CONFLICT GEOGRAPHIES OF WATER POLLUTION IN THRACE REGION OF TURKEY

by

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the tension between industrial development policies and environmental protection and the rising pollution levels in the City of Lüleburgaz in Thrace region, a peripheral region of Istanbul, Turkey. The environmental narratives of second- third-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants, who began arriving in the early 20th Century, and Kurdish migrants, who arrived in Lüleburgaz in the post-1990 era, express conflict geographies of pollution across communities and between the communities and the state. Heavy pollution in the Ergene River, where the river is declared “dead,” is not a mere accident but rather a facet of neoliberal environmental governance. A politics of non-governance Conflicting narratives of Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish migrants uncover multiple layered conflict geographies of water pollution in Thrace region by grappling with the question of how “the nation” is continously reterritorialized within neoliberalized constructions of environment and river politics at the community and policy realms. Ethnic-class segregation leads to different community demands with regard to river pollution and environmental degradation in neighbourhoods characterized by different materialities of housing and occupation, a particular facet of non-governance that creates landscapes of invisibility. This analysis contributes to theories on “actually existing neoliberalism” and the ways through which the nation and its various territorial practices at different epochs of neoliberalization processes not only create consent for neoliberalization practices, but also give way for historical and racialized ethnic conflicts to survive.
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Lastly, without the funding of SSHRC Doctoral Award, AAG Dissertation Award and Queen’s University Graduate Dean’s Doctoral Field Travel Grant for pursuing my field research, writing this dissertation would have been impossible.
Statement of Originality

I hereby certify that all of the work described within this thesis is the original work of the author. Any published (or unpublished) ideas and/or techniques from the work of others are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices.

(Eda Acara)

(May, 2015)
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For my dearest father, Altan Acara

(1930–2014)
Chapter 1 Introduction: Meeting the Ergene River

The Ergene River, a tributary part of the Meriç River (Maritza in Bulgarian, Evros in Greek), crosses the border between Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey in Thrace region. It is considered by the Turkish Ministry of Environment (2004) to be a “dead river,” with level four pollution.\(^1\) The river has witnessed rapid industrialization and its environmental consequences.

Turkey, located at the crossroads of Middle East and Europe, has undergone enormous industrial and environmental change in the past decade, leading to severe water pollution. The highest water pollution in Turkey is found in large metropolitan areas such as Istanbul, and in their peripheries. The Marmara region, which encompasses various industrial zones located on the periphery of Istanbul, has the most polluted water (Turkish Ministry of Environment and Forestry 2004). While water policies in Turkey have seen particular attention from scholars and the state, with a relative enhancement in policy implementation concerning regulation and monitoring of water pollution as a result of the European Union accession process, still the historical, economic, and political tensions in balancing the needs of the industrial development and environmental protection have not been overcome (Orhan and Scheumann 2011).

Historically, industrial policies have persistently been favoured at the expense of environmental policies in Turkey, starting in the 1930s with the prioritization of industrialization in as an instrument to fight against European colonization (Keyder 1999;\(^1\) This is the highest level of pollution, encompassing both surface and underground water pollution.)
Şenses and Taymaz 2003). Until after the 1980 coup d’état, a majority of the industrial activities, primarily state enterprises, were located in Anatolian cities such as Ankara, Antalya, Adana, and Izmir (Quataert 1994; Şenses and Taymaz 2003). During this time, Istanbul lost its regional importance in trade (Keyder 1999).\(^2\) With the emergence of economic liberalization and adoption of structural adjustment programs, followed by the entrance of Turkey into the Customs Union and membership negotiations with the European Union, Istanbul became a centre for the service and finance sectors, as well as a trade centre for the Middle East and east European countries (Keyder 1999). While such developments led to the substantial integration of Istanbul into the international markets, restructuring of Istanbul’s industry in the Thrace region first occurred in the early 1990s (Mortan et al. 2003e). It was also during this period that the monitoring of water pollution was transferred to local authorities, and a new environmental law was introduced,\(^3\) including a polluter pays principle. Although the law includes “sustainable development” as a necessary framework to regulate environmental pollution in industrial peripheries, it also emphasizes that environmental protection shall be carried out in harmony with economic and social development targets. This clause allows for the prioritization of economic development over environmental protection (REC 2006; Orhan and Scheumann 2011).

My research draws on this tension between industrial development policies and environmental protection and the rising pollution levels in the City of Lüleburgaz in

\(^2\) Keyder (1999) emphasizes that Istanbul lost its merchants and tradesman during the early 1930s, as a result of the population exchange between Greece and Turkey.

\(^3\) Environmental Law (No. 5491) was adopted in 1983 and revised in 2006 (REC 2006).
The Ergene River flows for 194 kms constituting a drainage area of 10,730 km², starting from Saray, Tekirdağ and makes up the main regional surface water source for irrigation, industrial production, and household use purposes. The primary sources of

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4 Muhacir originally has religious meanings, referring to the ‘forced’ migration of the prophet Muhammed from Mecca to Medina (Language] N.d) and it also stands for immigrant. The term, like its religious meaning further signifies a forced return migration of the ethnic Turks, once settled by the Ottoman back to the original destination, Turkey. Muhacir was still a word commonly used to refer to themselves by both generations of Muslim-Balkan immigrants, directly or indirectly, during my interviews.
contamination are household and industrial waste, which are directly discharged without any treatment to the river (Çevre ve Orman Bakanlığı [Ministry of Environment and Forestry] 2003, 2006; Üniversitesi 2007; Çevre ve Orman Bakanlığı [Ministry of Environment and Forestry] 2010). It is important to note that the percentage of contamination from household waste is greater than that of industrial discharge. However, discharge of industrial waste has much long lasting effects when compared to household wastewater (Muluk et al. 2013). Moreover, considering the fact that the Ergene River basin makes up 54% of Thrace region where industrial and agricultural production are undertaken together, the pollution at multiple sites of the river has become almost contagious and can affect locations far away from the original contamination source. With increasing effects of climate change and with decreasing amounts of forest coverage due to Istanbul’s construction boom and growing demands for water to be transferred from Thrace region, the Ergene River basin is considered to be a water poor region. This phenomenon also locates pollution of Ergene River, as an important problem both in the long and shorter run (Kantarçı 2004; Yüksel 2008).

River pollution plays an extensive role in soil and contamination of surface and underground water, endangering animal, human, and plant life. Several studies have found traces of hard metal toxicity in the rice that is cultivated in the Basin, which affect average agricultural productivity (Avşar, Gürbüz, and Kurşun 1999; Arıcı et al. 2000).

Currently, the Ergene River’s use in irrigation is strictly prohibited. In sites where rice is cultivated, Ergene River water is mixed with dam water to lessen the effects of the contaminated water on agricultural production. However, the effects of such measures are still not decided since there can be other factors affecting contamination of the product, stemming from topographical features of the soil (Avşar, Gürbüz, and Kurşun 1999).
Currently, the Ergene River’s use in irrigation is strictly prohibited. The water is usually mixed with relatively less polluted water from dams to lessen the effects of the contaminated water on agricultural production. However, the effects of such measures are still inconclusive since there are other contamination factors stemming from, for example, topographical features of the soil. That is why, more extensive studies are needed in order to be able to assess the overall picture of the hard metal contamination in agricultural crops that are mainly exported to the internal markets (Avşar, Gürbüz, and Kurşun 1999). It is important to note that pollution that affects agriculture stems not only from the river pollution, but also studies have showed that presence of heavy traffic transportation networks across the borders (Adiloğlu et al. 2011). In addition, overuse of pesticides (in specific herbicides) (Gökçe et al. 2005) and trans boundary contamination of the Meriç River, which merges with Ergene River before flowing into Aegean Sea (Kantarçı 2005; Kramer and Schellig 2011), affect agricultural productivity and the overall environmental security of the agricultural crops for human and animal health. Moreover, the sandy structure of the Thracian soil, especially beneath the main industrial zones in Çorlu and Çerkezköy, expedites the spreading of underground water contamination from landfills and/or discharge of wastewater from households and/or factories (Kantarçı 2005; Ekmekyapar, Karabulut, and Meriç Pagano 2011).

Rapid industrialization, concentrated in the textile, food, and leather sectors in order to meet the demands of the megacity Istanbul through low production costs, is the
Labour migration from central and Eastern Anatolia and unplanned development of industrial, agricultural, and settlement zones, in addition to absence of personnel monitoring, state regulations, and mechanisms to combat water pollution, further intensify the problem of water pollution (Mortan et al. 2003b; Orhan and Scheumann 2011). Despite the current industrial pollution of the Ergene River, complete relocation of Istanbul’s industry to the Thrace region, particularly to Lüleburgaz and Çorlu, is planned (Trakya Kalkınma Ajansı 2010). If successful, more than two million people are predicted to migrate to the region (Anonymous 2006).

Industrial pollution reaches its peak in Lüleburgaz, Çorlu, and Çerkezköy, which form the main axis of industrial concentration (Kramer and Schellig 2011; Orhan and Scheumann 2011). Within this context local civil society organizations and journalists refer to Lüleburgaz as part of the devil’s triangle due to its location at the middle of the Çerkezköy and Çorlu industrial zones (Çakıroğlu 1997; Ergene N.d). There has been a growing environmental campaign by civil society groups in Lüleburgaz, Çorlu, and Çerkezköy to raise awareness about the pollution of the Ergene basin. These groups draw attention to the industrial zones as the source of water pollution (For a recent communique see Ergene N.d). On the other hand, my own field research experience in Lüleburgaz in 2007 for another project about civil society suggests that narratives of water, the Ergene River, and water pollution are associated with diverse economic,

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6 Currently, there are six organized industrial zones, one European Free Trade zone and 18 small size industrial sites, accommodating approximately 2500 industrial facilities (Trakya Kalkınma Ajansı 2010). These figures only show the legal and registered industrial ownership whereas it is reported that 70% of the industrial activity in Thrace occurs outside of the legally established organized zones (Inci 2010).
demographic, and cultural changes in the region. One of the respondents in this former research project, a Bulgarian-Turkish immigrant of 1930, related the degeneration of the Ergene River basin to the degeneration of the Turkish-Bulgarian culture by referring to the Kurdish labour migration as a threat to the environment. This brief conversation illustrates that there are many different conflicts within which the experience and knowledge of pollution are structured, including ethnocultural conflict between Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish immigrants that came to Lüleburgaz as a result of the development of industrial zones (Mortan et al. 2003b).

By taking environment in both of its meanings, as surroundings (çevre) and nature (doğa), the focus of my dissertation is on the types and intensity of ethnic and class conflicts expressed in different community understandings of environmental pollution. My research will contextualize these conflict narratives within the Turkish state environmental history and industrial policies. The dissertation addresses how environmental narratives of the Ergene River’s pollution reflect and affect relations between two communities. From a wider perspective, I frame ethnic and class conflicts between the two communities in question, within the historical constructions of the Turkish nation and Turkishness by concentrating on the socio-spatial difference with regard to access to clean water. In turn, I question how neoliberal environmental governance affects and changes the senses of belonging by looking at definitions, negotiations, and experiences of the Ergene River and its pollution, with an aim to understand how the idea of the nation as a form of power discourse circulates within the
context of socio-spatial relations between communities, by exclusion and inclusion of certain groups in the nation-body.

There is a consensus in the political science literature that Turkish national identity is narrated as Sunni and Turkish (Belge 2007; Bora 2007; Bazin 2009). The construction of a monolithic and absolute Turkish national identity became fixed during the 1980 coup d’état (Üstel 2004), which resulted in state repression of different identity groups and communities (Kadıoğlu 1998; Üstel 2004). These identities in turn found their way forward through their opposition to the monolithic racialized ethnic definition of the Turkish nation (Kadıoğlu 1998; Caha 2005). Although there is an important amount of research on Turkish nationalism, there is little attention given to how the idea of nation is reproduced in daily life, particularly through environmental governance and community politics. This gap in the literature is another important reason why I am choosing these specific ethnic and class communities for this research.

Turkish immigration policy was shaped and continues to be shaped by a two-tiered immigration regime, based on 1951 Geneva Convention and the 1967 Protocol, which does not grant refugee status to asylum seekers coming from outside of Europe with “non-Turkish and non-Muslim” origins (Kirişçi 1991; İçduyuğ and Aksel 2013; İhlamur-Öner 2013). This means that asylum seekers and refugees from the Middle East, North Africa, South Asian countries, and former Soviet Union countries, excepting those such as Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants, were only allowed to stay temporarily in Turkey,

\[7\] The two-tier system of immigration refers to the distinction between conventional and non-conventional refugees where non-conventional refugees are only temporarily housed in Turkey before being relocated in a third country.
thus positioning Turkey as a transit country.\textsuperscript{8} These immigrants do not have the rights to work and/or to have permanent residence in Turkey.\textsuperscript{9} 

Muslim-Balkan immigrants, as conventional refugees, have been framed by the Turkish state as a “Turkish” kin group (İçduygu and Aksel 2013) since the establishment of the Turkish Republic, which provided Muslim-Balkan immigrants with privileges of permanent housing and settlement in Turkey.\textsuperscript{10} On the other hand, Kurdish people have long been framed as “pseudo citizens” (Yeğen 2006), which later changed in the post-1980 era with the denial of Kurdish ethnic identity, and was temporarily halted due to armed struggle and urban political action (Bozarslan 2008; Bayır 2013). Nevertheless, Kurdish migration from eastern parts of Turkey to the west of the country were rather widely considered as an urban problem (Doğan and Yılmaz 2011; Saraçoğlu 2011). Disassociating Kurds from the ethnic and political realm within which Turkishness has been constructed strikes right at the heart of what it means to be urbanized.

Many studies argue that the Turkish government saw Muslim-Balkan immigrants who migrated to Turkey as the most favourable ethnic community for assimilation and

\textsuperscript{8} The relevant regulations were devised during the Cold War and articulate Turkish opposition against communism. For more on how the policy was prepared, for example, see: Kirişçi (2000).

\textsuperscript{9} The geographical limitation has been widely criticized by the European union and other international organizations such as the UNHCR serving humanitarian needs of refugees. In the post-1980 era, Turkey started receiving influxes of asylum seekers and refugees especially from the Middle East, due to the Iraq-Kurdish dispute and eight-year war between Iran and Iraq. Under the pressures of the criticism for meeting the basic criteria for humanitarian assistance, Turkey changed its immigration policy for the non-conventional refugees in the 1990s, and started temporarily allowing them to stay in camps. These camps are often closed to monitoring by international organizations, which has been another controversial issue, raised especially during the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011 and the recent Kobane crisis in 2014 (Ihlamur-Öner 2013). Moreover, during the current Syrian refugee crisis, the Turkish state operationalized a special “protective regime” only for Syrians, which granted them with open borders, no forced returns to Syria (regardless of whether they stay in the camps or not), and providing state assistance for those who stay in the refugee camps (Özden 2013).

\textsuperscript{10} For more on the privileges granted to Muslim-Balkan immigrant by Settlement Law, please see Chapters 3 and 4.
turkification (Kirişçi 2000; Cagaptay 2006; İçduygu and Aksel 2013). Their settlement was administered by the state and aimed at dispersing the immigrants among Turkish inhabitants so that their overall assimilation was made possible (Cagaptay 2006). Kurdish migrants to Thrace came to Lüleburgaz after the 1990s as a result of the rapid industrialization and during an impasse of armed conflict between the Turkish state and Kurdish insurgent, which resulted in their marginalization in Lüleburgaz (Mortan et al. 2003a). Their environmental narratives of pollution are subsequently shaped and articulated by conflict history and socio-spatial exclusion of Kurdish people from the realm of Turkish nation.

Theoretical Frameworks and Literature Review

In the following three subsections, I illustrate three dynamics with regard to how I approach to the environmental narratives that bring together conflict geographies of ethnic and class privilege with regard to access to clean water. These dynamics blend political ecology (Harris 2002; Watts and Peet 2004) and environmental racism frameworks (Pulido 2000) to explore how conflicts are transformed with the rise of neoliberal environmental governance in the Thrace region in the post-1990s era. I further explore “governmental rationalities” within a Foucauldian framework (Miller et al. 1991; Lemke 2002; Foucault 2007) in connection with notions of place, spatiality, and memory (Casey 1993; Malpas 1999) from which convergences and divergences in environmental narratives arise and illustrate the conflicts between communities and the state as well as the conflicts across communities. Overall, the theoretical frameworks critically bring together political geography with environmental geography in order to cross-examine
“socio-political inequality and differentiated outcomes of neoliberalized natures” (Harris 2009, 402).

At first, drawing on political ecology frameworks, I understand the social construction of environment at the intersection of larger social, economic, cultural, and political processes (Castree and Braun 2001; Watts and Peet 2004). I concentrate on where and how the communities locate source(s) and outcomes(s) of river pollution in addition to how different communities relate the matter of the Ergene River’s pollution to the overall industrial and demographic changes in Lüleburgaz and the Thrace region. I blend this approach with conflict geographies (Harris 2002) to argue that community knowledge about environment is built on dynamic conflicts based on ethnic and class lines.

The second part focuses on how I contextualize the notions of ethnic and class privilege with environment governance through the operationalization of a Foucauldian understanding of environmental governance and governmental rationalities to explore how changing political and economic governance of the environment creates new environmental subjectivities. I use this approach to explore how neoliberal environmental governance transforms senses of belonging and governs relations across communities with different ethnic and class backgrounds.

The last focus of this dissertation will examine the memory of the Ergene River and its pollution. For this last section, I use Malpas’ (1999) conceptualizations of place, spatiality, and narrative to explore how senses of belonging and memory work in environmental histories of pollution. I also use this section to understand the place of the
Ergene River and its pollution in environmental narratives, alongside with where the two distinct communities locate places of water pollution in Lüleburgaz landscape.

The focus and the lead questions in this dissertation are largely related to the discursive constructions of what environment is across space and time and who has a right to define what is nature and what is natural. These questions further illustrate the very making of ideologies of nature and deciphering these ideologies would help denaturalize what is called or defined as nature and natural (Castree and Braun 2001). Based on this idea, I frame environment in both of its meanings as “surroundings” (çevre) and nature (doğa) in order to bind socio-natures across neighbourhood, regional, and national layers.\(^{11}\) My research aims to explain conflict geographies of the two communities in question through exploring their constructions of how they understand their surroundings (the neighbourhood, county, and nation) in relation to environmental change in Lüleburgaz by taking into account their experiences with the Ergene River’s pollution.

**Conflict Geographies of Water Pollution: The Messiness of Encounter**

There is a plethora of literature on the analysis of water as a source of intra-state conflict or a possible source for future armed conflict in the Middle East (see for example Collins 1991; Drake 1997; Beaumont 2000; Amery 2002; Swain 2004; Fisher and Huber-Lee 2006; Lipchin 2007; Paul Michael and Ilan 2007). Selby (2005) criticizes that overemphasis on the inter-state conflicts in the Middle East based on water eschews the significance of small scale intra-state conflicts, showing that other resources such as oil..."
are the main source of geopolitical conflict.\textsuperscript{12} Within this context, Selby (2005) stresses that such overemphasis on water conflicts feeds on and strengthens orientalist constructions of the Middle East as a region composed of states that are in continuous conflict by nature. I understand conflict geographies of water more than as a systematic symptom of Middle Eastern state relations, by focusing on environmental narratives of communities that “capture the intersection between water use, access and integrity and different, interrelated and multi-scalar aspects of conflict in social, political, cultural and ecological senses.” (Harris 2002, 794). In other words, my dissertation focuses on the conflict geographies across communities and between communities and the state.

The majority of the research literature on environmental changes in developing countries is dominated by understanding the failure of states through drawing attention to the “peripheral visions” that are ignored by state discourses of environmental policy (Robbins 2000, 126). Such failures are mainly acknowledged by problematizing and analyzing resistance movements (Mackenzie and Dalby 2003; Goodman, Boykoff, and Evered 2008). With reference to water-related issues in the developing countries, some of these scholars bring knowledge of non-governmental organizations while calling for their integration with overall state policy realms (see Asamu 2004; Jonsson 2005; Minh Thu and Sajor 2009). Other scholars work with concepts such as environmental justice or environmental racism to incorporate the politics of environmental movements (see Tracy 1998; Carvalho 2006; Drew 2008; Kelly 2009) and/or the specific local knowledge of

\textsuperscript{12} Selby (2005) further emphasizes that access to water is an important community concern rather than a state concern. Within this context, he draws attention to less emphasis diverted towards water policies by the states in the Middle East.
ethnic, racial, and gendered subjectivities in research and state policy realms (see Laituri and Kirby 1994; Cutter 1995; Pulido 2000; Warf and Ueland 2006; Dooling 2009; Farhana 2009; Walker 2009). All of these studies show that water is a source of conflict across and within communities as well as between the state and the communities; however, while there has been much research on the latter there has been little research on how economic, social, and cultural relations are transformed across different communities over the course of environmental pollution (Heynen, Kaika, and Swyngedouw 2006). I therefore concentrate on conflict geographies of water pollution across the communities in question by contextualizing it within the overall tension between community knowledge of the Ergene River’s pollution and the Turkish state’s industrial and environmental policies in Thrace region.

Human–environment relations are built at the intersection of ideological, economic, social, historical, and political processes. The social construction of environmental issues reveals diverse conflicts and processes of negotiation among and across communities and between communities and the state over natural resources (Braun and Wainwright 2001; Harris 2002; Watts and Peet 2004). By concentrating on how diverse agents who experience and “negotiate” water pollution on a daily basis narrate industrial and environmental changes in Lüleburgaz, I seek to uncover the political, social, ecological, and cultural grounds on which community conflicts emerge. I concentrate on where and how the communities in question attribute the source(s) and outcomes(s) of river pollution; in addition, I investigate how they relate the matter of the Ergene River’s pollution to the overall industrial and demographic changes at multiple
levels, stretching from the neighborhood to the regional and national. I further look for possible divergences and convergences of the community definitions and causes of water pollution.

My concern is with how ethnic and class conflicts across communities are revealed, expressed, and experienced. Communities are “the locus of knowledge, a site of regulation and management, a source of identity” (Watts and Peet 2004, 25). Community experiences are not pure knowledge of power relations; they are not monolithic; and are subjected to change (Robbins 2000; Watts and Peet 2004). That is, diverse community experiences of environmental change articulate privileged subject positions as a result of environmental governance (Robbins 2000; Watts and Peet 2004; Agrawal 2005). Here, I understand environmental governance as a form of governing space (see Huxley 2007), where privilege is a socio-spatial relationship across different communities. I locate ethnic and class privileges within the context of different and often discriminatory encounters with the state, an outcome of environmental governance practices, in both of its meanings, as “the surroundings and the natures” and a source of conflict between the communities in question.

Different encounters with the state during the process of (im)migration and settlement in the Thrace region for both of the communities shape how environment is constructed in relation to its pollution. The ongoing peace negotiations over the Kurdish issue in Turkey, rising demands for labour, construction fetishism across the neoliberal economy since 2000, in addition to local ethnic tensions resulting in segregated

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13 Many of the works on environmental racism draws on the relationship between white privilege and pollution (see for example Pulido 2000).
settlement patterns between the communities in question, are just some among the topics reflecting the messiness of conflict geographies of environmental pollution. Throughout the following chapters, I specifically concentrate on conflict geographies, shaped by everyday nationalisms, leading to ethnically informed segregationist habitation and class and ethnic tensions of the neoliberal economies at the neighbourhood, regional, and national levels.

By taking conflict geographies as a core concept within the context of Turkish nationalism and Kurdish peace process, I embed my arguments on everyday nationalisms in the meaning of conflict as “more than armed struggle” (Galtung 1964). This concept means to imagine and conceptualize peace and its geographies by critically investigating territorialisation of the nation in everyday life, which is often governed by socio-spatial distances, with ecological consequences. For example, I examine stereotypes of the Kurdish people in the neighbourhood and how these stereotypes become part of the very construction of how Kurdish settlement is approached and constructed by Muslim-Balkan immigrants living in the neighbourhood—both of which groups are located in close vicinity to the Ergene River and its streams.

Subject positions emerge within conflicts rather than the other way around (Braun and Wainwright 2001). Thus, environmental conflict and/or social construction of environment and its pollution constitute a necessary place to start analysis rather than exploring how different subject positions emerge in the first place (Braun and Wainwright 2001). Thus, the first step of analysis in this dissertation entails how the Ergene River’s pollution is constructed along different ethnic and class lines. It is only
within this context that the second step of my analysis emerges, and that is the exploration of the ways and kinds of ethnic and class privileges that shape the place, and context(s), of water pollution in Lüleburgaz. While the first step is more to do with how the Ergene’s pollution and the river itself are constructed and experienced in relation to different ethnic and class identities of the communities in question, the second step involves the attempt to explain different community experiences of pollution around the concept of “privilege” in spatial, ecological, political, economic, cultural, and social senses. In the next section, I illustrate how I use the notion of ethnic and class privilege within the context of neoliberal environmental governance.

**Governmental Rationalities and Environmental Governance**

The social construction of environment by subjects is closely related to the practices of governing spaces, which are shaped by power discourses (Robbins 2000; Braun and Wainwright 2001; Watts and Peet 2004; Agrawal 2005; Huxley 2007). I am interested in how changing forms of environmental governance in Lüleburgaz open up opportunities and create obstacles for different communities to negotiate environmental pollution in the Ergene River by regulating the socio-spatial relations between communities.

Many of the studies from the political ecology and environmental racism literature about environmental pollution\(^{14}\) indicate that ethnic, racial, and class privileges are produced and enacted by socio-spatial relations, “constitutive of the city and

\(^{14}\) Geographical literature on environmental racism and white privilege, which takes into account the experiences of racialized groups, examines unjust distribution of natural resources in different neighbourhoods of cities, such as quality of water and air based on class, race, and gender and focuses on North America and the U.S. in particular. For environmental racism see: Cutter (1995); Pulido (2000); Dooling (2009) and for political ecology literature on pollution and its relations to ethnic, racial and class privileges see: Watts et al. (1996, 2004) and Robbins (2000).
produced by it” (Pulido 2000, 13). I look at how historical ethnic and class conflicts manifest themselves as forms of governmental rationalities within the overall community constructions of the Ergene River’s pollution; and, secondly, how these rationalities are transformed by neoliberalization of the environment and decentralization of industry to the Thrace region. With more focus on the spatiality of privilege that regulates the visibility and recognition of pollution experience, I further bring geographical theories around place and spatiality to relate Lüleburgaz contemporary landscape to the socio-spatial difference of communities.

The concept of governmentality for the study of neoliberalism is closely linked with exploring “how it [neoliberal rationalities] functions as “politics of truth”, producing new forms of knowledge, inventing new notions and concepts that contribute to the “government” of new domains of regulation and intervention” (Lemke 2002, 55). These studies largely concentrate on “techniques of government (e.g., systems of accounting, methods of the organisation of work, forms of surveillance, methods of timing and spacing of activities in particular locales, etc.) and technologies of government (e.g., types of schooling and medical practice, systems of income support, forms of administration and ‘corporate management’, systems of intervention into various organisations, and bodies of expertise)” (Dean 1994). Less literature deals with the state’s shifting governmental responsibilities to non-state entities (other than NGOs), which merges the theoretical gap between what happens across “the verticality and encompassment” of the governmental techniques and technologies of the neoliberal state

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15 Also see Miller et al. (1991); Ferguson and Gupta (2002); Whitehead, Jones, and Jones (2007).
The former refers to the state as “above civil society, community and family” and the latter locates the state “within an ever widening series of circles that begins with family, local community and ends with the system of nation-states” (Ferguson and Gupta 2002, 982). My research looks at such vertical and encompassing dimensions of the Turkish state within the context of immigration and environmental governance. I analyze encounters between the state and the different immigrant groups, which further shape geographies of settlement and conflicting relationships between communities. This analysis is mainly built on vertical and encompassing encounters across the family, neighbourhood, region, and nation-state. I seek to underline the degrees of power in neoliberal state governance for producing ethnic-class subjectivities that continue to reproduce nationalism in everyday life.

Governance creates a discursive territory, trespassing mental, physical, and institutional borders (Agnew 1994; Penrose 2002; Paasi 2003a) in which unequal exercise of power by the two distinct communities becomes “rational.” This process raises questions such as who has a right to define the original settlers of Lüleburgaz and immigrants, as well as who has the right to exercise power over the definitions and constructions of water pollution. Through these questions, I locate governmental rationalities between the realms of historical relations of ethnic and class privileges that establish the socio-spatiality of neoliberal environmental governance and the “socialization of the political” (Negri 2015, 2). Further, neo-liberal environmental governance articulates and benefits from the historical project of the Turkish nation-state,

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16 For example see Agrawal (2005); Coleman (2007); Coleman and Kocher (2011); Demetriou (2013).
particularly from the idea of the Turkish nation, as governmental rationalities are constructed around them, particularly through discursive territorialisation of the nation across environmental trajectories. Here, I refer both to segregation of the neighbourhood, which affects the understandings and conditions of water pollution as well as segregation as a social-spatial and an environmental (in both of its meanings, as surroundings and natural) relationship, which is thoroughly embedded in the territorialization of the nation.

It is important to note that I specifically use the terminology and theories of racialization in connection to ethnic nationalism within the context of Kurdish–Turkish conflict, as opposed to, for example, ethnicization used by Saraçoğlu (2011). Saraçoğlu (2010, 2011) research concentrates on the ways through which Kurdish migrants in Izmir are perceived by the Turkish middle classes and conceptualization of the ethnic equalities through ethnicization, without relating it across multiple geographies. On the other hand, my attempt here seeks to expand on examining the meanings of racial vocabularies, and discursivity of racialization (Ergin 2008) in connection with ethnic nationalism in Turkey. That is simply because racialization, as a concept, provides opportunities to link multiple geographies of racism of Europe and Turkey so that it becomes possible to understand how Turkishness as well as Muslim-Balkan immigrants have been associated with whiteness and Turkish modernity, which was often at the heart of environmental narratives and understandings of urbanity.¹⁷ In that sense, racialization of ethnicity as a

¹⁷ For more please refer to Chapter 3.
conceptual framework grasps “national framing of modernity” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 223).\(^\text{18}\)

The next level of analysis in this dissertation is related to the contextualization of ethnic and class privileges in close proximity with the environmental pollution in Lüleburgaz, which requires understanding the changing forms of environmental governance in the post-1990 era, characterized by the decentralization of Istanbul’s industry to the Thrace region and introduction of a “polluter pays” principle in the Environmental Constitution (Orhan and Scheumann 2011). Decentralization of Istanbul’s industry has diverted the authority to monitor pollution levels to local authorities, mainly the municipality, while the planning processes of Istanbul’s decentralization are jointly regulated, designed, and financed by the Ministry of Development (former State Planning organization), Thrace development agency, and a private company called the Istanbul Metropolitan Planning Firm (that works for Istanbul’s Municipality) (Trakya Kalkınma Ajansı 2010).

The networks of environmental governance in Thrace and Lüleburgaz characteristically are forms of neoliberal reregulation and privatization of pollution\(^\text{19}\) within the context of deregulation of the industrial zones in Thrace, which are the ultimate source of water pollution in the region. Bearing in mind this neoliberal transformation in the environmental governance, my ultimate concentration is on how neoliberal governance affects the senses and places of belonging, the idea of the nation

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\(^\text{18}\) Wimmer and Glick Schiller (2002) argues that national framing of modernity refers to the separation between “the rise of nationalism from that of the modern state and democracy” which “naturalise the nation-state” (Wimmer and Glick Schiller 2002, 223).

\(^\text{19}\) For the common characteristics with regard to the neoliberalization of environment, see Castree (2008).
and community, and how these are related with the community definitions, conceptualizations, and constructions of the Ergene River’s pollution and Lüleburgaz. I particularly seek to explore how and where the idea of the Turkish nation is reproduced in daily life by the meanings of pollution at an impasse of neoliberal transformation of environmental governance alongside with how governmental rationalities are shaped and constructed by it.

In order to ground and further contextualize the notions of ethnic and class privileges as socio-spatial relations within Lüleburgaz, the last step of my analysis consists of examining how the dead river is remembered and reinvented in environmental narratives. Within this context, I explore how community constructions of the Ergene River and its pollution are connected to senses of belonging and place, which in turn will give clues about how environmental changes in Lüleburgaz landscape are understood by the communities in question.

Memories of the Dead River and Environmental Narratives

Spaces are not blank containers that bind subjects and experiences, and places are not mere locations in space that the subject gives meaning to. Structures of spatiality are nested in places, which enact and transform the structures of spatiality. Limits of subjectivities and experiences are determined by the structure of place and spatiality (Malpas 1999). Moreover, place and spatiality extend into different places, which connect the act of dwelling in a place to other places. Senses of place emerge within the larger networks of places. Within this context, experiences are built-in memories of places (Casey 1993; Malpas 1999), which narrate “times of places and places in times” (Casey
This is the essence of distinct local knowledge. Malpas (1999) frames this relationship between time, place, and memory with the concept of event where “events—and so also the memories of events—can be understood both as constitutive of larger event structures while they can also be understood as composed of smaller constituent events” (Malpas 1999, 101). Thus, narratives are instrumental in telling the order of events, which are picked out from the larger event structures (Malpas 1999).

Drawing on the aforementioned concepts with regard to narratives, memory, and place, I examine the memory of Ergene River within environmental narratives and how the communities in question narrate the event of its dying/pollution. By concentrating on the time and the events that are introduced in environmental narratives, I question how much the constructions of pollution are attributed to the changes in Lüleburgaz landscape. These questions are crucial in contextualizing the divergences and convergences with regard to where and when the communities in question locate the sources and outcomes of the Ergene River’s pollution.

**Methodologies**

In gathering, analyzing, and contextualizing environmental narratives, I define the methodologies and methods of this dissertation to be a blend of multiple field experiences and epistemological approaches. First, due to unexpected turns and decisions at the field site, my initial theoretical sampling drastically changed from a comparison of environmental narratives belonging to Kurdish versus Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants living in Thrace region to focusing on the environmental narratives of Muslim-Balkan immigrants. This change was particularly necessary because the neighbourhood that stays
at the very heart of my analysis was a mixed ethnic neighbourhood with less rigid ethnic boundaries across its Muslim-Balkan populations. On the other hand, including participants other than Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants further contributed to my analysis in observing historical continuities of stereotyping and segregation among Muslim-Balkan immigrants in general, but also between Kurdish and Muslim-Balkan immigrant populations living in the neighbourhood. Second, contextualization of the environmental narratives involved using other materials such as the archives, composed of newspapers printed by the local Muslim-Balkan immigrants and journals belonging to the local state during various time periods, alongside with personal photography archives.20

Despite such a blending of research methods and methodologies, one of the main cornerstone concepts that shapes my analysis is a basic Foucauldian discourse analysis (Foucault 1974) to explore and contextualize environmental narratives of the communities. By discourse, Foucault meant “practices that systematically form the object of which they speak” (Foucault 1974, 49). Meaning can only be formed through the knowledge of things, which is governed by discourse. Discourse is about knowledge production through language and knowledge production is not merely a linguistic process, but a process related with social practices (Hall 2001). Discourses are formed, articulated, and enforced through discursive practices, which involve the use of specific genres, words, and concepts governed by the rules of the discourse (Foucault 1974). Foucault (1974) underlines that examining discursive practices is not possible through the

20 For example, Chapter 3 concentrates on such journals and newspapers printed between 1930–1940 in addition to an analysis of a personal photography archive on Alpullu Sugar factory; whereas throughout Chapter 4 and Chapter 5, I included more contemporary local newspapers and their articles in order to contextualize and strengthen my arguments.
linguistic analysis of meaning. Rather, rules of a discourse are what form discursive practices and vice-versa. Sets of rules in Foucauldian discourse analysis are based on discovering and understanding the limits and dependencies of the discourse in question (Miller et al. 1991). These limits broadly question:

What is it possible to speak of? ... Which utterances are destined to disappear without any trace? Which are destined to enter into human memory? ...Which utterances are put into circulation and among what groups? Which are repressed or/and censored? ...Which utterances have been abandoned as negligible and which have been excluded as foreign? ... What types of relationships are established between the system of present statements and the body of past ones? ... among the discourses and previous epochs or foreign cultures, which are retained, which are valued, which are imported, which are attempts made to reconstitute? ... What individuals, what groups or classes have access to a particular kind of discourse? How is the relationship institutionalized between the discourse, speakers and its destined audience? ... How is struggle for control of discourses conducted between classes, nations, and linguistic, cultural or ethnic collectivities? (Miller et al. 1991, 60)

Foucault’s questions with regard to the analysis of the rules of a discourse emphasize that his discourse analysis does not look for origins but rather seeks to explain the dynamics and plurality of transformations from one epoch to another. This emphasis on social processes rather than a single origin is particularly useful in tackling transformations of environmental governance and settlement that shape ethnic-class proximities within the context of socio-spatial worlds of the neighbourhood and the specific communities in question. I explore how diverse agents who experience and “negotiate” water pollution on a daily basis narrate industrial and environmental changes in Lüleburgaz. I concentrate on where and how the communities in question attribute the source(s) and outcomes(s) of river pollution; in addition, I address how they relate the
matter of the Ergene River’s pollution to the overall industrial and demographic changes in Lüleburgaz and Thrace region. I further look for possible divergences and convergences for the community definitions and causes of water pollution.

I then interpret and correlate these environmental narratives against the background of historical, political, and economic processes that frame environmental and socio-spatial changes in Thrace region. This process includes examination of the state-level planning of regional development, industrialization, and management of river pollution to grasp the dominant narratives of neoliberal environmental governance by the state actors. Within this context, I explore how communities and their relations to water are depicted and regulated in relation to how the idea of the Turkish nation is articulated in the neoliberal discourses of environmental governance.

**Research Design: Theoretical Sampling and Recruiting Participants for Research**

My research design involved three stages that are linked with the analysis and conduct of environmental narratives and conflict geographies across communities. First, I conducted a total of forty-nine interviews. Forty of these interviews were with Muslim-Balkan immigrants (17 women and 23 male participants). Three of them were non-immigrant local people, commonly known as gacal (2 male and 1 woman participant). Seven of the interviews (6 male and 1 woman participant) were conducted with Kurdish participants at the Kurdish quarter of the neighbourhood where this study was carried out.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{21}\) Here is the composition of the interviewees in the Kurdish quarter: 4 male participants, aged +40 years old, who are members of the county’s Peace and Democracy Party branch, 1 male participant +50 years old, another male participant aged 33 years old, and lastly, a young woman aged 31. While the young woman was unemployed, the rest of the participants were working in truck driving and construction sectors. Only the young male participant was working as a cook at a local factory.
There were limitations with regard to sampling of research participants. I first planned to interview Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants who came to Thrace region before 1945. As my field research characteristically showed, Muslim-Balkan immigrants before 1945 have largely migrated to more urban centers, such as Istanbul and/or county centers away from where the Ergene River was located. As a result, I decided to redesign and limit my sampling by only including Muslim-Balkan immigrants who came to Lüleburgaz between 1945 and 1990, the range of migration history that I encountered in the neighbourhood. Also, in the initial research design, I planned to interview more Kurdish people; however, security reasons and their demand to stay invisible as a community unfortunately limited the number of Kurdish participants.

Since the 19th century, Thrace region has historically been an important region for Muslim populations living in the Balkans to migrate after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire (Şimşir 1986). The Ottoman–Russian war in 1893, which resulted in Ottoman land loss in the Balkans, which was followed by the Balkan Wars between 1912–1915, were considered as instigating an important first wave of Muslim immigrants coming from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece to Turkey. Starting in 1945 until 1989, there was another wave of Muslim-Balkan immigrants, particularly from Bulgaria, due to a nationalist agenda in the Balkans (Parla 2003). Thus, the 1989 migration wave from Bulgaria was not included in my research sampling, as they mostly live in the county center under state-sponsored housing (Parla 2003). In addition, Roma people, who
consider themselves as Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants, are excluded from my research sample; as I think research towards Roma groups must employ a different research design and theoretical concepts because their historical marginalization is based on different processes.22

At the beginning of my field research, my theoretical sampling was composed of Muslim-Balkan immigrants without any ethnic distinction. On the field site, however, I encountered a much wider ethnic composition that exceeded the dichotomy of Muslim-Balkan immigrants versus Kurdish migrants. This situation was applicable to former historical segregation patterns across Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Within this context, the most crystalized form of segregation was in between immigrants with Pomak origins23 and non-Pomak immigrants (Greek, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and other former Yugoslavian country immigrants, especially Bosnian). This pattern of segregation was most visible in the composition of the neighbourhood quarters.24

Another important factor that influenced the composition of the research participants in this study was sustaining a robust age range in order to be able to tackle generation related differences in conceptualizing “conflict” across environmental

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22 Roma people live in the neighborhoods located at the county center. Over the summer, it is customary to see Roma tents in the fields near the villages close to the Ergene River, where they work as seasonal workers. On the marginalization and local history of Roma people, for example, see: Mortan et al. (2003b).
23 Aslan et al. (2014)’s research about the ethnic geographies of Turkey defines Pomaks as a Muslim group with Slavic origins. There is no ethnic-based census surveying in Turkey, but the same study estimates that the population of Pomaks is largely concentrated in Thrace and Marmara regions.
24 That is the reason why the number of Pomak participants in the study equalled 20 percent of the total number of participants, which was composed of eight Pomak participants (four women and four men): 2 women with an age range of plus 50; one young participant between 18–30 years of age and another one between 30–50; and other three men with an age range of plus 50 years old and one participant aged between 18–30 were included in the sample.
narratives.\textsuperscript{25} Table 1-1 shows that interest in the study by participants with an age older than 50 years was considerably higher compared to other age groups. Such an interest is not a coincidence, as a majority of this group was either retired and/or housewives with flexible time arrangements.\textsuperscript{26} Moreover, younger generations between the ages of 18 to 40, unless they were students, were generally reluctant to participate (especially if either they and/or a relative is a factory worker), as they were afraid to say anything about pollution, which would be understood to be a critical and political act.\textsuperscript{27}

Analysis with respect to differences across immigrant generations constituted both a strength and a limitation to this study. It is noteworthy that higher numbers of participants in the plus-fifty-year-old group led to getting a much deeper and more diverse historical account with regard to the settlement in the neighbourhood during the 1950s and 1960s. This age group further contributed into the study by providing knowledge about how past time ethnic relations were spatialized and how the Ergene River was utilized. The second group, composed of participants between the ages of 30 and 50, mainly were the first generation that lived the environmental consequences of the transformation of the ecological economy—mainly from an agrarian to industrial

\textsuperscript{25} Accordingly, those plus 50 years of age were first-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants, whereas participants that were in between 30–50 years of age were second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Finally, participants with an age from 18–30 were third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants. For a more detailed examination of the age, gender, and ethnicity variance of research participants, please refer to Appendix B.

\textsuperscript{26} To be more exact; six of them were retired, five of them declared themselves to be housewives, one of them was an public employee, and six of them were farmers. Please also note that two cases were missing.

\textsuperscript{27} There might a multiplicity of reasons behind this reluctance. One of them can be the considerable state coercion against environmental activists, mainly local villagers, struggling against hydro-electric power plants at the time when the interviews took place in 2012. For more please see the case of a young environmentalist women, who was ordered by the court not to speak to anyone after she was found guilty for protesting against daming project in the Black Sea region (Özonur and Burucu (2011). Another reason would be the fear of the industrialists, especially owners of the factories, a factor that was indirectly mentioned before refusing take part in my interviews.
economy and/or liberal to neoliberal economies. Lastly, the youngest participants of this study who are in between the ages of 18 to 30 years old were especially crucial in understanding contemporary urbanization and modernity, while gathering more knowledge on the ways through which ethnic conflicts re-emerge in the everyday spaces of the neighbourhood.

