

Belonging to Imbros: Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Turkish Republic

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by

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*To my grandfather Hakkı Işıksalan,
who is the best storyteller I have ever known...*

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ABSTRACT

Belonging to Imbros: Citizenship and Sovereignty in the Turkish

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Elif Müyesser Babül

This study aims to analyse the narratives and practices of belonging in Imbros, and the implications of those narratives and practices of belonging related to the larger issues of governmentality and sovereignty in Turkey in general. Based on the ethnographic analysis of the island along with the narrative analysis of the interviews conducted during the fieldwork, it intends to address migration and belonging as issues of governmentality and sovereignty. In that sense, the thesis aims to problematize the concept of citizenship with regard to its relation to power and authority. It claims that the emergence of citizenship in the republican Turkey refers to a cultural process of subjectivation and a form of governmentality through the regulation of the legitimate way of belonging to a place within the national borders.

Through the definition of Imbros in terms of marginal and exceptional, where the contestations over belonging take place currently, this thesis argues that looking at the ways in which these terms operate on the island reveals the undeclared of the republican citizenship and governmentality related to ethnicity, religion, nativeness, land and locality.

KISA ÖZET

İmroz'da Aidiyet: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde Vatandaşlık ve Egemenlik

Elif Müyesser Babül

Bu çalışma İmroz/Gökçeada'da aidiyet anlatı ve pratiklerini ve bunların Türkiye genelinde egemenlik ve yönetimsellik ile ilgili olarak nelere işaret ettiğini çözümlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Adanın etnografik analizi ve saha araştırması sırasında yapılan mülakatların anlatı analizine dayanan çalışma, göç ve aidiyet konularını yönetimsellik ve egemenlik meseleleri olarak ele almaktadır. Bu anlamda tezin amacı, vatandaşlık kavramını toplumsal güç ve otorite ile ilişkisi bağlamında sorunsallaştırmaktır. Tez, Cumhuriyet Türkiye'si'nde vatandaşlığın ortaya çıkışının, milli sınırlar içerisinde meşru aidiyet şeklinin düzenlenmesi doğrultusunda bir kültürel özneleşme/özneleştirilme süreci ve yönetimsellik şekli olduğunu iddia etmektedir.

Aidiyet mücadelelerinin güncel olarak yaşandığı İmroz/Gökçeada marjın ve istisna (olağanüstü hal) kavramları bağlamında tanımlanarak, bu kavramların adada nasıl işlediğine bakmanın Cumhuriyet vatandaşlık ve yönetimselliğinin etnisite, din, yerlilik, toprak ve yerelliğe ilişkin söylenmeyenlerine işaret ettiği tartışılmaktadır.

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INTRODUCTION

At the end of my first visit to the island of Imbros, while I was making my farewells, I was advised by both of my key informants to bring a letter from my department in the university, informing about my research on the island, and to present it to the kaymakam next time I came. This, as they told me, was a cautionary act that would prevent me being disturbed later on, while conducting my research. Any minute novelty on the island was easily traceable not only because it was such a small environment housing a closed community with face to face relationships, but also because there were lots of "infiltrators" among the islanders who willingly inform the local authorities about suspicious people and events on the island. My revelation of myself before any interrogations taking place was a strategy that would provide me with an upper hand in case a problem arises.

Having heard stories about previous researchers who were forced to leave the island because they were found "suspicious," I did what I have been advised to do to prevent the same thing happening to me. After six months, as I returned to Imbros to begin my interviews, I paid a formal visit to the kaymakam. He asked me about my research, and in particular, about what and whom I was planning to interview. I told him I was there to collect "stories about Imbros" without saying anything about what those stories might refer to, and that I haven't specified any particular group of people in my mind as my informants to be. This time acting more frankly than I, he directly asked me if I was interested in the Rum past of the island. He especially wanted to know if this research was my own project or was offered to me by somebody else (my advisor for instance.) Was my research funded by any organization? Was I planning to write a book at the end of my

research? He then asked me if I knew anything about the Muslim population living in Western Thrace. I told him I had read about it. He said it would be impossible for me to conduct a similar research there if I wanted to, because the Greeks would not let me. The condition of Rums living on the island was a lot superior to the condition of Muslims living in Western Thrace. The Turkish government was very tolerant towards the Rums and if I were to hear stories about land takeovers and Turkish settlements from the Rums I interview, I should remind myself of these points.

The idea of a researcher going around the island, asking people about Imbros, clearly, was not a favourable thing to the kaymakam. Yet, he did not, formally or informally, try to stop me. The range of terms in which the story of the island can be told, displays quite a contested character. Whether the story is the story of an exile or a voluntary migration, a state sponsored resettlement in line with its welfare policies or a transfer of population aiming the island's Turkification, varies according to how people make sense of the events that happened in Imbros.

The kaymakam did not totally deny the truth of Rum stories I might hear in my future interviews. Yes, there might have been events of land expropriation or construction of settlement villages on the island, but Imbros was a part of the Turkish land, and it was under the sovereignty of the Turkish state. Thus, all state acts on Imbros were legitimate due to the rights of sovereignty. As a former kaymakam of the island of Tenedos whom I interviewed in Ankara before I started my fieldwork said to me: "Nobody told the Rums to leave. They chose to go themselves. Most of the men ran away not to serve their military service and lost their citizenship. They all went to Greece and got rich, anyway..."

This thesis is about tracing an ongoing dispute over belonging in Imbros. My aim is to look at the ways in which the arguments of belonging in Imbros are constructed and practiced, and to trace how these belongings become different means of claiming the island.

The term “belonging” indicates a desire for some sort of attachment, and re-defines “identity” not as a fixed concept, but as a threshold in movement (Fortier 2000). I choose the term “belonging” rather than “identity” in my analysis both because it helps me to grasp the dynamic state of different forms of existence in Imbros, and because the idea of “a threshold in movement” allows me to look at the ways in which these senses of attachment circulate within the present of the island, in the daily lives of its current actors.

My understanding of belonging is very much informed by a sense of attachment to a place. Thus, I would like to think of belonging as always mediated through an imaginary¹ relationship between the self and the place. Forms of belonging that construct (and at the same time are constructed through) stories of attachment to a place, are at the centre of my study. I would like to think of this “sense of attachment” in line with “a

¹ Here, and throughout the thesis, my use of the term “imaginary” draws from the work of Cornelius Castoriadis. Social imaginary differs radically from an “image of” or “reflection” that pre-supposes an existence/reality prior to it. On the contrary, the “imaginary is the unceasing and essentially *undetermined* (social-historical and psychical) creation of figures/forms/images, on the basis of which alone there can ever be a question of ‘something’.” (Castoriadis 1987: 3) Social imaginary, thus, points out a realm of thought that is always a mode and a form of social-historical doing that belongs to society and to history. I use the term “imaginary,” precisely to emphasize this historical and social embeddedness. Additionally, the term imaginary does not, by any means, correspond to a realm of imagination that indicates something other than reality. Just the opposite, reality and rationality are the works of imaginary, which means that the imaginary with its material effects belongs to the domain of reality.

sense of place” that refers to a definition of belonging to a place in terms of “inscribing it with meaning through social acts and memory” (Hoffmann 2003). Thus, place indicates something more than a mere geographical spot, and is defined through an act of meaning attribution in line with the formation of an imaginary of belonging. What I try to do in the context of Imbros is precisely to look at the relationships between multiple forms of meaning attribution to the island and belonging to it. These acts of meaning attribution to Imbros take the form of different stories about the self and the island, which do not always cohere with each other. In fact, I argue that the current dispute, which I claim exists about “what the island of Imbros refers to,” is being carried out in terms of the struggle over defining what the story of the island (i.e. the self in relation to the island) is.