![Number of Participants](image)

**Table 1-1 Age range of the participants at the neighbourhood (excluding Kurdish participants)**

The last important aspect with regard to sampling was the attempt to include farmers and workers in this study, especially to cover how pollution was governed at the factory level and also to understand the ways through which farmers struggle with the burdens of environmental pollution. As shown in Table 1-2, approximately 21 percent of the research participants were farmers: two of these farmers were big producers for national markets while six of them mainly produced vegetables and other crops for the local markets (like the county bazaar). On the other hand, unfortunately, there was less participation by the workers because of time constraints and, presumably, due to fear of the factories and the state. It is further important to note that all of the participants had
small gardens in front of their houses where they grew crops for their seasonal consumption. In addition, all of my participants, except for participants who were in between the ages of 18 and 30, were former farmers; they either worked on their own fields or were seasonal labourers in others’ fields.

Table 1-2 Employment of the Participants (excluding Kurdish participants)

In the process of recruiting the participants of this study and choosing a research site, I spent approximately 10 days at the county centre, having preliminary interviews while mainly walking with a local photographer who provided me with his network of people whom he thought would be relevant to my study. In the meantime, I met my

28 It is important to note that on my initial draft, I planned non-representational landscape analysis (mainly derived from scholars such as Mitchell (2002); Mitchell (2003); Revill et al. (2008) and Rose (1996), which involved walking with a selected number of participants after the initial interviews were conducted. However, because of the unwillingness to participate in such an endeavour, because walking increased visibility and thereby endangered the anonymity of research participants, I decided not to undertake such an analysis.
informant, who was a part-time scriptwriter and photographer, who was interested in making a short movie about the Ergene River and its pollution. Working with a local informant at the neighbourhood was useful in terms of building trust with the communities. I started to do interviews while he was present and after a week, by using a snowball methodology, I completed the rest of my interviews. I always conducted interviews in participants’ homes.

**Coding from Below and Tackling the Messiness of Contradictions in the Interviews**

I used an oral history methodology in my in-depth interviews to uncover the arrival stories of immigrants to the particular neighbourhood in Lüleburgaz and their experiences of the Ergene River’s pollution. For Muslim-Balkan immigrants, these interviews further entailed how they remembered the Ergene River and the advent of its pollution. While analyzing these oral histories, I mainly drew on narrative analysis as a methodological approach (especially see Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Maines, Pierce, and Laslett 2008).

There are two main dimensions that I examine by using narrative analysis. The first one concentrates on how personal narratives provide knowledge with regard to settlement history of the neighbourhood and Muslim-Balkan immigrants’ arrival to Thrace region. In other words, narrative analysis was useful in building “a socio-spatial history below.” History from below encompasses a multiplicity of invisibilities, based on ethnicity, class, language, gender, and ability in addition to events and encounters with the central and/or local state and other communities. It is also important to note that there is very little research with an environmental and rural analysis scope in/about Turkey where core knowledge comes from the local people themselves. That is in fact a
consequence of a tradition dating to early the Republican era’s paradoxical modernity, which undermines rural people’s knowledge at the expense of rational and scientific knowledge (Karaömerlioğlu 1999). With this frame, I operationalized thematic code sets, by using a qualitative analysis software known as Hyper Research, later to form the basis of analysis, such as stories of immigration to Thrace region, women’s different caring lives across the riverscape, success of the immigrant settlement policies by the state after the 1950s, emotions with regard to neighbourhood landscape change, which led to pollution of Ergene River. Throughout Chapters 4 and 5, these code sets become significant in gathering the pieces of neighbourhood settlement history along with pollution, and urban and industrial and/or agrarian histories.

The second dimension focuses on the collective narrations which “draw on the rules and models and other narratives in circulation that govern how story elements link together in a temporal logic” (Maines, Pierce, and Laslett 2008, 4). This part dwells on how stories are discursively constructed based on collective rather than mere personal experiences. From another angle, this second dimension also builds on the unique relationship between memory and experience (Malpas 1999). In order to uncover these aspects of my analysis, for example, thematic code sets exploring the narration of Kurdish arrival to the neighbourhood and/or kinds of stereotypes (belonging to Kurdish migrants) to narrate conflicting relations across communities, and narrative elements with regard to the event of “pollution,” were very useful, along with cross examining these stereotypical, racialized, ethnic constructions against the background of nostalgic

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29 Also see the previous section on theoretical frameworks.
neighbourhood history (as genre of narration), articulating in the narratives initiated the first steps into my thesis arguments, based on nostalgia as spatial practice (Lowenthal 1975; Olwig 2002).\(^{30}\)

There are degrees of silence and contradiction embedded in the interview process because “our identity is constructed on contradictions” (Maines, Pierce, and Laslett 2008, 45). During the course of transcriptions and coding the interview material, I encountered particular contradictions and silences with respect to stereotypical descriptions of the Kurdish migrants by Muslim-Balkan immigrants. As other studies on such stereotypes, I was expecting negative Kurdish stereotypes to be common in the interviews. Although they were significantly common, as indicated in the charts below (ethnic-based and gender-based stereotypes), there were also what I termed as positive stereotypes (contradictory ethnic-based stereotypes). Instead of making these contradictions invisible in my coding set, I used them to further understand the internal logic of the narratives, both personal and collective memory narratives, by asking, “how are such contradictions useful in the everyday life of the neighbourhood?” and/or “what do these contradictions say about the history of stereotypes, circulating since the first settlement of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants occurred?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic-based Stereotypes and their frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They have some sort of relationship with terrorist groups&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They are shameless (they fiercely advocate their rights)&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{30}\) For more please see Chapter 4.
Another important aspect of my analysis was taking into consideration of discursive intersectional relations to form stereotypes and shape everyday neighbourhood spatialities. This step required analytically separating coding sets in association with the dominant discursive themes that would merge to reproduce everyday nationalism and its territorial consequences, especially ethnic segregation. For example, gender-based stereotypes were the most powerful criteria for justifying everyday ethnic segregation. This further suggests the power of gender in shaping everyday spatialities, beyond women and their place.

**Contextualizing: Analyzing written materials and following local memory**

The second and third aspects of my research design mainly involved contextualization of personal and collective narratives in the interviews. As mentioned before, personal narratives are shaped by forces of history and historical events (Maines, Pierce, and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender-Based Stereotypes and their frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Their wives are conservatives&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They discriminate against their women&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They are not modern&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They reproduce a lot&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;They do not care about their children&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contradictory ethnic-based stereotypes and their frequencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They are very hard working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They have strong alliance and unity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 1-3 Composition of the Research participants**
Laslett 2008); however, historical contexts are not stable, static backgrounds, to which individuals can be reduced. In order to grasp the dynamic historical forces of socio-spatial changes, I first examined local county newspapers, which involved scanning a majority of the newspapers from 1990 to 2010. This examination was based on looking for keywords such as Ergene River, ethnic dispute, squatter settlements (gecekondu), and agriculture. These newspapers included Görünüm, a newspaper with a leftist tendency; Hürfikir, a local newspaper with liberal tendencies, and Özdilek (1935–1980), a newspaper that was published by Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Trakya Dergisi [Journal of Thrace] (1936–1950). I employed discourse analysis while analyzing these journals.

As a second and final step to contextualize the environmental narratives that I gathered, I conducted additional short interviews in the villages and at the centre of the Lüleburgaz, located close to the river (see the figure below).31

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31 Here is a list of interviews: one male environmentalist at Sinanlı village, seven women and environmental activists at Karamusul village, six local men at Alpullu and seven interviews with charismatic leaders of Lüleburgaz County (six men and one women).
These were rather exploratory interviews in order to understand the wide array of environmental problems of the region. It is important to note that I did not have a chance to use all of these interviews as part of this dissertation project, as they do not carry sampling robustness. Nevertheless, interviews at Alpullu became particularly important in terms of grounding my analysis of the newspapers and the overall agrarian uses of the Ergene River. That is mainly because with the interviews in Alpullu I managed to track down memories of the Ergene River together with the establishment of the sugar factory in the early 1930s. As you will further read in Chapter 3, these interviews were useful in understanding the environmental narratives I collected in the neighbourhood. Before the pollution, many of the narratives told about growing and selling sugar beets to the

32 All of them were aged plus 40 men, with Muslim-Balkan immigrant descendants.
factory, which provided their main income. It is important to note that this second stage of interviews were only for context building and a supportive phase to the environmental narratives and examination of local newspapers. In both of these stages, I used the interview questions in Appendix A, by changing the name of the places accordingly.

**The Question of “Where are you from?” and Contentious Reflexive Methodologies**

I will now outline how I approached to the issues with regard to authority and the power of the researcher and the researched in connection with the politics of research. The approaches that I employed while problematizing conflict zones with regard to my positionality as a researcher inherently structure the research design alongside the content of the interviews and other relevant correspondences at the field site. Thinking of reflexivity and the researcher’s positionality is not only useful to employ a practical ethical stance at the field site but it also constitutes the earlier stages of research analysis.

In this section, I particularly look at my diverse class and ethnic positions in the field both within the context of and beyond an outsider/insider paradigm in accessing and performing field research. I also lay out some of the basic themes and units of analysis in this dissertation, such as vocabularies of racialization, the intrinsic relationship between urbanity and Turkish nationalism, in addition to internal orientalism, to justify ethnic segregation.

When addressing the question of power in the terrain of research, feminist Donna Haraway (1988) argues for the impartiality of knowledge by criticizing the disembodied researcher, caught up in what she calls a “god trick.” The so-called “God trick” stands for western and masculinist ways of seeing the subject of research as an object. This “gaze
from nowhere” (Haraway 1988, 587) denies the partiality of knowledge and power relations in the process of research. The “god trick” in Haraway (1988) is ultimately related with the power of the researcher in the research process and intersectional standpoints of the researcher and the researched that affect the processes of research and knowledge production. As a way to problematize such issues, Haraway (1988) suggests employing an understanding of situated knowledge. Situated knowledge entangles the limits of the researcher, meaning a multiplicity of positions that the researcher affects during data collection, interpretation, and the processes of writing. In other words, situated knowledge problematizes the central and rational, disembodied position of the researcher in the research process. Many critical geographers engage with reflexivity as a strategy to unpack the multiple positions of the researcher through developing a critical eye on the research process (Rose 1997; Lather 2007).

Feminist geographer, Gillian Rose (1997) argues that there are two main reflexivity approaches to alter the unequal power relations between the researcher and the researched among critical geographers. She refers to these approaches as transparent reflexivity through which the power relations are made visible and known. The first one is relating everyday experiences to larger and broader relations of power; and the other one is distribution of power between the researcher and the researched, which becomes most visible in the issue of insider and outsider positions of the researcher to a specific community and/or geography. Within this context, the researcher’s identity is constructed as an insider or an outsider in relation to the research subject(s), due to their age, gender, race, dress, and so on, which in turn affects the knowledge produced (Scott 1992;
Damaris 2001). Gillian Rose (1997) underlines that while transparent reflexivity strategies are important, there are still unknowns and an inevitable failure in equally distributing power to the research participants or undoing the power relations that are embedded in the positionality of the researcher based on gender, ethnicity/race, age, and ability. It is within this context of conflict and developing a critical eye about the failures and the transparencies that situated knowledge claims power over the academic discourse.

Overall, I understand the practice of reflexivity as a strategy to unpack and decentralize the researcher’s power, which should be a practice more than studying the other so the researcher learns his/her limitations (Rose 1997; Lather 2007). My main concern is first with my power and responsibility as a researcher to the communities that I engage with. Coming from a Bulgarian-Turkish immigrant background, and having lived in big cities for most of my life as a third generation immigrant, I problematize my own identity and my political position against nationalism through the course of my dissertation research. Nevertheless, my ethnic background does not mean that I understand the circulation of nationalism fully since depending on place, region, and a multiplicity of other factors, such as dependency upon a metropolitan area like Istanbul in addition to different class positions and histories of my research participants other than my own, complicates my rather insider position to one of the communities in question. This research started with a political motivation and responsibility towards developing and drawing attention to everyday nationalisms. As I anticipated during the very early stages, these particular ethical positions, while familiarizing me with Kurdish politics and
various political Kurdish groups in Turkey, further located me as an outsider, as I do not have experience with regard to the conditions of being Kurdish.

Considering insider/outsider position is not enough to understand the impartiality of knowledge (Rose 1997). Indeed, my field experience showed that my positionality was more complex and fragmented when compared to the methodological insights. Starting from the early days of my fieldwork, I was constantly questioned for “Where I was from?” based on my skin color and my urban Turkish accent. One of the most striking conversations of these encounters happened on the first day while I was drinking tea with some of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants at the garden, in front of the teacher’s lodge where I was staying. After the initial introduction with regard to what I was planning to do in the county, these people asked me “where I was from?” Although I told them that I was from Ankara, the capital city of Turkey, they insistently asked where my ancestors were from. I responded by telling them a brief story of my mother’s side, migrating from Bulgaria to Turkey right after the Balkan wars (1912–1915). One of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants asked, “okay, you (your family) are immigrants but how did your color turn out to be like this? And added, “do you have any Roma ancestors?”

Racialization in Turkey becomes invisible and normative as a cultural practice by establishing vocabularies of racialization (Ergin 2008). Racialization is not only about skin color but it is how skin color “is placed” in a hierarchy.33 Scholarship on racialization is largely based on European and American experiences of colonization and

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33 One of the most common examples given in explaining how racialization is not only about skin color is the racialization of Jews before Second World War. Having white skin, Jewish people were seen as blacks compared to the racist hierarchy of german whiteness (Hutchison 2010).
slavery, articulated across social, political, and economic structures. For the case of Turkey, however, it is not possible to speak of such a colonization and slavery experience. This does not mean that Turkish nationalism from its foundation onwards was not influenced by an internal racialization, which was strengthened by an internal orientalism. Thus, Turkish scholarship after the 1990s era, specifically concentrating on the early Republican period, reveals that even tough Turkish nationalism was founded on anti-imperialist sentiments. It further reorganized ethnic hierarchies across citizenship and settlement ecological realms. This scholarship further emphasizes that slavery and eugenics were not accepted and/or implemented by the nationalist elites; and thus concludes that it was rather based on ethnic nationalism, targeting language and ethnicity as markers of Turkishness.

Turkish ethnic nationalism has continual power over ethnic classifications (Ergin 2008). While it locates racialization as an important aspect of Turkish culture and modernity, “race” as a term was silenced by “culture.” Indeed, constant questioning of “where I was from,” which eventually was asking about my skin color based on racialized presumptions (association with Roma appearance), was powerfully related to how different migration histories (for my case, Turkish-Bulgarian migration during the early Republican period) were assimilated into the discursive formations of Turkish

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34 For example see: Maksudyan (2005), Ergin (2004), Çağaptay (2003) and Bora (2007). More on this will be examined in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3.
nation and nationalism. Thus, this relation was apparent in everyday encounters with outsiders/strangers, as a strategy to familiarize with them.35

The stranger is not just any outsider. Rather, a stranger is someone associated with a certain origin. The stranger “is not the wanderer who comes today and goes tomorrow, but the one who comes today and stays tomorrow” (Simmel 1950). Association of my skin color with being a Roma was, in fact, interpreted based on this notion of my strangeness for Muslim-Balkan immigrants, which triggered linking the most familiar ethnic difference (being a Roma). My skin color was interpreted with respect to how an immigrant group settled and/or was placed. In other words, such racialized interpretation stemmed from how Muslim-Balkan immigrants built historically informed social, economic, and political relations with the county and the region.

When I interviewed Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood, “where I was from” was again a very popular question, based on my skin color and my urban Turkish. Slightly different from the Muslim-Balkan immigrant concerns, I was suspected for being from PKK (Partiya Karkerê Kurdistan)36 and/or an assimilated Kurdish person not revealing her ethnic identity and/or a Turkish state agent. Furthermore, the fact that I was writing this dissertation for a Canadian University raised suspicions over my being an American agent. These concerns were openly expressed and/or implied. Such forms of

35 On the other hand, it is not surprising to see that the Roma people often refer to non-Roma Muslim-Balkan immigrants with the word, Baro, meaning white. In deed, Baro here, stands for both ethnic and class differences.
36 The PKK, also known as Kurdistan Workers Party, has been a leading armed organization since the mid 1980s in the Kurdish people’s struggle in Turkey.
imagining the stranger/outsider was related to how Kurdish people were excluded historically from the national, regional and neighbourhood realms.

Instead of further making such claims both by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish people invisible from my process of researching and later on writing this dissertation, I tried to develop a sense of politically and ethically informed responsibility both during my interviews and in writing. Accordingly, I see my research process as an inspirational endeavour for the people living in Lüleburgaz, which problematizes “What are the researcher’s [your] boundaries about being of use to participants [them]? What are participants’ [theirs] about being of use to the researcher [you]?” (Lather 2007, 55). In parallel, I see my responsibility in this research to understand and make visible the complex power struggles that are experienced in everyday life and are linked with discourses of everyday nationalisms, environmental pollution, and neoliberalization.

One of the tactics that I employed was, for example, trying to make visible ethnic hierarchies while avoiding stimulating further ethnic hatred, especially during my interviews with Muslim-Balkan immigrants. This entailed employing different interviewing strategies as far as different age groups were concerned. I had a set of interview questions asking about the Kurdish newcomers. All of my Muslim-Balkan immigrant participants tended to be silent when such questions were asked to them. They would either avoid the topic altogether or would just underline that there are no problems with the Kurdish people. In order to break the silence, I found a question, which almost
always worked as an icebreaker into ethnic issues: “Would you let your son/daughter marry someone from the other side?” (oradan gelin ya da damat alır mınsınız?).

As the following chapters of this dissertation will explore much more deeply, the neighbourhood in which I undertook my fieldwork was ethnically segregated. Through the interviews, I learned that there were occasional fights between Muslim-Balkan immigrant and Kurdish youth, due to various reasons. Specifically in my interviews with younger generations of Muslim-Balkan immigrants, I tried to engage in diverse conversations relating school and personal lives while talking about the ethnic relations, in order to relax but also soften tensions in such conversations. On occasions, where I had interviews during the times when a bomb was found at the Kurdish side, the relaxing tactics were further useful and ethically necessary. Here, my political responsibility lay along with both the wellbeing of my individual participants and Kurdish communities, living in the neighbourhood.

While trying to soften and relax conversations, I attempted to bring new knowledge into my interviews. For example, when a participant underlined a stereotype about Kurdish people and their quarter, I tried to question the validity of these stereotypes. This questioning continued during my writing process by asking, “What were the boundaries about being of use to them? What are theirs [participants] about being of use to me?”(Lather 2007, 55). Such questions were instrumental in trying to locate: “Where I was from?” And “Where and how was my work positioned?” In answering these questions, I carefully analyzed which quotations to exclude because they

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If my participant would still not talk about ethnic issues, I would stop asking questions to him/her with regard to ethnic differences and migration.
might have strengthened nationalist sentiments without exactly hindering the essential argument that the quotation would provide. These were tough choices but necessary attempts to exercise political responsibility during and after my field research.
Chapter 2 Prelude: Finding Ergene River

It was a very hot summer day in 2012 when I finally arrived back to Ankara from my field trip in Thrace region. My task was not only finding former environmental assessment reports about the Ergene river, but also I sought to find contemporary experts who at the time had dealt with developing the basin management plan for the Ergene River (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı Su Yönetimi Genel Müdürlüğü 2011).38 This task was not easy, due to the institutional and legal restructuring of the general government’s environmental sector by late 2011, which was led by neo-liberalization of the water sector39 as a result of programs of international financial institutions (IFIs henceforth) specifically during the 2008 crisis, Turkey’s accession to the European Union, and re-territorialization of the “neoliberal” state within the context of water related sectors. This restructuring not only involved institutional and regulatory changes within the realms of policy making and execution, but it physically relocated some units under the former Ministry of Environment Forestry in different buildings to other buildings currently owned by the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı) and Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning (Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı). The scenery of two Ministries, spread in multiple single buildings across the city, was further

38 I interviewed six experts (two of them off the record) working at water pollution related sectors at the central government level (specifically DSI, Ministry of Forestry and Water works and Ministry of Development). Since analysis of all these interviews would exceed the scope of this dissertation project, I only included four of these interviews in a descriptive manner. For the interview questions, please see Appendix C.
39 Harris and İşlar (2014) underline that neoliberalization of the water related sectors is not new but it has been an ongoing process since the 1980s where natural resources were first opened for privatization. Deriving from Salzmann (1993), they argue that decentralization were also part of resource management technologies of Ottoman state governance (Harris and İşlar 2014).
a challenging indicator of the chaos that the reorganization caused. It is also worth mentioning that Ankara’s main boulevard, Atatürk Bulvarı, has long accommodated the main ministries and the military buildings, in addition to State Hydraulic Affairs (Devlet Su İşleri- DSI henceforth) and, for example, the State Planning Organization (now Ministry of Development) in addition to the Prime Ministry. The physical placement of such buildings has long characterized the centralized state power across the capital city of Ankara.

Some of the changes that occurred with 2011 restructuring in relation to water pollution included reorganization of the former Ministry of Environment and Forestry under two separate Ministries: the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı) and the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning (Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı) in addition to reorganization of State Hydraulic Affairs (DSI) under the mandate of the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs. DSI’s, which has been the main institution to coordinate and execute irrigation and water allocation projects in the past 50 years, was extended to cover planning and construction of all water treatment plants (Çınar 2009; Harris and İşlar 2014; Gülen N.d). For the case of the Ergene River, the construction of these plants was outsourced to construction firms while meanwhile, in connection with the 10th five-year national development plan (2014–2018), municipalities of mid- and small-size cities have been encouraged to form consortiums to increase their so-called attractiveness for companies to build these water treatment plants.
Following the dissolution in 2011 of the State Planning Organization (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı—DPT henceforth), which served as the main central planning and governance institution for 50 years, a new ministry, under the name of the Ministry of Development (Kalkınma Bakanlığı) was established in the same building and with the personnel of the former State Planning Organization, as an umbrella institution for regional development agencies across the country.

Reaching experts (either retired, or retired and contracted by the related Ministries) was difficult not only due to reorganization of the water related sectors. When it comes to the management of the Ergene River Basin, there was also a certain degree of arbitrariness with regard to “which governmental institution” prepares the management plans. Notwithstanding that preparation of the basin management plans are all assigned to the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning (Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı),

40 It is worth noting that such consortiums spiked suspicion from NGOs such as the Association of Research, Aid and Education about Local Governance (Yerel Yönetim Araştırma Yardıım ve Eğitim Derneği- YAYED) that they would result in monopolization of the water treatment plant sector and/or increase the share of multi-national companies over water related sectors in addition to sparking increases in water tariffs (Gülen N.d). It is very early to comment on such a criticism especially within the context of Thrace region, as construction of water treatment plants are still underway, but based on comparative case studies on Antalya and İzmit (Çınar 2009; Harris and İşlar 2014), there is some indication that the water tariffs may rise in the future. In the case of monopolization, the fact that seven waste water treatment plants have been contracted to the same company, namely Türkerler Holding, signals early signs of monopolization. See: http://www.turkerler.com/alt-yapi/ergine-atis-su-tesisleri/

41 State Planning Organization was established after the military coup of 1960, with the main task of planning annual investments and preparing five-year development plans for the import substitution program and was founded as an under secretariat of the Prime Ministry, having an autonomous status within the state. So, it was not attached to any ministries and was given privileges to recruit its own personnel. For a very detailed restructuring of the State Planning Organization see Öğuz (2008) and Akçay (2006).

42 The Ministry of Development was mainly established to collect EU accession funds, obtained through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Similar type of institutions, set up as Ministries to carry the same mandate as the Ministry of Development in Turkey, have been established during the pre-accession of other EU member states (Övgün 2011).
management of Ergene River basin was handled by the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı) as a result of the former Prime Minister’s demands (see Yılmaz 2012). An expert working at one of the water related government institutions explained this arbitrary task with regard to holding the Ergene River Basin management in the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs by unwillingness of the parliament to unveil the severity of the Ergene River pollution and its health risks for the communities living in the region (el). Arbitrariness is an indicator that decision-making mechanisms pertaining to the water related sectors could be very centralized in a rather complex way.

Authoritativeness of the Turkish state has consolidated the neo-liberalization of nature in Turkey. This process became very visible in environmental catastrophes in 2014, such as the Soma massacre where more than 300 miners were killed in a mining accident, and in environmental struggles such as the Gezi Park movement and/or hydroelectric dam movements in Turkey (Oğuz 2008; Ercan and Oğuz 2015). Such authoritativeness was also palpable at the Ministries and DSI, as there was a significant attitude of silence by the experts as a result of the state pressure upon the experts due to the rising protests against hydroelectric power plants in the Black Sea region in 2012. During this time period, some experts secretly provided some of the environmental

43 In parallel, in the 10th national development plan (2014–2018), management of Ergene River Basin and particularly its pollution was specifically cited almost like an exemplary environmental project, and thus seen as an opportunity to increase the regional competitiveness for attracting foreign and non-foreign capital (Kalkınma Bakanlığı [Ministry of Development] 2013).
assessment reports to the activists of the movement. Similar pressures were applied in the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning (Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı) and at the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs (Orman ve Su İşleri Bakanlığı) within the context of Ergene River pollution. For example, one of the experts that I interviewed underlined that Ergene river pollution was handled as if it was “a terror problem” (e1), because the government wanted to keep experts working at the Ministries and DSI silent by asking them not to engage in conversation with any researcher and/or environmental activists. It was impossible for me to interview any junior experts at the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs about the Ergene River management plan as the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs granted only one expert the privilege to talk.

Expert cultures at the state institutions in Turkey have been in considerable change since the liberal and neoliberal restructuring started after the 1980s. This transformation in expert cultures and institutional memory is most visible at the former State Planning Organization since its experts were the main actors of planning industrial investments and environmental policies until the mid 1990s (Akçay 2006). One of the retired experts, who was contracted for a year to transfer her knowledge of water policies, in specific relation to the former decisions and policies of the State Planning Organization.

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44 This was off-the-record information. According to the same off-the-record-interview, some of the officers working either at the ministries and/or DSI that supported the hydroelectric power plant movements were centrally appointed to different local branches.
45 The definition of the Ergene River as a terror problem was also significant as the Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs associated the Ministry’s Ergene River Basin management and pollution control plan with a militarized name, “Operation Dawn” [Şafak harekats] (N.A 2014).
46 Silencing of any criticisms towards the government’s water related projects has been a systematic act uniquely by the AKP government, which ranged from treating environmental protests as national threats, such as in the Gezi Park protests. One of the most striking examples of this silencing policy was mobilized after a protest against hydroelectric plant in Erzurum when one of the protestors was restricted for talking to anyone in the village (see Özonur and Burucu 2011).
Organization (now, Ministry of Development), to the newcomer personnel, best described the shift in experts’ abilities to criticize any Ministers as follows:

It [Ministry of Development] is like a typical ministry and the personnel here are like ordinary state officers. One says something and the other one writes. They strive on their own. If they want, they can improve themselves. However, they do not have the mission to improve the system or contribute into the institution. I mean in the past we used to know everything and would guide all of the institutions. But we do not know many things today. For example, he mentions [talking about the minister] of Silvan and Ambar dams; I have been working on these dams for the last two years and they just started their construction. It has been a year since my Minister goes to the region and he talks about the dams as if they are big successes. I would have gone there [in the past, to participate in the celebrations for starting the construction of the dams] but I would not have referred to it as a success. I would have said that we had been working on the dams for the last five years and my minister was not able to execute the construction of the dams in the last 2 years. We would have told it like that. Right now, the public sees as if everything is a big success. For me, that [construction of the dams] is a huge failure. Because the South Eastern Action plan was prepared way before in 2008; but people do not know anything and we are so powerless (case e2).

The feeling of “powerlessness” is part and parcel of the time frame in which the interviews were conducted because the final stages of the restructuring of the governmental institutions dealing with environment in general were reached in the year

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47 Both of the hyrdoelectric power plants are built as part of the Southeastern Project (Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi).
48 “Yani devlet memuralığının tipik bakanlık uygulaması gibi, o söylüyor öteki yazıyor yapıyor. Çaba sarfediyollar kendi içlerinde; isterlerse kendilerini geliştirebilirler ama buradaki sistem iyileştirmek ya da kurumlara katkıda bulunmak şeyler yok artık. Yani eskiden biz bilirdik, kurumları yönlendirdik. Şimdi, haberimizin olmaması mesela, Silvan ve Ambar barajı diyor; ben bunu iki yıldır çalışıyorum, temeli yeni atıldı; bir yıl oldu bakanım gidiyor benim; onu çok büyük bir olay gibi anlattımyor. Oraya ben giderdim ama ben onu öyle anlatmazdım. Beş yıldır uğraşıyoruz, iki yıl oldu Sayın Bakan bunu yapamadı edemedi; biz onu öyle aktarabilirız şimdi artık artık kamuoyu her şeyi bir başarı gibi görüyorum. Benim için o büyük bir başarısızlık onun bu yıl olması çünkü 2008’de GAP eylem planı yapıldı, oradaki şeyine baksınlar yani ama o kadar habersiz ki insanlar ve biz artık o kadar güçsüz ki...”
2011. After the mid 1990s, the State Planning Organization’s central role in planning had been gradually decreased and an institutional chaos ensued among incoming new personnel, changing regulations, and institutional practices. Feelings of powerlessness further underline changing expert cultures under the authoritarian neoliberal state formations, most visible in the silence of the experts working at the Ministries.

The restructuring of the state institutions in 2011 was part of a multi-stage program of establishing and consolidating the neoliberal authoritarian state in Turkey, which actually has started after the 1990s. This multi-stage program involved new industrial policies shaped by new regionalism, where the state’s role has been downsized to policy coordination rather than direct protection and/or investment; leading to the reorganization of the institutions, such as Ministries, and their mandates dealing with industrial and environmental policies. This new structure did not bring full decentralization of the water related sectors in the Turkish case; rather, it brought a highly centralized and authoritative state that is re-territorialized very diversely across regions and reorganized across different institutions (Oğuz 2008, 2012; Harris and İşlar 2014; Ercan and Oğuz 2015). In the next section, I expand more on how water pollution is seen and was rationalized by the Turkish state, particularly in the five-year national development plans and in the narratives of the experts in the last 30 years in between “the politics of non-governance,” “organized irresponsibility,” and “pollution as opportunity.”
Politics of Non-Governance and Organized Irresponsibility: How does the Neoliberal State, “See” Pollution?

While the restructuring of the neoliberal state is still underway, its contradictions are most valid especially where environmental and labour related crises are considered. That is because neoliberalism is akin to environmental accidents and accident related crises (Prudham 2004; Ercan and Oğuz 2015). Many studies understand environmental pollution as an end result of global capitalism and/or neoliberalization processes, as environmental conditions are expected to deteriorate because of the lessening powers of state control over natural resources and domination of the market mechanism with increasing exploitation (Harvey 1996; Katz 2001; Harvey 2005; Harris and Işlar 2014); however, environmental pollution, as I argue throughout this thesis, not only creates landscapes of invisibilities, as a contradiction of the capital, but it also presents itself as a place of a re-territorialized (neo) liberal state\(^{49}\) and socio-spatiality of the nation-state. That is because water pollution specifically manifests itself as a “hub” for almost-deliberate politics of non-governance, which constitute the basis for geographies of conflict at various different levels of the nation, region, and neighbourhood.

The concept of a politics of non-governance is inspired by Prudham (2004) work about “organized irresponsibility” across different regulations, institutions, and various other stakeholders within the privatized water sector, as an organizing principle of neoliberalism. Within the course of examining the water pollution tragedy in the

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\(^{49}\) The reason why I use (neo)liberalism as such is that Ergene River pollution is not only an end result of neoliberalization processes in Turkey, but it dates back to the liberalization of the industry by the 1980s in Thrace region.
Walkerton water poisoning incident in 2000 in Ontario, Canada, Prudham (2004) argues that neoliberalism uses accidents and environmental catastrophes to seed “organized irresponsibility” into its regulatory systems, and thus to create the chronic (not accidental) crisis by and through nature is commodified. It is indeed important to note that the ways through which organized irresponsibility is formed and structured and/or how marketization, commodification, and privatization are “bundled” (Harris 2013; Harris, Goldin, and Sneddon 2013) within the overall variegated neo-liberalization processes are dynamic and multifaceted, and yet lead to similar accidents, catastrophes, and eventually crisis. My argument here in this short prelude as well as throughout the thesis builds on this understanding of “organized irresponsibility.” I slightly modify the concept as an integral part of what I term as politics of non-governance, especially when the Ergene River pollution, having a well acknowledged history by the Turkish state for more than 30 years is concerned.

Regardless of various different reports hinting for exploitation of the natural resources in Thrace region, pollution started and continued in devastating measures until today. For example, a very early report by the OECD (1968), prepared just before the restructuring of Istanbul’ s industry to the Thrace region was undertaken during the early 1970s, suggested that migration as well as industrial development would increase...

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50 The drinking water was infected by a deadly strain of E Coli and as a result, 2,300 residents living in Walkerton were affected (Prudham 2004).
51 On variegated neoliberalization in a global context see: Brenner, Peck, and Theodore (2010) and also for a more specific analysis of variegated neoliberalization in Turkey see Harris and İşlar (2014).
exploitation of natural resources in the region.\textsuperscript{52} Another report that was prepared for the Association of Research in Social, Economic and Political Areas in Turkey [\textit{Türkiye Sosyal Ekonomik Siyasal Araştırmalar Vakfı}] by hydrobiologist Artüz (1990)\textsuperscript{53} identified the pollution in the Ergene river basin to be “exhibiting an extreme case of industrial pollution” (Artüz 1990, 1), due to lack of legal and institutional precautions in terms of treating and also monitoring industrial and domestic wastewater. This report as well the latter reports about the Ergene River’s pollution, including regional and national plans after 1990,\textsuperscript{54} further emphasize that since wastewater was used for irrigation,\textsuperscript{55} even when the pollution was detected in the early 1990s, the accumulation of toxic materials and heavy metals in agricultural production will result in increasing rates of illnesses, not only in Thrace region but across the country due to the sale of agricultural products in the internal markets.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{52} One of the major steps into restructuring Istanbul’s industries and moving them to Thrace region, specifically to organized industrial zones in Çerkezköy and Marmara regions, such as Bursa, started in 1971 when the State Planning Organization designated these regions as underdeveloped regions to be developed through governmental incentives. One of the main reasons for decentralizing Istanbul’s industry was the development in transportation across the Bosphorus Penninsula binding Asia minor to Europe (Tekeli 2013).

\textsuperscript{53} The idea over the preparation of this study by Artüz (1990) was inspired by Güneş Gürseler ‘s (former MP of Tekirdağ) speech at the Turkish Parliament in 1988, made under “Speeches out of Agenda” (1988). The same former MP was also present along with the mayors of the region when the study was conducted mainly in Çorlu, Ergene and Muratlı.


\textsuperscript{55} Water from the Ergene river is still used in some parts of the region (Kılıç 2011). In my limited observations, for example, in Uzunköprü where rice is produced, the high waters of the Ergene river still remain one of the irrigation sources.

\textsuperscript{56} Also see Ekmekyapar, Karabülut, and Meriç Pagano (2011) study in Tekirdağ, Thrace region with regard to the contamination of drinking water wells by heavy metals originating from nearby industrial zones. Also, for a cancer-scan research (with a limited number of participants in Çorlu where organized leather industry is established), see Yorulmaz et al. (2012).
One of the most significant factors explaining why almost-deliberate non-governance of the Ergene River’s pollution exhibits historical continuity is that protection of environment has long been seen as a hindrance for economic growth and socio-economic development by in Turkey. Delays in adoption of the national plans for an environmental policy, and specifically water policy, which would respond towards the demands of environmental rights, security, and health, have been a chronic state in the national development plans.

As far as the national planning history that started in 1968 is concerned, the literature mainly draws attention to the Third Five-Year National Development Plan as a start date for the inclusion of “environment” in national plans so that the necessary regulations and institutions for environmental protection, and later, sustainable development, were slowly initiated until 2000 (Algan 2000; Arat 2000; Erim 2000). Until the Sixth Five-year National Development Plan (1990–1994), environment and environmental problems were presented under several different sub-topics (Arat 2000). Presentation of environment scattered under several different sub-sections in the five year national development plans is often seen as a consequence of Turkey’s long time insistence that economic growth should not be slowed down by environmental concerns.

57 This tension during the period between 1923 and 1950 will be examined in Chapter 3, within the context of Thrace region. It is also worth mentioning that there have been singular regulations during the Ottoman Empire period to prevent environmental degradation and pollution based on cases. For more see Algan (2000, 222–225) and also, Erim (2000).

58 In the third Five-Year Development Plan (1973–1977), environment appeared as a sub-topic under urbanization; in the fourth Five-Year Development Plan (1979–1983) environment was again a sub-heading under Regional Development; in the fifth Five-Year Development Plan (1985–1989) environment was part of the section entitled “Social and Political Targets.” It is worth noting that in the Sixth Five-Year National Development Plan, environment was a separate topic that was merged with settlement, which in a sense continued to general tendency of taking environmental problems as a consequence of urbanization.
(Algan 2000; Arat 2000; Keleș 2005; Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011; Orhan and Scheumann 2011).\(^{59}\) Within this context, the Seventh Five-Year National development plan was a limited breakthrough, as it incorporated sustainable development in its principles and also environment as a separate heading under “Projects Concerning Foundational Structural Changes” (*Temel Yapısal Değişim Projeleri*).

Where the specific planning history of the water sector in the five-year national development plans are concerned, water was extensively seen as a resource for irrigation by the state, especially until the Fourth Five-Year Plan (1979–1983).\(^{60}\) As one of my expert participants noted, “during the second and third five year plans, water was envisioned to be abundant … drinking water was the first priority need … within the context of irrigation, meeting the water demands were seen to be important” (e2).\(^{61}\) This does not, however, suggest that problems with regard to water pollution or management of basins were never stated: Contamination of drinking water by sewage and/or industrial waste and contamination capacities of basins and/or need for basis management plans have been issues that were mentioned on an ad-hoc basis and without much institutional and legal coordination until after 2000.

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\(^{59}\) The same struggle occurred over incorporating “sustainable development” into the Environmental Law (Law no. 2872, issued in 1983 and amended in 2006) and the overall practices of the institutional frameworks to counteract the dilemma between environmental protection and economic growth (Orhan and Scheumann 2011).

\(^{60}\) This emphasis over irrigation via construction of large dams, and thus improvement of agricultural production, starting with Southeastern Anatolia Project (Doğu Anadolu Projesi) have continued into the present. Regional development projects such as Eastern Black Sea project (Doğu Karadeniz Projesi-DOKAP), Konya Plains Project (Konya Ovası Projesi- KOP) and Eastern Anatolia Project (Doğu Anadolu Projesi-DAP) have emerged from such large-scale irrigation projects (also see Kalkınma Bakanlığı 2013).

\(^{61}\) “mesela su bol diyen düşünülmüş, yani ikinci, üçüncü planlarda su kaynakları kullanırken özellikle de İçme suyu ilk öncelikli ihtiyac denilmüş … sulama açısından da … sadece talepleri karşılamak yönünde bir arzla bakılmış”
The emphasis on irrigation related projects within the state sponsored water sector until the mid 1990s, where DSI almost stood as the central organization (Kibaroğlu, Baskan, and Alp 2009), has also created strengthening of irrigation related institutions over others. The same retired expert, who worked in the planning of irrigation projects in Turkey for more than 20 years, further mentioned, for example, the power of DSI and its financial incentives over the former Directorate of Rural Services (Köy Hizmetleri Müdürlüğü). Such finance-based conflicts constituted major setbacks over cooperation across these two institutions without the mediation of the former State Planning Organization. The same institutional territoriality was experienced in between the irrigation and environmental sub-sectors working at the former State Planning Organization:

When it comes to environment, I remember, for example, although the people at the irrigation and energy subsectors did not think it like that but it was said that the irrigation investments were prioritized against the environmental investments. It was brought up to the point where they said; environmental subgroup must stop the irrigation investments. And so, some people (at the State Planning Organization) took a stance to prevent such (irrigation) investments. This even happened within the State planning Organization where the irrigation subsector group was intended to be vexed with the environment subsector group. (case e2)

62 In 1993, the World Bank provided a loan to Turkish government in return for a semi-privatization of the DSI’s responsibilities of maintenance of the irrigation canals ... etc., which further started the initial steps into BOT projects as well (Kibaroğlu, Baskan, and Alp 2009).
63 The Directorate of Rural Services (Köy hizmetleri Müdürlüğü), that was dissolved in 2005. It assisted DSI’s large-scale irrigation projects in addition to consolidating minor irrigation projects particularly rural areas of Turkey (Kibaroğlu, Baskan, and Alp 2009; Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011)
64 “çevre konusunda da ben mesela ilk hatırlıyorum; planlamamın içinde sulama enerjiciler öyle düşünüyordu ama özellikle sulama yatırımlarını çevre yatırımları engel olacak boyutta öne çıkardı. Yani öyle gündeme getirildi ki; çevre sulama yatırımlarını durdurmalı; o kadar işte yatırımları engelleyici bir takım tavırlar takındı. Bu planlamamın içinde dahi olduğu biz çevre sektörü ile iki küs gibi yaşama eğiliminde olduk.”
This quote indicates a policy mentality, defending irrigation related projects and thus increasing agricultural production and/or generating a somewhat agriculturally induced development, “despite other environmental concerns,” which is much like the relationship between economic growth and environmental concerns that is mentioned above. Algan (2000) underlines that Turkish environmental policy has not been based on any environmental ethics to provide environmental protection. Within this context, a certain degree of non-governance was evident in the water sectors so that it would not prevent economic growth even though they presented contradictions when pollution later became part of the picture.

An “authority crisis,” which includes institutional territorialities, as introduced by the conflicts between the DSI and the Directorate of Rural Services in the water related sectors—that is also frequently mentioned in all of the five-year national development plans since 1996—further exhibits this politics of non-governances. Water and water pollution intersect multiple state (both central and local) institutions, which is presented as a difficulty in monitoring how water is allocated and used:

The real problem here is the chaos across institutions on the grounds of their powers and responsibilities. They also lack, coordination and cooperation among each other. Also, continual changes made in public institutions, especially when such an institution is withdrawn from another supreme institution and restructured another one; and/or when a decrease or change is done within the realms of an institution’s tasks and duties; and when some of them are eliminated lead to prevention of an inveterate institution and accumulation of experience and knowledge and
also, cause a continuous anxiety over the working personnel.”

(Kalkınma Bakanlığı [Ministry of Development] 2014, 18)

Regulation and monitoring, including enforcement and compliance management of water quality, crosscut multiple institutions and their policies, which has been a long standing problem within the context of decision-making across water-related sectors of Turkey (Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011; Orhan and Scheumann 2011). Monitoring water pollution, including the enforcement and compliance management of water pollution, are still by-law regulated and monitored at large by the state agencies, such as the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning, Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, district governments, in addition to, for example, local environmental task forces of the National Gendarmerie. Understanding the cooperation among these institutions’ mandates becomes very confusing and often overlapping (Yasamis 2007).

After the legal reforms in 2014, organized industrial zones and free trade zones are responsible for establishing their own environmental assessment units, which would

65 “Burada esas problem kurumlar arası, yetki ve sorumluluk kargasası, koordinasyon ve işbirliği eksikliğidir. Ayrıca, kurumlarda devamlı yapılan değişimler, bazı kurumların bağlı oldukları üst kurumlardan alınıp başka üst kurumlara bağlanması bazlarsının görev ve yetkilerinin değiştirilmesi veya azaltılması, bazlarsının kapatılıp ortadan kaldırılması kurumsal köklemeyi, deneyim ve bilgi birikimini engellemekte, çalışanlarda sürekli bir tedariklik yaratmaktadır.”