Claiming a Place Through Stories of Belonging

During my study, I went after the different stories of attachment to the place, which construct different forms and imaginaries of the self in relation to the island. The stories people tell about themselves are not only a recital of events whose truth can be challenged, but they also indicate a peculiar way of organizing experience and asserting meaning: “How individuals recount their stories –what they emphasize and omit, their stance as protagonists or victims, the relationship the story establishes between teller and audience- all shape what individuals can claim of their own lives.” (Rosenwald and Ochberg 1992: 1) Likewise, the stories of

belonging, narrated in terms of attachment to a place emerge as the narrators' claims of both themselves and the place. However, this act of making sense through telling one's own story of belonging does not appear free from the existing narrative frames within the society. On the contrary, the stories of the self stand at the borderline between the personal and the social. This points to the social/public aspect of private self-understanding, which means that making sense of one's self is not immune from the existing relationships of power and authority within society.

Hence, stories of belonging in Imbros always emerge as being informed by the configurations of power and authority throughout the island. These stories, each as a different way of meaning attribution to the place, are about making claims about/on the island. On the other hand, ways and acts of claiming a place bears a direct relationship to the position one attributes to one's self in relationship to that place, and the social configuration making up that place. Therefore, ways of claiming the island through the stories of belonging always appear to be mediated by the position one attributes to one's self within the configurations of power and authority, which points to an imaginary relationship between the self and authority. For that reason, I pay special attention to the kinds of claims that can arise from certain forms of belonging, and also the other way round, the kinds of imaginaries of belonging that can be traced in certain claims. In Imbros, there are multiple ways of claiming the island. Each claim over the place points to a way of making sense of the self, the place, and authority in relationship to each other.

Naming, which is an authoritarian act about meaning attribution, bears a direct relationship to power. Naming is an authoritarian illusion that negates the former presence of the thing that it names. It pre-supposes a starting point of the absence of everything, a position of “from nothing,” and is both about mastering and annihilating (Blanchot 1981). Thus, naming always appears as re-naming, like a “colonial re-inscription” that names in a different way or claims with different means that compete with those of the natives (Hoffmann 2003).

Power, in the Foucauldian sense of “modern productive power” as opposed to a repressive form of power which forbids and punishes through the material use of force and violence, governs through naming and determining the truth and its meaning (Foucault 1977). Power operates through the control of the imaginaries of its subjects and their practices, both by defining the terms in which these imaginaries can be articulated, and through the production of those subjects who would for themselves assume and perform these imaginaries. This points to another Foucauldian concept that of “governmentality,” which is about the operation of modern productive power as the “conduct of conduct” via techniques of government that work through the governed (Foucault 1991). I believe that the narratives of belonging on the island, as stories claiming both the self and the place through the configurations of power and authority, provide me with the perfect means to study governmentality on the island. Thus, looking at governmentality in Imbros is an important part of studying how

and why things happen on the island since governmentality is a concept that directs us to the production of people and place in relation to power.

The official discourse on the island represents one way of making sense of what has happened (and is happening) in Imbros. This peculiar way of meaning attribution can be traced through the practices in the court, the land registry office, the municipality, or in the public speeches of the local governors on the island. It points to a certain way of explaining the past and the present. But what is more crucial about it is that it defines the legitimate terms in which the act of “making sense” in Imbros can take place.

The stories about the self on the island operate as the basis of making claims about Imbros. These claims about belonging to the island, which at the same time are claims about the belonging of the island, in certain moments, have to be articulated and performed in reference to the official discourse. In displaying (public) presence in Imbros, like organizing public events and religious ceremonies, weddings, or applying for property rights, and even the most elementary occasion of entering the island, one needs to get into a dialogue with authority. Speaking to authority figures, when, for example applying for an entry visa, or going to the court to claim ownership of a house that reverted to the treasury during the cadastral survey, assigns a certain speaking position to the speaker. The act of petitioning appears similar to an act of filling out an application form, where the required information for the positioning of the person as the

petitioner is determined outside (or before) the actual process of petitioning. In an Althusserian point of view, while speaking to the authority in certain ways, “individuals are always already subjects” (Althusser 1971). They are interpellated, addressed by the authority with reference to the pre-defined categories of position before (e.g.) “The Law.” What is more, the actual process of speaking is pre-defined in the sense that what is valid and what is not in pursuing an argument, and what is relevant and what is not in making a claim is always already set (e.g. in court.) This is why, at certain times and places, while speaking to the authority, one can only tell the story defined by the authority, and only be the addressor that the authority defines.

However, power does not operate only through the interpellation or pre-definition of the subjects according to the existing categories of subject positions. Modern governmental power also operates through the production of the governed subjects who assume and perform those subject positions enabled by the form of governmentality that prevails at the time. This makes the process of “subjectivation,” or becoming subject as the governed, an essential part of the operation of governmental power. This process can be traced through the self-narratives of the governed subjects as an attempt to make sense of themselves with reference to the larger narratives that predominate and serve as frames for people to make sense of themselves within society.

Hence, narratives of the self as accounts of personal experience cannot be understood without paying attention to the existing narrative frames within society. People guide their actions and construct their identities by locating themselves, or being located within a (multiple, but ultimately limited) repertoire of emplotted stories.

The act of emplotment refers to a selective appropriation of events in constructing narratives through a thematic plot, which is actually an act of prioritising and rendering meaning to events (Sommers and Gibson 1994). Plot, with its connecting function between an event or events and the story, represents an intelligible whole that makes events into a story (Ricoeur 1980). “Meaning” appears as an organizational centre, or the plot of the narrative (White 1985). Likewise, historical events do not gain meaning according to a quality that is inherent to them, rather the meaning of events is constructed through their organization in a special way in relation to each other, and to the bigger picture they present (White 1972). Power appears through the decision about what this bigger picture is all about, and the plot around which this picture will be drawn. It realizes itself in the moment of asserting meaning to the self in narratives and their practices.

Focusing on people’s narratives about themselves and Imbros, as an act of making sense of what has happened on the island with reference to their position according to the configurations of power and authority, bears a direct relationship to a study of governmentality on the island. Narratives that are available in Imbros and the way they operate within the everyday

life on the island are matters of the social and the political. The way people narrate their lives in relation to Imbros is about people's claims regarding their own lives. It is also about what people claim of Imbros in reference to who they think they are. This act of narrativization happens through the narrators' positioning of themselves in a larger narrative. Each life story is told with reference to a bigger picture in the background, to which people turn in order to say, "So this is what it was all about!" However, not all bigger pictures (that are limited in number) seem to have the same effect in making claims to truth and reality. Moreover, not all meaning assertions seem to be valid in making claims about one's self and the island to which it relates. I claim that the current political struggle in Imbros takes place in terms of this argument about validation, and the "truth" this validation assumes about what has really happened (and is happening) on the island.

The story of what has really happened in Imbros is always already about the story of what is happening in Imbros, of what Imbros is, for "pastness" is a position that gains meaning through its relationship to the present. The past does not refer to a finished event that happened before now, and thus predetermining it. It is rather something that is being formed in the present and for that present, by subjects whose creation goes hand in hand with the continuous creation of the past. Thus, the notion of the past does not only cover "that what has happened in the past" but also takes into account "that which is said to have happened," which is about the narrativisation of the past, happening in the present. It is this process of narrativisation that appears in relation to power, because it is through the exercise of power

that some narratives are made possible, while others are made silent. Silencing happens through rendering some events “unthinkable,” which “is that which one cannot conceive within the range of possible alternatives, that which perverts all answers because it defies the terms under which the questions were phrased.” (Trouillot 1995: 82)

The obligation to get into a dialogue with the authority to make certain claims in Imbros, constructs some of the stories about the island’s past as “unthinkable,” for the dialogue always happens around the terms defined officially by authority. Throughout this process, the events or stories that have the capacity to defy these terms are dismissed at once as being not related, or irrelevant to the claim being made. Along with the working of the past on the island, some stories are left unrecognised.

To trace the exercise of power, Trouillot focuses on the process of “historical production” and the unevenness of historical power through questioning authority, the formation and accessibility of the archives, and the selection of narratives that will be put into those archives. He calls for asking the question of “how history works” instead of “what history is” because he believes that “...what history is changes with time and place or, better said, history reveals itself only through the production of specific narratives. What matters most are the process and conditions of production of such narratives. Only a focus on that process can uncover the ways in which the two sides of historicity intertwine in a particular context. Only

through that overlap can we discover the differential exercise of power that makes some narratives possible and silences others.” (Trouillot 1995: 25)

Although, unlike Trouillot, my research question is not about the production of history in academia, my idea of “how the past works in Imbros” draws from his question about “how history works.” What I want to do in the Imbrian context is to look at the operation and the circulation of the different stories of Imbros at the daily level and how they appear in people’s narratives when trying to make sense of themselves and the place, mediated by the configurations of authority. Along with my study, the point of ratification for the narratives that are valid (as Trouillot’s archival power) appears in the form of their “legitimacy” in making an argument for certain claims in Imbros. Thus, in my thesis, I pay special attention to the question of which narratives are made valid and recognized in making certain claims at certain moments, while others are made irrelevant and dismissed; and how this leads to a sort of “silencing” as a form of governmentality on the island.

However, while I say that the process of making sense of Imbros through the narrativization of the self and the place does not happen outside present power relations, I do not presuppose that the whole process happens exactly as defined by authority. On the contrary, I believe that construction of meaning occurs in negotiation. The negotiating parties do not appear to be equal, of course, for only one party has the privilege to recognize and legitimise. But that does not mean that the other(s) would be totally

deprived of the means of strategy making and struggle for recognition. Hence, looking at the stories of belonging in Imbros would also mean looking at the times and moments of appearance of unrecognised stories, and how their appearance takes place.

Looking at the prevailing narratives of belonging throughout the island of Imbros, this thesis will show that citizenship emerges as the main point of reference within the narratives of relationship between the self and authority that is valid in making claims about Imbros. Here, authority takes on the figure of the state, since citizenship represents a relationship between the people and the state. The state appears through the local representatives in the administration who are also subject to discourses of progress and development also endorsed by the state, and who may thereby enter into their own negotiations with the state.

However, citizenship does not appear as a uniform imaginary throughout the island. The idea of being a citizen refers to two different understandings of the self in relation to the state. While the first form of citizenship is thought in terms of being loyal to the state, the second form conceives citizenship as a contractual relationship between the self and the state, based on mutual rights and obligations. The struggle about belonging in Imbros takes place through the negotiations arising from the tension between these two imaginaries. These negotiations take place in line with the struggles related to the transformation of the citizenship imaginary from the former to the latter.

Throughout different narratives of belonging (thus citizenship) on the island, the past, the place and the self are imagined in different ways in terms of their relationship to each other. In the first form of belonging, the island is described in terms of a native land to which one belongs through primordial ties. Within this narrative, the past is remembered through a definition of Imbros almost like the Garden of Eden in which the natives used to live happily. The present situation is described as the fall from that golden past, a fall for which the state is responsible. Thus, the relationship between the self and the state emerges as an obstacle to the actualisation of one's autochthonous belonging to the place. In the other form of belonging, the island is described as the territory of the sovereign, and thus constructs the past as a story of the establishment of national sovereignty and security throughout the island. Within this imaginary, the relation of the self to the island is told through one's claims to the position of the sovereign, that is, the state. In another version of this imaginary, although again the island is defined in terms of the establishment of sovereignty, the past appears as a story of being deceived by the sovereign, and the self in Imbros is imagined as the victim of the state.

In this thesis, I will show that these three imaginaries are the product of history, that is, what happened on the island. The first is the story of autochthonous population who were encouraged to leave by a state intent on securing undisputed sovereignty. The second belong to groups who settled on their own initiative and found on the island either work or a

sense of culture and identity. The third form of making sense of the self and the land through citizenship is articulated by villagers from Anatolia who were settled on the island by the state as part of its policy to govern the island.

Finally, by the end of the thesis, I will try to think the practices of belonging and citizenship on the island in relation to the idea of Turkish nation-state sovereignty. Following Schmitt's idea of sovereignty as pointing at the moments of "exception" and "decision," rather than norm and the application of the law (Schmitt 1985), I will show that Imbros as an exception, indicates, the undeclared of Turkish nation state governmentality. In that sense, I will employ two different, but related points of view to look at the Turkish republican idea of sovereignty. My first point of view will be to look at the way governmentality operates in Imbros. Through this point of view, I will argue that government in Imbros is established through the emergence of the ideas of citizenship and the rule of law as the main terms around which the new republican governmental subjectivities emerge. However, I will also argue that these subjectivities are also formed through the contestation of these two terms. Hence, I will show that while being a citizen stands out as the key term through which claims related to the island are validly carried out, the definition of citizenship, in terms of who gets to be defined as the citizen, appears to be rather ambiguous. Similarly, the idea of the rule of law, in terms of the definition of what is legal and what is not, points to another realm of ambiguity on the island. I will argue that state sovereignty in

Imbros is established not in spite of but because of these moments of ambiguity, and that governmentality in Imbros is first and foremost geared to produce this sovereignty.

My second point of view will be to look at the operation of Turkish republican governmentality in general from the island of Imbros. This point of view will allow me to argue firstly that Imbros, as the “exception” also embodies the “space off” (De Lauretis 1989) of the Turkish nation state imaginary, from where it is possible to reveal its mechanisms of construction. In that sense, I will show that looking at the ways in which the arguments of citizenship are carried out on the island, and how they are approved or dismissed by the state points to an implicit rule that stands at the basis of the idea of citizenship, thus governmentality in Turkey. I will argue that religion and ethnicity, being the two key terms that define the Ottoman form of governmentality do not seem to disappear with the formation of the republican idea of state sovereignty. On the contrary, looking at the practices of citizenship (as an all-inclusive public persona that represents the emergence of the republican imaginary) reveals the continuity of Ottoman categories of governmentality in the effort to establish republican sovereignty.

Re-searching Imbros: Ethnography and Its Promises as a Burden

Anthropologist Renato Rosaldo calls for a new way of imagining and approaching culture. Rather than the standardized conceptualisations of static, monolithic culture and its detached observers, he argues for a new

way of studying culture that would acknowledge and embrace the previously excluded notions of motion, diversity and subjectivity. Comparing social analysis with ideology, he says: "If ideology often makes cultural facts appear natural, social analysis attempts to reverse the process. It dismantles the ideological in order to reveal the cultural, a peculiar blend of objective arbitrariness and subjective taken-for-grantedness." (Rosaldo 1993: 39)

Following Rosaldo's argument, social analysis becomes "something more" than writing normalizing, distanced accounts of objective truths about the stable, unified object of analysis (culture). This, for Rosaldo, implies a re-definition of both the analysis, and its focus as "meaning" sensitive. "Putting culture into motion," the new way of analysing the social imagines its object as an "ongoing conversation" which is not essential and static, but is always a becoming, and positions itself as a part of that conversation, instead of a detachment for the sake of objectivity. Rosaldo offers ethnography as a new way of writing about culture and a form of social analysis. He claims that ethnographical writing (not the classical ethnography with a normalizing distanced discourse, but an ethnography which is informed with this new understanding of culture and its analysis) has the capacity "to defamiliarize the familiar," to make something natural and objective appear strange, historically and culturally peculiar, thus in need of explanation and further investigation.