66 In specific, General Directorate for environmental management (Çevre Yönetimi Müdürlüğü), General Directorate for environmental impact assessment and planning (Çevre Etki Değerlendirme ve Planlama Genel Müdürlüğü) and Provincial directorates of environment and forestry (Çevre ve Orman İl Genel Müdürlüğü) or private consultant firms designated by the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning are among the local water pollution monitoring systems that work under the mandate of the Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning and the Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs. See the regulation about environmental monitoring (Çevre Denetimi Yönetmeliği) (Official Gazette 2008) and the regulation about controlling water pollution (Su Kirliliği Kontrol Yönetmeliği) (Official Gazette 2004).
carry on the necessary monitoring activities. By these last changes, the state’s involvement was decreased in monitoring environmental impacts in the organized industrial zones. Since industry is involved, the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Industry, in addition to local municipalities, are responsible for designating and approving the settlement of such zones and/or factories whether outside or inside the organized industrial zones. The 10th National Development Plan encourages all these institutions to work together at the basin level while recognizing their lack of coordination and cooperation (Kalkınma Bakanlığı [Ministry of Development] 2013, 2014).

The 10th National Development Plan is perhaps the most significant plan in the history of Turkey where environmental problems have came to be seen as an opportunity for economic development, known as “green development” (Kalkınma Bakanlığı 2013, 137; also see Harris and Işlar 2014). That is a significant outcome of the EU accession process in Turkey (Harris and Işlar 2014), in addition to the semi-privatization of the water-related sectors, which created a new sector for wastewater treatment in Turkey. The data on municipal wastewater treatment from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), shown in Table 2-1, illustrate the entrepreneurial potential with regard to the development of a municipal wastewater market in Turkey:

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67 See the Regulation on Amendment of the Regulation about environment officers, environmental management units, and environmental consultancy firms (Çevre Görevlisi, Çevre Yönetimi Birimi ve Çevre Danışmanlık Firmaları Hakkında Yönetmelik'te Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Yönetmelik) (Official Gazette 2014).
Table 2-1 the number of municipalities served by wastewater treatment plants across Turkey between 2002 and 2012

A politics of non-governance is an acknowledged and recognized repertoire of the (neo) liberal state. For the case of the Thrace region and Turkey, before 2000, non-governance had been deliberately crafted as “a governmental rationality” so that the economic development, both industrial and agricultural production, would not be slowed down. The “authority crisis,” and policy emphasis over irrigation projects are state tactics that pave the way to non-governance in the realms of environmental protection, more specifically in environmental pollution. Thus, non-governance has never corresponded to total abandonment of the water related sectors but has involved selective prioritization of some sectors over others, such as irrigation versus environmental protection. To this end, environmental concerns have only become relatively visible when they can be rationalized and commodified in one way or another (Scott 1998). Moreover, the history of planning in Turkey reveals that non-governance and “organized responsibility” as state tactics are not limited by the neo-liberalization processes and/or by AKP governance; but
by 2000, neo-liberalization consolidated itself in a highly authoritative state and governance, which will most possibly exacerbate the politics of non-governance.

The dissertation particularly questions how politics of non-governance is experienced in the forms of re-territorialized conflicts at various local levels—the regional, national, and neighbourhood—and thus attempts to historicize nationalist, developmentalist, and modernist roots of non-governance. In this regard, the following Chapter 3 tackles the idea of nature in order to historicize how nature and modernity were constructed within the context of Turkish nationalism during the early Republican era. I look at, for example, how factories were seen as a way to “tame nature” and generate urban development, as a symbol of Turkish modernity. I then contextualize the discourses around nature with how Muslim-Balkan immigration from the Balkans to Thrace region was governed and regulated from the early Republican era to the 1950s in order to territorialize the new Turkish nation across agricultural and immigration policies in the region. Chapter 4, on the other hand, focuses more on the environmental narratives of pollution, industrialization, and new Kurdish migration to grasp the landscape change in the neighbourhood. This chapter particularly analyzes multiple constructions of nostalgia—longing for the golden agrarian past and its intersections with “neighbourly” politics and ethnic segregation. Chapter 5 specifically takes Kurdish stereotypes that shape and reproduce the ethnic segregation in the neighbourhood, which gets to be re-territorialized within the context of Ergene River’s pollution, in the form of “invisibility.” Finally, chapter 6 explores how Kurdish people construct Ergene River pollution and their way of habitation at the seclusion of racialized ethnic segregation. I seek to illustrate
how landscapes of invisibilities and politics of non-governance are bundled within the context of (neo) liberalism and nationalism across regional, national, and neighbourhood levels.
Since the early 1990s, there has been an important turn in Turkish social sciences to analyze Turkish nationalism. This turn was due to rising nationalist tendencies in Turkey, especially as a result of the military operations in the eastern parts of Turkey between 1984 and 1996; and the political reactions by Kurdish, Alevi, and feminist and LGBTTQ movements in challenging the Turkish national identity, known as “the Turk,” as a hetero-normative, militarist, ethnocentric, nationalist, and masculine/sexist construction. These works in general led to a wider spectrum of nationalism studies in Turkey by questioning how the term Turk was created and how its discursive meanings changed over time? Who did the term exclude and include with daily life consequences? All of these questions are important in denaturalizing national identities and/or nationalisms in circulation and developing newer senses of belonging. Thus, the scholarship on Turkish nationalism can be read as an attempt to re-narrate the past that, in human geographer David Lowenthal (1975)’s words, is always reinvented, reconstructed, and fabricated in the present. The current political climate in Turkey, of domination of political Islam and neoliberal conservatism, in addition to the contemporary debates over democratization process (es), specifically concentrated on ethnicity and religion based rights, are part and parcel of the paradoxical Republican transition from what Foucault

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69 Here, I specifically refer to Alevi and Kurdish movements. Having said this, feminist issues, especially the right to abortion in addition to LGBTTQ concerns over right to sexual rights and/or environmental
(2007) would term as territorial state to the state of the population (Casier and Jongerden 2011). This Republican transition was also an endeavour in strategically reconstructing the powers of the past in the present. Deriving from the aforementioned research agenda, in this chapter I focus on what I term as spatialization of the Turkish nation, as a territorial practice, in conjunction with the emergence of the Turkish nation by the early 20th century.

By the beginning of the 20th century, the fall of the Ottoman Empire, an empire with borders stretching across three continents (North Africa, Middle East, and the Balkan Peninsula) was a long historical process of land loss to the nation-states. Land losses consequently brought displacement of the Muslim and non-Muslim populations across the Balkans, Turkey, and the Middle East in general (Ahmad 1993; Karpat 2012). By the end of the First World War, which was followed by the National War [Kurtuluş Savaşı] in Turkey, the area of Anatolia, and the Balkans (encompassing the borders of the Turkish Republic as of today) was ruined, with demographic, political, and economic chaos (Ahmad 1993; Karpat 2012). Nevertheless, the Republic was able to secure its borders, while institutionalizing the Turkish national identity upon a common language, land, race, and historical past that exceeded the boundaries of national sovereignty, and professing common descent with Turkish ancestors in Central Asia (Kadıoğlu 1998; Üstel 2004; Belge 2007; Altinay 2009). With the establishment of the Turkish Republic, Muslims with different ethnic backgrounds (meaning not necessarily concerns over public space, pollution, and vast construction of damming projects, are some of the more invisible agenda items, at least within the context of the Turkish media.

70 A couple of million Muslims migrated to Turkey from the Balkans (namely, Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia and Croatia, Romania, and Serbia) between 1912 to 1960 (Karpat 2012).
ethnic Turks) that migrated from the Balkans to Turkey were easily assimilated to this Turkish national identity (Poulton 1997b; Parla 2005; Cagaptay 2006).

Anderson (1991) rightfully underlines that nation is “imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (Anderson 1991, 6). Perhaps, the nationalist tensions of the era after the Balkan wars as many of the nation states in the Balkans, such as Greece and Bulgaria, took their contemporary cartographic shape with their current borders, must have posited a great challenge for the newly establishing Turkish Republic to form a nation, in the sense to which Anderson (1991) refers. With this context in mind, the arguments of this chapter explore the relationships across “territorial practice, representations of territory and representational territories” (Lefebvre 1991, 33 in Jones 2007, 33) in order to understand the historical background on national identity formation of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants living in Thrace region.

First, Turkish national identity is discursively produced with its own connotations of Turkish territoriality, by what I term “the discourse of Turkish migration.” The state’s instrumental and strategic use of anthropometrics to institutionalize the territory of Turkey and its national population defined the Turkish race, who have been migrating for centuries from Central Asia, as the agents of civilization from a historical perspective, and marked Anatolia as the (last) home for the Turkish nation. By this narrative, the Ottoman past and the new Turkish Republic were intended to be distinguished temporally and spatially, through the valorization of a common ethnic past. Differences among
various ethnic populations were further recognized, although without enunciation of their names, and were erased at the same time by construction of the very same discourse through its emphasis on Turkish origins and common history. The discourse of Turkish migration, I argue, was very influential in the formation of the *Turkish History Thesis*, which made up the basis for the content of the new geography books of the era. I explore the works of *Afet Inan* (Inan 1930, 1947, 1954, 1956, 1960; Inan 2005), one of the leading pioneers of anthropometrics, history, and anthropology in Turkey.

My second argument is concerned with the dissemination of Turkish national identity across places, in other words, across the territory of the Turkish Republic. I look at the Thracian constructions and the border-making practices by the Public Inspectorship of Thrace [*Trakya Umum Müfettişliği*]. The Inspectorship was established in 1936, after the declaration of independence in 1923, to secure the borderland between Turkey, Bulgaria, and Greece by promoting the development of the region (Koçak 2003), and had a monthly-published journal, named *Trakya Dergisi* [*Journal of Thrace*], with an aim to educate Turkish peasantry about agriculture, diseases, and the Republican revolution. My analysis of the articles in *Trakya* shows that during the early Republican era, large infrastructural projects were strategically employed to sanitize the Ottoman past and to construct a national and modern form, which was a spatial project, aiming for the

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71 For example, Kurds were frequently acknowledged as Turks that forgot their “true” ethnic identity over time. Non-Turkish identities were paradoxically recognized and disavowed. Otherwise, there would have been no need to underline Turkish identity as the source of national belonging.

72 For an analysis of “territorial nationalism” and mental and physical meanings of the nation [*vatan*] constructed by the geography books from 1912 to early 1930s, please see Özkan (2014).

73 Public Inspectorships were established in two areas by the beginning of the century after the independence of the Turkish Republic. The first Inspectorship was established in Eastern regions. Public Inspectorship of Thrace was the second inspectorship to be established (Koçak 2003).
production of the new national subjects. This process further translates into creating viable middle classes of the new nation. Within this context, the reinvention of the meaning of Turkish village, and especially industry and/or factory, as the places of the new Turkish civilization and nation, were crucial. Emphasis on infrastructural projects in the journal was a symbolic representation of the early Republican policies of urbanization. For example, with their specific sports and social facilities, factory spaces were not only designed to promote town development, industrialization, and urbanization; but they were also instrumental cultural projects to develop modern national culture in Turkey (Peri 2002; Karakaya 2010; Keskinok 2010). The emphasis upon built environment was also influential in village rehabilitation projects or construction of model villages during this era (Keskinok 2010).

Lastly, within the context of Thrace, these state governed projects aimed for production of Muslim-Balkan immigrants as the subject of national development; and so, they were to be seen to become the future middle classes. This last argument in this chapter is based on my analysis of a local newspaper, Özdilek, published by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants living in Thrace region between 1935 and 1980. It was originally a newspaper, which started to be published by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants every 15 days in Bulgaria in 1924 until 1927. Özdilek resumed again in 1935 in Turkey. Here I suggest that the Muslim-Balkan immigrants complied with the early Republican projects of urbanization—at least at the representational level—and they were assimilated into the overall racialization process. Hence, they embraced the role, which was provided by the newly established Turkish nation-state, as being the subjects of the nation. This was
mainly possible through their acceptance of the discourse of Turkish migration, which located Muslim-Balkan immigrants within the Turkish racial family. The process of assimilating the immigrants into the nation realm was paradoxical as it involved subjugation of the immigrants—as others of the nation—due to their non-Turkish ethnicity.

The arguments of this chapter are theoretically based on an exploration of territorial practices as a powerful state tactic and a powerful political technology to produce national subjects by designating their “places.” Consequently, territory here encompasses not only the physical borders of the nation-state, as Agnew (1994) underlines. Rather its boundaries stretch over mental processes through which “the territory exists and achieves institutionalized meanings” (Paasi 2003a, 113). And these boundaries are further in communication with the social spaces of the national territory. This suggests that the discourse of Turkish migration is intrinsically linked to planning of the newly founded Turkish nation. In other words, for example, territorial practices of factory settlement construction in the early Republican era are embedded in the spatialization of the nation-state, targeting capital accumulation and national development of the relations of production (Brenner and Elden 2009). This phenomenon also suggests a network of territorial relations that “have social space (spaces) for support” (Lefebvre 1976–1978, Vol. 4:164–165 cited in Brenner and Elden 2009).

In what follows, I briefly explain the methodology of this chapter by focusing on the “politics of archives” (Brown and Davis-Brown 1998) in reflecting the materiality of
the nation along with introducing the background on the materials of analysis in more detail. This section is followed by the analysis of the materials in question.

**Methodological Background of Analysis and Making sense of the National Materials**

I started my research with an intention to compare the spatialization of the nation in the early Republican journals, with a specific interest on different ethnic group publications in addition to government sponsored journals. With this objective in mind, after a brief literature review on the matter, I went to the Turkish National Library [Milli Kütüphane]. It is important to note that the majority of the literature that examines the early Turkish Republican era concentrates on People’s House [Halkevi] journals and largely mainstream national newspapers. Although these journals are valuable resources in understanding how class and ethnicity were understood by the elites of the period, it is impossible to explore in them how different ethnic groups have felt and thought of the ongoing Republican reforms and nation-building. In the National Library, it was impossible to reach resources for this period in languages other than Turkish (for instance in Kurdish), due to a multiplicity of reasons including the absence of such written publications. Nevertheless, as an institution referred to as ”Turkey’s memory” the collection only contains 280 pieces in Kurdish among its three million resources, which mainly were published during the 1990s (Aydin 2009). Archival collections are political.

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74 Established in the tense political atmosphere of the 1930s after the Independence War and adoption of the one-political party system and the People’s Republican Party (PRP), People’s Houses were designed as a mechanism, preparing the necessary infrastructure for national development and disseminating the new modernization project to the rural masses (Ari 2004). Aiming the development of the countryside through its several branches, People’s Houses visited villages in order to gather knowledge about tradition, folk music, and language of the countryside. Furthermore, they organized national day celebrations, sports activities, as well as public medical check days to improve the “traditional” conditions in the villages (Karaömerlioğlu 1999). For further resources on People’s Houses please see Aksit (2005), Alemdaroğlu (2005) and Balkılıc (2009).
rather than just a technical issue (Brown and Davis-Brown 1998), as far as the authoritative period of the early Republic is concerned. The absence of resources in languages other than Turkish is an indicator of how the idea of the Turkish nation and Turkishness are constructed in a way that selectively establishes the materials of the nation in the National Library.

I examined two different journals of the early Republican era *Trakya Dergisi* [Journal of Thrace] (1936–1950) and *Özdilek* (1935–1980) by employing discourse analysis. I limit myself with the time frame of 1935–1937 for both journals. Year-based limitations particularly stem from the influence of this time period in defining the nation and the realm of Turkish citizenship (Üstel 2004). Furthermore, some of the ideas formed during this period are still very alive and circulating across environmental and regional identities, as Chapters 3 and 4 will explore more deeply.

I employ discourse analysis in order to understand the spatialization of the nation within these two materials. According to Fairclough (2003), discourses manifest themselves through texts and the social influence of these texts is based on meaning-making processes. Processes of meaning-making are composed of three elements: 1) production of text; 2) the text itself; 3) reception of the text (Fairclough 2003). Deriving from Fairclough’s (1992, 2003) understanding on the co-constitution of text and context, I bring my analysis into the early Republican context, which influenced the stages of production and reception of the journals in question.

Also in accordance with Fairclough (2003)’s three dimensional discourse analysis, I examined Afet Inan’s works (Inan 1930, 1947, 1954, 1956, 1960; Inan 2005),
written mainly between 1930 to 1940 in order to understand the nationalist context in which the ideas of the Turkish nation in the two journals in question were constructed. Afet Inan was the adopted daughter of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, who was an anthropologist and official historian of the early Republican era. Her works about the origins and the historical settlements of the Turkish race were funded by the state (Maksudyan 2005) and supported by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk personally. Her writing on the history of the Turks well represents the racialization of the Turkish national identity (Maksudyan 2005), as a response to *the climate moral economy* (Livingstone 1993) of 19th-century Europe. It is worth noting that majority of the critical works with regard to the racialization of the Turkish national identity concentrate on exclusion and denial of the ethnic and religious minorities such as Kurds (Yeğen 1996) and/or Armenians (Altinay 2004; Maksudyan 2005). On the other hand, I focus on the mechanisms of denial and concentrate more on how exclusion is structured by the inclusion of particular ethnic identities into the nation-body.

As a second step of my analysis, I employ content analysis of *Trakya* by organizing themes from the texts around the spatialization of the nation in daily life places. *Trakya*, being a government-sponsored journal, represents the official nationalist discourse of the era and, in that sense, reflects the imagined nation and its places. As the last dimension of my discourse analysis, I examine *Özdilek* to understand how the Muslim-Balkan immigrants accepted the imagined nation by using content analysis.

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75 Afet Inan and Mustafa Kemal Ataturk wrote letters to each other while Afet Inan was completing her PhD thesis on the origins of the Turkish race through employing anthropometric measures of 64,000 peasants in Turkey. For her letters and her autobiography see: Inan (2005).
The Discourse of Turkish Migration and Ambivalence of Paradoxical Nationalism

With the rise of Turkish Republic as an independent country after the Civil War against western colonial powers came a reform period in Turkey where the official language was designated as Turkish. The alphabet was changed from Ottoman to the Latin alphabet. The caliphate was abolished, while disassociation of the religious from state affairs institutionalized secularism. These reforms were consequences of nationalism in the early 1930s Turkey (Ahmad 1993).

I understand nationalism as “both a goal to achieve statehood and a belief in collective commonality” (Nagel 1998a, 247). The first goal—achieving, maintaining, and exercising statehood—commonly involves armed conflict in the form of revolution or anti-colonial warfare; the second goal assures the imagination of a common national past and present (Anderson 1991). Furthermore, nationalism is more than a political ideology. It is a constitutive discourse, governing everyday relationships through reordering and governing the family, the relationships of members of the family with each other, and the relationship of families with each other and with other institutions (Sirman 2007).

Turkey has never been in the direct control of western colonial powers and gained its independence as a nation-state through a revolutionary war with the British, French, and Greeks (Ahmad 1993). Although it has never been a colony, the majority of the critical literature on nationalism in Turkey, especially with respect to the early Republican era, emphasizes the intrinsic orientalism in Kemalist political and economic policies around religion, development, and construction projects of new settlements in Kemalism stands for the nationalism during the Republican era (Belge 2007).
Turkey. This intrinsic orientalism frames the West around the notions of progress, development, and civilization, while condemning the Ottoman Empire as the main era in which the Turks were led backwards (Kadioglu 1996; Sayyid 1997; Karaömerlioğlu 1999; Eldem 2010). In this sense, early Republican policies were politically motivated in nature targeting “the creation of a totally new society … a new type of Turk very different from the Ottoman” (Ahmad 1993, 77).

Afet Inan contributed to the early Republican period’s paradoxical nationalism by aggressively arguing in her thesis on the origins of the Turkish race that Turks are among the white race and introduced civilization to the West (Inan 1930, 1947, 1954, 1956, 1960). Afet Inan defended her thesis in Geneva University in 1939, personally supervised by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Turkish Republic, and funded by the Turkish Republic (Inan 2005). The support and interest of the Turkish government in Afet Inan’s thesis further illustrates the governmental power and guidance over ethnic and racial issues and structuration of Turkish anthropology in Turkey.

In her thesis titled Türk Tarihinin Ana Hatları [Main Characteristics of Turkish History], Afet Inan (1930) defined race with reference to anthropometrics. She further mentioned that skin color is not an important element in defining races; however, according to her, shape of skulls, faces, and height are the scientific indicators of a “race” (Inan 1930). As mentioned before, Afet Inan (1930) specifically wrote this book to present the characteristics of Turkish race by providing accounts of Turkish civilization, which later formed the basis of the Turkish History Thesis. The main arguments of the Turkish History Thesis were:
• The original homeland of the Turks is not Mongolia, but Turkistan.
• Turks are not members of the Mongoloid “yellow race,” but of the brachycephalic white race.
• Neolithic civilization was first created in Central Asia by the Turks.
• Due to climactic changes (mainly drought) Turks of Central Asia migrated to different parts of the world and introduced Neolithic civilization to Asia, Europe, and America.
• The Turks developed the early civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt.
• Early civilizations in Anatolia (Asia Minor) such as those of the Hittites were also of Turkish origin. Turkish language is the oldest language of high culture and is the origin of Sumerian and Hittite languages.
• The Turks have formed many states in history. (Altinay 2004, 22-23)

Scientific exploration of the Turkish race was important for Afet Inan for two main reasons. First, such an exploration explained the origins of Turkish nationhood. Secondly, Afet Inan thought anthropometric exploration of the Turkish race would be beneficial for the social engineering where allegedly “racial” characteristics that are developed during the racialized course of time due to environmental change, and migration can provide guidance for employment and schooling policies (Inan 1947). 77

Within this context, Afet Inan’s definition of race to explain the origins of the Turkish race further associated biological/physical with moral characteristics of the nation (Inan 1947) as follows:

Every human being is not only under the influence of his or her parents, but they are under the influence of … their race. Human societies would progress by the guidance of their racial characteristics. Racial attributes indicate the characteristics that are

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77 Latter objective for using anthropometrics in the military, sports, and even at schools, suggested by Inan (1947) was never realized in state policies (Karaömerlioğlu 1999; Uzer 2002; Alemdaroglu 2005).
inherited in a society. With this, traditions, spiritual elements would compose the origins of a nation. It is this national spirit and union that indicate the characteristics of one’s race in the path of history. A person is already under the influence of some thoughts and emotions when they are born; that is the formation of spiritual power in a society. (Inan 1947, 61)

Her motivation for writing the thesis dated from the mid-1920s when Afet Inan was taught French in a French high school for women. Along with language courses, she learned world geography and history (Inan 2005). During her high school years, she observed the circulation of racialized accounts that described the Turks as a “yellow race, secondary and barbarian” (Inan 1947, 100-101). Later, Afet Inan showed those books to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk and they decided to concentrate on the question and origins of the Turkish race to disprove the image of the Turkish race in the West, particularly in Europe.

The story of Afet Inan’s thesis demonstrates the domination of climate’s moral economy in 19th century geography (Livingstone 1992), which constituted the “racialized body as a form of geographical knowledge” (Kobayashi 2003, 544). Instrumentalization of geography for imperial expansion and re-interpretation of Darwinism under the influence of imperialism impacted the racialization of geographical knowledge (Livingstone 1992; Mitchell 2000; Kobayashi 2003). In that sense, Livingstone (1992) emphasizes that the idea of race was imposed on climatic conditions to explain the moral, psychological, and mental superiority of the white race. As a result, civilization became linked to racial superiority and thus was naturalized within the evolution of the white race (Livingstone 1992). Within this context, there are historical and epistemological links between how the concept of space and the idea of human races were developed in
western scientific knowledge, by “placing human bodies in particular landscapes, setting spatial limits upon the activities of those bodies, and linking the characteristics of those bodies (their gender, ‘race’ or ability, for example) to specific places” (Kobayashi 2003, 544).

Inan’s thesis argument with regard to the whiteness of Turkish race was a joint project between geography, anthropology, and history. Afet Inan attempted to invert the climate moral economy developed in western geography by the 19th century in order to prove that the Turkish race was a white race. According to her, Turkish racial characteristics were mapped on the body, and would be revealed by anthropometrics. For this early period, Kadioğlu emphasizes that “Who and How should one be a Turk?” rather than “Who are the Turks?” (Kadioğlu 1998, 34) were the dominant questions in Turkish history scholarship, which was also true for Afet Inan’s attempts to fight back against the Turkish stereotype in Europe.

Homi Bhabha underlines that the ambivalence of colonial discourses, as a form of governmentality, is most obvious in the very stereotypes that they invest in. It is through stereotypes that colonial discourse as “an apparatus … turns on recognition and disavowal of racial/cultural/historical differences” (Bhabha 1994, 70). The subject looked upon through the frame of the colonial discourse and/or through the stereotype in the end, goes through a splitting of its identity, and transforms “in assuming the image” (Bhabha 1994, 45). Afet Inan’s writings articulated colonial discourse as a form of

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78 It is not coincidental that the first history department was built as a joint department with geography in Ankara University in 1935. This shows that history and geography were understood as joint sciences to explore the origins of Turkish race.
governmentality. While trying to disprove the racialized Turkish stereotype in the West, Afet Inan reproduced a slightly different but a similar racialized discourse, which was powerfully articulated in the *Turkish History Thesis* arguments as well. Within this context, the *Turkish History Thesis* was instrumental in the production of the idea of the Turkish nation, which depicted different ethnic communities, such as the Laz, Kurds, and Çerkes, as “Turks who had forgotten their Turkishness or were in denial of their Turkish origins” (Altinay 2004). It is within this context that what I refer to as the discourse of Turkish migration was significantly important in the assimilation of ethnic difference during the early Republican period.

The discourse of Turkish migration defined the Turkish race as the agents of civilization from a historical perspective and marked Anatolia as the home for the Turkish nation.\(^79\) In Inan’s writings Turkish migration was depicted as a natural phenomenon or a phenomenon that occurred out of necessity due to the wars (see for example Inan 1930, 1960; Inan 2005). In her autobiography, Afet İnan located her own familial story of migration from the Balkans; a place called Dorian [Doryan] within the context of Turkish migration and pointed at the act of migration as the fate of the Turkish race in the following quote:

> Some of the Dorian[s], some during the Balkan wars and some after the Lausanne Agreement migrated to their former land, Anatolia … perhaps, this is the fate of the Turks, isn’t it? The climate changes, then they migrate, they would conquer other countries and would go settle in these countries. When life becomes miserable [in the lands that Turks have conquered], they would

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\(^79\) From the perspective of Afet Inan, the aim of history and anthropology should be to uncover the traces of Turkish civilization (Inan 1960).
return to their former land. This is the fate of the Turks. For a time, they went to the direction of the sunset, as if they followed it. Then, they struggled to go after the direction of the sunrise. Even if “Migration” and “to migrate” immensely affected our language and our traditions, we would not like to be called “immigrant”. Destitution made us immigrants (Inan 2005, 22).

Considering the epoch of migratory movements, especially after the Balkan wars and from the First World War onwards, the emphasis on the discourse of migration is not surprising. Such an emphasis on migration was a strategy of the government to create a sense of relatedness, an imagined community, a nation based on the Turkish origins of the different Muslim populations (i.e., Kurds, Laz, Çerkez) in Turkey. Here, differences of these populations were recognized and explained by the discourse of migration and erased at the same time by construction of the very same discourse through its emphasis on Turkish origins and common history.

The discourse of migration was intrinsically linked with the idea of civilization. According to Afet Inan (1930, 1960), despite their migration, Turks left traces of their civilization in the places where they stayed. Two of her books that were translated into English addressed the contributions of Turks to western sciences (Inan 2005). One of those books concentrated on maps of the 15\textsuperscript{th}-century admiral, Piri Reis, who was claimed to have drawn the first map of the world (Inan 1954). The other book focused on an architect, Sinan, who was claimed to have developed modern engineering along with architecture in the Balkans and the Thrace region (Inan 1956).

The discourse of Turkish migration, mentioned in Turkish History Thesis and Afet Inan’s other works, sat at the heart of the paradoxical nationalism and intrinsic orientalism of Kemalism. This discourse was instrumental for assimilating the idea of the
west into the nationalist discourses of the early Republican era through investing in the idea of civilization. This idea of civilization further reinvented and consolidated the Turkish national identity and history by erasing an Ottoman past. Thus, by the discourse of Turkish migration, the boundaries and territoriality of the Republic were set within Anatolia, as it is depicted to be the last homeland for the Turks. The scientific legitimation of the Turkish race as an immigrant population and yet white like the Europeans further institutionalized the borders of the Republic within the territoriality of Europe while separating the Turkish nation spatially from “the East” and temporally from the Ottoman Empire. This boundary-making practice was an immediate result of Turkish modernity and all the contradictions that come with paradoxical nationalism during the early Republic. In the next section, I turn to Trakya and Özdilek for more local understandings of civilization and the discourse of migration.

**Sanitation of the Ottoman Past and Placing the Turk**

The Turkish nation-space in the early Republican imaginary was dominated by secularism, rationalism, and scientific social engineering, which aimed for erasing the Ottoman past. During the early Republican era, the Ottoman rule was seen as a period that led the Turkish race back from progress; and thus the Turkish origins and Turkish civilization were built on the discourse of Turkish migration. These ideas were articulated in Trakya. In the short story from the journal cited below, the Ottoman Empire was depicted as the cause of ruin in Anatolia. The story involved a fictional conversation between an Ottoman Sultan and Karagöz, a figure of the traditional shadow play during the Ottoman period, which gave voice to the illiterate public. Together they went for a
walk in Istanbul, reached a place of ruins, and came across two owls speaking to each other. The sultan asked whether Karagöz could understand their language and he responded by translating their speech to the Sultan:

The female owl responds to the male owl saying that “I have to make sure of your love so that you create ruins for me to fly upon and how.”
Well … what does the male bird respond?
Karagöz listens to the owls for a while and responds as follows:
… The male bird goes on: “as long as an Ottoman sultan rules on this land, be it ruins that you ask for. (Anonymous 1936a)

Erasing the Ottoman past, in other words cleansing the ruins of the past, was the main objective during the early Republican era (Ahmad 1993). In that sense, the capital city Ankara was seen by the elites as an “expression of its [Republic’s] desire to create a new culture and civilization on the ruins of a decadent imperial past” (Ahmad 1993, 91). Based on the articles of Trakya, sanitation of the Ottoman past was carried out in Thrace region by reinventing the meaning of the Turkish village, peasantry, and industry as places of the new Turkish civilization and nation.

Transformation of the meaning of villages unfolded in an authoritative discourse, which focused on how should the villages be, rather than who are the peasantry and what are the conditions in the village. Within this context, villages were depicted as places, embedded in the history of Turkish race and, thus, the origins of Turkishness were nested in the place of the villages. One of the most obvious examples of this understanding was expressed in an article in Trakya in which Kandemir (1936) told the story of a nomad Turkish group who migrated from Middle Asia and settled in Anatolia and called their settlement “köz” [fire] which linguistically transformed into Köy [village] over decades.
This story reinforced the idea that the village was embedded in the history of the Turkish race and thus the village formed the ultimate core of Turkish nation:

A long time passed in between. All of the Turkish groups made fire and settled to the land. As the time passed, Köz [fire] became köy [village] and each family took the fire to their houses and buried the village to their hearths.

Different families, different lineages and different leaders, independent economic and moral powers all settled in the village.

... Now the village lives in Turkish history as a symbol of settled and conjoined powers (Kandemir 1936, 15)

The peasantry and village place were also depicted as primary units for national development and progress, and as units to be planned. A majority of the articles in Trakya emphasized the role of the village and peasantry in the reconstruction of the nation, which was long neglected by the Ottoman rule. One of the articles, written by Öney (1936) in Trakya, which cited the speech made by the executive secretary of Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (People’s Republican Party), the only party that was in power, emphasized the importance given to the development of villages and the role of villages in the overall national economy as follows:

Village is the source of food and raw products
Village, is the largest exporter
Village is the largest and the trustworthiest client
Village is the basis of our army
Village in short means Turkey (Oney 1936, 15)

80 There is a number of scholarly works about the ideology and activities of People’s Houses in Turkey, concentrating on the nationalist and authoritative discourses that shaped the understanding of peasantist ideology (Karaömerlioğlu 1999; Şimşek 2002; Balkılıç 2009). This body of research argues that peasantist ideology circulated by People’s Houses targeted creation of a common national consciousness by decreasing the gap between the urban elites and the rural masses through ideological interventions at several spheres of culture, the social, and the political in the countryside. The interventions were shaped upon disseminating the Kemalist principles and ideals that were barely known by the peasants (Karaömerlioğlu 1999).
The emphasis upon the conceptualization of the village in Turkish national development, and economy further constructed the village as a place of national planning. This understanding of the village was built on the notion of national unity, which bound the peasants to the government and peasants to each other. Many of the articles in *Trakya* emphasized the role of the government in providing necessary funding and equipment to reconstruct old villages and their infrastructure and to enhance agricultural development. These articles further stressed the responsibility of the peasants in contributing to the implementation of the development plans in the villages; thus, one of the most recurring themes was with regard to the necessity for peasants to “work hard, together” (see Dirlik 1936a; Anonymous 1936b, 1936d, 1937; Kandemir 1937; Oney 1937). In these articles, the village was symbolic for a sense of place and belonging in the newly emerging nation-state in Turkey. Village, as “family” stood at the core of building this sense of relatedness that all nationalisms aim to reach:

… In the past, the villages would work for the chief, now there is cooperation; everybody has their own property. This means that village issues will not be carried out according to the will of the chief … but it will be carried with our mind, knowledge and cooperation. The village is no longer a stranger to us. It is our own family. (Anonymous 1936b, 4)

The “family” metaphor in the above excerpt further works to remind the peasants of their responsibility in the course of development. Peasants’ responsibility was framed around love for the nation and land (for example see Dirlik 1936b). Feminist anthropologist Sirman (2007) and feminist historian Najmabadi (1997) argue that
nationalism is built on defining the scales of love by answering when, where, how, and between whom the act of loving will take place. Attempts of defining the scales of love in the early Republican project of nation building in Turkey were framed by discourses of development, which located the village and peasantry at its core.

Development was further depicted by nationalist elites as a weapon against the imperial West, a tool for answering back to colonial imperialism as well as a way to erase the Ottoman past (Ahmad 1993; Baydar Nalbantoğlu 1997; Bozdoğan 2001; Jongerden 2009). With this objective, development as an idea stayed at the core of nation-building processes and for constructing a sense of nation-place and territoriality in Turkey, ultimately led to the governmental projects with regard to the rehabilitation of villages and their environments.

The idea of the village was seen by many of the authors of Trakya as an abstract concept with which members of the Turkish race were familiar historically (through numerous civilizations they built in and by their villages) but from which they became distracted by the Ottoman rule and imperial exploitation. Thus, modern development was seen as the only strategy to erase the Ottoman past and to build a different independent future. Within this context, the idea of development progressed alongside with sanitation of villages from their Ottoman past through the governmental war against nature, represented as a war against the Ottoman ignorance of the villages. Authors of Trakya represented the ideal village and its environment as places with drained marshlands,
parks, urban networks, with clean water, electricity, roads, and modern concrete homes (Oney 1936; Dirlik 1936b; Anonymous 1936d; Oney 1937).  

While villages symbolized a recuperated Ottoman past that needed to be reformed and rebuilt, the factory settlements and the cities and/or towns in which factories were located symbolized the future of the nation. Industry was seen as a tool to save the Turkish Republic from economic exploitation and colonial dependency, as expressed in Trakya: “let us hold on to the industry and factories. They will save us from oppression” (Anonymous 1936d). Yayman (1936) emphasized that Alpullu (in Kırklareli, Thrace region) had arisen as a town from “the land of malaria” into “a masterpiece of the new and modern Turkey with its mechanized and civilized appearance” (Yayman 1936, 10).

Alpullu had sugar, molasses, and alcohol factories at the time. The Alpullu sugar factory was the only factory to produce sugar in Turkey until 1927. The factory accommodated German and Hungarian engineers to train the future personnel of the factory. The factory settlement was built like an industrial housing complex, accommodating a swimming pool, a golf course, housing facilities for the workers and the manager of the factory, and a hospital that could accommodate 20 patients at a time, including surgery patients. There was a primary school and later a high school named Sugar School (Şeker Okulu) and what is called an art school for training workers and

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81 This is also an overlapping theme with Ozdilek (For articles in Ozdilek on concrete. modern homes in the village, see Peltek 1935a; Arda 1935e).
82 According to the Alpullu (1935a) journal, published by the factory, the first school was opened in Alpullu between 1928 and 1929, and in 1935, it is transferred to a newer building. Among 162 students going to the school in 1935, 40 were from the surrounding villages (Alpullu 1935a).
engineers for the future sugar industry. So, in itself the Alpullu Sugar factory was like a
town, designed to develop a community from within.

Figure 3-1 Alpullu hospital, not dated,
From personal archives

Figure 3-2 Alpullu Factory, workers` houses,
From the archives of Sugar Workers` Union (Şeker-İş)

Figure 3-3 the Manager`s house in Alpullu,
From the archives of Sugar Workers` Union (Şeker-İş)
During my fieldwork to Alpullu in 2012, I had a chance to visit the factory and its settlement, currently operating in a low state of production. I interviewed six former workers in the factory.\textsuperscript{83} In all of these interviews, the main emphasis was upon the high culture and modernity that the factory brought to the town. For example, while talking about the sports facilities located at the factory settlement, the swimming pool and the golf course, one of the participants vehemently mentioned, “Alpullu was like European town … an Olympics village.” According to another interview, the company that owned Alpullu factory and its settlement\textsuperscript{84} later in 1935 established a market place, known as the factory’s commissary store close to the railway station, where groceries and dairy food (especially butter, eggs, and milk) were sold. These consumer goods were mainly products coming from the other state farms, namely Türkgeldi and Sarımsaklı farms, in close vicinity to the factory. Furthermore, the factory owned a small dairy farm, for catering to the workers’ meals. Due to circulation of consumer products across the town, as mentioned by my participant, “People used to call Alpullu, ‘the center’ 30–40 years before.”

\textsuperscript{83} I interviewed six former workers (male). Five of these men aged between 50–60 years old while one of them was 86 years old, and worked as the only photographer of the factory for more than 20 years in Alpullu. The semi-structured and exploratory interviews were approximately about an hour in length, focusing on the past memories of the Alpullu factory, what it brought to the town, and the effects of the Ergene River’s pollution on sugar beet production. The possibility of the privatization of the sugar factory was also another crucial theme that we talked about.

\textsuperscript{84} According to my interviews at the local municipality, almost two thirds of the town’s land is owned by the company that also owns the factory itself.
Modernization was a cultural project, as much as it involved generation of work, employment, and development of the Turkish national economy. Alpullu sugar factory was one of the places where the cultural ideals of the newly established Republic were imposed without any negotiations. For example, promoting western attire was one of the most significant reforms of the era (especially from 1925 to 1934), an idea that was publicly declared by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, wearing a hat during a public speech in Kastamounu on August 25th, 1925. This act was followed by the adoption of a “Hat Law” on November 25th, 1925, which obligated civil servants to wear western style hats (instead of the traditional turban and fez). It was possible to see the symbols of the dress and hat revolution on the door signs inside the factory (Figure 3-5). Furthermore, one of the participants told about the town-wide balls, organized twice a year, one of them being
the New Year’s ball and the other one organized by the end of the sugar production season, named *kampanya balosu*. According to Meriç (2000), these balls were the places where the modernity of the newly established Turkish nation was performed, while giving the opportunity for the political elites to come together. My participant also underlined that modern dress code was an important facet of these balls, which lasted until 2000. The emphasis over the dress code and modernity, both at the symbolic and performative levels, has been part of the process of nationalizing the factory-place and instrumentalizing factory settlements as a model for modern urbanization of the new Turkish Republic.

Figure 3-5 Door signs, photograph, taken during my fieldwork in 2012.

Figure 3-6 Alpullu. 1935b. "Alpullu'da Müzik" [Music in Alpullu]. *Alpullu* 1(5): 4

Assimilation of the factory-workers into the Republican reforms was not limited by the dress codes. It also encompassed education in western music, for example, Figure

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85 Here, *kampanya* as a word has a context based meaning that probably passed from the German word, *kampagne*, which stands for the period of sugar production.
In Figure 3-6, Alpullu (1935c) illustrates the concert of an orchestra composed of twenty workers by the Alpullu Sports Club. In this concert they played European classical music such as Beethoven, Verdi, and Mendelson. Although in my interviews this particular orchestra was forgotten, the jazz group that was formed in the 1960s was remembered as a progress marker of the town in terms of modernity. Within this context, factory settlement was designed and/or acculturated to promote Turkish modernity and civilization, pervading everyday life. Indeed, depiction of the Alpullu sugar factory, just like the other state factories, was a state tactic to nationalize, in other words Turkify, everyday life. This process involved a paradoxical break from the Ottoman Empire, in terms of dress codes, music, and built environment.

Within the context of Trakya Journal, this paradoxical break from the Ottoman Empire period was most visible in the writers’ “look” at the factory. For example, Yayman (1936) celebrated the Turkish takeover of the factory with its now Turkish engineers and personnel, symbolizing an end of the so-called Ottoman, and therefore backwards, mentality, which rejected western modern science:

Feelings of respect arises in a human being towards the noble brain [referring to Mustafa Kemal Ataturk] and … his friends that are insurmountable to history while comparing the former ignorant and corrupt rule which was backward in mentality that called the Western technique, western endeavour and western style of living as sin! To the new Turkey that rationalizes [mevkileştiiren] and conforms everything according to scientific and technological progress. (Yayman 1936, 9)

86 Alpullu Sports club had a football team as well.  
87 Obviously, I am not concerned with if and/or how the state strategies for transforming factory places into one that produces the Turkish nation were subverted by the workers. That would be another research project worth exploring.
The factory-place was a vehicle to sanitize the Ottoman past, but also it was depicted as a form of human relationship where the dream of the nation came to be true. The fact that Turkish engineers worked in the factories together to develop the Turkish national economy framed the factory-place as a microcosm of the nation. “Turkish” factory settlement was further linked with the racialized understanding of Turkishness. This was another recurring theme in Özdilek. For example, in an article in Özdilek about the Alpullu Sugar Factory, factories symbolized the idea of civilization, which was long embedded in the Turkish History Thesis. According to this article, Turkification of the industry and commerce “erupted from our [Turkish] essence” (Çeltik 1935, 5). Here, the Turkish essence was “the first culture that vaccinated [the idea of] progress to other nations” (Çeltik 1935, 5).

Amalgamation of civilization and Turkification together, implying Turkish modernity as a way of seeing, was especially powerful within the representations of the Alpullu factory in the early Republican era. Indeed, one of the paintings (Figure 3-7) that used to hang on the walls of the school, made in 1934, symbolized this amalgamation of the Republican intellectual look at the Alpullu factory. The painting captured the bridge constructed by Architect Sinan in the 16th century—namely Mimar Sinan Köprüsü [Architect Sinan Bridge]—still standing in the 20th century, as a frame highlighting the steadiness of the Alpullu factory, both of which are narrated as cornerstones of Turkish civilization and the discourse of Turkish migration.88 This painting was reproduced in a photograph later in 1960s, taken by the former photographer of the factory, who was one

88 As mentioned in the earlier section, Architect Sinan was one of the two books that Afet Inan wrote about in order to prove her thesis of Turkish migration and Turkish people as a white, civilized race.
of the interviewees during my visit to Alpullu. He told me that he took the photograph to turn it into a postcard. My participant’s inspiration from the oil canvas while taking the image during the 1960s illustrates “expression and representation of a relation to place” (Malpas 2011, 7) where the amalgamated ideas of Turkishness with civilization and Turkish migration have been influential discourses in the everydayness of Turkish nationalism and modernity.