Sirman, on the other hand, describes this “alienation” as a promise of the anthropological point of view that enables the researcher to turn the gaze against him/herself. Thus, ethnography becomes something more than studying “distant cultures” and becomes a way of asking questions about the operation of everyday life, which the ethnographer is also a part of. Ethnographic study places its object of knowledge within the tension between “that which has happened,” and “that which ought to have happened,” which signifies the productive relationship between social practices and their narrativization within the society (Sirman 2002). Ethnography, thus, signifies the opportunity to investigate how the everyday practices of meaning assertion, reasoning, and (re)production happen, and what this happening means by studying both what people do, and what they say about what they do.

It was mainly these promises of ethnographical work that led me to carry out fieldwork in Imbros between August 2001 and August 2002, when I decided to study the island. During my research period, I made four visits to the island, each lasting about two weeks. Throughout my study of the island of Imbros, ethnographical research, having the capacity to make the “familiar” and “natural” appear strange, enabled me to ask questions about the everyday practices and their meanings on the island. Hence, my study appears as an investigation of how, and through which means, the island of Imbros is being lived, given meaning, and how these meanings circulate/operate within the present of the island.

During fieldwork, besides conducting participant observation, I carried out in depth interviews with the current and former residents of Imbros, native Rums², and settlers. Throughout the interviews, what I wanted to hear was how my informants related themselves to the island and tell me its story. Therefore, my main concern while I was doing the interview design and deciding my questions was not to name the story and define the terms in which it is going to be told. Not surprisingly, this concern led me to a series of inevitable difficulties. How was I supposed to phrase my questions? Was I going to be asking about “migration” or “exodus?” How would I avoid using key terms, which would mean my pre-determination of the story with my questions? What would I ask my informants to tell me the story of?

In the end, my interview design formulated itself during the actual process of its happening, in relation to my informants’ making sense of me and themselves, and this whole process of storytelling. I too, was re-shaped and re-defined as a researcher, as a guest, as someone suspect who asks too much, as a schoolgirl who needs help, or as enemy, and as friend all along the way, again and again. Finally, my research focused itself on people’s

² The term “Rum” in Turkish originally refers to the members of the Greek speaking Christian Orthodox community living in Asia Minor, under the Ottoman rule. The term particularly indicates the difference of the community both in cultural and political terms from the “Greeks” (Hellenes) who are Greek citizens. (see Oran 2003) However, there is not a standardized use of terminology in academic works related to this community. (see Hirschon 2003) While in most of the articles and books written in English, the term “Greek” is used (see Alexandris 1980, 1992, Clogg 1996, Tsimouris 2001) the words “Romios/Romoi” (which is the correspondent of the Turkish “Rum” in Greek language) or “Mikrasiates” and “Prosphygas” (a distinctive term for the Rums who went to Greece in line with the population exchange) are rarely used. (see Hirschon 1989) My preference of the term “Rum” instead of “Greek” draws first of all because “Rum” is an Ottoman term to refer to Greek Orthodox subjects and included as such in the Empire’s administrative apparatus. The use of this term indicates that the Rum issue is a product of the dissolution of the older Ottoman political order. But more important than that, I prefer the term “Rum” because it also points to the way my informants talk about themselves.

narratives of making sense of their lives and who they are, in relation to the island of Imbros.

However, even after the interview design was relatively clarified in my mind, the actual process of interviewing has never been a relaxed, standardized process of asking questions and getting answers in return, for several reasons. First of all, "the interview," both for my informants and I never ceased to be a field in which mutual strategies were applied to make sense of each other and ourselves within the situation of interviewing and being interviewed. On my part, no matter how much I tried to avoid pre-determining the story I was going to be told, I still had an agenda on my mind, which was reflected in my questions and the way I asked them. As for my informants, the story they told was very much in a way determined by their thoughts about the proper thing to tell in a situation like that. The situation, however, has never appeared clear and uniform.

In some of my interviews, for example, the tape recorder appeared to be an important medium in defining the proper story to be told in a recorded interview. The stories told by the same informants in the absence and the presence of the recorder differed dramatically. Sometimes, the presence of my key informants during the interviews had effects like me being dismissed from the whole process, and causing the interview to become a site of performance for the agenda that my key informant had in mind. Thus, the story of Imbros, with its zones of danger and its more acceptable

accounts, got defined and redefined through the interviews that happened as an ongoing negotiation between my informants and me.

Aside from the dynamics of interviewing, there was another very important reason that made ethnography in Imbros a restless and unsteady experience for me, which mainly stems from the way I was implied in the story I was researching. As a middle class, educated, Muslim Turkish woman, locating myself as the researcher of a story of “settlement” or “Turkification” in Imbros has been a most difficult fieldwork experience. While my implication within the story had very practical consequences during my fieldwork (as sometimes being regarded as the “natural” ally or the enemy,) the real problem I faced was my own feeling of desperation, caused by not knowing what to do with a story, in which I was implied as “the oppressor,” and the guilt which it aroused in me.

Still, I cannot claim to find a way to solve the unease that researching in Imbros caused in me. However, I can say that during the process, I have found a way to deal with it through feeling and accepting to carry a responsibility for the story of Imbros. Both as an ethnographer and as someone implied in the story, acknowledging this is how I make myself visible throughout this research. It is with these concerns that I have raised issues relating to the mode of government in Imbros. Following this lead, I have identified anxieties about sovereignty as the major factor shaping governmentality not only in Imbros, but also in Turkey in general.

The first chapter of this thesis will deal with the construction of the island as a place and mainly be an attempt towards the emplacement of the study and its questions. The second chapter will look at the practices of governmentality in Imbros by focusing on the accounts of what has happened there, told by people living on the island along with their discursive practices a propos these stories. I will try to track the transformation in the form of governmentality on the island, with an aim to elucidate the operation of these different forms of governmentality through the everyday practices and meaning attributions. The final chapter will concentrate on the narratives of “me and the state” throughout the island of Imbros with an aim of understanding the process of “subjectivation” within governmentality. Along the way, I will try to show how the process of subjectivation also works as a strategy to speak to/about the authority in pursuing claims about the self and the place.

CHAPTER I THE PLACE: AN ISLAND ON THE MARGINS

This is my story of the island of Imbros. This is a story, which is composed of a selection of the sources of information from which I derived a meaningful and coherent wholeness. Although it carries analytical concerns, it is inevitably selective. My story of Imbros gathers its “events” around a certain “plot” and relates this to a certain “bigger picture” as any other story (White 1972). As I mentioned earlier, I believe in the presence of certain power relations within the process of history writing. I do not think that the asymmetrical power relation between the author and the reader can be dismissed. Yet, I believe that it can be made visible through its acknowledgement. This is what I intend to do.

During my research, I’ve conducted over 30 in-depth interviews with various people living in the island of Imbros. My story is mainly built on my analysis of these testimonies. Literary sources available to me that are directly related to the island are quite few. The story of Imbros does not seem to be a popular subject of study neither within academia, not outside it. This may be a partial explanation of my preference to rely in oral sources.

This chapter, which is about the historical background of Imbros, is an attempt to “emplace” my research questions through the construction of the island as a distinctive, significant social space embedded in a certain

time and context. This is an attempt to contextualize my study on Imbros, and to point out my reasons for looking at it. “Emplacement” implies an inclination both towards seeing all social phenomena as emplaced, as being constituted in part through location, material form, and their imaginary, and towards an understanding of “the place” as more than a setting or backdrop, but as an agentic player in the game. According to this understanding, “place” appears as a unique process of meaning attribution to a space via social relations and practices, as a “...space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations”(Gieryn 2000: 465). But “place” at the same time, surrounds these social imaginaries and practices. “Everything that we study is emplaced: it happens somewhere...”(Gieryn 2000: 466) This, however, should not lead to a deterministic perception of place as essentially ascertaining the social phenomena without leaving any room for negotiation. On the contrary, places themselves come into being through their social imaginations. This is what makes them something more than a mere spot on a geographical map, and endows them with meaning. “Emplacement,” for my study, signifies the sensitivity for this unique act of meaning attribution to, and of being informed by “place.”

Following this line of thought, what I will try to do in this chapter will be to look at how Imbros as a place comes into being. Along the way, I will focus on two different ways of imagining the island and its story. Putting the Greek and the Turkish stories about the significance of Imbros side by side, I will try to understand the process of making sense of Imbros, and see what this might say about what kind of a place the island is, that is the

meaning that can and have been attributed to Imbros. In the concluding chapter, I shall also discuss the meaning I attribute to this place.

Both the Greek and the Turkish stories about making sense of Imbros imply an imagination of the island as “marginal.” The condition of “remaining at the margins” prevails both for the geographical and the imaginary configurations of the island. Imbros, while actually representing the geographical border between Greece and Turkey in the Aegean, at the same time symbolizes a terrain, which both the Greek and the Turkish nation-state imaginary fail (or at the same time desperately try, yet fail) to embrace. The meaning of Imbros for the Greek national imaginary, understood in light of the significance for Modern Greece, of Asia Minor and Asia Minor refugees, is closely related to the negotiation about the meaning of “Greekness.” Asia Minor, which represents a challenge for the imaginary of being Greek, both as a national identity and a spatial configuration, remains at the margins of the Greek national imaginary. The significance of the island for the Turkish nation state imaginary, on the other hand, derives its meaning from the states’ concerns related to its security and sovereignty. The Turkish national imaginary that grasps the meaning of Imbros in line with its problem of minorities and territorial sovereignty also renders the island “marginal.”

This chapter, then, emerges as an attempt to place these two different ways of telling a story of marginalization about Imbros side by side, and to put the previously mentioned questions about the claims of belonging and

memory into context. What I want to do, is to look at how stories of “Turkification” of the island on the one hand, and of its “de-Hellenization” on the other, render the island “marginal,” a place where these two imaginaries overlap and create a social space, which can work as a display window (for me as for the two states) to see the operation (contestation and reproduction) of the various meanings circulating in it.

Maintaining Security for the Sake of Sovereignty: A Story of Turkification

The island of Imbros (İmroz/Gökçeada¹) is located on the Aegean Sea, a zone considered to be “problematic” by the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a part of the international relations between Turkey and Greece.² The Aegean Problem, as stated by the ministry, spills over to disputes about the regulation of maritime zones on the Aegean Sea, the breadth of both states’ territorial waters, the dispute over the definition of the continental shelf concept, the regulation of high seas and the air space above it, and the dispute over the demilitarised status of the Eastern Aegean Islands. The ministry diagnoses the problem as a disagreement between the two states about “the international legal status” of the Aegean. Pointing out Turkey’s unease about what it identifies as the “unilateral” acts of Greece on the Aegean (e.g. expanding her territorial waters from 3 miles to 6 miles in 1936 without consulting Turkey,) the ministry interprets

¹ The English word for the name of the island Imbros, comes from its original name in Greek, Ἰμβρός. In Turkish, however the name is written as İmroz, which is how the island was called till the renaming of the island as Gökçeada in 1970.

² All quotations reflecting the ministry’s point of view about the Aegean are from the official website of the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, www.mfa.gov.tr

the fundamental source of tension as "...the Greek tendency to regard the entire Aegean as a Greek sea in total disregard of Turkey's rights and interests as one of the coastal states."

According to the Turkish point of view, the Aegean implies a status quo, resulting from the "final" arrangement on the regulation of the region through the Treaty of Lausanne³, in 1923, which defines the international status of the Aegean as a "common sea between Turkey and Greece" as opposed to a "Greek national sea." Following this line of argument, the Aegean, of which Turkey and Greece are both "coastal states," is regarded as a space subject to international regulation, which requires "the mutual consent" of the "two littoral states, which have legitimate rights and interests in the Aegean Sea." Thus, the main point of argument for the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs emerges as "the nationality" of the Aegean, which also determines the limits of the rights of sovereignty the two states can claim over the region. Following this issue of sovereignty over the Aegean, which also serves as a platform for the discussion about the meaning of the Aegean (national or international,) the matter of the two states' sovereignty over the Aegean islands becomes crucial. From this Turkish point of view, Imbros along with Tenedos, as being the two remaining pieces of land on the Aegean under Turkish sovereignty, are like a proof of equal existence of Turks and Greeks on the Aegean.

³ For a full text of the Treaty of Lausanne, signed between the then newly established Turkish Republic and Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Romania, and the governments of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia at the end of The Turkish War of Independence following World War I, on July 24, 1923, see www.mfa.gov.tr

The political significance of the island for Turkey also makes sense when one places it in the wider perspective of the problem of non-Muslim minorities who have been an international relations issue for the Turkish state (and the Ottomans before them) for the last 200 years. Following the Ottoman heritage, the Turkish Republic has always had the fears of its territorial sovereignty being challenged through interventions by other states in the name of the protection of its non-Moslem minorities. The nation-state's perception of Imbros, which stands out with its internationally recognized minority population, has to be understood in line with these fears. According to the Lausanne Treaty, which marks the end of the Turkish war of independence and the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the Rum (Greek-speaking Orthodox Christians) population of Imbros were excluded from the process of the Turkish-Greek population exchange and remained within the borders of the Turkish nation state as citizens. In return, the islands' administrative status was considered to be subject to international regulation that would be set by the terms of the treaty. The Rum of Imbros, being the reason for the island to be endowed with a semi-autonomous status in Lausanne, (which corresponds to a zone where the state would be unable to exercise its full rights of sovereignty and be constantly vulnerable to outside intervention) can be seen to represent a weakness of Turkey for the newborn republic. In that sense, the Rum presence on the island (which is a piece of national territory) for the Turkish state signifies the threat of intrusion by "foreign elements" in its "national affairs." What is more, the Rum citizens of Imbros, whose terms of existence do not fit in the desire for national

homogeneity, retain the capacity to rupture the corporatist republican imaginary (Parla 1989).⁴

Hence, throughout the republican period, the island has turned into a space in which Turkish rule has been subject to scrutiny both by Turkish policy makers and by the international community. Since then, “the project of Imbros” turned out to be a project of Turkification, of sovereignty, cast in the terms of various policies such as development, liberalism, or multiculturalism through which Turks have felt watched and assessed. This sense of being watched from outside has also created an effect of seeing one’s self through the eyes of another, and turned Imbros into a mirror for the Turks to watch themselves as an object of their own gaze.

Turkish state policies related to its Rum minorities which were given the status of citizens with the Treaty of Lausanne⁵, have always been shaped in close relation to the international political agenda of the time. While the 30’s and 50’s, the years of close relationship between Turkey and Greece, indicate the years of liberty and social recognition for the Rums of Turkey, the 60’s and the 70’s with the acceleration of the wide-known problem of

⁴ Taha Parla who argues for the influence of Ziya Gökalp’s social and political thought on both early and contemporary republican nationalist idea in Turkey, defines Gökalp’s social idealism as a type of “solidaristic corporatism” which sees society as an organic and harmonious whole consisting of mutually interdependent and functionally complementary parts that gather around a single “public interest.” Gökalp, according to Parla, puts his idea of “Cultural Turkism” at the center of this ideal social wholeness. “Cultural Turkism” represents an idea of national unity based on a common language (Turkish) and common culture (Turkish) as opposed to race, yet to which the Rum existence with its Greek language and local culture represents a threat of rupture.