Figure 3-7 Image by the factory’s former photographer, inspired by Figure 3-8.

Industrialization was part of the early Republican projects to fight nature. An independent and new nature of the Turkish Republic was narrated through discursive rationalization of nature. Factory-places were regarded as former lands of malaria and
swamp areas, which were linked to the ignorance of Ottoman rule. In that sense, these swamp areas functioned as heterotopias, as sites of exclusion (Miller et al. 1991), which were re-narrated as places of production in the Republican era. Factories and modern homes were instrumental tactics for the production of a rational environment and nationalist ideology. The war against nature was narrated along with returning to the origins of Turkishness where the idea of civilization was embedded. Thus, fighting nature was fighting against the Ottoman rule and the colonial powers. The construction of Izmir expo site in an area in the middle of Izmir, which was burnt by the Greek army when they were retreating from Anatolia, was a symbol of this emphasis upon industrialization for decolonization (see Inan 2005, 78).

The early Republican era policy of urbanization, involving factory settlements, etc., was shaped by an urban–rural dichotomy. The emphasis over the need for modernizing rural areas illustrates intrinsic orientalism that Kemalist ideology promoted during this period. Within the context of the Trakya journal, while rural areas and rurality are despised, understood to be a result of Ottoman neglect, and rural development, urbanization, and/or modernization of the villages became an ultimate target to create a westernized Turkish nation. It is easy to see the contradiction within this line of ideology: for example, although western culture is embedded in Turkish history, it is still something to be reached. In that sense, the nationalism that is articulated in the journal territorialized the nation in between the orientalist places of the East and West, urban rather than rural, by promoting the sanitation of the Ottoman past.
Within this overall nationalist context, commercial and industrial places, modern homes, urban networks, as well as parks, became important symbolic representations of the national landscape. Construction of these places came with their glorification, even fetishization, at least at the representational level, as places of the Turkish nation. Within the context of Thrace region, the emphasis over the discourse of Turkish migration was an important state tactic to transform former Ottoman lands into Turkish state territory in which the factory settlement, modern home, modern villages and/or rehabilitation of the villages found national materiality.

The early Republican period and its state-led development, industrialization, and urbanization were intended to form the organic unity of the nation, but also resulted in disparities across different classes and along urban–rural settlements (İnsel 1996; Yalman 2002). This contradiction was apparent in the factory design and social experience of my participants in the Alpullu Sugar factory. For example, according to the interviews, the housing facility of the factory settlement was gated, with a security guard at the gate. The factory housing part was named as the colony (koloni) and entrance to the area was restricted by permission from the management. The naming of the area is especially interesting as I think the colony served as the model national community to the rest of the local people living in Alpullu or in villages in close proximity to the factory. In my casual conversations, usually with people outside of Alpullu, Alpullu’s social and sports facilities were often remembered with their restrictions and/or people’s memories of furtive uses of these facilities by outsiders. In that sense, the boundaries of the factory settlement were instrumental in distinguishing classes of people from each other.
Similarly, hierarchy was evident within the separation of cinema hours and audiences. For example, one of the interviewees pointed out, “Wednesday screenings were for the engineers, working foreman, people that they [we] called the elites (protokol).” In the other screenings, even if they were accessible by people of Alpullu, as another participant pointed out, “still the ones without proper dressing would not be allowed.” Within the context of Thrace in the early Republican era, factory settlements with all their facilities provided privileges for the people who worked and lived in it based not only on ethnicity but also on class. But how did Muslim-Balkan immigrants acknowledge such privileges? Keeping this question in mind, in the next section, I will concentrate more on how these places of the modern Turkish nation were perceived by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants.

**Colours of Civilization**

Landscape is “a nested world of places which, although they have [had] a physical expression, primarily represent[ed] the social place of people in a polity” (Olwig 2002, 215). Places articulate histories and meanings, which are physically present on the landscape, in the form of symbols and/or names of streets. The analysis of the physical landscape and imprints are not enough, since place “is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning.” (Tuan 1974, 213). Thus, the process of landscaping involves mindscaping, “a means of training the mind to envision the country in particular scenic, spatial terms” (Olwig 2002, xxxii). Within this context, I look into the processes of mindscaping in the Turkish national landscape through which Muslim-Balkan immigrants produced themselves as subjects of the Turkish nation. Here, the questions with respect to how Muslim-Balkan immigrants
came to see themselves as the constitutive subjects of the Turkish nation are of particular interest. I examine articles published in Özdilek in order to explore how the discourse of migration that I emphasized in the first section of this chapter was received by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants (muhacir), and then turn again to the issue of the nation’s spatiality by examining the ways in which landscaping and mindscaping of the nation occurred simultaneously.

A majority of the articles in Özdilek represented Muslim-Balkan immigrants as relatives by blood to the Turkish race, through referring to the immigrants as blood brothers (kan kardeş, Kandaş) (see for example Karacan 1935; Kültigin 1935; Turanlioğlu 1935; YYücel 1935a; Anonymous 1935b; YYücel 1935b; Anonymous 1935c). In that sense, Muslim-Balkan immigrants saw themselves as part of a Turkish race/ethnicity, which was an idea further enforced by the Turkish state. The authors of Özdilek saw Muslim-Balkan immigration as a return to the original homeland of Anatolia where Turkish race(s) met again. The theme of returning to the original homeland was mentioned in Özdilek by Yuvel (1935b), who saw the immigrants registering their children in school. He engaged in a conversation with the fathers of the families, after which he said to the father of one family:

I said, you should be very happy to be in your original homeland in between the arms of our blood brothers. This land is ours. This land entirely belongs to us. Our kids will grow up in this homeland and get education in this homeland’s schools and they will become the future owners of Turkey. (YYücel 1935b, 3)

The representation of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, belonging to the Turkish race and returning to the original homeland of Anatolia, rested on a “dual geographic
framework” (Copeaux 1998, 32) formed by the *Turkish History Thesis*. This dual geographic framework represented the Turkish race within a continuum of migration from Central Asia to Europe while marking Anatolia as the (last) homeland (Copeaux 1998; Altinay 2004). For the case of the Balkans and eastern Thrace region, this message was manifested in Özdilek in a way that linked Muslim-Balkan immigrants to the entire history of the region by making the act of immigration timeless and placeless. Within this context, the earlier inhabitants of the Thrace region were called *Trak* and the authors of Özdilek saw them as relatives of Turkish race. By outlining this local history, the following article from Özdilek represented Muslim-Balkan immigrants as part of the national community whose Turkishness was re-built in Anatolia:

So you say how productive these lands are. That is because this land is moulded with the blood of your grandfathers. You would not know this, like I do because your national sentiments have been eroded. When there were no plains, gardens, fields on this piece of national land where you live, our ancestors (*soydas*) that are called as *Traks* came here. They worked like Turks. … This land turned green by the Turkish hard work. “Green Thrace” was given to this land by then. The land is a mother. You are the brother of eighteen million Turks, just like the way a mother’s children are siblings to each other. Now, the help that is offered to you will resurrect you. You were dead when you leave your home in the Balkans. You lost your field, your plough and your money. They took your ideals from your heart as well. They almost took your life. A being without an ideal is a dead being … and you died and were resurrected. Dying and then, being resurrected means that you will never die again. (Kültigin 1935, 2)

Although a majority of the Özdilek authors located Muslim-Balkan immigrants within the descent of the Turkish race, immigrant ethnic difference was made visible

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89 Here, ancestors (*Soydas*) refers to people of the same kin and race.
through two narratives, both of which were disavowed by the discourse of Turkish migration. The first one was with the difference in immigrant language. The second was the narratives of Turkish hospitality to the Muslim-Balkan immigrants that arrived to the Thrace region.

During the early Republican period, Turkish national identity primarily rested on the commonality that was enforced by the Turkish language (Ahmad 1993; Altinay 2004). This era also saw an emphasis on the sanitation of the Turkish language, through the exclusion of words that came from imperial languages like French, German, and Ottoman, in connection with a turn to the old Turkish in order to reinvent new words (Ahmad 1993). In order to disseminate the use of new words and the new language, the government distributed a list of words to be used in journals and newspapers. Although Muslim-Balkan immigrants spoke Turkish, one of the articles in Özdilek pointed out that the spoken language of the immigrants often seemed “funny,” when compared to the language of the Turkish inhabitants. As opposed to the difference of the immigrant language, the author of the article reminded of the origins of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants as Turks from Central Asia:

For a long time, we have regarded immigrants as inferior … and make fun of the speech and language of the immigrants, as if they are not from our blood or are strangers to our language. We must know that immigrants are the most perfect, original and purest Turkish blood who fought against the enemy until the end of their blood and … conquered … continents by going to Europe and Central Asia … (Karacan 1935, 2)

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90 These lists are started to be sent and published in Özdilek in 1935 (see Anonymous 1935d)
The difference of immigrant language was assimilated and disavowed by the help of the discourse of Turkish migration during the early Republican era. Herein also lies a paradox in which Muslim-Balkan immigrants became both the subject and object of the nation: they became the subjects through their relation to the Turkish race by blood and at the same time, became objects because of their difference in their language, which defined the conditions of Turkishness in the early Republican era.91

In Özdilek, knowing and speaking the Turkish language constituted national space by further defining who are the aliens, strangers, and foreigners to the nation. This identity was most obvious in an article, titled “Language Bridge is the border security to the national space” (Özkan 1935a, 1935b). The title reflected the historical governmental policy that shaped the resettlement of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants in strategic border regions and thus dispersed among the Turkish inhabitants.92 The following article further illustrated Muslim-Balkan immigrants’ acceptance (at least that of the authors of Özdilek) of these policies of assimilation:

It is the national culture that will complete the constitution of Turkishness. It is the [Turkish] language that is at the hearth of this national culture. … People who do not recognize Turkish language … are not from us. Because they cannot pass the Holy Bridge of Language (dil sıratı) that goes to the nation`s land, called the heaven … the ones who cannot go there are definitely not from us. It is the biggest war of all to assimilate anyone, among us but who is not from us so that they become like us. (Özkan 1935a).

Drawing from Sartre (1966), Audrey Kobayashi argues that “the act of establishing relationship … unfolds spatiality” where self and other are located at a

91 For the importance of Turkish language in the definition of Turkishness in the early Republican era see Ahmad (1993) and (2006).
92 For the settlement policies of Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants see Cagaptay (2006).
distance. This distance, in other words spatiality, of the relationship either locates the self as the object or constitutes it as a subject. Thus, the act of spatializing (and/or being spatialized) becomes fundamental to the constitution of the other (Kobayashi 2008 in Fuller et al. 2008, 698). Drawing on this approach, Muslim-Balkan immigrants were spatializing, and spatialized, at the same time during the early Republican era.

Governmental policies concerning the strategic resettlement of Muslim-Balkan immigrants in Thrace region, as a measure of border security against Greece and Bulgaria and their immediate citizenship status (Cagaptay 2006), were other indicators of spatializing-spatialized positions of the immigrants. Cagaptasy (2006) argues that Muslim-Balkan immigrants, specifically Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants were seen by the Turkish government as the most favourable ethnic community for assimilation and Turkification. At the same time, the immigrants were dispersed among Turkish inhabitants so that their overall assimilation was made possible (Cagaptay 2006).

The second way that assimilation of Muslim-Balkan immigrants was represented was through the narratives of Turkish hospitality for the immigrants that came to Turkey (Anonymous 1935b, 1935c, 1935e; Arda 1935f). I argue that the circulating themes of Turkish hospitality reflected power relations with regard to the production of immigrants as subjects of the nation. Deriving from Derrida’s (1999, 2000) works, some postcolonial scholars argue that the discourses of hospitality entail the constitution of a welcoming party to be the master of the house, city, and/or the nation where the incoming person is subjected to the laws of the welcomed nation, city, or house, and thereby othered (Yegenoğlu 2003; Bell 2010). Considering the vast number of immigrants that came to
Turkey during the early Republican period, generally Muslim immigrants from the Balkans were the most privileged immigrant groups with respect to the laws that governed the immigration policies of the early Republican era (Cagaptay 2006).93

The population of the early Republican era was very low due to the wars that the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic waged against the European imperial powers. This was an obstacle for national development (Ahmad 1993). Within this context, it would not be wrong to argue that Muslim-Balkan immigrants were seen as agents of national development.94 This was a circulating theme in Özdilek, where immigration was framed as a significant chance to develop the Thrace region. For instance, in one of the articles immigrant peasants were referred to as “essential beings that will develop and plant this vast array of land, which is currently empty” (Peltek 1935a, 2). With this goal, another article further emphasized that it is immigrants’ national duty and debt towards the government to be hardworking and to benefit from governmental aid (Arda 1935a). These articles showed that Muslim-Balkan immigrants constructed themselves as the agents of regional development in Thrace region and thereby they would become subjects of the nation.

Özdilek was not only a follower of the Kemalist revolution but also disseminated the ideas of westernization, Turkish race, and nation alongside with the discourse of Turkish migration. Within this context, the authors of Özdilek saw themselves and the rest of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants as an integral part of the Turkish race, nation, and

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93 In this sense, Cagaptay (2006) argues that Kurds and Roma people were the least privileged populations that migrated to Turkey, for their different language, which prevented their assimilation.
94 Considering the limitations of this research, more research needs to be done to explain this argument.
modernity. Modernity found its best expression in the idea of development and the role of
the immigrants in national economy. Perhaps most direct reference to this theme in
"Özdilek" was communicated through the story of the newspaper itself as follows:

If you can make sense of machines and if you have seen any steam turbines, you would have felt respect and amazement
towards them. If there were any of you who have known Alpullu Sugar Factory, they would know that once three or four steam
machines used to work and ... now it is only one steam turbine that does the whole job. This turbine ... gathers respect. However, to
me, it is the small newspapers that deserve most love and respect among those other little things [pertaining to the small steam
turbine]. (Adnan 1935)

The remainder of this article emphasized the resemblance of "Özdilek" to Alpullu sugar factory’s wind turbine for its production more than its size. This resemblance
further constituted the motto and identity of the newspaper (Adnan 1935). In fact, the role
of the immigrants in the overall national development and westernization was defined in
a similar fashion.

Throughout the aforementioned analogies of altruism for the nation through hard
work to erase the Ottoman imperial past were complicit themes in assimilating the
Muslim-Balkan immigrants in the early Republican era. The Ottoman regime was mostly
characterized with adjectives connoting dark and the nationalist Republican era was
expressed with adjectives like light and/or enlightened (Arda 1935a; Kaskati 1935c; Arda
1935i, 1936). This depiction is more to do with racialization as “a process of vision”

95 It is also worth noting that in Turkish light, enlightened, civilized and intellectual are represented with
the same word: aydın.
(Pred 2004), which indeed finds its expression in the colours to represent development and civilization. For instance, in an article by Arda (1936), “the revolutions of Ataturk’s Turkey, brought 17 million people from a suffocating darkness to light and culture” (Arda 1936, 1). Here, an Ottoman past is represented with darkness, as part of colonial past and underdevelopment.

As I have tried to explain in this section, Muslim-Balkan immigrants represented themselves as part of the civilized, white Turkish race as defended by the Turkish History Thesis by emphasizing their role in building civilization in the Balkans. For instance, Arda (1935d) criticized Bulgarian land claims on Thrace region by pointing at the fountains, Turkish baths, shrines, and bridges as products of Turkish existence and civilization in the Balkans. It is through this continuity in Turkish race and bloodline and landscape with which Muslim-Balkan immigrants associated that they become the subjects of the nation.

The changes in the national landscape that were built on sanitation of the Ottoman past were framed as successes of the enlightening Kemalist revolution. In that sense, nationalization of the railway company, which managed East Express, was celebrated (Peltek 1935a) in addition to factories like Alpullu Sugar Factory. In addition, sanitation of the Ottoman past from the Thrace landscape further occurred through the change of street names. Names of the streets that were in the Ottoman language and/or reminded of the existence of a foreign, non-Muslim minority ownership, were changed into Turkish names (Kaskati 1935c).

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96 For an excellent account on Swedish colonialism, remembering, memories and the colors of civilization see Pred (2004)
In association with this perception of light and enlightenment of the Kemalist Revolution, urban networks of electricity and water shaped the structure of the ideal and civilized nation-places (for example see Kaskati 1935c; Arda 1935i). Kaskati (1935) saw the end to the revolution only when “… the land becomes green in between flowing water.” With electricity and water, also construction of parks and gardens were among other important themes in Özdilek. These were seen as places where the citizens of the nation would come together and meet each other, thus establishing a sense of relatedness (see for example Anonymous 1935f; Arda 1935i).

Muslim-Balkan immigrants’ view of themselves as close kin and brothers/sisters of the Turkish race was reinforced by the governmental policies in the early Republican era, which was further supported by the discourse of Turkish migration, an important governmental instrument to assimilate Muslim-Balkan immigrants to the overall Kemalist revolution and the idea of Turkishness. Muslim-Balkan immigrants saw themselves as agents of the Kemalist revolution and national development in Thrace region. In other words, they encouraged other Muslim-Balkan immigrants to use the racial and class privilege that was provided by the government to the non-Muslim immigrants, coming from the Balkans. Here, Muslim-Balkan immigrants’ understanding of the nation was more than the national territory of Anatolia in line with the particular era’s perspectives with respect to the spatialization of the nation that idealized factories, modern homes as weapons against the European imperialism.
Conclusion

I have sought to explore the social and discursive constructions of Turkish territory and territoriality and the ways through which these constructions are co-constituted across the historical narratives and places of the “imagined” Turkish nation. First, I concentrated on how the discourse of Turkish migration was constructed as an integral component of the Turkish national identity by analyzing Afet Inan’s writings on the matter. I argued that the discourse of Turkish migration worked as an instrument to fight against the racialized image of the Turks by European colonialism and assimilated Muslim immigrants coming from the Balkans into Turkishness.

In the second part of this chapter, I argued that the nation’s spatiality was more than the national territory through my analysis of Trakya. The early Republican era focused on the sanitation of the Ottoman imperial past by emphasizing modern village homes and factory settlements. These places all symbolized the Turkish takeover of Anatolia from the European powers.

Last, I explored how Muslim-Balkan immigrants received the nation’s spatiality and argued that the immigrants saw themselves as the agents of national development alongside subjects of the nation. This process was mainly possible through their acceptance of the discourse of Turkish migration, which located Muslim-Balkan immigrants within the Turkish racial family. I also discussed the relational processes of spatiality (spatializing and spatialized) through which Muslim-Balkan immigrants were othered and became the subjects of nation.
The Republican era was a turning point in territorializing the nation while redesignating socio-spatial proximities across different ethnic groups. This process founded the new Turkish nation and state on a re-narration of history (the origins) and geographical limits. Here, geography means more than border making with other countries for legitimizing territorial sovereignty; but it covers boundary making within the country itself. Factory settlements and/or modern villages were part of the new places of the Turkish modernity. Within this context, environment, in the sense of its meaning associated with nature, was only part of this re-narration, as something that needs to be modernized, or otherwise it was depicted to be a scene of the devastating Ottoman past. The imagination of nature with historical re-narration is also a socio-spatial project of distinguishing national origins from the Ottoman Empire.

Earlier conceptualizations of industrial development at the expanse of environment, as the ideal environment was envisioned to be “urbanized” and/or disciplined (as in the case for modern villages, mentioned in the previous subsections), were present during the early Republican era, when nationalization of industry was a primary motive of the new Turkish nation-state. The early Republican era was a turning point in establishing urban and rural distinction through re-narrating history. In recent research based on the geographical imaginations of the green concept within the context of environmental citizenships in Turkey, Harris (2014) highlights ambivalent narrations of environment articulated across east–west and urban–rural gradients; both of which I argue become more meaningful when thought of with the internal orientalism of the nation-building processes of the early Republican era:
Nation building is a continuous process where reconfigurations of fluid environmental proximities continuously emerge in the wider context of everyday spatialities. The next chapter more deeply concentrates on ambivalences of nationalism and (neo) liberal development together with the meanings of pollution across ethnic-environmental divides, stretching from urban–rural to east–west gradients, especially by the examination of the Settlement Law in conjunction with nostalgic histories of immigrants’ settlement in the neighbourhood where I undertook my fieldwork.
Chapter 4 Settling in

Historical Geographies of Settling 1: From National Families to Regional and Neighbourhood Families

One of the striking things during the Gezi Park occupation by various citizen groups until it was invaded by police forces in 2013 were the names given to the extremely narrow streets, naturally formed in between the tents. These street names referred to, for example, people associated with libertarian struggles, such as Noam Chomsky, or people who were murdered during the protests. The settlement of tents occurred not only around common ideologies and struggles; but it further involved establishing places serving the needs of the protestors, such as a veterinarian or day care tent. Reclaiming place, whether done by protestors or nation-states or immigrants, involves processes of spatial organizing and naming that are shaped by forces of memory and the ways through which memory outlives time through such ascriptions on place. In that sense, re-naming has always been part of creating national territory in Turkey.

Exploring the ways through which symbols, streets, cities, towns, and neighbourhoods are named, while also investigating how places are organized in relation to each other, hints towards whose history is ascribed on spatial organizing and helps carve out distinct identities and their places.

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97 Change of names attributed to the cities, towns, and neighborhoods from non-Turkish languages (i.e., Armenian, Greek, etc.) to Turkish names has been one of the most significant ways to territorialize national places in Turkey since the start of the Balkan wars (1912–1915). Renaming practices escalated with the Republican era (Aslan et al. 2014).
In this sub-section, I investigate immigration policies of the Turkish state from the Republican era onwards; particularly Settlement Law in relation to the ways through which the law “relatively” shaped the settlement of the neighbourhood’s Muslim-Balkan immigrant populations by creating a place for quarter-based living. This quarter-based living was represented by community practices of naming quarters, founded on ethnic difference. By examining the Settlement Law, I concentrate on the relational spatiohistories of ethnic settlement across different racialized ethic communities in Turkey. I particularly look at which communities are settled and which are displaced in accordance with the law and correlate such regulatory frameworks into the neighbourhood situation in question.

There are two reasons why I use “relatively” in defining the force of the settlement law in shaping the settlement of Muslim-Balkan immigrants: first, although the Settlement Law was meant to be influential in settling the Muslim-Balkan immigrants into various places of Turkey, my oral history narratives suggest that in many cases, the settlement of the immigrants took place outside of the Settlement Law’s jurisdiction and it was shaped by immigrant networks. As one of the permanent settlement regions for many Muslim-Balkan immigrants, Thrace region was resourceful in providing such networks. Strengthened by such networks, the Settlement Law was influential in organizing neighbourhood, regional and national identities around a certain national(ist) understanding of “ethnic families,” even though quarter-based living prevailed among Muslim-Balkan immigrants, founded particularly on language differences.
Second, quarter based living founded on ethnic, religious, and language differences within and across neighbourhoods has a history that dates back to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman scholarship on conviviality across Muslim and non-Muslim groups, in addition to relations among Muslim communities across centuries of Ottoman Empire rule, which eventually dissolved into nation-states by the 19th and early 20th centuries across the Balkans, revolves on two main standpoints. One of them explains the dominion of the Empire for centuries by its “pragmatic and flexible management of diversity with boundaries as mobile markers of difference” (Barkey 2008, 277), while the second position involves stereotypical imagination of the imperial rural and urban life, segregated across religious, ethnic, and language lines, which was realized through quarter-based living (Quataert 2000). As underlined by Quataert (2000), although one’s religion determined how one was subjected by the Empire to taxation and/or clothing restrictions,98 newer studies increasingly show that residential segregation was based on wealth rather than ethnicity, religion, and language. Accordingly, many neighbourhoods (mahalle) in the urban areas first started around a religious building (i.e., mosque, synagogue, or church), gathering communities of the same faith and language together; but this religious spatial relationship quickly changed its form once other groups

98 Briefly, the Ottoman Empire land was organized around what is known as millet system through which Muslim and non-muslim communities were taxed in different ways in exchange for the Sultan to allow non-muslim communities to preserve their internal affairs (Quataert 2000).
(with different faiths and languages) started to settle in. The ways through which residential patterns were shaped were built differently depending on the economic capacity of the region in the Ottoman Empire (Quataert 2000; Behar 2003; Barkey 2008). Thus, it is very hard to reach any generalized conclusions with respect to the residential patterns in the Balkans or Thrace region during the 19th century and 20th century. Accordingly, within the context of this study, it was not possible to track down whether quarter-based living was a settlement pattern that Muslim-Balkan immigrants continued over generations since the 19th century.

This sub-section will illustrate that quarter-based living, especially based on language and ethnic differences, has largely dominated the neighbourhood settlement history right from the beginning. I suggest Muslim-Balkan immigrants first settled in accordance with their own ethnic and linguistic groups rather than their wealth, before the arrival of the Kurdish groups in the early 1990s. That is, for example, Pomak groups99 settled in their own quarters whereas the rest of the Turkish-speaking Muslim-Balkan immigrants tended to reside in a different quarter, close to the railway and the mosque.100 Even though such quarters still exist with less and less significance in terms of limiting daily contact and sustaining intercommunal relations, I argue in this sub-section that despite ethnic and language differences, Settlement Law played a relatively role in

99 Pomak groups are generally known as islamicized slavs (Poulton 1997a) and/or Bulgarian Muslims in Bulgaria and/or Greek Muslims in Greece (Konstantinov 1997). It is because of their in between identity in terms of religion and language, they have been subjected to ethnic violence and thus were minoritized both in Bulgaria and Greece. Among the other Muslim-Balkan communities, Pomaks were also the poorest after Roma. For a detailed account of the trajectories faced by Pomaks see Konstantinov (1997).

100 It is further important to note that, for example, Pomaks and ethnic Turks in Bulgaria resided in separate parts of the country before 1950s. Pomaks lived in north of Bulgaria whereas Turkish populations lived in southeast and northeast zones of the country. After the 1950s, when Turkish communities migrated, many Pomaks resettled in Turkish zones for better futures (Konstantinov 1997).
assimilating the Muslim-Balkan immigrants into neighbourhood, regional, and national identities. It was then, the Settlement Law, as a bio-power state technology in the Foucauldian sense (Foucault 2007), that managed to create national subjects.

It is important to note that I try not to look for sanitized forms and/or cases of complete subversion or subservience of communities to governmental rationalities with regard to settlement. That is because as Allen (2003) in *Lost geographies of power* rightfully emphasizes, citing Deleuze (1986), power is open-ended: “power is ‘a kind of ‘molecular soup’, where unexpected elements come into play and things never quite work out in the manner anticipated.” (Allen 2003, 66). As my interviews indicated, the Settlement Law was not successful in terms of forcefully resettling the Muslim-Balkan immigrants in governmentally designated zones. The same is not true, however, for the Kurdish populations who were displaced. The settlement law is a powerful document that articulates the idea of the Turkish nation-family, by frequently referring to Muslim-Balkan immigrants with the word soydaş (being from the same race/kin with the Turks). One the other hand, it is indicative in the interviews that Muslim-Balkan immigrant participants chose to stay in the Thrace region even if they were assigned to settle in other parts of Turkey, in accordance with the Settlement Law, for they had family members and/or former neighbours that already settled in Thrace region in late 19th to early 20th centuries. Although the Settlement Law was not successful in resettling the Muslim-Balkan immigrants in designated zones, successful de-settlements of the Kurdish populations in addition to the narratives of Muslim-Balkan immigrants articulating a
strong sense of family across multiple spatial scales, indicates the relative success of the Settlement Law in “settling” micro-nationalism across Muslim-Balkan immigrants.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, following the population exchange treaties with Greece, and later with Bulgaria, re-population of the region became a significant governmental technology to re-territorialize Thrace region to be a border region of the Turkish Republic after the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.\textsuperscript{101} Former local populations, who were mainly Jewish, Greek, and Bulgarian, who used to live as Ottoman citizens were exchanged and/or in some instances violently expelled from Thrace; in return, Muslim-Balkan immigrants were resettled in the zones that were former Greek or Bulgarian settlements (Cagaptay 2003; Karpat 2012).\textsuperscript{102} Repopulating the region was possible by the establishment and dissemination of racialized ethnic hierarchies by the state. Thus, Muslim-Balkan immigrants, except for the Roma people, were instrumental in territorializing a sense of Turkish national identity and land, which was based on a discourse of Turkish migration that marked Anatolia and Thrace as the last homeland to be migrated to. Cagaptay (2006) argues that the Turkish government saw Muslim-Balkan immigrants as the most favourable ethnic community for assimilation and Turkification. In parallel, the immigrants were dispersed among Turkish

\textsuperscript{101} There are several immigration waves of Muslim-Balkan immigrants across the border to Turkey from 1915 onwards; however, the largest movement occurred in 1915 with the Balkan Wars, another one right after the Republic was established and a population exchange treaty was initiated across Greece, Bulgaria, and Turkey, and the last one in 1950, mainly from former soviet countries, as a result of ethnic tensions (Parla 2005). For the purposes of my field research, my participants from the neighborhood were mainly composed of Muslim-Balkan immigrants that came during the 1950s.

\textsuperscript{102} For a more extensive view of the changing ethnic composition between 1927 to 1965, for example, see Aslan et al. (2014, especially see 179-186). Maps showing the changes with regard “mother tongue,” which is regarded as an important indicator of ethnicity by Turkish nationalism, very well illustrate that in Thrace region, there was a significant decrease in populations speaking Bulgarian, Greek, Ladino, and Pomak languages between the 1927 and 1960 censuses.
inhabitants so that their overall assimilation was made possible (Cagaptay 2006). It was the context through which the settlement law was governmental technology of bio-power, an important social engineering tool from the 1930s to 1960s in regulating the resettlements and de-settlements of different ethnic populations across Turkey.

Prior to the Republican period, settlement of the Muslim-Balkan immigrant populations, mostly refugees,\textsuperscript{103} was governed by the Immigration Commission (\textit{Muhacirin Komisyonyu}) from the 19\textsuperscript{th} century until the Turkish Republic was established (Karpat 2002; Kale 2014). This commission was responsible for designating land and housing for the newly arriving immigrants in addition to providing for their full integration to the Ottoman polity. Their migration was accepted on the basis of their submission to the Sultan and respect for the Ottoman Law.\textsuperscript{104} The Settlement Law (Law no. 2510), adopted between 1934 and 2006 with slight differences when compared to the settlement policies of the Ottoman era, can be considered as a descendant law of the Immigration Commission. Different from the ideology of Ottomanism behind the formation of the Immigration Commission in the Ottoman Empire, Turkishness was the fundamental constitutive element of the Settlement Law in “accepting” and “settling” the immigrants into Turkey. Turkishness in the Law was collapsed on the national and ethnic family, and thus articulated moral as well as ethnic definitions of Turkishness, which

\textsuperscript{103} Their immigration started by late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, due to newly formed nation states that seperated from the Ottoman Empire (Kale 2014).

\textsuperscript{104} According to Karpat (2002), the Immigration Commision was the first systematic attempt to regulate and govern immigration in the World history. Although the Commission governed all immigrants from different religious backgrounds, Muslim immigrants had far more priviledges in receiving aid and better land (Karpat 2002; Kale 2014).
further illustrates reconfiguration of ethnic proximities after the Republic was established.

The Settlement Law was extensively used in regulating, settling, and assimilating immigrant populations between 1923 and 1990 (Sosyal Planlama Başkanlığı 1990) when the majority of the immigrants (were) settled in Marmara, Thrace, and Aegean regions of Turkey (Kirişçi 2000; Parla 2005; Cagaptay 2006). The second aim for adopting the law was settling the nomadic tribes in the eastern, southeastern, and western parts of Turkey (Kirişçi 2000). Within the text of the Settlement Law, the immigrant was defined on the basis of relation and allegiance to the Turkish race/family and culture (Law no. 2510, Article no.3). The immigrants were differentiated among three groups, based on their knowledge of Turkish: those who spoke Turkish and therefore were ethnic Turks, the second group composed of those who do not speak Turkish but were considered to be within the Turkish race/family/culture (i.e., Turkish kin groups), and the last group encompassed those who did not speak the language and were not considered to be part of the Turkish race/family/culture. While the first group was permitted to settle anywhere, the second group, who were largely composed of Albanians and Pomaks, was to be settled on state-provided land or housing in and across Turkish-speaking settlements. The law also stated that any settlement of immigrants cannot exceed 10% of the overall

105 Istanbul, Bursa, and Tekirdag were the leading cities for settling Muslim-Balkan immigrants (Sosyal Planlama Başkanlığı 1990).
106 The law uses the word *soydaş* and *ırk* interchangeably when referring to the characteristics of the immigrants to be settled. While the former refers to ethnic ancestral ties, the latter connotes race. The Muslim-Balkan immigrants were constructed as part of the Turkish ethnic family who were left out of the homeland, which made them favourable by the Turkish government to assimilate into the Turkish national family/race (Parla 2005; Cagaptay 2006).
107 Thus, immigration of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants was used to cultivate the Turkish nation and its ethnic homeland (Parla 2005).
The restriction on neighbourhood population and occupation aimed at preventing the formation of further nation-states (Karpat 2002). The last group was composed mainly of non-Muslims, Arabs, and Kurds. Finally, the Settlement Law made it explicitly clear that those who “do not have any allegiance to Turkish culture, anarchists, spies, nomadic Roma people [gypsies (çingeneler) in the original text] and ones that were deported/exchanged” (Law no. 2510, Article no.4) were not allowed to enter Turkey as immigrants.

The country was organized into three different zones where settlement of different immigrant groups was regulated and administered by the Council of Ministers [İcra Vekilleri Heyeti]. The first zone covered places where people of Turkish culture were required by the government to intensify. The second zone included places that were designated for the settlement of immigrants and specifically highlighted settling the Thracian counties of Tekirdağ, Edirne, and Kırklareli (Hür 2011). The last zone was considered as areas restricted for settlement, as they were insecure for health, economic, cultural, and political reasons. Deriving from the secret state documents, journalist and former historian Ayşe Hür (2011) notes that the third zone involved politically rebellious sites located in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of Turkey where Kurdish Alevites and Arabs lived108 such as Ağrı, Dersim,109 Kars, Bingöl, Bitlis, Muş, Batman, and

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108 This zone also encompassed places where Armenians lived before the genocide in 1915.
Diyarbakır. Once immigrants were settled in a zone, they were restricted from moving to settle in another place for at least for ten years (Law no 2510, Article no.29). Thus, the settlement Law sought to guarantee permanent settlement as well as permanent displacement, especially for the Turkish-born people of Kurdish, Armenian, and Arab descent who were displaced as a result of the civil war and/or by the very Settlement Law itself (Hür 2011).

Many of the Muslim immigrants that came during the 1950s onwards until 1989 migrated to Turkey under the “voluntary migration agreement” (serbest göç anlaşması; 1953) adopted between Yugoslavia and Turkey and “close kin migration agreement” (yakın akraba Göçü anlaşması; 1968) between Bulgaria and Turkey. Until 1960, approximately 300,000 Muslims of all ethnic groups, formerly residing in Yugoslavia, came to Turkey (Öktem 2011). This agreement intended to unite the families who got separated as a result of the population exchange and forced migrations in the Balkans (Şen 2007). Öktem (2011) emphasizes that as a result of the experience of the regular enforced migration history, many of the Muslim groups in the Balkans feel familiar to their kin ethnic groups in Turkey\textsuperscript{110} and therefore they were eager to migrate (Şen 2007). This feeling of familiarity was also the reason why Muslim-Balkan immigrants were considered to be the most suitable for assimilation to Turkishness and Turkish national identity by the Turkish government (Şen 2007).

\textsuperscript{109} It is important to note that the Dersim Massacre took place in 1937 against the mentioned Settlement Law where the Turkish army intervened. In 1937, The Turkish government enforced the law in Dersim to relocate local people to ethnically homogenize the region (Hür 2011).

\textsuperscript{110} These feelings of intimacy and familiarity were especially felt strongly by Muslim populations of various ethnic groups, residing in Greece, Macedonia, Kosovo, and Bulgaria; and less so for the populations in Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina (Öktem 2011).
The settlement history data I gathered in the neighbourhood do not provide an exact comparison of how successfully the Settlement Law was implemented on a mass scale and/or how well the immigrants complied with the state decisions with regard to settlement. For example, out of 38 cases, where all of the participants were Muslim-Balkan immigrants that came to Turkey between 1923 and 1960, eight reported that they were given land by the state and three came to Turkey as fugitives and did not qualify for state settlement policies. The rest of the participants did not know if they were included within the context of the Settlement Law. Four of the eight participants who were given settlement (housing or construction material for housing and land) by the state reported that they were settled in elsewhere in Turkey than the Thrace region. These participants found the original places inappropriate for their agrarian and husbandry knowledge and skill and after a short duration of search on where to relocate decided to come to the Thrace region where they had family members and/or former neighbours, who previously had migrated to Turkey.

In the narratives, there were two reasons why Muslim-Balkan immigrants chose to live in Thrace region. The first was due to feelings of familiarity for the agrarian environments of Thrace. The other reason was feelings of familiarity based on ethnic kinship, as Thrace region was among the first three choices where the immigrants were settled by the state during the earlier migration waves. Such feelings of familiarity are

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111 On the other hand, the General Directory of Land and Settlement (Bayındır ve İskan Müdürlüğü), which was responsible for keeping inventories with regard to numbers of immigrants that were settled in addition to calculation of land given to the settled immigrants, only states the number of immigrants that are “settled.” From their statistics it is not possible to estimate how many immigrants came to Turkey, which would have been a better criterion for judging the success of the settlement law (also see Sosyal Planlama Başkanlığı 1990).

112 A majority of the cases did not know if they qualified for the state settlement policies.
largely articulated by powerful expressions of family: such as “Thracians are like a big family.” Here we “environments and cultures” (traditions) are usually constitutive of regional identities (Paasi 2009) collapsed on the family metaphor. In addition to embracing regional identity, all of the participants underlined the power of family within their feelings of belonging to the neighbourhood. That is also a significant geographical feature of neighbourhood (mahalle), in the traditional sense, as it “extends the interior space of the family to the residential street” (Mills 2007, 340). It is within this context that family is not only a metaphor but “an experienced reality” that culture and history validate spatial identification at the national, regional, and neighbourhood levels (Paasi 2009, 141).

According to the narratives encompassing life histories, the neighbourhood’s first settlement was very close to the railway station and immigrants from the same extended family and/or former neighbours (in Bulgaria, Greece, or Macedonia) were settled in close proximity to each other, usually ended up settling on the same street and forming a quarter. In the case of the second and third generation immigrants, it was revealed in the interviews that their ancestors were from the same villages in Bulgaria, Greece, or Macedonia. Overall, the lived experience of the “family” metaphor corresponded to settling in certain quarters of the neighbourhood as a family and/or as previous neighbours. Following such a pattern in settlement might have strengthened the articulation of neighbourhood with regional and national identities as “certain continuity

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113 During the 19th and 20th centuries, many of the ethnic groups (such as Pomaks, Bulgarian-Turkish, Greek-Turkish, etc.) are referred to and/or distinguished by the name of their hometowns (Şimşir 1986). The hometown naming was especially common among the Bulgarian-Turkish and Greek-Turkish immigrants.
over time and social and spatial differentiation from others are often key elements of identity” (Paasi 2009, 139).

Common ethnic kinship across different Muslim-Balkan immigrants was influential in spatial segregation when the migration wave first hit the neighbourhood during the 1950s. The first settlement area, at close proximity to the railway station, was widely occupied by Turkish-Bulgarian immigrants (except for Pomaks) and Albanian immigrants. On the other hand, the far end of the neighbourhood, close to the main road coming from the county centre, was largely a Pomak quarter. While language use was a factor in shaping segregation, as for example the Pomak language is totally different from Turkish, ethnic prejudice was another influential element in quarter-based living:

Q: Albanians, Bosnians, and Pomaks intermingled later on, as I understood from the narratives, right?
Participant (P): Right. We used to say “Albanian” for the ones who migrated from Yugoslavia. In the place where I worked, they called those immigrants Bosnian. They were speaking a totally different language. We were capable to understand the language of the people that we called “Albanian”. Well, my mother tongue was Bulgarian … my mom and dad came from Bulgaria in 1951. I was born in 1957. Since they were just in the process of learning Turkish, we used to speak Bulgarian at home …
Q: From where are they from in Bulgaria?
P: From the north, close to Danube river in Romania
Q: Is that why they call you Pomak?
P: my mother used to tell us that we are not Pomak; they used to call some other people Pomak. But when we came here, just because we did not know Turkish, they started calling us Pomak.114

114 Soru (S): Arnavutlar, Boşnaklar, Pomaklar sonradan karışıyor birbirine, bilmiyorum anladığım kadarıyla …
S: Bulgaristan’ın neresinden?
K: Kuzeyden, Romanya, Tuna nehri tarafından
(Case 38, 45 years old, woman, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

The narrative exemplifies the complexity over “where one belongs” across spatial divides, especially within the context of Muslim-Balkan immigration experiences. Quarter-based living was a way to cope with coexistence. In addition, while mixed ethnic marriage was often a topic where participants further illustrated spatial and social segregation, it was also seen as a another factor that in the end led to blending of diverse ethnic groups in the later generations: “in the past Pomaks would marry Pomaks. Girls would not go to gacal [families] and/or people from Dağ. Now, we have mixed” (case 43, 56 years old, woman, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant). From another angle, forming extended families with other ethnic groups was another survival strategy, which should have strengthened the understanding of a “Thracian family,” residing in the same neighbourhood.

The Settlement Law and its content prioritized Muslim-Balkan immigrants by locating them within the overall Turkish racial/kin family. The territorialization of Turkish nation across different immigrant groups from the Balkans was made possible by the immigrants themselves through operationalizing “the family,” as a source of regional and neighbourhood identity and quarter based co-existence strategy. In this regard, family was especially useful in defining the feelings of familiarity, which extended from

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S: O yüzden mi size Pomak diyorlar?
115 Gacal stands for the non-immigrant families, whereas Dağ is a hometown in Bulgaria.
116 “evet eskiden Pomaklar pomaklara, kızlar gitmezdi gacallara Dağlılara, şimdi karışık.”
belonging to the same ethnic family, same neighbourhood family, the same regional family and finally, the same nation (al)-family. This amalgamation signifies multiple worlds of “imagined communities” (Anderson 2006 [1983]) across spatial history and the spatial present, which form the cornerstones of nostalgic discourses articulated in thinking about the Ergene River pollution.

**Environmental Narratives of Pollution: What was it like before?**

Before it was polluted, the Ergene River used to flow for daily life. My participants who were older than their late 30s remember the river as a place linked to the ways through which the river was utilized and became a source for irrigation within the local agrarian economy. Clean water was seen as a community and individual resource, as well as a source of spatial identity. However, this spatial identity is not fixed, but rather in flux and contradictory as it also posits diverse hegemonic ideas, constructions, and perspectives. This fluidity normalizes pollution and creates a hopeless and irreversible dead end for the communities that are affected.