⁵ The Rum population living in Istanbul, Imbros, and Tenedos were excluded from the compulsory population exchange between Greece and Turkey according to Convention signed at the end of the First World War in January 30, 1923, concerning the exchange of Greek and Turkish populations, along with Treaty of Lausanne signed after the Convention in July 23, 1923.

Cyprus, signify years of hostility and exclusion. Imbros can be seen as a part of this process. The Rum inhabitants of the island, as a result of the largely hostile policies of the Turkish State, left their homelands and fled mostly to Greece in large numbers. Throughout these years, the terms of local relations between the state and the minorities in Imbros were set by the times' hegemonic discourses in the international arena: discourses of national sovereignty in the early states of the Republic, national development, welfare state and lately, democracy and multiculturalism.

State policy on Imbros has always carried an obvious intention of Turkifying the island. Policies of Turkification, for Ayhan Aktar, represent the establishment of the Turkish ethnic identity's sovereignty and authority, at every level and regardless of any concessions, in every dimension of social life from everyday language to the history that will be taught at school, from education to industrial life, from trade to the state personnel regime, from private law to the resettlement of the citizens in certain regions (Aktar 1996). The Turkification of the island through the establishment of state sovereignty via policies of land expropriation and resettlement, of education, of spatial re-organization, and of re-designation can be understood as the taming of the island to become a national (thus safe) place. However, making the island the object of policies of Turkification simultaneously renders the island marginal in the national imaginary, since it implies that the island is not "really" Turkish. The story of the Turkification of Imbros is the story of this process of marginalization in the name of establishing sovereignty.

The records of the Lausanne Conference Proceedings, related to the question of the Aegean islands⁶ may be read as the earliest moment when the Turkish republican imaginary tried to make sense of Imbros. The records expose the conflicting terms in which the question of sovereignty over the Aegean islands in general, and Imbros and Tenedos in particular, is grasped by the different parties of discussion. The main point of opposition between İsmet İnönü, Elefteros Venizelos and Lord Curzon (representing Turkey, Greece and the British Empire respectively) appears to be about the basis of sovereignty. While Venizelos and Lord Curzon argue that the decision about the sovereignty of the islands should be based on the ethnicity of the islands' population, İsmet Paşa asserts the urgency to meet the Turkish demands for security, and claims this be the main point around which the argument on sovereignty should take place:

In reply to Lord Curzon's argument about the ethnical character of these islands, and also of Samothrace, İsmet Pasha said that their ethnical character could not have any importance nor exercise any influence when the issue was to settle the fate of the straights and the system of the islands dependent thereon, for these islands formed, together with territorial system of the Dardanelles, a single whole. In the matter so essential, the presence of several thousand men, of no

⁶ The sixth and the seventh meetings of the Conference that took place on the 25th and the 29th of November 1922.

matter what race, could not outweigh geographical and political considerations of the highest importance.⁷

Therefore, the basis of Turkish policy about the islands and its claims of sovereignty appears to be about the geographical unity of the islands and Anatolia, and Turkey's security concerns, which is a practical outcome of this unity. Compared with the extremely important geographical and political considerations of Turkey, the "several thousand men" of "whatever" ethnicity living on the islands, emerge as a matter of minute detail.

Discussions related to the matter of sovereignty over the islands of Imbros and Tenedos in Lausanne, result in the Article 14 of Part I of the *Traité de Paix*, entitled "Political Clauses":

Article 14

The islands of Imbros and Tenedos, remaining under Turkish sovereignty, shall enjoy a special administrative organisation composed of local elements and furnishing every guarantee for the native non-Moslem population in so far as concerns local administration and the protection of person and property. The maintenance of order will be assured therein by a police force recruited from amongst the local population by the local administration above provided for and placed under its orders.

⁷ Lausanne Conference on Near Eastern Affairs 1922-1923: Records of Proceedings and Draft Terms of Peace, HM Stationery office, London, 1923, pg.107

The agreements, which have been, or may be concluded between Greece and Turkey relating to the exchange of the Greek and Turkish populations, will not be applied to the inhabitants of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos.

Article 14 of the treaty, while putting the islands of Imbros and Tenedos under Turkish sovereignty, also sets clear cut limits to the use of this sovereignty by provisioning the formation of a special administrative organization for the islands to ensure the just governance of the Rum citizens living on them.

In 1927, law no.1151 regulating the local administration of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos was passed. According to this arrangement, the islands were given a special status concerning the organization and the execution of local administration. As opposed to all appointed structure of an ordinary district administration within the legal boundaries of Turkey⁸, the two islands were to have a semi-autonomous administrative structure, basically organized around a district council composed of ten members all of whom would be elected by and among the islanders for two years. All of the civil servants and municipal police officers employed by the district administration would be from among the islanders as well. The community on the island would authorize religious affairs and the organization of such institutions. The education system, on the other hand, was to be arranged in

⁸ The structure of a regular local administration in Turkey is established through law no 5442 of the provincial administration, which was released in 1949. The administrative structure of a district is composed of a *kaymakam* (governor), who is the chief of the civilian administration, district representatives of the ministries, and an executive committee of a district assembly all of whom are appointed by the state.

accordance with the general regulation of education in Turkey. It was to be public, secular and in Turkish. Those who wished to educate their children in their native language (other than Turkish) and their religion (other than Islam) would have to arrange this under the supervision of the Turkish government, at times other than school hours.

The law on the administration of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos has never been applied. The only article that was carried out was article 14, concerning the regulation of educational affairs on the islands. This article was abrogated in 1951, with the Democratic Party coming to power, and education on the islands gained a semi-autonomous position. In 1964, however, following the wind of change in Turkish state policy, closely related to the international affairs of the time, the article was reinvigorated again. 1964 appears as an important year in this respect. Marking the peak of the conflict over Cyprus, the year had direct impact on the locals of Imbros as well as other Rum citizens and residents of Turkey. Starting with the Turkish government's announcement on the 16th of May 1964, regarding the annulment of the 1930 Greek-Turkish agreement on free settlement and the right to work, more than 40.000 Turkish citizens of Rum origin (mostly from Istanbul) were expelled from Turkey.⁹

It can be said, however, that the "Turkification" of the island of Imbros as a governmental policy dates back to 1946, the year when the first group of Muslim Turkish citizens of about ten households were brought by the

⁹ For a focused analysis of the displacement of the Rums of Istanbul in 1964, see: Demir, Hülya and Akar, Rıdvan, İstanbul'un Son Sürgünleri: 1964'te Rumların Sınırdışı Edilmesi, İletişim Yayınları, İstanbul, 1994.

government to the island from the Black sea region. The 50's, the years of the Democratic Party regime, signify the years of tranquillity and liberty for Imbros. Following the years of the 1960 military coup first came the expropriation of agricultural lands in 1964, then the location of a military battalion on the island. The same year *Atatürk Öğretmen Okulu*, a boarding school of higher education that aims to "spread Turkish culture, and to maintain cultural accumulation for the benefit of Turkish society" was established. In 1965, an open correction centre on the southwest coast of the island was formed, which was followed by the establishment of a state owned farm of agricultural production (TİGEM) in 1966. With a governmental decree released on July 29, 1970 İmroz was renamed Gökçeada, and Greek place names were replaced with Turkish ones.¹⁰

Throughout the following years, the island became the site of resettlement for a periodical transfer of population from the Anatolian mainland.¹¹ Villages from Trabzon (1973), Isparta, Burdur and Muğla (1984), and finally from Çanakkale, Biga (2000) were relocated on Imbros. New villages or districts were established in the process. (Şahinkaya, Yenibademli, Uğurlu, and Eşelek.)¹² These above mentioned forms of involuntary resettlement were legitimised or rationalized as being acts of a

¹⁰ The villages of Κάστρο, Γλίκι, Αγιοι Θεοδωροι, Αγριδια, Σχοινουδι, have become Kaleköy, Bademli, Zeytinli, Tepeköy, Dereköy, and district names ΑΛΙΚΙ, Αγιος Κυρηκος and Σναπιδα have changed into Tuz gölü, Kuzu Limanı and İnce Burun.