All of my participants who used to own or work in fields close to the riverside remember the clarity of the water by linking it to the agrarian productivity of the land. Emphasis over agricultural production, when remembering the pollution of the Ergene River, constituted the means to express the beauty of lands surrounding the river, where the beauty of the riverside was connected with productivity of the land:

There were gardens at the other side of the river ... what a beauty! It was green, there were tomatoes, peppers ... etc. They used to water them from the river. People used to garden around here. However, after the river was polluted, they are all gone now. (case
3, 55 years old, man, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{117}

There was huge grassland. It was so beautiful and there were also, peppers, tomatoes, and eggplants. I can’t even begin to tell how beautiful it was. (Case 9, +70 years old, woman, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{118}

At the time, we used to plant things such as tomatoes, beans, and leeks. By then, we used to water them from the Ergene River. The land was very productive and it was beautiful. (case 24, +50 years old, man, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{119}

The “beauty” of the Ergene River was further narrated along with its clarity. Thus, communities used clean waters of the river for cattle, drinking, cooking, and making tea. As opposed to pollution, which is understood to be non-natural or a result of human action, the beauty of the river was constructed as a way to describe “nature and naturalness” of the past:

We used to swim, water our cattle, we used to fish, gardens were watered, and everything was natural then. (Case 21, +40 years old, man, first generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{120}

We used to irrigate our field. On the riverside, mainly sugar beet was planted and more often, irrigated agriculture was carried out. We planted vegetable gardens in large amounts in the fields. We planted watermelon. Believe me … there were Greeks at a village here, they were not able to sell their vegetables and brought them here and sold it for two liras [cheaper than its actual cost]. It was

\textsuperscript{117} “Derenin öte tarafında bahçeler ... ne kadar güzeldi yani. Yeşillilik, domatesler, biberler herşey...dereden sularlar. Hep bu bahçıvancılık vardı burada, o da bitti dereden sonra. Herşey bitti.”

\textsuperscript{118} “O tarla mesela kocaman bir mera anlatamam sana o kadar güzel ki, biber domates, patlıcan anlatamam sana”

\textsuperscript{119} “O zaman bahçe lace domates, fasulye, lahana gibi şeyler ekiyorduk. O zamanlar Ergene’den suluyorduk. O zaman verim yükselti, çok güzdü.”

\textsuperscript{120} “Yüzüyorduk, ineklere su veriyorduk, bahçek tutuyorduk, bahçeler sulanıyordu, o zaman doğaldı.”
that much abundant and natural (tabi). (Case 14, 82 years old, man, non-immigrant [gacal])

Williams (1983 [1976]) draws attention to the three cyclical meanings of nature:

“i) the essential quality and character of something; (ii) the inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both; (iii) the material world itself, taken as including or not including human beings.” (Williams 1983 [1976], 219). These three meanings of nature are usually blended with one another to strengthen specific constructions of what is called nature and natural. By this complex articulation of meanings, different constructions of nature can become normal(ized) and/or normative (Castree and Braun 2001). The above environmental narratives of the Ergene River in the past place pollution as an unnatural phenomenon, while situating the past as almost like a golden era, something long past, ruined, and which cannot be returned to, for it was “natural.” By positioning the Ergene River pollution as an irreversible pollution, in a strange way, the pollution of the river is normalized, which brings a certain degree of acceptance of it.

Another way to normalize pollution as an irreversible phenomenon was the narrative emphasis on “dying nature for unnatural reasons.” For all of the research participants older than 30 years, nature and agricultural production were (unnaturally) “dead.” One of my participants expressed the death of nature by drawing attention to the

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121 “Suluyordu da. Ergene kenarında pancar daha ziyade sulu gıda yapıldı. Büyük tarlalar halinde bostan ekiliyordu, kavun ekiliyordu. İnan ki birarada, Yunanlılar vardı Düğüncübaşı’nda, bir ara bostanını satamayıp getirdi 2 liraya burada satmış oldu o kadar bolluktu ve tabiidi.”

122 For the words of nature, in fact English and Turkish have a commonality. Doğa is the word for nature in Turkish, which comes from the word root of “to be born.” It also means, essential character (mizac, huy) of something, which is foundational and cannot be changed. It further encompasses the entirety of human and non-human beings in the material world. Lastly, it is force, which governs the material world. For more also see Harris (2014).
death of “the godly given nature” of the past. According to her, before the pollution, the land was abundant and productive without any human intervention or utilizing any agricultural techniques to grow plants. Within this context, even if vegetable and fruit diseases like mildew (*basra*)\(^{123}\) negatively affected the agrarian productivity in the past, it was natural, and given by God:

Participant 1: we used to have green beans like emeralds without putting any pesticides but now there comes that fog and then leaves become white. Is that mildew, no it is not right? It is not. Mildew comes from the god [naturally] … this thing sticks on the leaves and the plant shrivels.

Q: What is mildew?

…

Participant 1: it is a (plant) disease that comes by air
Participant 2: remember when I explained, disease comes with light rain and passes the infections in the air to the plant.
Participant 1: Yes, but it is from the god [naturally]. (case 4, participant 1, woman, +50 years -old, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\(^{124}\)

The riverside in the past did not only bear geographies of agricultural labour but it created its own unique ways of socializing. Many of the participants recalled fishing at the river and eating the fish with their neighbours and/or swimming, drinking water, making tea, and/or taking a bath after a long day of labour in the fields. Although

\(^{123}\) During very brief work with a forest ecologist professor at the field site, he implicated that the mildew might also be caused by the misconduct of the Hamitabat natural gas thermal plant, located in Kırklareli.

\(^{124}\) Katılımcı 1(K1): hiç ilaç atmadan fasulyeler zümrüt yeşili olurdu eskiden. Şimdi o sis oluyor ya hemen yaprakların üzerine bembeyaz oluyor...Basra mı o, basra değil? Basra olur mu, basra allahtan olan birşey...o bitkinin üzerine yapışıyor, sonra bitki buruşup kalıyor.
Soru (S): Basra nedir?

…

K1: havayla gelen bir hastalık

…

Katılımcı 2: Hani ben, sana soyledim ki ince yağmur gibi, o havadaki seyleri enfeksiyonların bitki bulasılmasını sağlıyor.
K1: Ama o Allahtan olan birşey.
somewhat rare in my interviews, one of the participants even recalled how she ended her fasting by drinking water from the river during the months of Ramadan. In that sense, the memories of the river encompassed multiple geographies of religion, social life, neighbourhood relations, and ecological diversity:

By then, we used to come and go to the river, we would water the sugar beets from the river, and we would plant rice. We used to fast and in summer it would be so hot ... as I said, we would end our fasting by drinking water from the river. ... These are all good memories of the past. (case 4, +50 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)¹²⁵

This place was so beautiful in the past. Everything about this place was beautiful. You would go to the river around this time of the year, we would go with children and we would take a bath. (case 3, 55 years old, man, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant).¹²⁶

There was water like this (by showing the clean water in the carafe). We would drink that water. We would make tea with it ... we would make pastries. ... It was that beautiful (case 1, 65 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)¹²⁷

There were many catfishes. They are called the carp around here. There were other types of fishes as well. They used fishing rods or cover nets to catch them. We used to eat a lot of fish ... I am 65 years old, I wish I would see the clean Ergene before I die. If I can ever catch a little fish with a rod from that river before I die...it was a beautiful river. Now, I fulfill my longing for the river by watching documentaries on TV. Whenever I see the rivers at the Black Sea region, memories come to my mind: we used to make tea, sit down and drink it. We used to barbecue and eat it together. ... It was that beautiful. Well now you have seen its current state. I

¹²⁵ “O zaman gelip giderdik, dereden pancar sulardık, çeltik ekerdik. Diyorum ya oruç tutardık, bütün yaz susuz yanyorduk. ... bunlar hepsı guzel anlar.”


¹²⁷ “Şimdi böyle kaynayan su vardı, böyle (sürahiden su döker gibi göstererek) suyu dökersin. Oradan dolduruyorduk. İçiyorduk oradan. Çayımızı oradan demliyorduk...kızartmalar yapıyorduk, börek pişirirdik. O kadar güzeldi.”
will tell you the beauty and you will tell its ugliness. (Case 5, 65 years old, woman, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{128}

Space is never void or blank, where subjects give meaning to and/or act in it. Places are not mere locations in space that the subject gives meaning to. Structures of spatiality are nested in places, which enact and transform the structures of spatiality. Place and spatiality extend into different places, which connect the act of dwelling in a place to other places. Senses of place emerge within the larger networks of places. Within this context, experiences are built upon memories of places (Casey 1993; Malpas 1999), which narrate “times of places and places in times” (Casey 1993, 277). Here, remembering the Ergene River narrates multiple economies of resourcefulness of the river, based on gender and class interwoven with “nostalgic” times of the neighbourhood and river before economic liberalization, restructuring of Istanbul’s industry, and further development of industry in Thrace region.

Within the context of how the Ergene riverside was remembered, many of the participants referred to the Ergene River as their “seaside,” largely because except for two of the cases all of my participants,\textsuperscript{129} mainly peasants with little land. Considering the poor conditions of the first- and second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants who settled in the neighbourhood, going to the seaside was a luxury and it was mainly a


\textsuperscript{129} These two participants were non-immigrants (gacal in local tongue) and were among the local elites.
middle class act. However, the river and the riverside were remembered as an opportunity because “the rich were able to go by the seaside but the poor were not able to” (case 29, 45 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant).

Rivers bear multiple economies of resourcefulness not only for different cultural groups, but also across the members of the same community, positioned differently in the power geometry (Jackson and Chattopadhyay 2000; Castree and Braun 2001; Watts and Peet 2004; Farhana 2009). As Desbiens (2004) in a different context points out, natural resources are socially produced and thus “Resources are not, they become” (Desbiens 2004, 104). The Ergene River was a site for gendered economy of social reproduction. As their narratives indicate, my women participants emphasized that the river provided a place for them to leave their children while they worked. The river was also a place where different women in the neighbourhood left their children with other families while they worked.

Participant: … They [children] would never get out of the water, I mean, while we were working … my sister in law had three kids, I had two, we were a crowded family. (case 1, 65 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)  

Q: Did you have a garden or a field close to the river?  
Participant: We did not but our neighbours did and we used to go to theirs. We were living at the next door. When we were young, we used to work in their field. Our mothers would have been around. Therefore, when we were young we spent a lot of time around the riverside. (case 33, +40 years old, man, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

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In all of these environmental narratives, I always felt the power of romanticism and nostalgia with regard to how the river was remembered. My interviews started with complaints about the pollution of the river and then continued on yearning for the old and clean Ergene River. Nostalgia, a yearning for the land long ruined in the past was the most significant element in all of these accounts where the river and riverside, as significant gendered and/or community resources for irrigation, agricultural production, and socialization, were an integral part.

The environmental narratives of pollution do manifest conflicted geographies of the past through nostalgic ways of speaking about landscape change in the Thrace region. Nostalgia operates across two worlds, one that is lost and the one that is apparent in the light of the lost one. The conflict arises when both of the worlds are remembered and the question of “what remains?” becomes visible and felt in the landscape. That is precisely the spatiality of social and cultural identities, circulating across current environmental narratives, as “Nostalgia depends on where the speaker stands in the landscape of the present.” (Stewart 1988, 227). In this way, nostalgia emerges as a cultural practice.

The concepts of nostalgia articulated in the environmental narratives are due to socio-spatial changes, shaped both by the migration experience and by the passage to a liberalized economy, where industrial development was prioritized by the state. Ergene River narratives are strongly associated with this temporal and spatial transformation,

Küçüklüğümüzde oralarda çalıştık, annelerimiz oralarda olurdu. Yani, küçükken çok vakit geçirmişliğimiz olmuştur.
scripted on the neighbourhood landscape. This nostalgic narration, however, normalizes environmental pollution by positioning it as an irreversible phenomenon.

Nostalgia was treated as a soldier’s war illness of longing for home during the 18th and 19th centuries in Europe (Lowenthal 1975). “Being a geographical illness,” which was later transformed into “a sociological complaint” in the late 19th century (Lowenthal 1975, 3), it still connotes loss of the past and the familiar, both of which are spatially and historically informed. Baker (2000) further underlines that in Turkey, localism is fundamentally constituted on feelings of nostalgia organized upon micronational(ist) tradition(s). Similarly, Özyürek (2006) argues that nostalgia for the early Republican period especially among the middle classes and bureaucratic elites in Turkey, emerged in the 1990s, as a way to counteract Islamism, Kurdish separatism, as well as the exacerbated interventions by the IMF and EU in the economic and political realms. These are of course broad definitions of the ways through which nostalgia for the past becomes embedded in national identities and becomes a reaction to define changing realms of citizenship and its environments in Turkey.

Muslim-Balkan immigrants cannot be considered as part of the societal strata that Özyürek (2006) explored. However, nostalgic ethnic nationalisms run deeper and can lead to redefined and newer affiliations with place-making and place-based identities. ¹³² Nostalgic yearning for an agrarian past, including memory of traditions and knowledge of

¹³² For similar arguments in South Asian cases where environmental politics is molded with agricultural environments and its peoples see Cederlöf and Sivaramakrishnan (2006) and Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan (2000). Both of these editions are more interested in rights-based environmental contestations and thus, examine civic and ethnic nationalisms to understand the ways through which they become embedded in local environmental subjectivities.
the Ergene River, bring agrarian changes and environmental politics together, as a way not only to reclaim changing understanding of citizenship but also to suggest everyday territorial assertions against the background of a changing neighbourhood landscape. This transformation is limited not only by the increasing Kurdish migration to the neighbourhood, but it also covers changing scopes of citizenship privileges as Turkey moved from agricultural based industrial economy to more a urbanized/urbanizing economy, based on manufacturing and service sectors (Diakosavvas 2011). As such, while agriculture was the leading employer before 1980, with state incentives and price controlling, the sector’s share in the workforce shrank down by half in 2000s, which marked a decrease from 8 million jobs (half of the entire workforce) in 1988 to 2.9 million jobs (Diakosavvas 2011, 16). And so, the nostalgic resourcefulness of the Ergene River is linked to the ethnic and class economies of the Thrace region and how Muslim-Balkan immigrants were settled by the Turkish state over the course of time from 1923 onwards.

Agrarian affairs are part of the environment question, contrary to the literature that envelopes environmental issues, with no relation to humans (Agrawal and Sivaramakrishnan 2000). With the increasing neoliberalization processes in Turkey, we will possibly see more organized ways to reclaim agrarian environments, a movement which needs to be evaluated within the socio-spatial histories of the renewed territorial affiliations with agrarian environments.

In 2014, the Turkish government prepared a new law to survey the fertile agricultural lands in Turkey in order to provide them with the status of “protected
agrarian areas” to prevent their misuse (Çakır 2014). Within the context of Thrace region, a recent campaign to declare Thrace region as a “protected agrarian area” (tarımsal sit alanı), which was initiated by a woman village dweller and farmer living in close vicinity to the Ergene River, in fact represents one of the justifications for such territorial claims. In addition, building wired fences around agrarian lands by a local municipality in Bursa, located in Marmara region, while claiming to protect fertile agricultural lands from illegal housing and construction (AA 2010), is one among different repertoires that awaits critical scrutiny. The fact that both central and local governments’ attempts to be included in the process of designating such protected agrarian areas in addition to the local community claims over their lands, shows multiple contestations over agrarian environments.

The South Asian experience with regard to reclaiming land at the juncture of agricultural and environmental politics shows that such contextual campaigns can be used by dominant regional and/or ethnic and cultural groups to “symbolically and materially appropriate nature for the sake of increasing their own political and economic control within a region” (Cederlöf and Sivaramakrishnan 2006, 8-9). In this regard, the question of “what is protected from whom?” is significantly important to understand the ways through which environmental governance is re-territorialized within the context of socio-spatial histories. I do not entirely dismiss the idea to establish protected areas for agrarian activities, but even if that is to be done, critical evaluation of the socio-spatial history of

133 For the petition see: https://www.change.org/p/gida-tarm-ve-hayvancilh-bakanlik-trakya-toprakları-tarımsal-sit-alanı-ilan-edilsin
the settlements in question needs to be undertaken to be able to contextualize the environmental measures. That is because environmental and everyday politics are bundled.

**Historical Geographies of Settling 2**

The neighbourhood where I did my fieldwork is about two kilometres away from the Ergene River and 100 kilometres from the Bulgarian and Greek borders to Turkey. It is right at the periphery of the county centre, surrounded by fields and villages along the Ergene River. A majority of the fields along the river stream are abandoned and/or not cultivated as productively as in the past. Reasons as to why parallel the general tendency of land use in the Thrace region: decreasing agricultural production due to lack of young people willing to work on the fields, decreased productivity of agricultural produce as a result of pollution, and attractiveness of working and living in more urbanized cores (Gezici 1997; Trakya Üniversitesi 2007). The neighbourhood is also close to the E-5 highway, the main highway in between the Greek and Bulgarian borders and the megacity Istanbul. It is very close to the industrial centres of Çorlu and Çerkezköy. There are many factories located mainly along the E-5 highway for transportation reasons and many people residing in the neighbourhood, especially young people, work in these factories.

The neighbourhood itself is not exactly an attraction centre, especially when compared to the county centre. In my interviews, younger people aged in between 17 to 35 without any hesitation complained about lack of parks, bars, and cafes in the neighbourhood, so they meet their friends at the county centre. There are actually five
restaurants located right adjacent to the railway station but, as highlighted by a seventeen-year-old young woman, because there is alcohol sold at the restaurant it is not a preferred place for young people to go. The fact that young people want to be anonymous when they meet friends is another factor in why they find the county centre more attractive. Places are socially constructed in relation to how people see where they live but also in connection with where they want to see themselves living. Although participants’ narratives point to diverse ambivalences, participants of this study often evaluated the neighbourhood as a setting in between rurality and urbanity; however, being neither one of them. The distinctions are made on the basis of familiarity, infrastructural networks and/or closeness to “urban” facilities, such as hospitals, used by the participants. For example a woman in her late forties, who migrated from one of the surrounding villages after she got married, found the neighbourhood to be “different than a city, as you can knock on anyone’s door at any time you want … but it is not like a village … in a village, when you want to organize Hıdrellez, you can organize it far more easily, but whatever you do in here, it does not happen. It is place like this. It is not a city but it is not like a village as well. It is in between. There is no development in here.”

By pointing out the fast industrial and demographic development of Çorlu, another participant in his mid

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134 Hıdrellez [Ederlezi in Roma language] is a spring welcoming festival, celebrated by Balkan populations on the night of May 5th of every year.
135 “Yani şehir gibi değil. İstediğin saatte birisinin kapısını çalma sansın var hani, şehirdekiler apartmanda o kapıdan o kapıya birbirini tanıma ama burası oylı de değil ama köy gibi de değil…köy yerinde hıdrellez yapmaya kalksan mahalle icerisinde organize edip daha kolay yapabilirsin. Ama burada ne kadar çaba göstersen, hani devamı gelmiyor. Öyle bir yer burası. Yani çok farklı birşey. Şehir de değil; köy gibi köy de değil. Arada bir yerde. Bir gelişme yok. Gelişme hiç yok.” (Case 6)
136 Based on the interviews, conducted mainly at the county centre, Mortan et al. (2003e)’s research emphasizes that Çorlu’s fast growth due to rapid industrialization and migration from other parts of Turkey is seen as a threat for the county. A similar view was also mentioned- albeit in lesser frequency in my
50s remarked on the presence of transportation networks and natural gas for heating, as a distinguishing factor of the urban modernity of the neighbourhood. In contradiction, however, another resident of the neighbourhood emphasized lack of urban parks and well-maintained streets, even a tough neighbourhood is an (urban) administrative unit. In all of these narratives despite their ambivalences, urbanity is largely defined by being connected to the infrastructural networks, which are seen to be significant indicators of progress.

These narratives, underlining the in-betweenness of the neighbourhood with regard to rurality and urbanity, ascribe a transitional aspect to it; however, not dynamic, as if the neighbourhood is suspended while the surrounding centers like Çorlu is perceived to be “more urbanized and crowded.” It is possible to observe “the feeling of suspension” in the vicinity of the neighbourhood when combined with its local history.

The neighbourhood was located in the middle of military-agricultural complex until the end of the 1960s; that is, until when Çerkezköy—now an industrial area and settlement—was put into the list of underdeveloped regions in 1971 (Tekeli 2013). Interviews. And this quotation was the only one stating Corlu as an urban evil, a direction that neither the county nor the neighbourhood should resemble in the future.

137 “... yani burada her şeyin önünde, ulaşım var, doğalgazın var, hangi bir köy yerinde var? Şehir daha mı iyi buradan? Burgaz artık, kendini aştı. Çorluyla aynı olacaktır.” (Case 21)
138 “Yani genel olarak mesela Burgaz’in mahallesi olarak geçiyoruz, köy değil burası ama yolları olsun. Sokakları olsun...kaldırım taşı filan yok.” (Case 22)
139 With a focus on fetishization of the urban water networks in Greece, Kaika (2005) emphasizes a similar argument. She largely associates this with the ideology of progress and Greek national identification with the Europe, as the origin of European civilization during the 19th and 20th centuries.
140 As a result, the establishment of an organized industrial zone was decided in 1973 and the zone was established in 1976. This era further coincides with political struggles over how the city-region plans of Istanbul would be shaped. One of the areas of discussion was around where to locate the leather industry in Kazlıçeşme, Istanbul that was at first established outside of Istanbul residential area but quickly expanded. After 1980 when the military officers who took over the political regime approved the decentralization of the industry, the Kazlıçeşme leather industry was relocated to the organized leather industry zones in Tuzla.
while regional expansion of Istanbul and decentralization of Istanbul’s industry was debated within the planning committee of Istanbul. Thus, from the establishment of the Republic until the end of the 1960s, Thrace region and the neighbourhood as well was used for military exercises, due to the unresolved border issues, particularly with Bulgaria. Meanwhile the agricultural industry, specifically the sugar industry, was located in Alpullu. Crops other than sugar beet, such as wheat and sunflowers, were also produced (OECD 1968). According to OECD (1968), a majority of the agricultural production was for the consumption of the military or the local communities.

The railway was an important reason why the neighbourhood stood as a military base until the end of 1960. According to the narratives, besides the railway station, there were only houses belonging to the high ranking military officers (pashas) alongside a very old flour factory, known as the mill (değirmen), a few shops and houses of the workers working at the factory, and abandoned “Greek and/or Bulgarian” homes. According to the oldest participant of this study, an 85-year-old man who is known to be a gacal in the local language, which stands for the local families who did not get settled in the neighbourhood as a result of immigration, Bulgarians or Greeks left this flour factory after they ran away during the Republican era. He also added that the factory

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141 Also see the previous chapter of this dissertation.  
142 It is noted in the plan by OECD (1968) that sunflower seeds were brought and introduced to Turkish agriculture by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, in agreement with my interviews.  
143 The military area was removed to the county centre between 1941 and 1942, which left the neighbourhood uninhabited.
produced candy. The neighbourhood was very close to two state farms: Türkgeldi and Sarımsaklı Farms. While the Türkgeldi farm experimented with the sugar beet and wheat seeds, the Sarımsaklı farm leaned on livestock production.\footnote{State farms in Thrace region were not particularly good at researching the needs of the small farmers (OECD 1968). In parallel, almost none of my participants remember Türkgeldi and/or Sarımsaklı as places where they could get seeds or livestock. The only memory about these places is that, for example, Türkgeldi farm would leave extra produced vegetables and/or fruits to the neighbourhood.} State farms in Thrace region were not particularly good at researching the needs of the small farmers (OECD 1968). In parallel, almost none of my participants remember Türkgeldi and/or Sarımsaklı as places where they could get seeds or livestock. The only memory about these places is that, for example, Türkgeldi farm would leave extra produced vegetables and/or fruits to the neighbourhood.\footnote{Currently, Sarımsaklı farm has been privatized while Türkgeldi has been left redundant with few numbers of personnel.}

With the approval of Istanbul’s expansion of the city-region in 1980, Thrace region has been designated as a peripheral region of Istanbul. Thus started a newer era with the establishment of the agricultural-industrial complex in Thrace region. Local interviews point out to two significant events in the transformation of Thrace region, pollution of the Ergene River and the construction of the Trakya Glass factory (\textit{Trakya Cam Fabrikası}) in 1978, and the relocation of the leather industry in Kazlıçeşme, İstanbul to Çorlu. According to my participants, these two events were very influential in attracting other dirty textile industries to the region, where the Turkish state was the main body in promoting the expansion of Istanbul’s textile industry to the Thrace region through regional development funds (Tekeli 2013).\footnote{None of the participants in the neighbourhood mentioned of purchasing or benefitted from the seed and/or livestock production on either of the farms.}
On the other hand, after 1980, structural adjustment programs (SAPs) promoted by the IMF and World Bank resulted in reduction of the state budget for supporting agrarian development. However, as mentioned before, the state did not totally disappear but stayed as a coordinating agent, without holding any responsibilities to regulate the market (Yenal and Keyder 2011; Harris and Işlar 2014). Thus, this process left especially small farmers “unprotected” across market mechanisms. The economic reform package, introduced in 2000, signified a complete transition to neoliberal agrarian development, which included elimination of support prices and withdrawal of support for the unions of agricultural cooperatives. Among other laws that primarily influenced the producers in the Thrace region was the Sugar Law enacted in 2001, through which contracts with the farmers were limited by more extensive quotas, which gradually decreased the amount of sugar production (Aydin 2010).

Almost all of the participants in this research had their own fields where they planted sugar beet until 2000, as sugar beet was far more profitable compared to growing sunflower and wheat. It was a regulated product through supported prices. Among the sugar beet farms, only one participant had an apple tree orchard and the rest of all the participants planted wheat, sunflowers, and leek at some point in their lives.146 All of the participants were small farmers.147 Before 2000, these small farmers sent their products, including sugar beet, via railway to the Istanbul farmers’ markets (hal). Aside from the

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146 Although it is not mentioned anywhere else, leek seems to be another vegetable that travelled with the immigrants, primarily with the Albanian immigrants to Thrace region, in accordance with their narratives.
147 Large farms have been widely common in production of rice since late 1960s (OECD 1968).
production in the fields, all of the participants of this research used to and still do have their own little gardens, where they plant fruit and vegetables for their own consumption.

In connection with the development of the Thrace regional economy, it is possible to categorize the neighbourhood economy in two phases. The first phase consisted of establishing the military-agricultural complex, and the second phase encompassed the establishment of the agricultural-industrial complex. The (neo) liberal turn, particularly in the agrarian sector, in conjunction with the decentralization of Istanbul’s industry to Thrace region, led to proletarianization of the farmers in the region from the late 1970s onwards (Mortan et al. 2003e), along with second generations migrating either to more industrialized centres such as Çorlu, Tekirdağ, and Istanbul (İstanbul Kalkınma Ajansı 2010; TKA 2010).148 It is possible to see the economic transformation in the abandonment of the neighbourhood for older people in addition to reduced productivity and labour in the fields as a result of the migration of younger people, especially in the rural parts of Thrace region (Trakya Kalkınma Ajansı 2013). Within this context, I argue that the economic transformation from military-agricultural complex to agricultural-industry complex leads to nostalgic ways of seeing the incoming migration and the Ergene river pollution in the environmental narratives.

148 On the other hand, Istanbul is the city where most of the migratory movements (both in and out) take place in accordance with the census data taken from 1990 onwards.
Nostalgia and Futures of the Present

Personal narratives and life histories bear a certain degree of nostalgia (Boym 1994). What makes nostalgia worth examining is its collectiveness\(^{149}\) and its sources alongside with “what it can achieve in terms of geographical form?” As mentioned by Bissel (2005), all of these questions are hidden within “context” through which nostalgia about the past becomes a certain possibility for the future in a material sense. As such, there is an increasing amount of literature examining different layers, types, and consequences of nostalgia in anthropology and memory studies (Atia and Davies 2010; Ange and Berliner 2014).\(^{150}\) These studies underline that nostalgia becomes embedded in personal and collective narratives when ruptures in the temporal and spatial senses occur, where nostalgia “reconstructs the past as a means of establishing a point of critique in the present” (Bissel 2005, 239). On the other hand, the main concern that geographers have with nostalgia has been its consequences and/or its ways of transforming the landscape. Lowenthal (1975) emphasizes, “we need the past, in any case, to cope with present landscapes” (Lowenthal 1975, 5). As a geographer focusing on how landscapes are created through the nostalgia of the past, he asserts that past is always present in the landscape, which produces a certain imagined and sometimes fantasized future. To him, “We constantly reform historical scenes, as we do our memories, to fit present stereotypes” (Lowenthal 1985, 30). The past is re-invented, reconstructed, fabricated in

\(^{149}\) Collectiveness of nostalgia has been the first characteristic that gave way to its critical analysis, which was first brought up by Davis (1979).

\(^{150}\) Nostalgia has been a topic of concern in a variety of social sciences since it was first identified in the 19th century, extending from medical to psychological sciences. For the sake of this Chapter, I am excluding such literature, but for a brief overview please see Bissel (2005) and Atia and Davies (2010)
the present. Like Lowenthal (1975), the geographical literature on nostalgia as cultural practice mainly concentrates on how the past is reproduced through material cultures, specifically through objects or places, like monuments or squares in the urban context (Legg 2007; Davidson, Park, and Shields 2011). In addition, there is a quite a bit of work on natural landscapes and their nostalgic representations, mostly in the humanities, arts, and design (Schama 2004; Cusack 2010).

Overall, studies on nostalgia scrutinize colonialism, nationalism, and/or transitioning/ed worlds of post-socialist states and market relations, modernity, and/or urbanization as a source of rupture. Considering the predominance of such issues in our contemporary social, economic, and political worlds in one way or another due to globalization and/or neoliberalism, nostalgia is a global epidemic as it is “a defense mechanism in a time of accelerated rhythms and historical upheavals” (Boym 2001, xiv).

Within the context of the environmental narratives by Muslim-Balkan immigrants, nostalgia represented discomfort towards the changing regional and national economy, which directly affected my participants’ lands, either in the form of pollution and/or change of crops that are produced (i.e., the sugar beet) or overall agricultural productivity due to neoliberal agricultural policies and/or pollution. I further contextualized nostalgic environmental narratives with regard to the ways through which the Ergene River is remembered by looking at the historicity of the Ergene River’s resourcefulness and Turkish state settlement policies. I further located the normalization of pollution as

151 For colonialism and nostalgia see Bissel (2005) and Piot (2010); for nationalism and post-socialist state and market relations see Boym (1994, 2001); Todorova and Gille (2010); and on nationalism and nostalgia see, for example, Herzfeld (2005); Özyürek (2006); Parla (2009) and Bryant (2014); for urbanization, modernity, and nostalgia see Williams (1973)
something that cannot be defeated across these nostalgic narratives. In this regard, nostalgia for the agrarian era has a community disciplining aspect with regard to the liberalization and neoliberalization of agrarian lands of Thrace region, where resistance to environmental pollution is limited by everyday coping strategies with pollution.

Another striking feature of the environmental narratives is that: contrary to the scholarly literature on nostalgia, rather than yearning for the golden agrarian era articulated in the nostalgic environmental narratives, Muslim-Balkan immigrants yearn “for modernity” rather than “against modernity” as a place of critique. That is, nostalgia is constructed by a powerful nationalist discourse, which orders the intimate “vertical and encompassing relationships” between the neoliberal Turkish state and the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, and also between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish migrants (Ferguson and Gupta 2002). As such, nationalist discourse “mobilize[s] the nostalgia for the old Common Place lost and individual nostalgias and family histories, and proposes a plan of action for the purification and rebuilding of the collective home” (Boym 1994, 287). Thus, it is “uniquely capable of bridging gaps and crossing boundaries between public and private spheres” (Bissel 2005, 239-240). The next chapter will deal with this aspect of nostalgia at multiple spatialities of the neighbourhood level, which bring together private and public spheres in the ways through which the nation is territorialized in an era of neoliberal governance. I also argue that neoliberal environmental governance needs to be contextualized in cross comparison with other neoliberal policies in education and social assistance programs in order to grasp polarization and ethnic segregation at the neighbourhood level. I deepen my analysis by examining racialization of the
neighbourhood landscape and ethnic segregation between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the Kurdish residents as a result of the mahalle/neighbourhood politics that is interwoven with nostalgic remembrance of a past that is often symbolized in the pollution of the Ergene River.
Nationalist discourses, articulating within the everydayness of the neighbourhood, particularly materialized in the ethnic (and class) segregation of the neighbourhood, are a source and a consequence of the nostalgic environmental narratives concerning the memories of the Ergene River. The fundamental nationalist paradigm of territoriality, which separates “us” from “them,” lies in the very construction of local histories, neighbourly relations, and everydayness in the present landscape by the process of stereotypification. Here, not only do stereotypes involve false and/or incomplete but naturalized personification of ethnic and class identities, but stereotypes further connote bodily geographies and landscapes. That is how I argue nostalgia speaks through stereotypes, naturalizing ethnic segregation in the neighbourhood.

Moreover, ethnic segregation is only one of the consequences of nationalist remembrance of the past; I further argue that stereotypification of the ethnically different bodies and their geographies leads to landscapes of invisibility, where Kurdish people’s claims and problems associated with the Ergene River’s pollution are silenced by the communities and by various other local governance agencies. The environmental narratives of the Ergene River are shaped by nostalgic loss of the agricultural lands, especially felt by the second and third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants. On the other hand, the Kurdish side of the neighbourhood, referred to as “Kurdish neighbourhood” (Kürt mahallesi) by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, is outside of the

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152 Invisibility is more deeply investigated in Chapter 6.
zoning plan for Lüleburgaz. Thus, many of the Kurdish migrants do not have a land registry for their homes. Their quarter of the neighbourhood is a gecekondu (squatter) settlement. According to my limited number of interviews in the Kurdish neighbourhood, the Kurdish residents most often complained about the pollution of the river in relation to their lands and their houses, as their settlement is situated right at the conjunction of the river streams, Lüleburgaz Stream (Lüleburgaz deresi) and the Ergene River. The junction becomes a big problem especially when there is heavy rain, which floods half of the neighbourhood with polluted water. As a result, concerns of the Kurdish residents with regard to the pollution of the Ergene River differ from those of the Balkan immigrants and, because of the segregation of the neighbourhoods; there is an invisibility of different concerns. In order to illustrate such different claims, it is important to look at the ways through which ethnic segregation is formed, normalized by producing landscapes of invisibility. What I mean here by landscapes of invisibility is two fold: the first meaning is associated with the invisibility of the Kurdish residents’ claims about the river pollution and the other is the general invisibility of the polluted sites around the Ergene River itself. While the former is largely a product of ethnic segregation, the latter is a product of changing economic relations, mainly passage from an agriculturally dominated economy to heavy industrialization in the region.

**Mahalle/Neighbourhood: As an Extension of Ethnic and Gender Segregation**

Ethnic segregation started right at the center of the square where three coffeehouses were situated, almost forming a square at the entrance of the

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153 Please see Chapter six for the analysis of these interviews.
neighbourhood. Two of the coffeehouses were at the left and there was one on the right side of the square. Altogether, the coffeehouses and the kebab restaurant at the very middle of the road made up the square. Two of the coffeehouses on the left were regarded as “immigrant coffeehouses” (muhacir kahvesi) whereas the only coffee shop at the right of the square was referred by “the coffeehouse belonging to “people of eastern origin” (doğu kökenlilerin kahvesi). Furthermore, one of the immigrant coffeehouses was referred to as a “youth coffeehouse” (gençler kahvesi).

Places and socio-economic functions of coffeehouses, whether in cities and/or villages, are studied for their role in establishing patronage relations (Kıray 1998), or for providing opportunities of networking relations among men on political and economic matters and/or discussing which products to sell at what cost and to which vendor (Behar 2003; Mills 2007; Öztürk 2008). Coffeehouses are gendered places; they constitute the gendered ways of socializing and networking across the neighbourhood (Kıray 1998; Mills 2007; Öztürk 2008). As opposed to coffeehouses as men’s places, homes, fields, streets after dinner, and the nursery tree garden (fidanlık), belonging to the state, were places where Muslim-Balkan immigrant women spent time to talk and walk around.

Muslim-Balkan immigrants in the neighbourhood often see the visibility of women and their mobility in the neighbourhood as an important local ethnic difference. In this respect, ethnic differences between Kurdish and Muslim-Balkan immigrant identities are justified through gender politics. In parallel, the honour of belonging to the neighbourhood for generations, or in other words, a sense of locality, is manifested
through gender politics, in specific by Muslim-Balkan immigrant women’s mobility across the neighbourhood:

Participant (P): … how can we stop them [Kurdish migrants] from coming to our neighbourhood … that can only be done by the municipality or by the Mukhtar’s office. The situation is bad, however. They surrounded us and even started to settle next to our houses. Well, if we have houses across each other let’s say, you can go out comfortably. But when they are on the streets, even if you are passing by the street, you would have to tidy yourself up.

Q: So they look at you?

P: well, their looks make you uncomfortable. Some of them even make inappropriate remarks, but their looks tell a lot … well, when you are alone, you can go anywhere but when they are around, you feel uncomfortable.

Q: What kind of inappropriate remarks do they make?

P: One time, I was coming from the school, while I was passing by the street; there were three or four kids. They said, look at those legs! When that happens, you can’t go and answer them back; you can’t do anything because you are scared. I don’t know how I got back home … as I said we are unhappy to have them here but there is nothing we can do. (Case 12, 24 years old, woman, third-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

Q: well it seems like; there are not much of any neighbouring relations with that side [Kurdish side]?

P: yes

Q: do you think that they are much different?

Participant: they are very much different; they are very much different than compared to Thracian people.

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Soru: Bakıyorlar, öyle mi?

K: Yani başkaşları olsun, kimisi laf atma oluyor. Ama başkaşları yetiyor … kendin her şekilde geziyorsun ama onlar olunca, bir tedirgin oluyorsun.

S: Nasıl laf atıyorlar?

K: Hatta ben bir kere dersaneden geliyordum, jeste yolda geçerken üç dört tane cocuk vardı, off bacaklara bak faları filan böyle laf attilar. İnsan öyle olunca ne geriye döntüp laf söleyebiliyorsun, ne de hani birşey de yapamıyorsun korktuğun için, yanı eve kendimi nasıl attım bilmiyorum yanı…dediğim gibi rahatsız ama yapacak birşey de yok.
Several narratives of women’s mobility further voice ethnic encounters between Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish migrants, particularly living in the Kurdish quarter (Kürt mahallesi) as a rare phenomenon. It is not a coincidence that such encounters more often happen between younger generations across different ethnicities. In research about an old urban neighbourhood, Kuzguncuk in Istanbul, Mills (2007) emphasizes that senses of belonging and familiarity are sustained by the gendered practices of neighbouring. Thus, neighbouring is built on “traditional gender roles for women as wives and mothers, which place them at home during the day” (Mills 2007, 336). For the neighbourhood where I did my field research, neighbouring across homes, gardens as well as fields was an important way to construct a collective sense of neighbourhood community, in which the Ergene River functioned as community space. This collective sense of neighbourhood community articulates power relations based on ethnic identities. In parallel, all of the women participants with Muslim-Balkan

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155 S: Evet, komşuluk ilişkileri pek gelişmemiş galiba o tarafla?
K: Evet
S: Çok mu farklı geliyorlar peki?
K: bayağı, yani Trakya insana göre çok farklılar.
S: Nesil farklı mesela?
K: Bakış açıları. Sen mesela açık giyinirsan, Trakyalısın o sana bakıyor. Affedersin ama takip bile ediyor seni...rahatsız oluyorsun. Ama sadece Trakyalı olunca abi kardeşin her şekilde.
immigrant background said that they do not interact with their Kurdish neighbours, while comparing their neighbouring practices with other local residents, known as gacal:

Question: So there are neighbouring relations but they are distant. You do not neighbour with them [Kurdish people], like you do with the local people.
Participant: yes, we maintain our distance. I have a neighbour [of Kurdish origin] right next to me, and this district has come to recognize them. We have come to accept them as a neighbourhood, and they have accepted us as well, which means that they do not judge us based on our clothing. For example, she prays for five times a day, and she fasts as well but if I do not fast [in Ramadan] then, they would not judge us … or we dress differently compared to them but they do not lay bad eyes on us. They have accepted us and we have accepted them here. And our relationship goes on as such otherwise it won’t work out. (case 6, 36 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{156}

Neighbourhood, mahalle (neighbourhood) in Turkish,\textsuperscript{157} has a long historical, social and economic history in Turkey that stretches far back to the Ottoman era. In this respect, for urban and rural governance it has never been a modern concept. Mahalle settlement further has been an important economic, social, and cultural phenomenon, which powerfully influenced the construction of collective identities even of today (Tamdoğan-Abel 2002). Mahalle has been an administrative unit of the state, in the Ottoman Empire and in contemporary Turkey it is used for taxation matters. In the Ottoman Empire, taxes were collected by the city and redistributed to the individual
neighbourhoods for their own spending. So, it was neighbourhoods’ collective responsibility to ensure that taxes were collected and given to the city (Tamdoğan-Abel 2002). In the Ottoman era, such obligations placed on the collectivism of the neighbourhood were not limited to local neighbourhood economy, but also covered the juridical sphere in the face of events such as murder, burglary, and/or sex work.

In contemporary Turkey, such a state administration with regard to taxation within the neighbourhood no longer exists; neighbourhoods are shaped by and further reshape intersectional moral spatialities of ethnicity, class, gender, and religion (Tamdoğan-Abel 2002; Düzbakar 2003; Mills 2007; Erten 2012; Özbek Eren 2012). Ethnic encounters in the neighbourhood in question here were narrated in conjunction with highlighting the genderedness of the very encounter. Within this context, ethnic difference is woven around secularist and liberal constructions of gender politics and women’s bodies, particularly dressing (including veiling), which is one of the main dichotomies of the contemporary Turkey between secularism, modernity, and westernization (Secor 2002).

In Turkey, the controversial relationship across secularism and Islamism has been a steady political issue that was reproduced and built on gendered embodiments, specifically on women’s bodies and the ways through which they are mobilized socially,

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158 If a neighbor does not pay her/his tax, then the total sum of the tax that was paid would have been increased (Tamdoğan-Abel 2002).
159 Tamdoğan-Abel (2002) points out that in the case for murder, when the murderer was not captured and punished, the residents of the neighborhood became responsible for paying what is referred as, blood money [kan parası] to the family members of the person that was murdered during Ottoman era.
160 For more on the issue of controversial debate between headscarf and veiling please see Saktanber and Çorbacıoğlu (2008).
161 The relevant literature here mainly focuses on women’s bodies and it is appropriately parallel to my research findings (Göle 1996; Navaro-Yaşın 2000; Secor 2002).
politically, and spatially. For this reason, veiling (and for that matter the “headscarf”\(^\text{162}\)) is a socio-spatial practice (Secor 2002). Historically speaking, the headscarf, as well as veiling, has been a marker of gender, class, and ethnicity. In an urban context like Istanbul, this intersectionality is transformed into rural–urban demarcations (Secor 2002; Saktanber and Çorbacıoğlu 2008). Women’s bodies are socially and spatially marked and thus their bodies tell difference, particularly ethnic and class difference, as expressed by case 6 above.

Sociologist Göle (1996) argues that the early Republican era witnessed lifestyle reforms (i.e., hat reform) as part of the “civilizing mission” of Kemalism. The “civilizing mission” settled orientalist constructions of veiling as uncivilized, an obstacle against national development, while national development was attributed to western values, such as secular lifestyles (Göle 1996; also see Secor 2002). Thus, what people wear and speak becomes an ideological referent. Thus, women and women’s bodies became part of the national biopolitics through becoming the symbols of progress and western modernity.

Gender politics used by Muslim-Balkan immigrants to narrate ethnic difference was one of the most frequent themes when speaking of Kurdish migrants. The intersectionality of gender and ethnicity governs neighbourhood spatialities right at the entrance to the neighbourhood when looking at the coffeehouses. Thus, neighbourhood spatialities were filled with intersectionality of gender and ethnicity where through their articulation ethnic segregation was narrated as something legitimate. In parallel, rendering gender equality was seen as an ethnic indicator of where one belongs in socio-

\(^{162}\) *Headscarf* is my emphasis.
spatial distance. In the next section, I concentrate more on how “rendering gender equality” as a sign of ethnicity is understood by Muslim-Balkan immigrants by concentrating on discourses of education in connection with degrees of accepting Kurdish migrants into the neighbourhood, which was the second most frequent theme in my interviews.