¹¹ For an analysis of resettlement as a governmental policy of the Turkish state, following the heritage of the Ottoman period, see: İlhan Tekeli, "Involuntary Displacement and the Problem of Displacement in Turkey from the Ottoman Empire to the Present" in, Population, Displacement and Resettlement: Development and Conflict in the Middle East, Seteney Shami (ed.), Center for Migration Studies, NY, 1994.

¹² For a detailed analysis of the change in the demographic structure of Imbros, see: Alanur Cavlin Bozbeyoğlu, Differentiation in the Demographic Structure of Gökçeada Since 1923, Unpublished Master Thesis, Hacettepe University, Institute of Population Studies, Ankara, September 2001.

“welfare state” concerned with economic development or the prevention of a possible loss that may be caused by a natural disaster. The Turkish state also adopted several means of persuasion to make the idea of voluntary resettlement to the island look attractive. Providing special credit opportunities and agricultural aid in kind to those who would decide to settle in Imbros were among those means.

The years of resettlement on the island turn out to be the years of displacement for the native Rums of Imbros. Deprived of their means of production after the land expropriations, and facing hostile behaviour from both the government and from the new residents of the island, Rums of the island, one after another, left their native land. The peak of this exodus was 1974.

The year 1974 represents the climax for Cyprus. In July 1974, a coup d'état lead by the extremist EOKA partisans took place in Cyprus, which resulted in president Makarios being overthrown and Nikos Sampson being announced as president in his place. This was the culmination of the accelerating pro-annexation movements on the island, which started after the 1967 military coup that took place in Greece. Turkey, acting on the grounds of the Zurich Treaty (which marks the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus) that defines her as one of the three states guaranteeing the republic, has landed on the island on July 20th 1974. The Rums of Imbros remember this year as the peak of their exodus.

On the day of Turkey's landing on Cyprus, the local administration in Imbros took some measures to ensure peace and security among the Rums and the Turks on the island. The only coastal village of Imbros, Kastro, was evacuated to prevent villagers helping Greeks in case of a counter landing operation. The military regiment "for defence" armed the male Muslim population, and the notables of the Rum community, like heads of the villages or the priests, were put under arrest for one day, again, "to ensure security of life." Rum memories related to the year 1974 are full of anxiety and terror. Stories of rape, house raids and stories of people running away from the island late at night, secretly on small boats without being able to take any belongings with them, leaving their houses, their lands, their possessions, their lives behind are told by both the Turkish and the Rum communities on the island. Most Rums left Imbros that year.

Rums who left the island mostly ended up in Greece, like those who fled from Istanbul around the same years for the same reason. But again considerably large numbers of Imbrians have also gone to other places like the United States, Australia, or South Africa and became part of a wider category known as the Greek Diaspora. However, it is worth mentioning that the Rums of Imbros themselves are making a great effort to be distinguished from other Greek diaspora people by putting stress on being from Imbros and not from Greece, claiming an identity based on a specific locality. The Imbrian Association, an NGO that is active both in Athens and in Salonica, is an institutional sign of that effort. The association, which was established first as an initiative aiming to offer a helping hand

to those who emigrated from the island, gradually became a means of maintaining Imbrian identity. Today, besides providing a gathering place for the members of the community and publishing a bulletin and distributing it to other diaspora places to help keep people in touch, the association also tries to make the voice of the community heard both in the national and in the international arena. As the general secretary of the Imbrian Association in Athens states, the Association is also trying to coordinate members' efforts to come back to the island and claim what belongs to them: their island. The emergence of "return" to the island as a possibility, of course is a very contemporary phenomenon.

After the intense period of migrations in 1974, things seemed to have cooled down a bit for the remaining islanders. During this time, governmental policies intending a shift of population resulted in an enormous change in the proportion of Rums to Muslim Turks on the island. In 1950, there were 6125 Rums and 200 Turks living in Imbros. In 1970, the numbers were 2576 Rums to 4029 Turks. In 1985, the proportion the number of Rums to Turks was 472 to 7138. Finally, in 1990, there remained only 300 Rums on the island while the number of Turks has gone up to 7200 (Bozbeyoğlu 2001: 41). Imbros, which is now a place more Turkish than Rum has been declared as a touristic site with priority considerations regarding state funding, in line with the winds of change. Since 1993, foreigners wishing to travel to Imbros are no longer obliged to get a special permission from the governor's office in Çanakkale. Offering

certificate programs on tourism management and government-backed cheap credit for tourism related enterprises followed that.

This was the time when the native Rums of the island who had left, found both the chance and the courage to come back to the island. Coming back to Imbros, however, did not mostly mean a permanent settlement on the island. The returnees were mostly second generation Imbrians who got educated and built themselves a life in the places where they had formerly fled to, and returning to their land of origin was a summer time temporary activity for them. Since 1993, each year in increasing numbers, those second generation Imbrians come back to Imbros to spend their summer holidays and to be in their native lands during the Greek-Orthodox religious festival for the commemoration of the death of Virgin Mary, which takes place on the 16th of August.

The double process of Turkification and marginalization of the island in the national imaginary can be traced through policies such as placing the rejects of Turkish society on the island, an army outpost, and an institution that claims to show the proper ways of cultivating the land go hand in hand with a process of re-naming (Blanchot 1981, Hoffmann 2003). The name itself bears no relationship to the place, and is there as the sign of the process of renaming. Each time the name Gökçeada is uttered, it causes people to be alienated, and to remember what it was before, and therefore to recognize the process of re-naming. As I shall show in the next chapter, the issue of international security, which in effect refers to the Greek-

Turkish dispute over sovereignty in the Aegean, is one of the most important issues that shape Turkish policy in Imbros. This definition of Imbros as a matter of security in itself points to its marginality. Thus the state's attempt to tame the place, which remains at the margins of its imagined national homogeneity, causes the emergence of the island as even more marginal.

Heroic Guardians vs. Strangers at Home: A Story of Betrayal and De-Hellenization

Imbros and Tenedos, which were annexed to the Turkish Republic with the Treaty of Lausanne, form a part of *I kath'imas Anatoli* ("Our East" or "The East according to us") of Greece that represents the Greek presence in the Near and Middle East, in close relationship with the idea of *Megali Idea*. *Megali Idea*, the ideology of the early Greek nationalists, represents the aspiration of "...incorporating within the realms of an enlarged Greek state the 'unredeemed' Greeks of the Ottoman Empire" whose capital would be Constantinople. This nostalgic dream of a revival of the great Byzantium era also signifies a neo-Hellenic Enlightenment, and liberation of the Greeks from *Turkokratia* (Clogg 1996: 1).

The Asia Minor Catastrophe in 1922 represents the end of *Megali Idea* for the Greeks. At the same time it constructs the region as both the reminder of the lost homeland, and the symbol of the end of the hope of this revival. The 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange Between Greece and Turkey,

which resulted in a massive influx of Greek speaking Orthodox Christians from Asia Minor to Greece, signaled the demise of *I kath'imas Anatoli* that forms the basis of *Megali Idea*. Thus, Asia-Minor became, for Greeks, both the birthplace and the graveyard of the ideology. Another significant outcome of this period has been the entrance of the Asia Minor Refugees, the *Mikrasiates/Prosphygas* into the Greek everyday life as a socially significant phenomenon.