**There are “better Kurds”**

Nationalist and secularist discourses, which shape what women do with their bodies, was an important issue in constructing ethnic difference by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Rendering gender equality was seen as a marker of ethnicity and regional identity when Muslim-Balkan immigrants narrated Kurdish migrants in the neighbourhood. Another theme, which was connected to “gender equality, as a marker of ethnic difference” was the emphasis over educational attainment, but more importantly knowledge of reading and writing in Turkish, on the part of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants.

Question (Q): So you think that the Kurdish people at the town centre are more educated?
Participant (P): of course yes. They are more educated as families, because they are more educated, their children would see other children without making westerner–easterner distinctions. My daughter goes to their house. She has friends like that but here ... there are mothers [referring to Kurdish mothers] that I know of here, who do not even know how to read and write.
Q: you mean at the school council?
Participant: yes, I worked at the school council for one school term. They do not know how to read and write at all, neither the mother nor the father. Well then how much can that kid advance? Or how much can s/he look at things with an open mind? This is surely because of frustration. I think it is because of that. And I
think it is due to lack of education. (case 6, 36 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{163}

The above quote, just like the other seven interviews,\textsuperscript{164} suggests a distinction between the culture of Kurdish people in the neighbourhood and Kurdish people residing in the town centre. Culture is used in its “civilized and cultivated” meanings (Williams 1983 [1976], 89) and goes hand in hand with educational attainment. Education first stands for being able to read and write in Turkish, where language was seen instrumental in cultivating Turkish nationhood. This racialized understanding of Turkish language is a highly gendered notion (mother-tongue!),\textsuperscript{165} which is associated with education and has a long history in Turkish nation-state building processes. Second, educational attainment was seen as cultivating “civility” and engendering class mobility. Thus, if/when Kurdish people were seen to be educated, they were constructed as “almost like equals” with Muslim-Balkan immigrants, which signified “passage to whiteness” and/or ethnic assimilation. This second aspect, I argue, results in a discourse of selective racialization that is spatial, where, for example, the Kurds living in the town centre are narrated

\textsuperscript{163} Soru (S): Siz daha eğitimli olduklarını söylüyor musunuz (Çarşında Kürtlerin)? Katılımcı (K): Tabi tabi. Eğitimli. Onlar daha eğitimli, aile olarak daha eğitimli olduğu için çocuklara doğulu batılı hiçbir ayrım yapmadan, çok daha birbirlerine gidip geliyorlar. Benim kızım onlara gidiyor. Öyle arkadaşları da var kızımın ama bizim burası gerçekten...Hiç okumayı bilmeyen anneler var, burada tanıştım.

S: Okul aile birliğinden mı?

\textsuperscript{164} That is the number of answers, highlighting the distinction between Kurdish people living in the neighborhood and the town center.

\textsuperscript{165} National(ist) language policies with regard to the mother-tongue in many of the nationalist projects (whether postcolonial or not) positioned women as the spiritual core for the establishment of the nation, freed from the colonial powers (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Chatterjee 1989, 1990; Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1993; Nagel 1998b).
better” (assimilated) when compared to the Kurdish people living in the Kurdish Quarter of the neighbourhood. In other words, it is through urban/rural demarcations that ethnic difference is spatially iterated.

In Turkey, the realm(s) of education has been an important site where state politics of national culture are disseminated and/or practiced while cultivating the “Turkish nation” and “Turkish citizenship.” From the establishment of the Turkish Republic onwards, creation and dissemination of the Turkish language as mother-tongue was closely burdened on women, girls, and especially mothers (Aksit 2005; Akşit 2009). The Turkish language became the only official language with the establishment of the Turkish Republic in a territory where other languages such as Armenian, Kurdish, and Ottoman languages were prevalently in use. Thus, as Akşit (2009) emphasizes, the early Republican generations, particularly women, were ripped away from their previous mother-tongues to learn the new national language, Turkish, that was to engender a new relationship with the state. Thus, women became the bearers of the nation’s children and culture, by taking roles in the spheres of social/cultural and biological reproduction which included transference of the mother tongue (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989; Nagel 1998b; Akşit 2009). The above quote clearly manifested such gendered articulations of everyday nationalism as my participant (case 6) almost blamed Kurdish mothers in the school council for not knowing Turkish; thus, she held Kurdish mothers not qualified for raising Kurdish children who can be assimilated into Turkishness.

As mentioned before, selective racialization was a further narrative in distinguishing across Kurdish migrants in connection with education. Selective
racialization worked as a way to mark degrees of assimilation into the Thracian and Turkish socio-cultural landscape. For example, case 6 saw Kurdish people living in the town centre to be better integrated than the ones living in her neighbourhood as she thought that they were more educated. Here, we see two things that are influential, making such a narrative possible and widespread across my interviews: on the one hand, education, specifically knowing and practicing Turkish, was constructed as a way for upward mobility and ethnic integration/assimilation. Second, the town centre was depicted as more developed, with a modern and urban socio-cultural landscape, which I argue further affected the way Kurdish people were distinguished.

Racialized/racializing ethnic familiarities and differences are shaped by “proximity of shared residence,” in other words, dwelling (Ahmed 2007, 155). Thus, bodies embody the very characteristics of where they are placed and that is how we come to know racialized bodies as “a form of geographical knowledge”; and, thus, geographical knowledge becomes racialized (Kobayashi 2003, 544; Nayak and Jeffrey 2011). Participants emphasizing selective racialization located where one lives along the urban–rural divide across degrees of assimilation, as an indication of where one stands in terms of their success in ethnic integration/assimilation. It is within this context that Muslim-Balkan immigrants depicted Kurdish people living in the town centre as distinctively more integrated/assimilated to the national and regional landscape.

In parallel with the constructions of urbanity in connection to ethnic difference, being born in the Thrace region and living in the non-segregated part of the neighbourhood were further considered as signs of ethnic assimilation/integration. These
aspects were widely expressed by the younger Muslim-Balkan immigrants between the ages of 16 and 35:

But … for example we had some older brothers from the East, they are older and we talk with them. They say that people do not veil little children, in the East. They are from Batman (a city, located in South east of Turkey). They say that they would send girls to school. One of them has two mothers for example. He says that his father was wrong in doing this. But there is nothing else that can be done now but he adds, “my father would send my sisters to school.” But he says, they cannot understand the Kurds here. My friend lives in Istanbul and he is rich in wealth. Nevertheless, he says he cannot understand the Kurds here [in the neighbourhood].

(case 12, 24 years old, woman, third-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

Participant: they are not actually excluded, they want to be … well, I mean, I have close friends as well.
Q: From that other neighbourhood?
Participant: yes … yes, but since she was born here, I can say that I do not see her as an Easterner. She is my best friend … I suppose they (the other Kurds) do not like the ones that were born here … that is what she says. She told that their understanding and our understandings are different from each other. You have got to see our friend; she dresses all blatantly. (Case 19, 18 years old, woman, third-generation, Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

Participant 2: the ones who are not integrated, are they the ones who work? I mean the ones who do not go to school but directly start working?

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167 Katılımcı (K): Onları dışlayan yok da; aslında onlar, kendi kendilerini şey yapıyorlar çünkü çok yakın arkadaşlarından da var yani.
Soru (S): O mahalleden mi?
Participant 1: yes
Participant 2: do you have better communications with the ones who reside in this neighbourhood and go to high school?
Participant 1: yes (case 20, participant 1, 18 years old, man, third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{168}

These narratives show that Muslim-Balkan immigrants did not treat Kurdishness equally. The urban centre of the town was depicted as a place that yielded more integration for the Kurdish people, in other words, “passage to whiteness/Turkishness,” suggesting a racialization of urban geography. Geographical imagination of bodies and lands is a micro technology of power, specifically with respect to the national(ist) processes of racialization/racism (Penrose 2002). As the next section will indicate in more detail, it is through several narrative stereotypes that articulate across Muslim-Balkan immigrants about Kurdishness (in the neighbourhood) that places inhabited by the Kurds are not taken into consideration. In other words, Kurdish geographies are constantly turned into blind spots through which their problems become “theirs” (rather than our) problems. Within this context, selective racialization plays an important role in distinguishing across different Kurds, based on where they live.

**Dramatic Stereotypes and DissemiNation in the Neighbourhood**

The act of stereotypification produces images of the people and their place. Thus, the socio-cultural world is categorized (Gilman 1985). My main aim in this section is not explaining whether stereotypes are right or wrong. Rather, I am more interested in seeing

\textsuperscript{168} Katılımcı 2 (K2): Uyum sağlamayanlar (doğulular). Onlar genelde çalışanlar olan mı oluyor? Hani okula gitmeyenler olan, direk iş hayatına atılanlar olan mı oluyor?
K1: Evet
through how stereotypes legitimize to produce spatialities of segregation that shape the neighbourhood. In so doing, I argue that stereotypes are not only the representations of spatial segregation but they produce Kurdish migrants and their settlement as “a social reality which is at once an “other”” (Bhabha 1994, 71).

A stereotype is “a technical designation for the casting of multiple Mache copies of printing type from a papier-mâché mould” (Gilman 1985, 15). By the nineteenth century, stereotype was abstracted into scientific and everyday language as “stereotyped expression” in English and “kliše”[cliché] in Turkish (Nişanyan 2002). Both terms connote a pattern, a model, and a type that several times mirrors an original, as in the case for “the printing type from a papier-mâché mould” (Gilman 1985; Hall 1997). In that sense, stereotypes dramatize the original, by manifesting partial knowledge and thus re-establishes and reconstructs the original as fantasy. “Recognition of difference as imaginary” (Bhabha 1994, 81) is not only useful in denaturalizing the stereotype but also effective in questioning what the original is. Through this sentiment I understand stereotype not as mere false representation of reality but as an arrested moment, an arrested process of representation, which sustains and guarantees the status quo of ethnic segregation across time and place.

Bhabha (1994) emphasizes that stereotypes do articulate ambivalence of colonial discourses. He explains this phenomenon by illustrating contradictions embedded in stereotypes as they recognize and disavow racialized difference. For example, the colonial discourse names “the negro” as an object of desire and as well as a subject of terror (Fanon (1967) in Bhabha 1994). From another angle, colonial discourses and their
stereotypes are not whole, finished, and fixated phenomena. They are discomforted, as stereotypes are possible through recognition and disavowal at the same time—by the very terrorizing question of “what if difference is re-constructed and/or re-presented” (Bhabha 1994). Then, what would happen if “the negro” looks back? (Fanon 1967)

According to Bhabha (1994) and Fanon (1967) the performative question is not only an invitation for Blacks to resist against racism but it further articulates whites’ fear of Blacks uprising in colonial discourses. Within this context, stereotypes become useful in rationalizing (or counting/identifying) who (which Black?) can revolt against the status quo. So, stereotypes or creation and instrumentalization of stereotypes by distinct spheres of the government works as a technology of governmentality via colonizing institutional knowledge (Bhabha 1994). In this subsection, my aim is correlating some of the Kurdish stereotypes articulated since the 1990s by the apparatuses of the Turkish state, in particular the media and the judiciary system, with the stereotypes circulating in the neighbourhood, especially among the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Here, nationalist state discourses do not work like a hypnosis machine that captures its citizens into certain nationalist acts. Rather, these state discourses strengthen structural conditions where ethnic segregation becomes legitimate.

Historically, Turkey has never gone through a direct process of colonization by any of the western imperial powers. Nevertheless, one of the driving forces of Turkish nationalism has always revolved around the anxiety of “being colonized” by the West.169 This anxiety nurtured nationalist panic, particularly in state (governmental) nationalism

169 Also see Chapter 3 of this dissertation.
over how to become more western to “reach” western civilization (to defeat the West). This anxiety engendered a particular construction of an internal enemy that was depicted as a collaborator of “the West” (Bora 1995 ). Anxious constructions of external and internal threat(s) against the Turkish Republic “were settled in national memory, narrated as a survival case, always ready to be animated in the present” (Bora 1995 , 75). Within this context, Turkish nationalism assembled western and eastern nationalisms all at once. The separation is built on difference between territorial (former) and ethnic/cultural nationalisms (the latter) under the assumption that different nationalisms spawned from different historical and political conditions. One of the most significant places where these two types of nationalisms are assembled is in the realm of language, specifically languages other than Turkish. It is through this assemblage that people speaking languages other than Turkish came to be suspected for their collaboration with the West and thus, became the internal enemy. Speaking a different mother tongue (other than Turkish) and/or even speaking Turkish with a Kurdish accent, works like skin colour in terms of visibility.

In the post-1980 era, Turkey witnessed an immensely suffocating environment of ethnic nationalism, which targeted prevention of Kurdish as a spoken language in every cultural sphere, including but not limited to education, entertainment, and publishing industries, but encompassed using Kurdish alphabet letters in any name (Bayır 2013). In his analysis of the prominent nationalist columnists of the mainstream newspapers during

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this epoch, Bora (1995) draws attention to the western model of Turkish nationalism that became more visible. Within the language context, for example, speaking English almost like a native speaker was seen as representative of the Turkish Republic’s success in carrying its language reforms leading to western modernity. That was during the early 1990s when Kurdish albums were hidden other under cover albums (Aktan 2013) because being Kurdish, speaking Kurdish, listening to Kurdish music, all implied explicit connection with the Kurdish insurgency and the armed struggle, commonly known as PKK.171 Two faces of Turkish nationalism of the period, especially with regard to differential treatments of western and eastern languages “except for Turkish,” suggests the internal orientalism embedded in Turkish national identity.172

From late the 1990s to the 2000s, that is during the time when the armed struggle between the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) and the Turkish State escalated, we witnessed extensive dissemination of Kurdish (and also Turkish, for that matter) stereotypical representations via education(Altinay 2004), media (Celiker 2009), law (Koğacıoğlu 2004; Bayır 2013), and across the academic and activist communities (Ahmetbeyzade 2000). During the 2000s, the Kurdish question first evolved into a “Kurdish opening,” then was promoted as “democratization” and finally it took up the name of a “national oneness and brotherhood project” (Bayır 2013). Despite such attempts and political projects, the presence of stereotypical representations of Kurdishness did not change. In

171 There have been multiple court cases for speaking in Kurdish and/or singing in Kurdish in the 1990s for the promotion of Kurdism. In the juridical discourses, Kurdism was defined as “a separatist and a competitive ideology against Turkish nationalism, disrupting the unity of its peoples” (Bayır 2013).
172 Internal orientalism/Occidentalism is a continual phenomenon since the 19th century, in that sense an Ottoman legacy that has been lent over to Turkish Republic by 1920s, through which “the West” has been contrasted to the East in a continuous negotiation between the two constructs” (Ahıska 2003, 353). For differences in Ottoman orientalism, also see Makdisi (2002).
terms of the judiciary system, for instance, in the 1990s, Kurds were considered first as pseudo-citizens (Yeğen 2006; Bayır 2013) via their denial of a different identity (with a different language, etc. but also a range of implied characteristics that is very hard to summarize) and then, they were acknowledged as “Kurds” while making the distinction of “separatist” Kurds, allegedly known as practising Kurdism, and lastly, portrayal of Kurds, but particularly Kurdish culture, as deficient (to fit Turkish culture) especially via custom-based, tribal, and honour killing cases (Koğacıoğlu 2004; Bayır 2013).

In the neighbourhood in question here, Kurdish people were generally depicted as separatists, disrupters/invaders of neighbourhood “traditional” life, in addition to being welfare scroungers. The last depiction was further strengthened by delineation of Kurds as illegal workers and/or traffickers, almost defining the other half of the neighbourhood as “a dark settlement.”

Even if such depictions are at play, it is necessary to emphasize that there was little to no contact between Muslim-Balkan immigrants and Kurdish people in the neighbourhood. This partial knowledge that portrayed Kurds was a result of rare everyday encounters. Kurdish stereotypes and/or partial knowledge were formed by hegemonic discourses of racialization and ethnic nationalism and were articulated via community hermeneutics, which “makes somatic traits into symptoms of psychological or cultural character” (Balibar 1991 [1988], 58). However, it would be wise to be aware of the fact that the effect of such hermeneutics changes from time to time, especially at the face of certain “events,” depending on the ways in which “the terror” embedded in the stereotype was realized or seemed to be realized, at least by the Muslim-Balkan
immigrant members of the neighbourhood. That is also because an internal enemy stays as an always-ready narrative in the national memory.

Suspicion over the possibility of Kurdish revolt was one of the main fears that I collected in the narratives. Use of Kurdish in everyday life was one of the signifiers of such a revolt. The quote below belongs to a young woman, around her mid twenties (case 12). During our interview, she expressed her discomfort with regard to spoken Kurdish in public spaces. According to her, speaking Kurdish at home was tolerable, whereas speaking Kurdish in public spaces signified Kurdish resistance and/or “Kurdism.” This distinction with regard to use of Kurdish language in public versus private spheres also gave away the marked ambivalence of Turkish nationalism through which the Kurdish language and Kurdishness was recognized as a subject of social and neighbourly discomfort. Accordingly, her tolerance with regard to spoken Kurdish in the private sphere recognized and then disavowed ethnic and linguistic differences between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the Kurdish people:

… On occasion, I am often pissed off at them speaking in Kurdish, for example on a bus or in some place else. I get angry about such things. I mean yes, now that you are living here, you can speak it [Kurdish] around your family but I find it inappropriate to be done outside but I mean I don’t know how they think about this. I mean the other people [in the neighbourhood]. When they speak like that [speaking in Kurdish], it is as if like an uprising. It is like they are saying: well we live here but we do not have to speak your language. I do not think they feel like Thracian … and also, we heard that there are some among them that support PKK incidences
Here, use of Kurdish language in public spaces was treated by my participant almost like an act of treason against the regional, neighbourhood, and national identities that were collapsed on one another. This association of spoken Kurdish language with terrorism and/or as a symptomatic virtue of being a terrorist resembled the terror hidden in the question of “what if the other looks back?” and it was embedded in the very spatial distance created by stereotypes. Such a distance was “objectifying” in the sense that the distance belonged to the collapsed regional, neighbourhood, and national identity through which my participant gave meaning to identity. Objectification is not possible without institutional establishment of objectivity and objectification with regard to Kurdish–Turkish conflict in everyday life. In that sense, the act of stereotypification was a technology of governance through which ethnic proximities were shaped in everyday life.

According to Muslim-Balkan immigrant narratives on Kurds, being the internal enemies, two incidents were repeatedly told, both of which strengthened the stereotypical constructions of Kurdish people. Time-wise, these incidents fell very close to my field stay. I undertook field research in two phases: the first phase was from May to mid June,

173 “…Bazen en çok kıldığım şey otobüste olsun veya böyle başka yerlerde filan Kürtçe filan konuşuyorlar. Öyle şeylere ben çok kızıyorum. Tamam, madem burada yaşıyorsun, kendi ailenin yanında konuşabilirsin ama ne bileyim dişar yerde, ben uyun bulmuyorum ama tabi onların fıkri nasıldır bilemiyorum, daha baskalarının filan. Öyle konuştukları zaman yani, sanki şey gibi bir baskıurma gibi, ya işte biz burada yaşıyoruz ama sizin dilinizi konuşmak zorunda değiliz gibilerinden, hani çok Trakyalı hissettiğlerini düşünmüyoruz, biraz yardım edenler varmış, PKK olaylarında filan öyle şeyler de duyuyoruz” (case 12)

174 Here I am using Sartre’s parallel understanding where he states: “But the Other is still an object to me. He belongs to my distances; the man is there, twenty paces from me, he is turning his back on me” (Sartre 1966, 255)
which was close to the time when Newroz was celebrated for the first time in the
neighbourhood by Kurdish people; and the second phase started by the end of June
and lasted until the end of August, 2012. By June 30th, a bomb was found on empty land
in the neighbourhood, buried under the soil. According to the local newspaper, a former
PKK guerrilla, who came down from the mountain to settle in with his father, brought the
bomb. The bomb was to be used against the military barracks located at the town centre.
The local newspaper also stated that it was the father of the former guerrilla who reported
the bomb to the police. These two incidents supported the stereotype of
“separatist/terrorist Kurds.”

Recalling the Newroz events, a 25-year-old participant (case 15, 25 years old,
male, third-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant) was convinced that Kurdish people
chose the neighbourhood as “a pilot area … a place to gather … and they came with their
own flags to disseminate PKK propaganda.” Another 45-year-old participant
emphasized the bombing incident and asked: “what if we understand in the end that we
nourished a viper in our bosom? I mean how are we going to have a relationship with the
people, who are responsible for our martyrs?” (case 35, 45 years old, male, second
generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant). These narratives demonstrated that stereotypes
were not based on some imaginary fantasy but they were formed by how an event was

175 Newroz, Kurdish traditional celebration for the coming of Spring, is celebrated on March 21st to 23rd. Before the Spring, 2012, Newroz was celebrated by Turkish nationalists at the town centre. In that sense, 2012 Newroz celebrations marked a significant attention from the town centre as well as from the neighbourhood, as the Kurdish people themselves celebrated it.
176 “… yani pilot bölge burayı seçmişler … yani toplama yeri…onlar bayraklarla geldiler yani. PKK propagandası yapmaya geldiler.” (Case 15)
177 “…Yarın öbür gün, ya yılan besledik koynumuzda durumu olur mı? Yani bizim çocuklarımızı şehit edenlerle nasıl ilişki kuracağız…?”
constructed. In this case, both of the events were constructed through fear of the other. Thus, community heuristics were based on reinterpretation of stereotypes of incidents.\(^{178}\)

Stereotypes are partial knowledge. They are assembled and reassembled in daily conversations. Segregation and legitimizing the segregation based on ethnic difference was a part of family conversation and/or everyday dialogues with neighbours. So, it was normalized. I had the opportunity to observe this phenomenon during one of my in-depth interviews where the actual participant was present with her husband, son, and another neighbour.

Q: So how do you evaluate the relationships between the locals and the newcomers?
Participant 1: we have no relationship. It is hard to get on well with the Easterners. They have good and bad ones …but, it is different to have acquaintances, of course. Well I do not want to discriminate between easterners and immigrants (muhacir). However, easterners are a bit different.
Q: how so?
Participant 2: Do you have difficulties in communication?
Participant 3: They do not speak with us.
Q: where? You see them when you are walking?
Participant 3: yes … well, now for example Macedonians (makedonlar), they would not speak in Albanian when they are with a person who does not know it. However, it is not like that with Kurds. That is because they feel like they are excluded.
Participant 1: well I mean they can speak (their own language) they have the freedom.
Participant 2: well they speak it and then you hold back because you do not understand.
Participant 1: well they have angry attitudes. If you have a little quarrel, they have weapons. But we (Muslim-Balkan immigrants)

\(^{178}\) The bombing incident was true and according to the limited number of interviews that I undertook in the Kurdish side of the neighbourhood, where I had the opportunity to make contact with another member of the family of the former guerilla concerned with the bombing incident. He told me that the bombing incident was an unfortunate individual attempt and something that they did not want, especially where the segregated relationship between the two neighborhoods was concerned.
don’t do like that? (bizde var mı öyle şey?) They threaten to shoot you. They are different people after all. We cannot get on well with them. If they were a little bit furious, they would get out their guns. But we (Muslim-Balkan immigrants) don’t do like that? (Bizde var mı öyle şey?) … But we have got very crowded, really.

Participant 4: I would never say hi.
Q: so they are not like Roma people?
Participant 1: Roma people are a lot better believe me. I am sorry for saying this but they are gypsies and yet they are closer.
Participant 4: they [Kurds] grow up with guns. (In case 29) 

This conversation with multiple participants framed Kurdish people, as “different” when compared to the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Ethnicity was silenced with words like “them” or Easterners, which directly located Muslim-Balkan immigrants as westerners. During other interviews, lowering voice, as if some hidden secret was shared, strengthened horror or discomfort in using direct ethnic definitions. Silencing ethnic connotation of the Kurd was often realized by either referencing “They” [Onlar],

179 Soru (S): Peki ilişkiler nasıl yerlilerle yeni gelenler arasında?
Katılımcı 1 (K1): İlişki sıfır. Doğularla anlaşmak zor. İyisi de var, kötüsü de var....Tanıdık olması daha farklı tabi. Muhacirle doğulu ayrımcı yapmak istemiyorum ama doğulular daha bir farklı.
S: Nasıl farklı?
K2: İletişimde zorlanıyor mu?
K3: Bizimle konuşuyorlar ki.
S: Nerede? Mahallede yürürken mi görürsünüz?
K3: Evet...Şimdi mesela makedonlar, bilmeyen birinin yanında Arnavutça konuşmazlar ama kürtlere böyle değil. Onlar kendilerini dışlanmış gibi hissettiğlerinden.
K1: Ya tamam o serbest, o konuşulabilir de.
K2: Yani onlar konuşuyorlar, sen de çekiniyorsun anlamsıyorsun çünkü.
… ama çok kariştık, gerçekten kariştık.
K4: Ben katıyen selam vermem.
S: Pek romanlar gibi değil yanı, öyle mi?
K1: Romanlar daha iyi beya, affedersin çingenedirler ama daha yakın bak vallahi.
K4: Onlar çocukluktan silahla büyüyorlar.
in other words, without using the name and/or the Easterners [Doğulular] or Anatolians [Anadolular] interchangeably.\(^{180}\)

Bora and Şen (2009) emphasize that the Balkan immigrants were considered as the strangers as opposed to Anatolians, especially by more ultra-nationalist and racist ideologues, such as Nihal Atsız and Osman Yüksel between 1940 and 1950.\(^{181}\) This was a political reaction against the ethnic composition of the elites in power and their social engineering project for defining and instrumentalizing the “Turkish nation,” which almost exclusively located Anatolia as “terra incognita” (unknown lands) (Bora and Şen 2009).\(^{182}\) Powerful sovereignty projects such as nation (alist) state-building projects are moved by naming, that is, the name serves as a means to exclusion via inclusion (Agamben 1998; also see Kadioğlu 2013). Yet there is no way of knowing whether the separation between Anatolians vs. Balkanites has historically continued as a distinguishing community feeling or project and was collapsed on Anatolians/Kurds vs. Thracians. Nevertheless, naming Kurds as opposed to Thracians, as part of an issue of “regional backwardness, political reaction, tribal resistance and an issue of underdevelopment” (Yeğen 1999) is a long-term effect of the official state discourse, which understood and constructed the Kurdish issue as such, especially via media accounts.

\(^{180}\) It was often a curiosity for me during the interviews whether my participants meant to be talking about the other migrants, who were not Kurdish. As a result, I had to have reassurance continuously, by asking if they were referring to the Kurdish neighborhood.

\(^{181}\) See also Ergin (2008) and Maksudyan (2005).

\(^{182}\) From another vantage point, although the official elite discourse employed the a “dual geographic framework” (Copeaux 1998, 32; Altinay 2004), which located Muslim-Balkan immigrants as return migration to Anatolia, after generations, and the Turkish History Thesis was the benchmark, as mentioned in the previous Chapter, the returned homeland was not knowable and/or countable anymore.
It is further possible to tackle internal orientalism that was articulated by Muslim-Balkan immigrant narratives as a baseline framework for ethnic racialization. For example, using the Kurdish language in public places among Muslim-Balkan immigrants who did not have the knowledge of Kurdish was constructed as exclusionary. The reason for exclusion that has arisen with regard to the use of Kurdish language was again collapsed on the fact that Kurdish people were feeling excluded. Thus, the responsibility with regard to problematic cohabitation of neighbourhood spatiality did not ever surface as a matter of concern. In parallel, use of weapons, and/or angry attitudes by Kurdish people all further suggested barbaric and violent stereotypes of Kurds, which articulated feelings of “terror” and “horror.” These structures of feeling are in dialogue (just like in an actual dialogue) with the idea of exclusion while silencing ethnicity with “orientation” (Easterner). Within this context, the very last comment in case 29 above, emphasizing the “inherited” Kurdish behaviours, did not suggest a natural/biological inheritance but it rather stood for cultural inheritance. This remark particularly spoke to Kurdish people’s habits in the previously inhabited land (the Eastern part of Turkey), which were seen as disruptive, as opposed to those of Muslim-Balkan immigrants. That is “how spaces acquire the shape of the bodies that “inhabit” them” (Ahmed 2007, 156).

**Habitual Worlds and the White Hole of Ethnic Racialization**

Relations of proximity and/or structures of racialized spatialities have a continuous history, despite that as the racialization process changes across time and space in a specific neighbourhood, whiteness “stands out” and by doing so it survives. Thus, ethnic racialization “lags behind” (Ahmed 2007, 156) by making “the others” noticeable. We
can think of the process of racialization as a “white hole,” which determines who is oriented towards it or not. This white hole makes “who is not at home” visible. For the neighbourhood in question here, it was not the first time that relations of (in)visibility were first formed by the arrival of Kurdish people. In an interview with a participant at the far end of the neighbourhood close to the main road, he emphasized that Pomaks used to be the scapegoats, and they often were seen as the disrupters of the neighbourhood habitual life. According to him, the same thing was now happening with the Kurds, for their habits and ways of living are different in the place they came from:

Question (Q): so in the past, it was always the Pomaks who were blamed?
Participant: yes, of course, Pomaks were always blamed … but these people [Kurds] are workers here. When they first arrived, they used to let loose their animals. I mean that is how they do it in Anatolia. There are no pastures [in the neighbourhood] and so, they let them loose, and the animals wander around the whole day. They do not farm like here. They tried to continue the same life here and they caused (agricultural wise) losses. They did not have the consciousness as well and they received bad reactions. For example, one of them goes and takes plums from a tree without asking. S/he does not realize that it is a bad thing to do. And, when you tell them, s/he reacts against you because s/he thinks that it is normal [to take a plum from a tree without asking]. These things increase racist discourses. (case 39, 56 years old, male, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

183 In the local meaning, Pomak refers to Balkan Christians who became Muslims, long before they migrated to Thrace region. Unlike other Muslim-Balkan immigrants, they spoke Bulgarian as their first language. It is important to point that I only refer to this quarter of the neighborhood as the far end because I mainly started to work through the settlements close to the railway station and then moved down to the road, binding the town centre and the neighborhood.

184 Soru (S): Eskiden pomaklar itham edilir miydi?

172
One of the most powerful ways of ethnic visibility is how the other inhabits space. That is closely linked to how neighbourly relations are formed and negotiated historically in the past in association with how open it is to accommodate the habits of “the strange other” in the current time. The neighbourly relations of sharing crops in the neighbourhood were based on private property. The relative surplus that is earned either from gardens (around the houses) or the fields is usually either stocked and/or sold to local markets. In that sense, taking anything without asking the owner from the trees or gardens was considered as “thievery.” As mentioned in the quotation above, many of the newcomer Kurdish populations are workers in the construction sector and also deal with animal husbandry for their own consumption. According to limited number of interviews within the Kurdish quarter, \(^{185}\) Kurdish people saw some fruit trees for the first time in the neighbourhood, as many of the fruits were not grown in the place that they came from. Nevertheless, the real problem here does not lie in the difference of agricultural production but in how different habitation practices were assembled by Muslim-Balkan immigrant residents into the very stereotype of Kurdish people as disrupters of everyday life. This assemblage was further blamefully framed around where Kurdish people come from and how they lived “there.” In a similar fashion, another participant told that Kurdish people do not feel they belong here; if they did, “they would not have harmed local people’s property.”(Case 12, 24 years old, woman, third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant). She further complained that Kurdish people even stole sewage lids and

\(^{185}\) For more see Chapter 6 of this dissertation.
concluded that they behave like that because “their hearts are in somewhere else, in the place where they came from.”

It is possible to read through an amplified degree of nostalgic arrogance with regard to the ways Muslim-Balkan immigrants live in the neighbourhood when compared to the habits of Kurdish people. Feelings of arrogance and pride are situated and legitimized by local ethnic histories and experience of immigration to Turkey. Muslim-Balkan immigrants “muhacirler” in the local tongue, was repeatedly used as an identifying category in moral opposition when narrating Kurdish migration to the neighbourhood. Many of the first generation immigrants engaged in agricultural production; which is also what the official policy aimed for the Muslim-Balkan immigrants until the end of the 1960s. Thus, many of the personal narratives articulated ethnic difference by emphasizing how first-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrants took care of the land, planted trees, and sowed crops. From another angle, these accounts highlighted successful integration of Muslim-Balkan immigrants into the Thrace region of Turkey. Thus such narratives single out and legitimize the Kurds as disrupters of everyday life in a very institutionalized way, through locating nostalgic agrarian and neighbourhood landscape history at the centre of Muslim-Balkan immigrant culture:

Q: Were there any problems with the newcomers?  
Participant: well, here Yugoslavian immigrants inhabit the quarter behind the mosque; the upper side of the mosque belongs to Bulgarian immigrants. … Actually, since people here are Muslim-

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186 “Öyle şey olsu buraya sahip çıkarlar veya burda yaşayan halkın malına zarar vermezler veya ne bileyim şu belediye logar çukurları oluyor ya onların üzerindeki kapakları dahi alıyorlar, çalıyorlar. Yani o kadar buralı olarak hissetse, bu kadar zarar vermezler yani. Hissetmiyorlar bence. Hala akılları orada geldikleri yerde.” (case 12)
Balkan immigrants (*muhacir*), there were not many problems. There were problems right at the beginning. People who settled there (the Kurdish neighbourhood), cut down the trees along the river (Lüleburgaz river), they damaged the gardens. I mean think of this: my father comes here at the age of eight, and they did not cut trees even for heating purposes, they burned sunflower stems. I mean they [Kurds] came one night and ripped off the vegetable garden but when they did that, they were rarely challenged.187 (Case 35, 45 years old, male, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

The government gave them [Muslim-Balkan immigrants] 10 decare of land … some of them still do agriculture but some of them sold their land and moved to Istanbul because of Ergene river pollution. They learned things from us, and we have learned some things from them. Knowledge exchange has occurred … I mean mixed marriages have happened, there were intermarriages, and well they have adjusted to here. But currently, the ones who do harm here [the neighbourhood, as a whole] in other words, ones who do not comply with the customs here are Easterners. (case 13, over 70 years old, male, gacal, non-immigrant resident of the neighbourhood)188

While immigration memory was reassembled to underline Kurdish people as disrupters, Muslim immigrants were still seen as tolerant people, especially towards Kurdish newcomers. Tolerance is an important aspect of the racialization process, which

187 Soru (S): Sorunlar yaşadı mı peki yeni gelenlerle?
Katılımcı (K): Burada caminin alt taraflı Yugoslavya göçmeni, üstü Bulgaristan göçmeni, bir de iki gacal vardır. ... Şimdi burada insanlar muhacir oldukları için çok sorun da yaşamadı aslında. İlk zamanlar skintulur sorunlar yaşadı. O tarafa (Kürt mahallesine) yerleşen halk, dere boyundaki ağaçları kestiler, bahçeleri zarar verdiler. Düşün ki; babam 8 yaşındayken buraya geliyor, kısalı sık看得, ayçiçeği kökünü yakıyorlar bizimkiler. İşte geldiler, mesela işte o gece bostanları koparırlar, ama onlar koparınca da onlara çatan pek olmadı. (Case 35)

positions Muslim-Balkan immigrants as the master of the neighbourhood—in other words, home, where Kurdish people become subjected to the laws, including customs used for sharing crops across neighbouring homes.¹⁸⁹

Narrating history, especially through personal accounts, is a continuous process. In other words, local histories are dynamic and can shift in accordance with how the relationship with the surrounding environment of humans (and non-humans) is formed. They shape how the stranger is viewed but also the presence of the stranger re-narrates local histories. Here, history is multiple even if there might be commonalities and/or family resemblances across multiple local histories. Such a multiplicity may depend on class, ethnicity, and gender, but also age is an important factor in understanding the different re-narrations of immigration experience. In that sense, the discourses of second-generation immigrants, whose ages are greater than 40 years, usually express emphasis over first-generation immigration experiences, and articulate discourses of tolerance, while minoritizing Kurdish people.

Younger generations of Muslim-Balkan immigrants do not necessarily speak about tolerance towards Kurdish people. Their narratives were more bluntly segregationist. Such an aspect became visible during an in-depth interview with a 17-year-old male participant, who has Muslim-Balkan immigrant ancestors, where he told: “Thracians are generally more warm hearted and well educated compared to the Easterners” (case 20, 18 years old, male, third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant). While we were having the interview, his father paid a visit for a short amount of time to

¹⁸⁹ For a deeper analysis on discourses of hospitality and tolerance, see Bell (2010) and Yegenoğlu (2003).
bring us tea, heard what his son was saying and interrupted by warning him not to
discriminate against “Easterners” because, according to him, “Thracians did have their
own faults.” Here, my participant’s father’s interruption suggested that there are both
good and bad Thracians just like there are bad Kurds and good Kurds. My participant’s
father’s construction of Kurdish people articulated minoritizing language as it still used
the fixed category of ethnicity, as orientation. Nevertheless, both of them used Thracian
to name Muslim-Balkan immigrants, rather than implying all of the ethnically different
people who were born and lived in the Thrace region. Thus, immigration experience was
narrated in two distinct but related ways, based on age difference: While the father was
insisting on tolerance towards Kurdish people, the son was a lot more clear about the
habitual differences between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the Kurdish people.
This difference might be due to the relative loss of immigration memory in the younger
generations, as they usually do not identify themselves as Muslim-Balkan immigrants
anymore. As a matter of fact, many of them, including my 17-year-old participant, do not
specifically know where their ancestors came from, without asking their parents.
Forgetting the immigration experience transforms how younger generations view local
neighbourhood history and, in this case, this resulted in more segregationist and blunt
ways of racializing Kurdish people, especially the ones living in the neighbourhood.
Father–son conflict on the matter of discrimination against Kurdish people did not
resolve and my 17-year-old participant insisted what he was saying was not
discriminatory.
I do not necessarily argue that the discourse of tolerance and remembrance of the immigration experience, when narrating the changing ethnic composition of the neighbourhood, would have been less discriminatory. I rather suggest that the official state discourse of migration, mentioned in the earlier chapter, has been instrumental in imposing an imagined Turkish nation that has shifted into more blunt and aversive ethnic racialization among younger generations of Muslim-Balkan immigrants, especially towards the Kurdish quarter in the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, just because there are age-related differences in narrating the event of “Kurdish people settling in the neighbourhood,” it does not necessarily suggest that discourses of tolerance have completely disappeared among the youth. Indeed, the bad and good Kurds distinction discussed earlier can also be read as an assemblage between the discourse of tolerance and segregationist ethnic racialization.

Relatively popular stereotypes of Kurdish people as disrupters of everyday life among the Muslim-Balkan immigrant community in the neighbourhood can be due to a set of factors. Failed attempts of “democratization processes” are one of the obvious aspects for the widespread stereotype. A second reason is the expansion of the Kurdish quarter in the neighbourhood since the late 1970s, which made the migration event visible—in other words, undeniable—by the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Furthermore, the land that the Kurdish settlement is built on does not have a zoning permit, which sets it as an illegal occupation. Electricity and water are illegal. Muslim-Balkan immigrants can sometimes associate illegal status of the land with the opportunism of Kurdish people, in taking advantage of the empty land:
Their electricity is illegal, their water is illegal … I mean all is illegal. For example, I ask the electrician boy and he knows that their electricity is illegal. I mean, there was nothing like that in here before and they taught us tricks that we do not know. They do not have any education, first of all. They have an easterner in them. Whatever education they had in there, or whatever they were doing in there, they are trying to do the same thing in here. (Case 32, 53 years old, male, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

Such a depiction exemplified in this quotation referred to the Eastern part of Turkey, as a region where illegal housing practices are common and the Kurdish migrants carried these practices to the Thrace region. Thus not only were popular stereotypes of Kurdish people being the disrupters with regard to owning land in legal terms reinforced; but also, it strengthened the orientalist–nationalist dichotomy between the east and the west by criminalizing the “illegal” land ownership. Thus, the Kurdish quarter of the neighbourhood and Kurdish people were criminalized with a potential for crime; if not already in crime.

Ahmed (2007, 156) emphasizes that the proximal relationship of racialization is “habitual” where “habitual can be thought of as [a] bodily and spatial form of inheritance”. It is through the very spatial characteristic of racialization that “spaces acquire the ‘skin’ of the bodies that inhabit them”(Ahmed 2007, 157). Thus, some of the spaces become comfortable (and/or uncomfortable) for some bodies, compared to others. In this way, whiteness functions as “a form of public comfort (and/or discomfort as well) by allowing bodies to extend into spaces that have already taken their shape” (Ahmed

This public comfort feeds on “innocence” (Razack 2002; Baldwin, Cameron, and Kobayashi 2011), disavowal of the racialized violence of the past and the present.

Turkish nationalism has had a unique relationship with whiteness in building racialized ethnic hierarchies from early on during the 1930s when the Turkish nation(alist) story was invented. Ergin (2008) emphasizes that ethnic racialization since the early Republican era still lives in the racial vocabularies circulating in everyday life. Within this context, racial vocabularies can range from particular fascination with skin colour to not/pronouncing ethnic identities; thus racial vocabularies become useful in defining, building, and rebuilding “comfortable habitual worlds.”

Within the context of the neighbourhood, one of the facets of establishing “comfortable habitual worlds” is criminalization of racial stereotypes by representing the Kurdish quarter as a potentially criminal place like “a closed box,” bringing Kurdish people under suspicion. A 40-year-old male participant, who is a second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant expressed that he does not understand “how Easterners [in the neighbourhood] have so much money” (case 21) while expressing his suspicion with regard to the source of their income. Another 50-year-old male participant complained about the parsimoniousness of the Kurdish Quarter with an implication that the Kurdish Quarter is a closed community like a dark continent: “we sometimes organize weddings at the school garden and the families donate 250 Turkish liras to the school. People from

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191 For example see Altinay (2004) and Ergin (2008).
Everyday nationalism and racialization of ethnicity work across dichotomous contradictions. Thus, racial stereotypes make particular ethnicities recognizable while making them invisible. For example, Kurdish racial stereotypes—particularly the ones that depict Kurdish people as inheritors of illegal housing and suspicions over the income of the Kurdish people—carve out the history of Kurdish displacement and make it invisible while reducing and limiting the act of migration to Muslim-Balkan immigrant experience. From the point of view of the narratives it also makes it visible in terms of socio-spatial difference as in the case of “Kurdish neighbourhood” like a “dark continent”; and thus, the discourse of whiteness works like a big white hole where blackness becomes visible across a white background (Ahmed 2007). And, that is how dichotomous imaginaries embedded in stereotypes are formed to produce and reproduce racialized habitual worlds of ethnic segregation.

As I attempted to illustrate in this section, Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood were depicted as potential criminals. This stereotypical view expands across multiple levels of everyday life, from Kurdish people being disrupters of gardens and neighbourhood affairs established by Muslim-Balkan immigrants prior to Kurdish migration, to illegality of Kurdish settlement and living in the Kurdish Quarter. I consider such everyday arrays of stereotypical thinking within the context of a “family of

meanings” (Harvey 1996, 330). When the national, regional, and neighbourhood families are constructed by the habitual worlds of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, this family of meanings was diverse and diffused in different layers of the neighbourhood everydayness. Nevertheless, we should not understand this family of meanings as a way to powerful domination without any contradictions. Stereotypes are contradictory when seen from a holistic perspective. Dwelling in the habitual worlds of racialization is important to understand where contradictions lie across the relationalities of stereotypes. In the next section, I will concentrate much more on the contradictions across stereotypes in order to provide a more unstable view of the racialized ethnic segregation in the neighbourhood.

Uses and Abuses of Stereotypes: They are not the Victims

Stereotypes bear contradictions across each other and/or in between their relationality. It is through the power of relationality imposing silent and/or disavowed contradictions that, for example, the non-victim position of the Kurdish people is legitimized across Muslim-Balkan immigrants and in their discourse of Balkan immigrant whiteness. Within this context, success stories of (some) Kurdish people serves as means, “to prove equality.” A “Kurdish people are not poor” narrative may also be thought of as a discourse reinforcing the idea that Kurdish people are not victims and/or oppressed (like it is known): “They [Kurds] own all the bakeries in the town centre, they own other
sectors as well. Otherwise, they would have been assimilated” (case 32, 53 years old, male, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant).  

It is further important to view these racialized contradictions as products of “epistemic murk” (Biner 2006), that is an important repertoire of Kurdish-Turkish conflict, particularly “politics of victimhood” between the state and PKK (Biner 2006). As such, media narratives and images depicting “the mirroring relationship between the state and ‘the terrorists’ as perpetrators of the conflict” normalize and legitimize violence while turning “the victim into an elusive subject of violence”(Biner 2006, 350). That means that media politics of victimhood pin the non-victim position of the victim while constituting an “epistemic murk,” which articulates a very productive (in the sense of the power-laden) ethno-nationalist discourse, which is at the root of legitimizing violence.

For the case of the two communities in the neighbourhood, non-victim positioning of the Kurdish people, iterated by many of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, does serve as a basis for denying ethnic discrimination that Kurdish people face. Albeit different from the relationship between the Turkish state and PKK politics of victimhood in the media and/or the armed conflict they perpetuate, a “they are not poor” narrative together with the potential criminality of the Kurdish neighbourhood—just like “the victim as an elusive subject of violence”—occupied an important place in the process of stereotyping. These depictions readily implied that Muslim-Balkan immigrants were more victimized when compared to the Kurdish people.

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194 “Bütün pastaneler ellerinde. Bilmem nelerin ellerinde. Aksi takdirde eritirler adami zaten...” (case 32)
In highlighting the non-victim position of Kurdish people in the neighbourhood, Muslim-Balkan immigrants spoke of Kurdish stereotype(s) occasionally by their positive traits during conversations. Kurds were depicted as hardworking, strong, and collective (specifically meaning, Kurds stand in solidarity with each other) (*birlik*). In two of the interviews below, where two of my elderly participants, second generation Muslim-Balkan women, brought forth collectiveness of the Kurdish people living in the Kurdish neighbourhood while also emphasizing their determined efforts to earn money by being silver-tongued.

Q: So, how do you think their financial condition is that good?  
Participant 1: well they are doing it. They earn money.  
Q: well if they are workers, how do they earn that much?  
Participant 3: they earn it. They have their own homes. They work hard. They have their own eloquence; I mean they speak [to us] with saying mummy, and/or sister. They are hard-workers. (case 1 participant 3, 65 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\(^{195}\)

… They are very smart, well for one you look and they are living in the same house but then you look again and they have built their separate houses. They have their animals on the streets but they are in alliance with each other. … I mean, our people [Muslim-Balkan immigrants] should work and achieve the same thing. See we have 35 decare of land here. I mean the land is ours and two of my brothers should come and plant things. … Their wives are not working, they are not working and then they say, we did not get land from the grandfather. My father gave this land to us and we worked hard to build this house. If the [local] people in here work

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\(^{195}\) Soru (S): E peki durumları nasıl bu kadar iyi oluyor?  
S: E işçilerse nasıl bu kadar kazanabiliyorlar?  
K3: Kazanıyorlar, evleri var. Çok çalışıyorlar. Bir dilleri var: ‘ablacım, annecim’ diyorlar. Bir çalışıyorlar. (case 1)
like this [us], then they achieve things on their own … (case 4, +50 years old, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)\textsuperscript{196}

“Solidarity, collectivism, hard work, and unity” when used in narratives as such, were full of multilayered meanings. Structures of solidarity give way to the processes of hegemony and/or counter-hegemonic projects about place and power. They highlight different encounters with the state while also revealing place-based transformations that reconfigure ethnic-class positions and privileges. Both of the narratives above articulated a certain sense of nostalgia for the past, “creating cultures of loss” (Baldwin 2012). In the cases of the above quotes, feelings of loss were set on the loss of economic privileges led by prioritization of industrial development over agrarian production. In other words, this nostalgia was a by-product of the racialized and state-sponsored ecological economy, which was transformed throughout the 1990s and 2000s by gradual liberalization and neoliberalization of agricultural and industrial economies and/or the state in general, in Turkey. Within this context, ethnic difference in the narratives below, all of which embraced “cultures of loss,” spoke about loss of privilege, especially at the Muslim-Balkan immigrant end, while ethnic difference was further collapsed on the transformed class differences, but more specifically on class mobility, of the Kurdish people.

Turkey has undergone multiple economic, social, and political transformations since 1980. State-led development policies and their resolution after the 1990s, in

\textsuperscript{196} “Ama çok akıllılar, noldu bir evde hepsi otururlar, sonra bir hakarsın evler dikilmiş, hayvanat dolu ama birlik var… bizim insanlarımızı da çalışın yapın. Bak bizim 35 dekar yerimiz var, iki kardeşim, gelip ekin dikin. yer bizim … karları çalışıyor, kendileri çalışıyor ondan sonra yok, dededen kalmadi…Benim babamın elinde yoktu. Bu yeri verdi bize, biz ikimiz ekin dikin … ama Anadolu’dan gelenler öyle işte çalışiyorlar.” (Case 4)
addition to the Kurdish displacement and migration as a result of the Turkish military operations in the Eastern parts of Turkey, led to three different class positions in terms of property ownership and labour relations: semi-proletarianization with informal property relations in the city (Kayıtdışı yollarla kısmi proleterleşme); seasonal proletarianization (Geçici süreli proleterleşme); and semi-proletarianisation due to forced dispossession (Zorla mülksüzleştirmeye dayalı kısmi proleterleşme) (Keyder and Yenal 2013).

The first position stands for having informal housing in the city while maintaining the land and other agricultural relations with the village (or the county). Agricultural production was for sustaining the children in the city and/or was going to the elderly living either in the city or the village/county. Agricultural production was very useful and even necessary for the migrants who would come down financially in the city (İşık and Pınarcıoğlu 2013; Keyder and Yenal 2013). On the other hand, second-class position encompasses migrants whose residency is still in the village or the county but would go for seasonal work to another place. That practice is especially seen in seasonal tourism labour, in the western parts of Turkey. The last class position is unique to Kurdish displacement and defines the situation of the Kurdish migrants who were victimized by the military’s forceful evictions and/or for lack of security in their villages, located in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of Turkey. These people’s relationship with the rural is completely devastated and they are dependent on the precarious informal employment in the city and/or dependent on the state’s welfare (Keyder and Yenal 2013). Within this context, internally displaced Kurdish people became the reserve army of cheap labour,
especially in the metropolitan areas and in their surrounding peripheries (Yükseker 2009; Yörüklü 2012).

The proletarianization processes are meaningful if we understand them as processes (rather than rigid blocks) that are endlessly emerging in different places. Despite the city-based focus (rather than the urban (ization) in the Lefebvrian sense (Lefebvre 2003 [1970]) in the Keyder and Yenal (2013) theory of proletarianization in Turkey, it is still possible to read some of these processes across the narratives of Muslim-Balkan immigrants, highlighting stereotypical ethnic differences with the Kurdish migrants in terms of “solidarity, collectivism, hard work and unity.”

Muslim-Balkan immigrants emphasized two main themes when speaking of solidarity, collectivism, hard work, and the unity of the Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood. The first one was based on a narrative of “sly Kurds,” when referring to Kurdish migrants’ dependency on state welfare, encompassing the depiction of Kurds as welfare scroungers. In addition Kurds were narrated as people who defend their rights against the state when compared to Muslim-Balkan immigrants. This concept presented Muslim-Balkan immigrants as innocent conformists in comparison. A second theme was based on traditional versus modern solidarity nexus: Muslim-Balkan immigrants highlighted that traditional solidarity they used to have in the neighbourhood was lost and they became more modern; in comparison, traditional solidarity among Kurdish people made Kurdish residents of the neighbourhood to be more successful in the new

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197 On another research project Saraçoğlu (2010) about how Kurdish migration was constructed by the middle classes in Izmir, Turkey, stereotypical depiction of Kurds as welfare scroungers was widespread narrative.
competition and/or the transformed economy, according to the Muslim-Balkan immigrants.

Receiving social assistance has been reported to be a social stigma, especially among the new poor.¹⁹⁸ For example, Keyder and Buğra (2003) highlight the act of receiving welfare as a racialized stigma. Depending on the interviews with welfare recipients, they emphasize that social assistance recipients with non-Kurdish background speak about the easterners’ habit of receiving assistance (doğuluların yardıma alılsığısı) as a typical reference to such racialization (Keyder and Buğra 2003, 45). In parallel, the Sly Kurd narrative encompassed racialization of welfare much more common than it was anticipated in Keyder and Buğra (2003) research on new poverty. The first narrative below (case 6), for example, stressed the interest of Kurdish people in getting what was provided by the state, which explained to her the reason why Kurdish people would run after their rights. As a middle-aged mom, this participant (case 6) further complained about Kurdish people for not making school donations used to repair the school and buy educational materials, for she blamed it on Kurdish people’s neglect of their own children. In parallel, the second narrative (case 8) talked about high numbers of children that Kurdish people have, which according to her was the cause for Kurdish dependency on state assistance. When compared to the former narrative (case 6), she more strongly articulated the discourse of “Kurds are not poor.” Thus, according to her, Kurds had stronger capacity for slyness as they had lots of children but they laid children’s responsibility on the state, almost like a burden:

¹⁹⁸ There is a lack of research on how the poor construct and/or understand welfare in Turkey. For such limited research please see: Yılmaz (2013), Bora et al. (2011) and Keyder and Buğra (2003).
They definitely do receive welfare support. You know the welfare support that the state sends to the schools. People that are inspected by the school are receiving this support, definitely; but maybe, they are defending their rights to the end. I mean they go and reapply to the district governorship, ask why their children did receive the support last year but did not get it this year. They for sure, use their rights to its end. School needs are met via donations and they [Kurdish people] say they will not donate money to it. Our people [Muslim-Balkan immigrants] are far more cooperative (*mulayim*). They would not let it go any further. Our people would think not to victimize their own children [by not giving away the donation] and I think the best solution is not to victimize your own children. Local people here are far tenderer minded just because they would not want somebody to ask his/her child for why they did not give school fees. I think they [Kurdish people] do not value their children. (Case 6, 36 years old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)  

Participant (P): Well, there are some fees to be paid to the school and they do not provide them. This affects other children as well.  
Question (Q): but maybe the reason why they [Kurds] do not give money is due to their financial situation?  
Participant: nope, they want the state to give them money.  
Q: and that is what they say?  
P: yes, majority of them have two or three floor houses. We know that they do. I mean we are human beings as well. But we do not give birth to five or six children why? Because we want to give birth to a number of children that we can take care of. They have to do the same thing as well. They all have cell phones on their hands.

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but when it comes to giving 2 million liras to the school, they do not give it. Whenever state aid comes to the school, they are the first to run to get it. (Case 8, 36 years old, woman, third-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

The Turkish state does have welfare support for poor families to cover school expenses. This type of support aims to increase the attendance of students with a poor family background and thus continues to provide child support as long as the student goes to school and attends his/her classes. Although there is very little research on who is targeted with this type of state support, especially in terms of religious and ethnic variables; Yörüğ (2012) argues that ethnic group belonging largely determines whether the social assistance by the state is provided or not. He further emphasizes that social assistance is largely provided to Kurdish territories, not limited by the Eastern and Southeastern parts of Turkey but also by places with Kurdish populations settled in metropolitan areas. This tendency is targeting to alleviating social unrest rather than poverty per se (Yörüğ 2012). In a neighbourhood setting, where multiple stereotypical discourses about Kurdishness circulated, to be strengthened by a general social stigma on receiving state welfare and the Turkish state’s targeting of Kurds for social assistance, ethnic conflict was in a way exacerbated. This conflict was revealed in stereotypical and
dichotomous depictions of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants as more cooperative compared to Kurds, who were depicted as being sly and defenders of their rights.

“They [Kurds] are not poor” and “the sly Kurd” narratives were often expressed together when Muslim-Balkan immigrants emphasized that they would not receive welfare. In one of my field visits, I had the chance to speak with a government inspector (participant 3, below) who designated the state’s social assistance. During our focus group interview, where two other second-generation (participant 4 and participant 1) Muslim-Balkan immigrants were present, the government official expressed that there were only two or three people from the Muslim-Balkan immigrant side that received coal aid during winter. He further linked this attitude of not receiving the aid to the traditional solidarity among Muslim-Balkan immigrants:

Q: are there any locals (meaning, Muslim-Balkan immigrants) that receive the coal aid?
Participant 4: if there are 100–150 people from their side [Kurdish side], receiving coal aid, there are only 3 people here.
Q: but maybe for those people who are financially in need, it can be different.
Participant 3: no, actually people (Muslim-Balkan immigrants) who are financially in need do not turn to the state. They do not receive aid from the state just because it is the state. For example, I know some of them, whose financial conditions are not that good, but they do not want to be a burden (to the state).
Participant 1: look, here when there is a family, who is financially in need, people would help them out.
Participant 3: well those people that we would call poor would help even if it were little that they can afford … well, people here are more traditionalists. … I mean you know the things that happened during the civil war and so, a fellow would be in great need (for aid) but s/he would not ask for social assistance from the state. They think that a close neighbour would help out. (case 32)\textsuperscript{201}

\textsuperscript{201} “Soru (S): Peki, kömür alan yerli halktan kimse var mı?
It is not exactly possible to know if unwillingness in receiving social assistance from the state was due to social stigma on social assistance in general. Nevertheless, even if the phenomenon was based on the myth of a certain gratitude and the memory of the civil war, as one of my participants suggested, it still strengthened the argument that identity politics of Muslim-Balkan immigrants were woven around Turkishness (Şen 2007). Here, Turkishness not only bears political identity, source of citizenship, standing at the core of neighbourhood solidarity; but it also holds reference to an economy of gratitude. In other words, neighbourhood identities of Muslim-Balkan immigrants were closely linked to their encounter with the Turkish state, where the state provided land for agriculture rather than social assistance to the immigrants in the past, but more importantly, a homeland to which the immigrants can run away from ethnic violence in the Balkans. It is through this economy of gratitude that nationalism is still a continuing everyday practice.

The role of the state in welfare provision and just re-distribution changed dramatically globally, but specifically in Turkey it changed with the adoption of the 1982 Constitution right after the 1980 military coup d’état. Thus, the social state of Turkey with its role of the “patrimonial state” (devlet baba) before the 1980s was replaced by a
“spectator state” (seyirci devlet) where responsibilities of the state in redistribution gradually decreased (Koray 2008). Further neoliberalization and again a vast transformation with AKP government, where social assistance began to be used as an economic patch against rapid deterioration of the economic, social, and political rights and welfare (Yörük 2012), economic relations of debt and gratitude were re-constructed.202

Relations of debt and gratitude that are established by social assistance are formed by social and political memory, and vice versa (Yılmaz 2013), which affect decisions of applying for social assistance. In the narrative below, one of my participants constructed the state like a “weak” father figure when trying to provide for its citizens. That is due to the state’s changing role in delivering social assistance, especially to schools, where parents eventually became the source of aid. Such arguments articulating everyday nationalism towards Kurds as they were blamed for not paying for school fees, reproduced segregation on a daily basis while reintroducing the Turkish state with a different representation, like a weak father figure:

Q: Which grade is your daughter attending to?
Participant: My daughter is going to grade 7. It is a great school [The participant’s daughter is attending a different school, located at the county center, rather than the neighbourhood school]. If these fees are asked there, then … I mean smaller schools are much more in need. Well, the state cannot afford to everything. I mean which one of them [schools] can a state reach out to, there are so many schools and so well, they [Kurds] do not pay the fees

202 Thus, for example social assistance served as a means to bind the citizen to the dominant politics, by registering them as the poor (Yörük 2012). As far as the Kurdish poverty is concerned, by the help of state social assistance the so-called “pseudo-citizens” (Yeğen 1999, 2006) were turned into recipients and thus, became “calculable and governable,” not based on their ethnic and religious identities.
Kurdish people were perceived as people who, unlike the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, would defend and demand their rights from the state. This depiction almost characterized Kurds as rebels. In addition, one of the members of the local government, elected to represent the neighbourhood, highlighted that Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood behaved to state institutions, and particularly to their elected officers, as if “they [the state institutions] are obliged to do [whatever they ask for]” and with resentment he asked “why do you [speaking of the Kurds] express yourself to me like that? ... For example, if I do something for everyone, I would be doing something bad to them [Kurds], as if like I would behave differently to them” (case 31, 70 years old, man, second generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant). Similarly, another male participant articulated below that Kurdish people were more prone to standing up for their rights to the extent that they would even disrupt the order of institutions such as not waiting on the hospital line:

They are far less unembarrassed. We lay things clearly when we speak but they [Kurds], when they enter somewhere, they are unembarrassed (yırtıklar). For example, I went to a hospital, right? I would wait on the line because I would be given a number. But

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204 “Doğulu vatandaşların da ben bir serzenişte bulunuyum: devlet kurumlarına karşı "yapmak zorundasin" (gibi bir tavırları var’a getiriyor). Niye bana bu şekilde ifade ediyorsun? ... Ben herkes için birşey yaptıysam mutlaka onlar için doğru yapmadım. Bana biraz daha farklı davrandı gibi.” (Case 31)
they would never wait on the line. (Case 4, +50 years old, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

These narratives were particularly useful in legitimizing the non-victim position of Kurds to the extent that Muslim-Balkan immigrants understood social assistance, received by Kurdish people as unequal treatment and unjust distribution of welfare. Such diverse efforts for legitimizing a non-victim/victim position suggested a racialized politics of victimhood or “oppression Olympics” (Smith 2006). Although oppression Olympics as a term was used by Smith (2006) when referring to power struggles across different social movements, I believe it is also relevant here in illustrating the struggle over “who is the victim?” but more importantly, “who is the victim to be governed by the state?” Oppression Olympics between the two communities was much clearer in the conversations around state-sponsored social assistance and stereotypical depictions of Kurds exerting unity and collectivism. That was due to unequal and unjust encounters with the Turkish state at multiple levels, ranging from relations with regard to ex/inclusion from the Turkish nation and from the neighbourhood, itself.

While this depiction centered on redistributive practices of the state, the second popular depiction was more about the change in the feelings of community and belonging among the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. During interviews with participants articulating such concerns with regard to community dwelling and making, they reflected on the loss

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205 “Onlar, bizden daha yırtıklar. Biz böyle dobra dobra konuşuyoruz ama onlar bir şeye girisiner, daha yırtıklar. Şimdi ben hastaneye gittim değil mi, şirami beklereim çünkü bana bir şey verilmiş de mi? Ama o beklemez, cazgurlığına girer içeri. Başka bir hükümet şeyinde olsun, mesela bir karşılama olsun... Onların istediği olacak, onlar daha yırtıklar o konuda.” (Case 4)
of unity and solidarity, in addition to friendship and altruism, among Muslim-Balkan immigrants while locating solidarity among Kurdish people as a traditional act:

I always exemplify this: look at the solidarity and unity of those people, living just besides us! I observed this unity while I was working. I worked in the east [of Turkey]. When a student comes to Istanbul, s/he won’t just stay at the dormitories. I mean if the student has family; that family would embrace her/him and the student can stay with them. That is their understanding of hospitality. We used to observe this among our friends [who are Kurdish], their relative’s kid would stay with them … this phenomenon does not occur in the Thrace that often. (Case 38, 45 year old, woman, second-generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant)

There is widespread problematization of Kurdishness, especially institutionally, at both global and national scales within the confinements of “tradition” (Koğacíoğlu 2004), just like my participant above articulates. Kurdish traditionalism is depicted as a cross product of feudalism and backwardness when compared to more modern practices, silencing other ethnic and cultural demands, and thus locating ethnic difference within a hierarchy (Koğacíoğlu 2004; Bayır 2013). In the case above (case 38), different than other interviews, traditionalism of the Kurdish people was introduced as something positive, an aspect to be learned from. On the other hand, in a different focus group interview, there was a consensus established on the fact that close-kin marriage was seen to be the causal basis of Kurdish group solidarity that again trivialized ethnic discrimination:

Participant 4: well … we are local people here but we are like enemies to each other but they are not like that.

206 “Her zaman şunu örnek gösteririm, bak insanlar ne kadar insanlar birlikler yan tarafta! Ki ben bunu çalışırken de gördüm. Doğuda da çalıştım. İstanbul’a bir öğrenci geldiğinde kolay kolay yurda gitmez yani tanidiği varsa o aile onu sahiplenir, senelere onun yerinde kalabilir, misafirlik öyledir, arkadaşlarınızdan görür. İşte akrabasının çoğunu gelir… İşte bu bizim Trakya’da fazla olmaz.” (Case 38)
Participant 3: well they are relatives!
Participant 1: One of them [speaking of the Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood] married his aunt’s daughter and another one married his uncle’s daughter. Nothing is a problem to them (case 29) 207

Overall, themes emphasizing unity and solidarity that invaded across stereotypical images of “Sly Kurds who are also the defenders of their rights” stress upon the non-victim position of Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood. On the other hand, traditionalism, according to the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, that was embedded at the core of Kurdish solidarity located difference in a hierarchy, by further implicating that Muslim-Balkan immigrants were more “modern.”

Within the context of the Kurdish neighbourhood, segregation works as a very powerful strategy for boundary marking as it is a community-wide strategy to establish and govern racialized ethnic proximities. By looking at the Southeastern Anatolian project (GAP), 208 Harris (2008) underlines the ambivalence of the Turkish state in governing Southeastern and Eastern parts of Turkey, as “atavistic space,” compared to rest of the Turkey. This depiction of Southeast Anatolia legitimized state assistance and investment for the Kurdish territories (also see Yeğen 1999). In parallel, it is possible to think of Kurdish Quarter as an “ambivalent space of difference” (Harris 2008), which was solidified and reproduced across, racialized stereotypes.

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207 Katılımcı 4 (K4): Yani biz şimdi burada yerli insanlarınız ama biz birbirimize düşman gibiyiz ama onlar değil böyle.
K3: Onlar akraba.
K1: Teyze kızını almış biri, diğeri amca kızını. Onlar için hiç sorun değil (Case 29)
208 The project is one of the biggest development investments of Turkey, involving construction of a dam binding the rivers of Tigris and Euphrates for irrigation alongside with special administrative units to promote socio-economic development where gender equality was one of the main targets (Harris 2008).
Stereotypes “require, for its successful signification, a continual and repetitive chain of other stereotypes” (Bhabha 1994, 71). In the case of the racialized stereotypes in the neighbourhood, a chained world of other stereotypes unfolded in two ways. The first one was with regard to citationality of different discourses across stereotypes, as if stereotypes are in a dialogue with each other. This aspect was obvious in the family meanings across different stereotypes, outlined in this chapter, slightly different than what Bhabha (1994) intends. However, the second chain of other stereotypes connects with continual historical discourse of stereotypification, started long before Kurds’ arrival to the neighbourhood. The act of stereotypification is temporally contagious as they are constructed as consequences of ethnic conflicts (Appiah 2005). This second aspect was largely influential when other ethnic conflicts were considered between locals and the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, in addition to conflicts among different Muslim-Balkan immigrants, coming from different parts of the Balkans. It is by their citationality that stereotypes bear a complexity of meanings, histories, and geographies, where everyday nationalism gains its strength across multiple spatialities, producing invisibilities and/or blind spots. That is also how we should consider the invisibility of Kurdish people, and their settlements within the context of river pollution.
Chapter 6 Taking a Spatial-Racial Walk to the Other Side of the Neighbourhood

In order to reach the Kurdish quarter, I had to walk through the Muslim-Balkan side. As always, I took the bus to the neighbourhood and got off right at the entrance where the coffeehouses were located. It had been approximately 15−20 days since I started visiting the neighbourhood so I was already a familiar face in the Muslim-Balkan side. I greeted the people, chatting at the coffeehouse of the older Muslim-Balkan immigrants where I had interviews a few days before, and then I headed to my informant’s house.\textsuperscript{209} I was a bit anxious as it was going to be our first visit to the Kurdish quarter and I did not exactly know how my informant was going to take it or the ways through which he was going to interfere with my questions. Before we took off to their house, his mother seemed a lot more terrified with our journey, as she constantly warned us to be careful with the Kurdish people.

After briefly calming my informant’s mother down, we started walking to the end of the road leading to the railway and train station. During daytime, the train station area was usually a place where little kids play and/or it is used as a site for taking wedding photographs, as it is a historical building and water fountain. We passed by some of the children playing. Many of them were Muslim-Balkan immigrant children that my informant knew of. Then we followed the road leading to a junction: one of the branches

\textsuperscript{209} My informant was a third generation Muslim-Balkan immigrant man, aged 40 years old. We met at a café located in the county centre. He was immediately interested in my project, as he wanted to make a short movie about the pollution in the Ergene River. Although he did not have a camera at the time, he agreed on going to the neighbourhood together in order to undertake a preliminary expedition on the subject.
going to the formerly state-owned farm, named as Türkçe Çiftliği\textsuperscript{210} and the other one leading to the tree nursery, owned by the Turkish State’s General Directorate of Forestry. The tree nursery was a place of great attraction for the elderly women of Muslim-Balkan immigrant descent who went for walks, chatted, and learned about the plants that were grown in the nursery. It was a regular practice to take a root from the plants of the nursery to grow in their own gardens. After passing the tree nursery, we climbed a hill that eventually led us to the entrance of the Kurdish neighbourhood. There, my informant and I saw another coffeehouse (different from the ones located at the entrance of the neighbourhood) and the curious faces that were sitting there.

After our interviews, we learned that this particular coffeehouse served as a surveillance site for any newcomer to the Kurdish quarter, as there had been threats to the members of the neighbourhood continuously over the years. According to a member of the county’s Peace and Democracy Party (Bağımsız ve Demokrasi Partisi, BDP), the neighbourhood sheltered not only people who had been displaced due to armed conflict between 1986–1995, but also families who ran away from blood disputes and honour killings. In addition, during the time period when I was doing my fieldwork, the Turkish government had a permanent ceasefire with the PKK—the so-called “Kurdish opening.” Therefore there were also guerrillas returning to their families. The fact that that coffeehouse serves as a security site for the neighbourhood also shows the inadequacy of the Turkish state in “securing” the vulnerable Kurdish populations who have been

\textsuperscript{210} Literally meaning, here comes the Turk ranch.
internally displaced for several reasons and that the meaning of “securing” goes beyond armed forces.\textsuperscript{211}

As we approached the coffeehouse, one man quickly walked to us and asked me whether I was the sociologist who came to search for the pollution in the Ergene River. Immensely surprised, I nodded and with excitement, he said that they have been waiting for me. After briefly meeting my informant, as it was the first time they saw him in the neighbourhood,\textsuperscript{212} the conversation quickly started off with complaining about the smell of the Ergene River:

You cannot go out due to the smell of Ergene. I mean, look, we would have guests, our friends would come visit, our relatives as well. We live through very hard times because of this smell. Shall we bring our guests to home or not? ...We are people, who have migrated from Anatolia also, there is lack of information, our people do not know. He goes to the construction work. He does not know where to turn to [for complaining about Ergene River], then he sets his mind on it but after that, he is uncovered (\textit{deşifre oluyor}). (case 38k, +50, male, Kurdish resident)\textsuperscript{213}

It is possible to read through ethnic unrest diffusing across the environmental problem of Ergene River and the act of “legally complaining” about it to the state authorities, particularly to the municipality. Otherwise why would complaining to the

\textsuperscript{211} On the scope of Kurdish displacement, please see reports Kurban et al. (2007) and Barış için Kadın Girişimi [Women’s Initiative for Peace] (2013)
\textsuperscript{212} A year after this meeting, during the local elections I had a phone call from my informant and he gave me the news that one of the Kurdish residents of the neighborhood became a candidate for local elections in their run for the neighbourhood mukhtar’s team. He also told me that the time when we first went into the neighborhood was a start in the process. They did not win the election; however, it was the first time in the neighbourhood’s history that a Kurdish resident from the Kurdish quarter became a candidate against other Muslim-Balkan immigrants.
\textsuperscript{213} “Ergenênin kokusundan dışarı çıkmazsın. Yani baksın bize misafirlerimiz geliyor, dostlarımız geliyor, akrabalarımız geliyor, bu koku yüzünden çok zor durumlar yaşamıyoruz, misafirimizi eve getirelim mi götürmeyelim mi? ... Burada yaşayanlar Anadolu'dan gelen insanlar. ... Bir de bu konularda bilgi eksiği var, adamlar bilmiyor. Adam inşaatı gidiyor. Adan nereye nasıl başvuracağını bilmiyor, ondan sonra bu yola baş koyuyor ama sonra deşifre oluyor.” (case 38k)
state about pollution “uncover” a person, a resident of a neighbourhood? Indeed, the “cover” here also connoted living among the neighbourhood community where one can hide him/herself and become invisible when necessary. That was exactly what the neighbourhood served for—a survival strategy where subjectivities of ethnic conflict re-emerged continuously around the narratives of the Ergene river pollution.

In all of the seven interviews\textsuperscript{214} that I was able to have in the Kurdish quarter, including the ones we had at the coffeehouse, ethnic discrimination was almost extensively mentioned. These narratives focused on nationalist discomfort over the use of the Kurdish language in public places and at school. All of my older participants were parents so they had several complaints about the teachers and the principal of the school, for according to them the school was discriminating against their children as opposed to other “Turkish” children. According to these narratives, the degree of violence that Kurdish children faced ranged from direct violence of a teacher hitting a Kurdish student with a ruler and insulting him by saying that “the school shall not be home for terrorists; here we have the Turkish Republic (TR)” (case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident)\textsuperscript{215} to psychological violence where the teacher deliberately tried to harm the relationship between the child and the parent: the teacher asked the student whether he was an

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\textsuperscript{214} Here is the composition of the interviewees in the Kurdish quarter: 4 male participants, aged +40 years, who are members of the county’s Peace and Democracy Party branch; 1 male participant +50 years old; another male participant aged 33 years; and a young woman aged 31. While the young woman was unemployed, the rest of the participants were working (in the aforementioned order), in truck driving and construction sectors. Only the young male participant was working as a cook at a local factory.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{215} “öğretnen kaldırmış tahtaya cetvelle dövmüş, burası terorist yuvası değil burası TC demiş.” (case 38k)
\end{flushright}
adopted child as his family did not pay for the school donations (case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident).  

All of the participants further mentioned that education provided by the district school was insufficient in its content, as they did not care about the difficult lives of the Kurdish children and their families, internally displaced to be living in the neighbourhood. For example, a parent who did not have the opportunity to go to school and therefore did not know how to read and write in Turkish, moaned about the school’s complaints to the parents for not helping their children with after-school homework that is usually in Turkish! (Case 40k, +40 plus male, construction worker, Kurdish resident).

All of the interviewees highlighted problems with the lack of transportation to the school, especially during winter. Difficulties in accessing the school were not only distance related but also along the way to the school, children had to pass through the Muslim-Balkan immigrant settlement, where they had to cope up with ethnic violence. In this respect, one of the most striking narratives belonged to a young woman where she told about somewhat normalized verbal harassment based on ethnic difference especially

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216 As a result of the teacher’s attitude towards the student, my interviewee had a quarrel both with the teacher and the principal of the district school. The effect of the teacher’s claim, asking whether the student was an adopted child lasted a week and was eased by my interviewee by explaining his difficult job as a truck driver and their overall financial difficulties. Here is the original narrative explaining the incident in Turkish:

when walking across the area of coffeehouses located at the entrance of the
neighbourhood. She also had a story of direct physical violence at school by her teacher
for speaking in Kurdish.

Ethnic discrimination was a much larger phenomenon that was continuously
territorialized in different places. In this respect, structural violence on a daily basis
occurred not only within the neighbourhood area but it covered economic relations at
work. My participants, just like the majority of the Kurdish male residents living in the
Kurdish Quarter, worked in the construction sector but they had no work during winter.
They worked long hours without insurance in addition to working in seasonal piecework
jobs via sub-contractor companies. In some instances their Kurdishness affected their
wages. For example one of my participants highlighted this situation while rhetorically
asking “when discrimination happens to them [as adults], why wouldn’t it be happening
for their [our] children?”

Recently, we were working, we had Roma people by our side and
we are talking [in Kurdish]. I mean think about how accustomed I
am [to Kurdish] … for example, I always speak in Kurdish with
my children because I am all used to that. For example, I speak in
Kurdish with my friend. The Roma person there told me, “well
brother, excuse me but it was our people [Roma people] and your
people [Kurdish people] that suffered the most” They speak Roma.
“Now, when I enter into any government office, they call us
gypsies and they call you Kurds.” In other words, they do not care
about us. Or say there is a job, if the real cost is 10 liras- one says,
I will give 5 liras if the worker is a Roma. … Our situation is alike,
when discrimination happens to us [as adults], why wouldn’t it be
happening to our children? (Case 40k, +40 plus male, construction
worker, Kurdish resident)

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217 “Geçenlerde çalışıyordu, yanımızda romanlar vardı biz de konuşuyoruz. Nasıl alışmışsan…Mesela, ben
cocuklarımızla hep kürçe konuşuyorum. Çünkü öyle alışmışım. Mesela ben arkadaş胺la kürçe
 konuşuyorum. Ordaki roman şöyle dedi bana yav kardeş kusura bakma bir sizin kesim çok ezildi bir bizim
It was possible to observe re-territorialization of ethnic discrimination and normalized ethnic segregation into local public and political realm. For example, members of the County’s Peace and Democracy party told that they participated in May Day marches of 2012 that took place at the county’s central avenue, where Kurdish protestors were insulted for being terrorist partisans of PKK. According to my participant, some people eased off the tension between the Kurdish group and rest of the protestors, who were members of trade unions and other leftist organizations. In parallel another participant reported about ethnic tensions from non-Kurdish residents of the county and the police while Kurdish people were celebrating Newroz for the first time in 2012. Public spaces, such as streets and avenues, can become dangerous for Kurdish people if/when a Turkish soldier’s funeral would be held, especially if a soldier had lost his life in the Eastern parts of Turkey due to armed conflict. The narrative below suggests that Kurdish people would hide from daily contact in the neighbourhood during such times (i.e., a military funeral) to avoid escalation of ethnic-political tensions into physical conflict:

Here, there were a few soldier funerals, many people [in the neighbourhood] hid themselves that is because many people know me [and my ethnicity] and they can attack me [physically] with as
a result of that pain, in other words they [people who hid themselves during the time period] say that they can be attacked by the society. That is a reality. Well, the residents of the neighbourhood do not want this to start, neither the Kurds nor the Turks [in the neighbourhood]. (Case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident)\(^{{219}}\)

During our visit to the Kurdish Quarter, I further asked whether racialized attitudes towards Kurdish people in the neighbourhood and the county resembled those in other places in Thrace region and my participants told about places where the municipality together with the local residents tried to expel Kurds from their settlements in Thrace. These expulsion attempts sometimes extended into direct physical attacks upon Kurdish residents.\(^{{220}}\) It is important to note, however, that a collective attack has never occurred in the neighbourhood where I did my fieldwork. Nevertheless, one of the local newspapers that is politically affiliated with leftist tendencies in 1995 called for eliminating the Kurdish Quarter when it was still limited to a small number of houses, on the grounds of its illegal status and symbolization of “unplanned urbanization” like that in the metropolitan cities such as Istanbul. While the article argued for “waging a war against the squatter settlements like it is done in the metropolitan areas,” it referred to

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\(^{219}\) “Burada birkaç tane asker cenazesi geçti, çoğu insanlar saklandılar, çünkü insanlar beni tanıyor o kırgınlıkla bana saldıranlar, yanı bir toplum lincine uğrayabilirim diyor, bu bir gerçek yanlı. Yani böyle birşeyin yürümesini mahalleli kesinlikle istemiyor, kürtler olduğu kadar türklere de istemiyor.” (case 38k)

\(^{220}\) For a news article on a racist attack by a local resident towards another Kurdish citizen see: Babeski de ırkçı saldıri!!! [Racist attack in Babeski], in Pomaknews Agency. 2012 and İrklar kudurdu Kürtler hedefte [The racists have gone wild, Kurds are on the target], in Özgür Gündem. 2013: Kayseri-Kırklareli.

For more on the recent racist attacks on Kurdish students of Kırklareli University see Kırklareli Üniversitesi'nde ırkçı saldırılar devam ediyor [Racist attacks continue at the University of Kırklareli], in Özgür Gündem. 2014: Kırklareli. A series of attacks towards Kurdish candidates during the local elections was also another racist phenomenon that swept Turkey; for more on the extent of these attacks see Tahaoğlu (2014).
these settlements in the county, as “subtly developing what would become a nightmare later for the children of the county.” (Newscenter 1995, 1).

Conflicts work spatially by being re-territorialized, like a contagion. As my interviews in the Kurdish Quarter made much clearer, racialized ethnic conflict not only shaped ethnic segregation of the neighbourhood; conflict became part of everydayness by appearing in different spatialities, by reproducing unsafe places and times for Kurdish people. In the next section, I will dwell more on how conflict geographies of ethnic struggles inform river and settlement politics within the context of the Kurdish Quarter, in order to illustrate how problems at the Kurdish Quarter were turned into blind spots and created a landscape of invisibility and fear in which non-governance of environmental pollution became a state tactic.

**Different Encounters with the Ergene River**

Since March 2012, the Turkish public has been debating about the possible society-wide reconciliation with the Kurdish struggle, as part and parcel of the peace negotiations between the Turkish state and PKK/KCK. Peace is a process of “reconstruction-reconciliation-resolution” (Galtung 2001; Egbatan 2013; Kurtoğlu 2013), transcending the boundaries of security. In the case of Turkey, peace does not automatically equate to ending armed conflict. Peace negotiations will not only include eliminating racialized ethnic, gender, and religious differences, but also will further reconcile and reconstruct

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221 KCK *(Koma Civakên Kurdistan, Group of Communities in Kurdistan, Kurdistan Topluluklar Birliği)* encompasses the urban branches of PKK.
conflict geographies of those internally displaced who have migrated into other urban centres and their peripheries.

Racialized ethnic nationalism and capitalist dispossession go hand in hand in the construction industry, where subcontractor companies often see internally displaced Kurdish populations as a reserve army of labour taking precarious employment (also see Ercan and Oğuz 2015). Within this context, all of the participants except for one stated that they feel unsettled about their overall future in the region, both health-wise but also in terms of the settlement’s illegal status.

It is possible to observe the re-manifestation of the “Kurdish issue” as an environmental problem. In that sense, the cover over the Kurdish neighbourhood, as mentioned by another participant earlier, re-emerges just like the Kurdish subjectivity re-emerges at the juncture of racialized ethnic conflict and the pollution of the Ergene River. That is an important aspect of the conflict geographies between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the Kurdish people, taking place at “the intersection between water use, access and integrity and different, interrelated and multi-scalar aspects of conflict in social, political, cultural and ecological senses” (Harris 2002, 794).

Thus, their political reactions against the pollution of the Ergene River were limited by the Newroz celebrations. That is because whatever the Kurds do, according to my participant, is understood to be a separatist act:

Participant 2: we would march for the Ergene River, but they would turn it into something else.
Participant 1: whatever we say would be misunderstood …
Participant 2: But if there were to be a march, by villages in somewhere else in the county, nothing would happen (to the
protestors). There are local people, initially from the villages of the county that joined the police forces or became a doctor … Participant 1: we participated in the May Day march, as civil society organizations. I mean, whenever they find a little excuse, they would attack people here. (Case 40k, +40 plus male, construction worker, Kurdish resident)²²²

One of the participants that we interviewed in the neighbourhood coffeehouse mentioned an invisible wall between the Kurdish and Muslim-Balkan immigrant quarters of the neighbourhood, which he called the “Berlin wall and a shame wall” (case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident). He further mentioned the cesspool as a factor contributing to the smell of the neighbourhood. By referring to it as an indicator of inhumane treatment of Kurdish people by the municipality, he further explained that the Kurdish side of the neighbourhood collectively dug out the cesspool on their own. My participant, in addition to two other participants that I later interviewed, claimed that the municipality’s discriminatory attitude towards Kurdish people was seen to be the actual cause of the inhumane conditions within the Kurdish quarter, was perceived as something deliberately done to make Kurdish people leave the area:

Sorry to say this but the cesspool fills up, we complain it to the municipality … its cost [of emptying the cesspool] is say 20 liras, the municipality demands 80 liras, 100 liras. For the sake of humanity, we demand some infrastructure that is all we want. We do not want the land registry. After today, everybody is waiting for the infrastructure … our residents say, we may get rid of this [the cesspool] and I would not have the land registry. … Say, I am at the construction site [working], my wife calls, saying that the

²²² Katılımcı 2 (K2): Biz Ergene için yürürüz, onlar başka şeyeye çevirirler.
K1: Biz ne desek yanlış anlaşılır...
K2: Ama başka yerde İlçede, köylüler miting yapsınlar hiçbir şey olmaz yani. Köylerden de polis olmuş olan var, doktor olmuş olan var ... K1: Biz 1 mayısta yürüyüşe katıldık, sivil toplum kuruluşları. Yani bahane bulunca ufak bir bahane bulunca insanların linç ederler. (case 40k)
cesspool is full. Isn’t that humiliation? Isn’t it barbarity? … The guy [the mayor] says “as long as I exist in here, I will not bring infrastructural services to the Kurds.” (Case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident)

Q: Do you think the reason why they [the municipality] do not attend to your needs is Turkish-Kurdish segregation?

Participant 2: When the Albanian immigrants ... etc. are considered, they are all the same and they would want it happening. Maybe the problem is not with the immigrants in here but there is definitely a problem with the mayor. (case 39k, 33 years old, male, cook at a local factory, Kurdish resident)

When I asked the chief environmental engineer working at the municipality about waste water problems in the Kurdish quarter of the neighbourhood, later on, the answer was sharp indicating that the municipality did not have services for what are called squatter settlements—like the Kurdish Quarter. A water treatment plant that is to be established right at the exit of the larger neighbourhood area would be a partial solution to the smell of the Ergene River. It is important to note that the water treatment plant in question here will remedy the industrial and household wastewater coming from the Lüleburgaz stream and the Ergene Rivers. Furthermore, there has been an objection with regard to the placement of the treatment plant. For example, another well-known environmentalist of the province argued that the water treatment plant was not planned according to the water flow direction of the river and its streams. Even if the treatment

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223 “Çok affedersin, çukur doluyor, belediyeeye şikayet ediyoruz. Masrafi 20 liradir, belediye bizden 80 lira, 100 lira masraf aliyor...Yani insanlık adına bir altyapı oluşturan, başka bir şey istemiyoruz. Tapuyu da istemiyoruz. Zaten şu tarihten sonra millet altyapısi bekliyor...Adam diyor ben bu seyden kurtuluyorum, tapu olmasın... Ben inşaatçıyım, tak telefon geliyor, eşım anyor, foseptik çukuru doldu rahatsız oluyoruz. Doldu yani dışarı taşıyor yani, bu bir utanç değil midir? Vahset değil midir?...Ben burada varolduğum sürece diyor adam [belediye başkanı] kürlerin mahallesine alt yapı hizmeti göndermeyeceğim.” (Case 38k)

224 Soru (S): Sizce, buraya bakmalarının sebebi Kürt Türk ayrımı mı?
Katılımcı 2: Arnavut göçmenlerinin filan yapılıları ayındır ve onlar istemezler. Buranın göçmenlerinde değil ama belediye başkanında var bir şey. (Case 39k)
plant is constructed and becomes operational, the wastewater will still pass along the riverbed on which the Kurdish Quarter is established. Furthermore, the treatment plant will not be a solution to the household waste that is collected at the cesspool, as the project for constructing wastewater treatment plant did not include bringing infrastructure to the Kurdish Quarter.

Another issue that added to my Kurdish participants’ feelings of exclusion, was different costs offered by the municipality for the removal of the cesspool located in the Kurdish quarter. Again, during one of the two interviews I had at the municipality I brought up the Kurdish quarter’s claim with regard to the high costs for eliminating the wastewater in the cesspool and my interviewee off the record complained about different voting tendencies to be a reason for creating such gossip and “wrong” information for researchers like me.

In a later interview, two other residents living in the Kurdish Quarter expanded on the meaning of the smell, that the smell was having a further demarcating effect—marking the “uncleanliness” of the Kurdish homes. Complaint about the smell coming from the Ergene River was the utmost expressed effect of pollution both in the Muslim-Balkan immigrant quarter, as mentioned in the earlier chapters, and on the Kurdish side. Complaints in the Muslim-Balkan immigrant quarter over smell were almost always associated with its possible health effects and its severity, especially at dawn, with speculations over textile factories releasing their toxic waste during the unmonitored times. However, it was never identified with uncleanliness and ethnic exclusion as my Kurdish participant did in our interview:
When you work at a place, people ask where you are from. When I say I am from Iğdır, things change a little. I mean it happens. That is because you cannot hide from this from anywhere. I mean they say that the Thracians are better but then you know that the Ergene River smells. People ask to themselves whether their [Kurdish] houses smell. These things happen pretty often. (Case 40k, +40 plus male, construction worker, Kurdish resident)

Three other participants in different ways also underlined the invisible wall between the Kurdish and Muslim-Balkan immigrants. Indeed, criticizing “Thracians’ goodness” even when talking about pollution was an important indicator of the invisible wall between the communities. During another interview that I had with a Kurdish family, one of the participants criticized the inactive and politically passive position of the Muslim-Balkan immigrants towards the pollution of the Ergene River. During this interview, while my participant’s son made fun of the residents from Muslim-Balkan immigrant descent drinking alcohol by the smelly riverside, my participant further expressed his surprise and anger towards their conformity:

The river is poisonous. Local people in here avoid meddling. They do not have any reactions. I mean if there were to be another nation living here, they would have long rebelled against it. This smell devastates us … they show themselves off to be very modern and skilful but they ain’t know nothing. If you go to Erzurum, it is located at the far end of east [of Turkey]; they built a garbage treatment plant. I mean on top of it, CHP. In short, the Ergene

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225 Iğdır is located at the far east of Turkey. The province is at the border with Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iran.
227 Erzurum is an eastern province of Turkey.
228 CHP (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi) otherwise known as Republican People’s Party was established in 1923 under the name of People’s Party. Currently, it is one of the opposition parties in the parliament with MHP (otherwise known as the Nationalist Movement Party).
River is infecting people with cancer. (Case 39k, +50 years old male, former construction worker, Kurdish resident)

One of the most frequent events that threatened half of the houses in the Kurdish quarter was flooding of the Lüleburgaz stream. Flooding occurred twice in the past five years and affected half of the neighbourhood that was located right on the edge of the riverbed. Due to sewage and industrial waste that were discharged from the stream, affected residents either temporarily moved to stay with relatives until the water was withdrawn, or added another higher floor to their houses so that they can move to the upper floors when the water levels rise (Case 39k, 33 years old, male, Kurdish resident). My participants working for the Local branch of Peace and Democracy Party had attempted to report infrastructural problems to the municipality. According to one of these members, their complaints were passed on to different public institutions, such as the state Hydraulic Works (Devlet Su İşleri-DSI) and even to a MP candidate. Nevertheless no solutions were reached, due to “politics” dominating these institutions:

Q: what does the municipality say?
Participant: the municipality passed it [our complaint] on to the state Hydraulic Works. The municipality does that because we do not receive public water that is why they want the State Hydraulic


230 The flooding in 2001 was a major headline in the local newspapers as the bridge that connects the neighbourhood to the surrounding villages disappeared as a result of the extremely high water levels from the river. As a result, 9 villages in addition to the Turkgeldi State Farm were inaccessible (Atış 2001; Kaplan 2001). After a few days, the newspaper cited an interview with an environmentalist, warning the public about the pollution in the flooded waters and their potential harms for animals and agricultural production (Kaplan 2002; Newscenter 2002b). And on December 5th, 2002, a panel was held with participation of two local opinion leaders about the flooding of the polluted water in the Ergene river and its health risks for the next season’s agricultural production (Newscenter 2002a). Although the villages, the state farm, and the bridge that were flooded were very close to the Kurdish quarter, and indeed my participants clearly remembered the incident; all of the attention was given to the agricultural production.
Works. … The state hydraulic works is led by the dominant politics, by whoever is in power, AKP right? Then AKP says if we win the municipality of this place, we would construct it [the infrastructure]. If we do not win the municipality, we won’t make it. Before, there came an MP candidate [to the neighbourhood], he said, if was to be elected, even if the local municipality belongs to CHP [Republican People’s Party], I would service to your demands. He was elected, then he came back here, we reminded him [of our complaints] but he said, because there is a municipality here [that is responsible], I cannot interfere and do anything. There is a red line here, call it the Berlin Wall. One side of the wall is the Kurdish neighbourhood, and the other side is the Turkish. Majority of the problems are specifically in here: be it the infrastructural and/or the zoning problems. (Case 40k, +40 plus male, construction worker, Kurdish resident)\(^231\)

It was not uncommon among all the participants that accepted to join in this study whether originating from Kurdish or Muslim-Balkan immigrant side, to mention the indifference of the state institutions. That is a commonality in how diverse ethnic communities with different environmental problems and circumstances “feel” (neo) liberalization of environment but particularly land and water resources. All of the narratives\(^232\) were dominated by a sense of hopelessness for a clean Ergene River. That is because, in the last 30 years since the industries were relocated from Istanbul and elsewhere to the Thrace region, nothing with regard to environmental protection has been

\(^{231}\text{Soru(S)}: \text{Belediye ne yapıyor?} \)  

\(^{232}\text{Only one participant was hopeful for the future of the Ergene River as he felt that the European Union would find a solution to the problem. That was because the Ergene River flows into the Martitza River, drawing the border between Greece and Turkey. That the participant lent trust in the EU rather than the Turkish state further emphasizes non-confidence in state institutions.} \)
accomplished even if there had been some interventions to eliminate the pollution, such as construction by the state of a treatment plant in the organized leather industry zone. Furthermore, many people in the neighbourhood, including three of the participants from the Kurdish Quarter, remembered how the Ergene River’s water was given the status of “drinkable water” in recent years. 233 All of these experienced encounters with the state and its institutions suggest a generalized and normative non-governance of pollution in the Ergene River Basin.

The overall non-governance creates outrage, lack of confidence, and sometimes hopelessness for the future of the Ergene River. The aforementioned participant (case 40k, +40 plus male, construction worker, Kurdish resident) presented the complexity over the governance of water, but particularly “who governs water?” and its relationship to land ownership and right to infrastructure, especially as far as the squatter settlements are concerned. Thus, it seems like community negotiations over rights to infrastructure during election periods became a tool to manipulate voting behaviours by local candidates. That issue is also highlighted in the literature on gecekondu (squatter) (squatter) settlements and their negotiations to have land tenure since 1950s. 234

233 I was not able to obtain the original report either in the archives of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry or in the local newspapers. Nevertheless, the press release of an order to drive attention to the Ergene River’s pollution highlighted such a report (see Newscenter 2012; Pomaknews 2012) alongside with widespread and frequent mention of the report by members of the neighborhood.

234 Political protectionism was an important survival mechanism which both the political parties and the gecekondu (squatter) residents used in order to realize their interests, at the peripheries of the cities since the 1950s (Şenyapılı 2004; Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2013). Şenyapılı (2004) further emphasizes that survivability of gecekondu (settlements constructed in cities like Istanbul and Ankara depended on such negotiations between the industrial elite and the state, since many of the gecekondu settlements between 1950–1960 were established in places close to main roads and to industrial settlements.
Contemporary neoliberalization of municipal services, including obtaining land tenure by the *gecekondu* (squatter) settlements or by the municipality for the construction of mass housing or other facilities (such as water treatment plants, etc.) provides more power to the municipalities over negotiations with the communities living in *gecekondu* (squatter) settlements (Kuyucu 2014). On the other hand, when it comes to water sector services, water is subjected to more than 100 pieces of legislation and laws, which hold other agencies responsible for the supply of water and its treatment (Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011). For example, for the case of the neighbourhood including the Kurdish Quarter, water supply services and its treatment are within the mandate of the local municipality where, by law, the municipality has the right to outsource such services to the private sector. However, land that the Kurdish people have settled has a registry named under “agricultural field” where housing is limited, which automatically positions water supply issues within the mandate of the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (DSI). Where the overall Ergene master plan is concerned, where major restoration and rehabilitation of the river is targeted, the treatment of wastewater that is released from the Kurdish quarter is within the mandate of the Ministry of Environment and Water Affairs. It is also worthy of note that although all of the river basin

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235 For the new legal changes in the Municipality Law, please see: Kuyucu (2014)  
236 Until 1981, delivery of water and sewage services in Turkey was managed by the municipalities, largely obtaining their funds from the state budget via the General Directorate of the Bank of Provinces (*İller Bankası*), in the form of loan taking and the General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works (DSI) (Çınar 2009; Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011; Scheumann, Kibaroglu, and Kramer 2011). Nevertheless with the transition to an export oriented economy, semi-privatization of water management services by the municipalities became inevitable as a result of their high debts (Şenyapılı 2004; Çınar 2009).  
236 By law DSI is the leading executer party for water sector “planning” and any municipality and/or private company for that matter is obliged to have the approval and the cooperation of DSI (Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011).
rehabilitation and planning are undertaken by the Ministry of Environment and Urban Development by law, the Ergene River’s rehabilitation and master plan are situated within the mandate of the Ministry of Environment and Water Works, due to the former Prime Minister’s (contemporary president of Turkey) private order. Deriving from the case of the Kurdish Quarter here, we see multiple ambiguities and a multiplicity of agencies holding the mandate, which is largely caused by the legal and administrative clash over environmental protection and construction of infrastructural services in the urban settlements. Thus, the narratives mentioned above underline that gecekondu (squatter) settlements are vulnerable to state-wide (both central and decentred agencies acting independently of each other) arbitrariness, feeding on legal and administrative ambiguities of (neo) liberalization.

After the 1990s, gecekondu houses and neighbourhoods were increasingly seen as places of “crime, illegality, urban decay and other social ills” by the media and the other state planning agencies (Akbulut and Başlık 2011). This image of the gecekondu later was

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237 An expert working at the Ministry of Environment and Water works gave this information during an interview in 2012. The expert further added that after a television program and a series of newspaper articles, former Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan personally called the Ministry of Environment and Water Works to take the Ergene River Basin and its management into his hands. Here is a newspaper article mentioning the call of the former prime minister, without however referring to the change of mandate N.A (2012). Also see Chapter two.

238 As mentioned in Chapter two, protection of water resources is weaker when compared to the Turkish state’s infrastructure development and management tendencies, which is another consequence of neoliberalization and decentralization of the environmental sectors (also see Kibaroğlu and Baskan 2011).

239 The reason why I am bracketing (neo) liberalism is that the legal ambiguities over land tenure, pertaining to gecekondu (squatter) settlements is not a new issue, but it has been an issue since the 1950s that led to different provisions. İşik and Pınarçoğlu (2013) emphasize that until adoption of the 1982 constitution, the major trend was to rehabilitate gecekondu settlements in order to solve the housing problem in metropolitan cities. After the 1980s, state policies in Turkey strongly targeted destruction of these settlements. This attitude was contrary to, for example, general interest of the World Bank in encouraging states to enhance property rights of the squatter settlements (also see Roy 2005). For that matter, legal ambiguities over gecekondu settlements and their threat to capitalist possession, are embedded within every facet of liberal and neoliberal policies.
used to justify “a sense of urgency” for urban transformation projects of the Justice and Development Party since 2001 (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008). As such, urban transformation “is a major reorientation of public policy, from tacit acceptance and encouragement of informal settlements as the dominant mechanism of low-income housing provision, to a policy of ‘clearing’ such settlements to make way for profitable investments” (Kuyucu 2014, 613). Kuyucu (2014) emphasizes that this new property regime, acquired by cleansing the gecekondu settlements for new mass housing projects, is based on strategic use of the ambiguity and arbitrariness of laws and regulations. And, in the process, such legal ambiguities and arbitrary relations are further exacerbated (Kuyucu 2014).

Urban transformation projects do not constitute the main subject; it was a theme that came out during my interviews at the Kurdish neighbourhood as an issue of eviction fear and worry. More precisely, my participants declared their fright over a possible urban transformation project that they might face with the new plan, commonly known as the “Revised Environmental Plan for the Ergene River Basin, Sub-region of Thrace” (1/100.000 ölçekli Trakya Alt Bölgesi Ergene Havzası Revizyon Çevre Düzeni Planı).

Q: how do you think the new plan will affect the neighbourhood?
Participant: for our community and the neighbourhood, the main issue that we tackle is the infrastructure. Because we live with this problem for the last 30 years. We see something called urbanization in Istanbul.
Q: are you talking about urban transformation?
Participant: yes, as the residents of the neighbourhood, we are afraid about whether they would try buying us as well.
Q: Are you afraid if they would come here?
Participant: yes, what can we do against it? That is why, the most important thing is the land registry … we do not have land registry … there was this man in the other neighbourhood [Muslim-Balkan
immigrant side] saying that if he was to be permitted, he would have demolished the necessary places in a month … I mean think about it: there are people, who have belonging to this place in the past 25-30 years. I mean think that if this place is buried under ground in 20 seconds, then it means that humanity is destroyed because when he demolishes it then there are no more guarantees, there is no land registry. I mean, who will you, go to? We cannot find an addressee to our problem … they will give us a new house which will make us debtors. Above all, according to what we calculated among ourselves, the sales price for houses here is 40 thousand, they [as a result of the urban transformation project] will sell it to us for 150 000 Turkish liras, I mean would my life time span suffice in paying for this debt? Would my son`s life suffice paying it? I mean are we going to live in debt all for the rest of our lives? (Case 38k, plus 50, male, Kurdish resident) 240

The last question that my participant posed was striking as it ragefully underlined the vulnerable situation at the Kurdish Quarter. Here, I do not wish to argue that the Kurdish quarter was more marginalized and more polluted compared to the Muslim-Balkan immigrant side of the neighbourhood. Rather, I argue that the invisible landscapes of the Kurdish Quarter, referred to as behind “the Berlin wall” by the aforementioned narratives, masked the segregated nature of inequalities in accessing water and/or offsetting the effects of the Ergene River pollution across the neighbourhood. As such, it was also possible to observe different coping mechanisms with pollution. For example

240 Soru (S): Nasıl olur size, nasıl etkiler mahalleyi?
Katılımcı (K): Şimdi, bizim mahalleminiz için halkımız için herşeyden önce alt yapımız gelir. E çünkü bu sorunla 30 senedir yaşyoruz. Bak şimdi İstanbul’daki kentleşme diye birşey var.
S: Kentsel dönüşüm diyorsunuz?
K: He biz mahalleli olarak korkuyoruz: “acaba bizi de alırlar mı?”
S: Buraya da gelirler diye mi?
Kurdish residents were afraid of protesting against the pollution on the basis of the already-prevalent ethnic segregation and conflict.

While Muslim-Balkan immigrants’ narratives with regard to the effects of the pollution in the Ergene River had concentrated on decreases in agricultural productivity due to pollution, along with the smell of it, on the other hand, a limited number of interviews in the Kurdish Quarter illustrated that demands with regard to infrastructural concerns and land ownership were prioritized within the context of pollution. Furthermore, ethnic differences evidently seemed to prevent Kurdish people from openly complaining and reacting against pollution in the Ergene River. As such, vulnerability with respect to Kurdish displacement history created a difference in experiencing and reacting against pollution.

Historical armed conflict in the Eastern and Southeastern parts of Turkey and accompanying racialized ethnic discrimination, as narratives indicated in the segregation of the neighbourhood, had direct consequences in the ways in which the Ergene River’s pollution was constructed on the Muslim-Balkan immigrant side. In that sense, the invisibility of the Kurdish quarter’s problems, more precisely legal ambiguities over land tenure and responsibilities across agencies within the administrative structure of water the management sector, causing non-governance of wastewater in the Kurdish Quarter (i.e., the absence of infrastructure and water treatment facility), illustrated re-territorialization of Kurdish–Turkish conflict as an environmental problem. As a result, absence of infrastructure in the Kurdish quarter also marked the neighbourhood territory invisible, at least within the discourses of the Muslim-Balkan immigrant side.
Territorializing Landscapes of Invisibility at the Juncture of Nationalism and Neoliberalism

A majority of the scholarship that concentrates on nations and nationalism(s) highlights its relation to some form of territory. For example, Hobsbawm (1990, 9-10) emphasizes that nation is “a social entity insofar as it relates to a certain kind of modern territorial state.” Some form of territory or territorial belonging, wrapped in social and political consciousness, is central to the idea of the nation and nationalisms, both to its practice and ideology, (Anderson 1991; Billig 1995; Balakrishnan 1996; Penrose 2002). Considering that one of the most marked aspects of territory is its boundedness, nation-building processes are founded on boundary marking and boundary making (Penrose 2002). Boundary marking/making is among several other strategies of territoriality by which territorial control is asserted (Wastl-Walter and Staeheli 2004). Nevertheless, some geographers emphasize that boundaries of a national territory or territoriality are not limited by state borders but “it is political, economic, cultural, governmental and other practices, and the associated meanings, that make a territory and concomitantly territorialize everyday life” (Paasi 2003c, 113). In that sense, boundary marking is a continuous practice of territorializing the nation through which national identities are forged spatially and proximities of power are configured. As such, territory is “not … something which only manifests itself in population, but, rather, in territory too” (Elden 2007, 578). And thus, daily territorialisation of the nation naturalizes and, in fact, fixes “who is us?” and “who are them?” by continuously marking proximities across different bodies, and their places (or their out of placeness). That is also how nationalism is settled.
in everyday relationships as a constitutive discourse, marking limits, boundaries to everydayness continuously between different ethnic groups. It is at the heart of conflict geographies, continuously re-territorializing everyday segregation, and leading to landscapes of invisibility and/or blind spots.

Invisibility of the Kurdish Quarter and their problems within the overall context of the Ergene River pollution problem is a technology of (non) governance, exercised as a daily strategy by the residents of the neighbourhood. That is not to say that the Muslim-Balkan immigrant community have become recognized agents of governmental rule and perhaps policies of ethnic exclusion. Rather, it is to assert that invisibility is imposed on the Kurdish issue by the state policies and media used to bypass the problem of ethnic oppression and inequalities against the Kurds to turn into an issue of (under) development and to make invisibility thus defined “an ordinary subjugation that one learns to cope with” (Demetriou 2013, 6). Thus, such normalized subjugation occurs across multiple territories, that is, the exclusion both by the municipality, DSI, and by the Muslim-Balkan immigrant residents of the neighbourhood, of the Kurdish neighbourhood’s problems from the overall territory of the Ergene River, as an environmental problem.

It is important to note that invisibility is a survival and a coping mechanism used by the Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood. As the narratives suggest (especially the ones on political visibility) together with the reasons for the internal displacement of the Kurdish residents (i.e., honour killings, feudal disputes, state terror), invisibility also

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241 Demetriou (2013) looks at the minority status of the Greek citizens, exchanged from Turkey to Greece, as a daily arena for struggle. However, her research closely connects state-given minority status and its articulation in everyday life, something slightly different compared to the racialization of Kurdish people in Turkey.
serves as a sheltering effect. Indeed, use of the coffeehouse located at the entrance of the Kurdish quarter, as a security measure is another indicator of the invisible shelter that the neighbourhood and Kurdish quarter provides. This effect I believe partially informs my limited access to the neighbourhood, marking me as a stranger to the neighbourhood.

Throughout my research, I did not expect to uncover this so-called sheltering effect, as I, just like the rest of the researchers on neighbourhoods in Turkey, take neighbourhood as social space of solidarity with its own invisible conflicts. In other words, the mahalle literature is located right in the middle of exclusion–inclusion dichotomy, which to a certain extent undermines mahalle as a lived experience. Lived experience not only entails neighbourly relations but it also involves understanding these relations to be in constant conflict based on ethnicity, race, gender, language, and age, having their own spaces of negotiation.
Chapter 7 Finding the Ergene River yet again as Bare Life

“the exception is what cannot be included in whole of which it is a member and cannot be a member of the whole in which it is always included”(Agamben 1998 25)

It has been two years since I started working on writing my dissertation project. The Kurdish issues have been immensely transformed as a result of the Syrian and Iraqi conflicts while Middle Eastern conflict geographies have remarkably shifted. (Armed) conflict continues to be one of the most important important determinants of everyday life in Turkey. Since the start of war in Syria and Iraq and following the evacuation, and the later victory of Kobane in 2015, Turkey became a host country for 1 million Kurdish, Turkmen, and Arab Syrians, 242 a number that is expected to rise by 1.7 million in 2015; and 100,000 Iraqi, Afghani, and Iranian refugees and asylum seekers, that are estimated to increase to 200,000 by 2015. Some of the incoming immigrants/refugees/asylum seekers are “temporarily” settled in 22 camps (Ihlamur-Öner 2013; UNHCR 2015). According to a recent report by the Hacettepe University Migration and Politics Research Center (Hacettepe Üniversitesi Göç ve Siyaset Araştırmaları Merkezi- HUGO), approximately 13–14% of these refugees are in the camps, whereas the rest of the remaining population is scattered mostly in Şanlurfa and Istanbul, along with smaller

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242 As a result of the increasing invasion of the Islamic State across Iraq and Syria, the ethnic and religious composition of the refugees has been diversified by 2014, encompassing groups other than Sunni Arabs, such as Ezidis, Kurds, and Armenians. By the end of 2014, the total number of women and children refugees in and out of the camps compose of 75% of the total population (Erdoğan 2015).
numbers of them that currently live in other cities such as Gaziantep, Anktakya, Kilis, Adana, and Kahramanmaraş (Erdoğan 2015).

Upon the challenging and growing face of “the refugee crisis” in Turkey by 2014 (specifically, following the Kobane and Shinjar massacres\(^{243}\)), Turkish dual immigration policies and the geographical limitations with regard to accepting refugee status and providing refugee protection services for the newcomers from the East of Turkey were temporarily withheld through a so-called “protective regime” that only included the Syrian refugees without any time limitations (Erdoğan 2015). Accordingly, Syrian refugees were not provided with a refugee status but rather were accepted to Turkey as being “guests,” while the protective regime granted no forcible returns to Syria and state’s assistance to those who would reside in the refugee camps (Özden 2013).

The lives of the Syrian refugees in Turkey are left to “abandonment” where granted guest status due to protective regime in Turkey, creates multiple “zone[s] of indistinction” through which, “the limit between what is inside and what is outside the law” is displaced (Agamben 1998 23). Since the “guest” status does not grant any rights for permanent settlement, and thus prevents Syrians from taking up formal permanent jobs, which in the end is expected to swell the informal sector immensely, particularly in seasonal work (see Özden 2013; Erdoğan 2015), and exploitation of women and children in such seasonal work conditions.\(^{244}\) Here, perhaps it is further important to conceptualize “the new refugee economy” in multiple gendered and ethnic terms by including, for

\(^{243}\) For the Sinjar massacre see the newspaper article by Woolf (2014).
\(^{244}\) It is further important to note that necessary data to analyze how the refugee economy affects the Turkish economy, or for that matter general labour markets, are still not available; and so, much of the research cited here needs further investigation.
example, the sex slave markets that are reported to reach out from Mosul to Urfa, Turkey.\footnote{245} Meanwhile, many of the Syrian refugees face burning down of their homes located in the neighbourhoods of cities where they reside and/or kidnapping of children by IS militia,\footnote{246} especially when their abandonment exhibits the double burden due to the state of exception that comes in the form of vulnerabilities associated with urban renewal, poverty, and informality in Turkey.

The subject matter of this thesis is not Syrian refugees; however, the “exceptional” status that is assigned to the incoming Syrian refugees by the Turkish state is a result of the controversial two-tier immigration system, which is founded on the orientalism of nationalism at the policy level, and which regularly binds with racialized ethnic nationalism and capitalism (liberalism or neoliberalism). Whether in research and/or at the policy level, Kurdish people in Turkey are not admitted as refugees as, unlike asylum seekers or refugees, they hold citizenship. Nevertheless, Üstündağ (2010) underlines the striking resemblance of the Kurdish people’s status and existence to that of the refugees/asylum seekers, as Kurdish migrants (excluding Kurdish Syrian refugees who constitute a different ethnic group) forcibly left their homes and they speak a different language in the cities to which they migrated. Due to their citizenship they would be able to reach out to health, security, education, and other services provided by

\footnote{245} The phenomenon of sex slave markets that “allegedly” reach out to Turkey still needs further research, but there had been two newspaper articles by early 2015 in accordance with few numbers of ezidi women survivors’ witness accounts. For more see Çağlayan (2015) and Baysal (2015).

\footnote{246} The fire in the houses occupied by Syrian refugees has been frequent news since 2011 but more extensive fires occurred by the summer of 2014, in Ankara, and included multiple story buildings in the same neighbourhood, Hacı Bayram in Ankara. The neighbourhood is known to be one of the zones where urban renewal is being carried out. The incident drew much suspicion. After his own research on the incident, Erdoğan (2014) argued that it was rather the profiteers of the urban renewal projects that burned down the Syrian homes.
the Turkish state; but their vulnerabilities with regard to their displacement and/or language barriers would stay unrecognized. It is perhaps most striking to see such invisibility at the policy and research levels as well:

The minute they [Kurdish people] enter into the city, they become a part of the big development and world capitalism narrative that overshadows their agony and problems that led to their “migration.”

This particular comparison of Kurdish people to refugees/asylum seekers, I think corresponds to state of exception and to that life of *homo sacer*, “a human victim who may be killed but not sacrificed” (Agamben 1998 ). As (bearer of) bare life, homo sacer’s death and for that matter homosacer’s life becomes insignificant and therefore, the violence that the homosacer bears is not regulated and stays out of the law as an exception. This process normalizes the death of homo sacer. Agamben (1998 ) further underlines that bare life and state of exception are not limited by a certain topographical zone and/or a definite topological relation like the (concentration or the refugee) camp, but rather he conceptualizes “the camp as permanent state of exception” that is found in cityies’ interiors, outskirts, and/or places like airports (Agamben 1998 175-176).

Inspired by Agamben (1998 ) ground breaking work, neoliberalism and urban informality, in addition to borders have been theorized as states of exception, being part of the dominant rule. A new set of curious research leans on mega-projects of ecological and urban transformation (almost like gated ecologies in its more than human

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247 “Kent ortamına girdikleri anda, çektikleri acıların ve “göçmelerine” sebep olan sorunların hasıraltı edildiği ve kayıt dışı kaldıgı o büyük kalkınma ve dünya kapitalizmi anlatısının bir parçası olurlar.”
248 For urban informality and neoliberalism as states of exception see Ong (2006); Roy (2005), and also Smith (2007); On immigration and refugees, for example, see Darling (2009); on the city and the camp see Diken and Laustsen (2006); Datta (2013); Demirtaş-Milz (2013); Schinkel and Van den Berg (2011).
terms), as states of exception. The most important challenge and contribution of this body of research has been the emphasis on networking topological and topographical relations across different encampments, which are founded on “uneven development” and/or fluctuating peripheralizations. As such, the topographical gap between outside and inside that characterizes certain isolation and suspension, “the exception” from the general rule, has been questioned and indeed blurred. Giaccaria and Minca (2011) research on the Auschwitz concentration camp, which forms the basis of Agamben (1998) theorization of “the camp” and the state of exception, not only explicates networks of other concentration camps in producing bare life but it also draws attention to the dependent and peripheral relationship of the Auschwitz concentration camp to the town as part of a much wider resettlement plan of the German Nazi regime in southeast Europe, particularly Poland. Encampment thus stretches topographies of the camp per se and opens up a new venue to spatialize it within a much wider circuit of topological relations, exceeding its original “metaphorical” meaning, first theorized by Agamben (1998).

It is possible to locate Ong (2006) conceptualization of “neoliberalism as exception” and “exceptions to neoliberalism” within the context of stretching the meanings of encampment beyond topographical relations. That is; while the first conceptualization underlines “extraordinary departure in policy that can be deployed to include as well as to exclude” (Ong 2006, 5), the latter argues for different historical and spatialized configurations of neoliberalism, especially within the context of the global

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249 See Follmann (2015) and Datta (2014).
South. Here, neoliberalism and calculative practices of market rationalities are not confined to labour markets, but also involve, for example, realms of citizenship and urban transformation, as sites of exception in both of its meanings. In parallel, Roy (2005) argues that urban informality as state of exception is “an organizing logic, a system of norms that governs the process of urban transformation” (Roy 2005, 148). Informality is not conceptualized as a separate sector but it represents an integral driving force for the formal sectors of housing, infrastructure, and labour. In both of these theorizations, the sovereign power is conceptualized in relation to its inclusion and exclusion of subjects and their places; thus forming diverse networks of encampments, dependencies, and peripheries.

My dissertation research demonstrates a parallel understanding of exception, which diversely binds nationalist discourses to neoliberalism, almost like a “natural” gatekeeper of invisibilities at multiple levels of the everyday management of neighbourhood life and ethnic segregation. Moreover, within the context of the deliberate non-governance of the Ergene River, it further posits “environment” to be another state of exception. Within the context of these multiple states of exception, by looking at environmental narratives, I have examined how environment, in both of its meanings as “surroundings” (çevre) and nature (doğa), is constructed at the juncture of nationalism and neoliberalism. Thus, I argue that nationalism is continuously re-territorialized across multiple spatialities, which sustain the continuity of national, regional, and neighbourhood families in an era of neoliberal (non) governance. I further argue that such an amalgamation sets up landscapes of invisibility—blind spots just like the Ergene River.
and the Kurdish Quarter. Here, non-governance becomes a state tactic, as a “state of exception” while invisibilities are negotiated and, as the Kurdish case suggested, can serve as a shelter for the internally displaced migrants to the neighbourhood.

In order to develop the arguments of this dissertation, I first explored the history of migration that shaped the settlement of those immigrants coming from the Balkan countries from the 1930s onwards, alongside with how environmental governance was rationalized across Turkey and the Thrace region. I argued that Muslim-Balkan immigrants were seen by the state as subjects of national development, suitable for assimilation into Turkishness and, by law, they were provided by the Turkish state with land for agriculture. My interviews suggested that not all Muslim-Balkan immigrants used such privileges as intended by the state; however, nostalgic narratives of the immigrants with regard to how Muslim-Balkan immigrants used the Ergene River and its surroundings for agriculture before the 1990s indicate a relative privilege in accumulating wealth to buy land and settle in Thrace region. State-owned enterprises, such as farms and the sugar factory in Alpullu, prepared the necessary conditions for Muslim-Balkan immigrants to participate more actively in national development. Thus, local narratives further showed that neighbourhood, regional, and national identities intertwined as a result of nationalist governmental policies of the era. On the other hand, factories and state farms were idealized as modern cornerstones of the new Turkish Republic by further assimilating Muslim-Balkan immigrants into secular, modern Turkish culture, all of which inaugurated the very foundations of the Republic.
Memory of immigration and cultures of losing the Ergene River as a resource and neighbourhood landscape that attracted other migrants from different parts of Anatolia in the 1990s era dominated environmental narratives of Muslim-Balkan immigrants. In that sense, the Ergene River’s pollution was depicted as a time and geographical marker, a boundary between the old and new worlds offered to the neighbourhood: that is, transformation of the neighbourhood landscape from an agricultural-military to industrial-agricultural complex. By this nostalgic understanding, the Ergene River’s pollution was normalized by depicting it as something that is irreversible.

Third, I tried to extend on the idea of nostalgia articulated in the environmental narratives and to understand how it played into the racialization of the neighbourhood landscape through ethnic segregation between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the Kurdish residents. Ethnic segregation involved multiple geographies of conflict. And nostalgia of the neighbourhood was influential in shaping neighbourly relations where exclusion was based on dichotomies of easterner–westerner, Thracian–Kurdish, and Turkish–Kurdish. These dichotomies were constantly circulating in the stereotypes that I outlined in Chapter five.

Kurdish stereotypes were a commonality across my interviews when speaking about the landscape change in the neighbourhood, and Thrace region in general. These stereotypes worked like a vicious hole that legitimized spatial and temporal ethnic segregation, causing fear and invisibility. They were historically formed, meaning that there had been stereotypes among Muslim-Balkan immigrants and between the Muslim-Balkan immigrants and non-immigrant local populations since the 1950s, formed long
before Kurdish arrival to the neighbourhood. Nevertheless, Kurdish internal displacement, ongoing Kurdish–Turkish ethnic conflict, which increased vulnerability of Kurdish populations in work and housing sectors, make Kurdish existence much more complex. In this vein, I tried to show, for example, different encounters of Kurdish populations with the state in the realms of social assistance, which constituted the core of neoliberal conservatism in Turkey. These encounters strengthened depictions of Kurdish people as welfare scroungers by Muslim-Balkan immigrants. As such, everyday nationalism gained strength across multiple spatialities producing invisibilities and/or blind spots.

Everyday nationalisms were influential in shaping neighbourly relations, and educational and work realms, in addition to community politics over river pollution. Racialization of the neighbourhood landscape strengthens feelings of nostalgia. Ultimately, this relationship between the nostalgic discourse and the racialization, obscuring the problem of the Ergene River to a local issue—one that belongs to the Muslim-Balkan immigrants, rather than the Kurdish populations living in the same neighbourhood area.

A closer look at environmental- and water pollution-related problems in the Kurdish Quarter in Chapter 6 of this dissertation revealed that absence of infrastructure in addition to flooding of the Lüleburgaz stream were not “seen” by Muslim-Balkan immigrants and the local government, as well as the central government agencies, as an environmental problem. According to my Kurdish participants, the illegality of the Kurdish settlement was often given as a reason by state institutions for lack of
infrastructural and water treatment facilities and non-governance of these settlements for improvement of their environmental conditions. It is possible to think of non-governance by the state as what Prudham (2004) refers to as a neoliberal construction of “organized irresponsibility.”\footnote{Prudham (2004, 345) argues that neoliberalism has a high potential to generate environmental catastrophes by “building organized irresponsibility into regulatory systems”.
} The act of non-governance, I further argue, is a facet with respect to landscapes of invisibility, and thus racialized ethnic conflict together with neoliberalization of the water sector in Turkey, prepare the conditions for re-territorialization of conflict geographies across river politics. That is the reason why Kurdish people living in the neighbourhood tended to abstain from taking collective action. This phenomenon also suggested the instrumentalization of invisibility of the Kurdish people, as a community tactic to coexist with the Muslim-Balkan immigrants. That is also one of the ways through which neoliberalization processes, which are not only limited by environmental politics but which are diffuse in other policies such as education and social assistance, are able to re-create ethnic-class polarizations. Thus, nationalism and neoliberalism comingle and function together; and discipline docility, in this case through community’s avoidance of being conspicuous in addressing pollution.

Istanbul’s urbanization structure, led by restructuring of industry to peripheral regions such as the Marmara and Thrace regions, has been a significant factor, influencing socio-spatial and environmental policies of Istanbul and that of the Thrace region, since the 1980s (İstanbul Kalkınma Ajansı 2010; Eraydin 2011). The Thrace region of Turkey will continue to have its significance in accommodating Istanbul’s
future relocation of its industries and the migrant populations that will follow such industrial growth. Within this context, the Ergene River’s pollution will also remain as an important problem for the region. There have been planning initiatives with regard to rehabilitating the river and constructing wastewater treatment facilities for the urban and rural centres, dumping all of their waste to the river. This research hopefully will show that pollution is not only a technical problem as environments are constructed and governed in accordance with social and cultural geographies. Therefore, it will contribute to a more complex understanding of the blind spots and landscapes of invisibilities located across the riverside and will eventually take these into consideration when planning to rehabilitate the river.

Is it possible to imagine a different landscape that would go beyond current racialized ethnic and class polarizations while also building a sustainable living in Thrace region? Considering the historical complexities of settlement in addition to continuing pollution in the region, which threatens community health not only in Thrace region but across Turkey, alongside the growing construction and industrial sectors in Istanbul and its hinterland, the answer might not be that simple. Nevertheless, the events at Gezi Park, even if its occupation only lasted for two weeks before the police forces brutally entered the park, definitely located current neoliberalization processes in Turkey within the context of economic and political realms. While undertaking my field research and writing this dissertation, I tried to make that point clear to people that I encountered along the way, including the members of the communities I engaged with. In other words, rather than coming up with single-recipe solutions to the problem of pollution, it is
perhaps of utmost importance for the communities to be able to participate in one way or another in decision-making processes “equally” with regard to planning and monitoring of the Ergene River’s pollution and settlement of different class and ethnic groups into Thrace region.

There is growing interest in environmental issues among contemporary scholars against expansiveness of the neoliberal city. However, this research is still limited by “the urban” and “the city” (Brenner 2013), neglecting the processes through which neoliberalization of environment, cities, and other resources shape the governance (and/or non-governance) of peripheries and/or edges of the city regions. It is within this context that one of the future directions for research must tackle the ways through which “non-urban” changes are connected to the urban centres and therefore sustain the neoliberalization processes in the urban areas and vice-versa. In other words, it is important to look at relational and historical geographies of the urban and non-urban in the Global South. Within the context of Thrace region of Turkey, this objective translates into, for example, following developments such as the construction of the third bridge over the Bosphorus to connect the Black Sea to Thrace, in addition to landscape changes to be constructed in the East of Thrace region, which includes building of an artificial canal to be accompanied by mass housing projects around the canal and relating such incidences to the overall environmental degradation of the region. There is no doubt that such projects carry risks of increasing conflicts across different ethnic-class groups, and between such groups and the Turkish state, by reterritorializing nationalism and neoliberalization processes. Researching such events would give more insight into the
diverse ways through which different ethnic-class groups resist or stay indifferent to massive neoliberal changes.

From a slightly different perspective, conflicts further shape experts’ collective and/or individual expectations of the future regional identity and landscapes that they advocate for. Another possible project that derives from this research focuses on how regional projects take shape. This entails exploring dynamic historical geographies of knowledge production about water pollution and its effects in regional governance and planning in Turkey. Such research might be able to provide more insight into how pollution becomes normalized and/or to what degree it will be normalized against the backdrop of industrial and regional development.
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Özkan, Yalçın. 1935b. "Dil Köprüsü Ulusal Alanlığın Sınır Bekçisidir [the language bridge is border security of our national territory]." Özdilek 1 (3):2.


Appendix A Interview Questions with Communities

1. Personal Information about the research participant (gender, religious sect, place of birth, year of birth, education, occupation, the neighbourhood s/he is residing, marital status)
2. Where do you work? Which neighbourhood is your work place located?
3. When did you come to Luleburgaz?
4. What was the reason that you chose Luleburgaz to come and decide to live?
5. When you first arrived in Luleburgaz, what was it like? And what are the significant things that you remember?
6. What kind of things has changed in Luleburgaz since you started to living in here?
7. What do you think about industrial and migration wise changes in Luleburgaz?
8. Do you remember going by the riverside before it was polluted?
9. What do you think about Ergene River’s pollution?
10. When and where do you think the pollution has started?
11. When and where did you start witnessing the pollution in Ergene River?
12. Who do you think are responsible from pollution? What do you expect them to do with regard to the pollution problem in Ergene River?
13. Who should be responsible from cleaning pollution from Ergene River?
14. How do you think Ergene River’s pollution is witnessed in Luleburgaz?
15. Which neighbourhoods do you think are most affected from Ergene River pollution?
16. How does river pollution affect your daily life in Luleburgaz?
17. Do you think some of the illnesses have increased due to pollution?
18. Have you ever heard of people poisoned by the water? Where were these people poisoned? In their homes or in their workplaces?
19. Can you provide a photograph/or a picture of Ergene River which best presents the river according to your opinion? This photograph can be either from the past or the present. I would like you to elaborate on the photograph as to why you think this picture/photograph best defines and presents Ergene River?
### Appendix B Age, Gender, and Ethnic Composition of the Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>f</td>
<td>Muslim-Balkan immigrant</td>
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<tr>
<td>plus 50</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>Muslim-Balkan immigrant</td>
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<tr>
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<td>f</td>
<td>Muslim-Balkan immigrant</td>
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<tr>
<td>plus 50</td>
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<td>Gacal&lt;sup&gt;252&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plus 50</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>Gacal</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-30</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>Muslim-Balkan immigrant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>251</sup> This table does not include the participants with Kurdish origins living in the neighborhood, in addition to the participants recruited in Alpullu.

<sup>252</sup> Gacal stands for the local people, that are neither immigrants nor migrants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>30-50</td>
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<td>Migrant from Ordu</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C Interview Questions with Experts at the Central Government Level

These questions were tentative and were deepened throughout the interview process, in accordance with the changes in the relevant sectors.

1. Personal Information about the research participant (gender, place of birth, year of birth, education, occupation, agency where s/he works and/or worked during the planning period)
2. There have been changes at the central government level in the past 5 years. Can you elaborate how these changes affected the institution that you have been working in?
3. What is the place of Thrace region in Turkish economy?
4. How do you think Istanbul affects the development and planning of Thrace?
5. In the specific plan that you worked, what were the priorities for Thrace and if you know for Luleburgaz?
6. Do you remember any difficult decisions that you and/or your team had to make in setting economic and environmental parameters?
7. What is your institution’s responsibility in terms of combating river pollution?
8. What were your own main contributions to the overall planning experience?
9. What do you think are the causes of Ergene River’s pollution? Who is responsible?
10. Do you think that migration into the region intensify the problem of pollution? How?
11. What were the decisions and projects adopted and implemented during your planning period to combat the pollution of Ergene River?
12. What further needs to be done to end the problem of Ergene River?
13. Were there any decisions and/or projects that were not possible to implement or adopt that were stated in the plans?
14. Do you receive any community reactions to the specific decisions and actions that you take with regard to the Ergene River’s pollution? If yes, can you elaborate on these reactions?
Appendix D General Research Ethics Board (GREB) Approval

April 26, 2013

Ms. Eda Acara
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of Geography
Queen's University
Kingston, ON K7L 3N6

GREB Romeo #: 6096795
Title: "GGEO-131-12 The Contentious Ethnic Geographies of Water Pollution in Turkey"

Dear Ms. Acara:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB) has reviewed and approved your request for renewal of ethics clearance for the above-named study. This renewal is valid for one year from May 7, 2013. Prior to the next renewal date you will be sent a reminder memo and the link to ROMEO to renew for another year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB of any adverse event(s) that occur during this one year period. An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that all adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours. Report to GREB through either ROMEO Event Report or Adverse Event Report Form at http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be cleared by the GREB. For example you must report changes in study procedures or implementation of new aspects into the study procedures. Your request for protocol changes will be forwarded to the appropriate GREB reviewers and/or the GREB Chair. Please report changes to GREB through either ROMEO Event Reports or the Ethics Change Form at http://www.queensu.ca/ors/researchethics/GeneralREB/forms.html.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

John Freeman, Ph.D.
Professor and Acting Chair
General Research Ethics Board

cc: Dr. Audrey Kobayashi, Faculty Supervisor
    Dr. Mark Rosenberg / Dr. Anne Godlewska, Co-Chairs, Unit REB
    Joan Knox, Dept. Admin.