These refugees who are defined by Renée Hirschon as “ a minority group of Greeks within Greek society,” were both facing discrimination within the larger Greek society, and were themselves preserving a separate sense of identity from that of the society. Hirschon, who looks at the social life of a group of *Prosphygas* in Pireaus puts the remembrance of the migration, and Asia Minor as the homeland at the heart of the construction and maintenance of this separate identity. This act of “remembering” defines the identity of the refugees as the embodiment of a certain “memory” for the larger Greek society, from another point of view (Hirschon 1989).

The work of E. Papataxiarchis on the Greek academic discourse within the Asia Minor refugee studies in Greece makes this embodiment clearer. Papataxiarchis who looks at the intense period of the collection of oral traditions and testimonies of the Asia Minor Refugees about their life in their homelands, argues that these studies helped for the cultural homogenisation of a Greek identity. This homogenisation based on the

accounts of remembering Asia Minor as the lost homeland, works for the reappropriation of both the lost place as memory and of the refugees as Greeks. Finally, says Papataxiarchis, this reappropriation helps to reconstruct Asia Minor as a place of Greek loss, rather than of a Turkish presence (Papataxiarchis 2003). Situated within this bigger picture, the story of Imbros becomes a story of “de-Hellenization,” rather than that of “Turkification.”

This is the way of making sense of the history of Imbros both in the work of Alexis Alexandris, who studies the post-Republican history of Imbros and Tenedos, and of Giorgchos Tsimouris who looks at identity constructions on the island of Imbros. The process of the island’s de-Hellenization goes hand in hand with a story of the betrayal on the part of the homeland in both of these writings. Both Alexandris and Tsimouris tend to make sense of the island’s history as a story of de-Hellenization, mainly as an outcome of Greek reluctance to stand by the Imbriots at the international political level, at the crucial moments of international negotiations.

Alexandris, who traces the story of Imbros and Tenedos from its annexation by the Ottoman Empire in 1455-56 along with the Thracian Sporades till the mid-seventies, points out two main moments of Greek impotency to deal with the issues related to the maintenance of the islands’ Greekness. While the first moment of ineffectiveness stands out as the time of the Lausanne Peace negotiations, the second moment of Greece’s

inability to act in favor of the remaining Greco-Christian elements on the islands emerges during the early years of the Turkish Republic, when the relationship between the Turkish and the Greek states was at stand still.

Alexandris describes the responses of the inhabitants of the two islands who had not been under Turkish rule for 10 years before and during World War I, to the Lausanne Treaty, which puts the islands under Turkey's sovereignty:

Notwithstanding the Lausanne guarantees, the Greeks of Imbros and Tenedos reacted strongly to the return of their islands to Turkish sovereignty. A protest note by the Tenediot community reached Athens on February 26, 1923. Similar letters were also addressed to the British government. On February 15, for instance, the islanders, in a letter to the British embassy in Greece, asserted that the decision to grant Imbros and Tenedos to Turkey was "contrary to the Allied declarations" and that "World War I was waged with the view of liberating the oppressed peoples." They ended their letter by expressing the desire to maintain their Greek identity. (Alexandris 1980: 13)

After the islanders realized the impossibility of the fulfillment of their wish "to remain Greek," they shifted their focus to obtaining autonomous status, reinforced with strong guarantees, for the two islands under Turkish sovereignty. The proposed guarantees enlisted the supervision of the League of Nations to maintain the rightful execution of the autonomy

envisioned by the treaty, and the insertion of a clause related to the exemption of the islanders from any military obligation. However, Turkey rejected these proposals on the ground that she would execute the said article "without outside intervention." The feeling of disappointment for the second time resulted in a group of islanders (mostly the native administrators and professional men who had served for the British army and the Greeks during the ten years of effective Greek rule) to flee from their native lands. Alexandris describes this disappointment felt towards Greece and England as a feeling of betrayal:

But the inhabitants of the islands continued to feel betrayed by Britain and Greece, who both appeared only too ready to put an end to the embarrassing controversy over Imbros and Tenedos. Paralyzed by the innumerable problems it had to face after the Asia Minor disaster, Greece, it appears, felt diplomatically too weak to press for the retention of these islands. After the satisfaction of Greek claims to the rest of the Aegean islands, particularly Samothrace, Athens was prepared to be conciliatory over Imbros and Tenedos for military reasons during 1914-1920, felt released of all responsibilities toward the islands after the insertion of the article 14 in the peace treaty. It had no time for the serious anxieties, expressed by the representatives of Imbros and Tenedos on numerous occasions, about the application of the proposed local administrative regime. On this particular issue, the Greek delegation could have adopted a more vigorous attitude. When article 14 was formulated, Venizelos could, for example, have raised such issues as the exemption of the islanders from military service and the presence of

the League of Nations during the transition of power in the islands. Neither of these requests would have interfered with the decision of the conference to return Imbros and Tenedos to Turkey. Instead, Venizelos engaged himself in absolutely fruitless private negotiations with İnönü and refrained from raising the issue of the islands in the peace negotiations. (Alexandris 1980: 15-16)

After the official establishment of Turkish sovereignty on the islands, the Greek government continued to remain silent about the Turkish government policies such as not implementing the law regarding the autonomous administrative position of the islands, and not granting the islanders' right of education in their native language, which means the continuous violation of the Treaty of Lausanne by Turkey. Alexandris draws attention to the fact that these represent the best times for Greco-Turkish relations when a number of bilateral agreements regarding the cooperation of the two states were established on several issues. Neither of these agreements, such as the Ankara Accord of June 1925, the Athens Accord of December 1926, or the Ankara Convention of 1930, makes any reference to the situation on the islands. Alexandris explains this as a result of the reconciliatory attitude of the Greek government aimed at the elimination of a possible conflict with the Turkish government, which could end up in jeopardizing the existence of its minority and the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. This attitude, which meant Greece's favouring of one group of Greek remnants in Asia Minor over

another, reinforces the islanders' feeling of being betrayed by the motherland.

In a text written by an Imbriot entitled "Imbros the betrayed island..." that appears on a web page related to Imbriot Diaspora,¹³ the feeling of the motherland's betrayal stands out quite strongly:

Eight months after the Lausanne Treaty, the Greek government sent a telegraph to the local government of the island:

"The Government is determined by any means to protect the inhabitants when they are suppressed or persecuted by the Turks and to see that the terms of the 14th article of the Treaty are carried out."

Seventy-three years after this telegraph passed, and with all the events that followed, it has been proved that mother Greece not only has not honored her signature and did not protect the people of the island, but

also on the contrary, abandoned them to their tragic fate.

Tsimouris' article about the identity perceptions among the Imbriots is also based on this story of betrayal. However, Tsimouris does not derive this common feeling of betrayal among Imbriots only from the Greek reluctance to act upon the de-Hellenization of the island on time. He states that the way the Greek government treated Imbriot refugees during the intense period of exodus from the island, has also contributed the feeling of betrayal:

¹³ For the whole page, see: <http://www.diaspora-net.org/imvros/indeximvr-en.htm>

Members of different generations strongly believe that Greek authorities demonstrated a blatant indifference to their cause both when they were persecuted from homeland and when they were settled in Greece. They complain that they were treated as an unwanted burden during their arrival: state officials, they say, were apathetic regarding the difficulties of their uprooting and rarely, if ever, advocated their concerns to international organizations. They also speak about reports addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which were swallowed by bureaucracy and never saw the light of the day again.

Another point of protest against the Greek State is the troubles, which most Imbrii encountered in their attempt to get Greek citizenship. State authorities were reluctant to provide them with Greek citizenship, they argue, in order to force them to return to the island and prevent its de-Hellenization. (Tsimouris 2001: 3)

On the other hand, Tsimouris says that the Greek State's perception of Imbriots who stayed in their native land appears radically different from its perception of those who migrated to Greece. The few elderly Imbriots who refused to move from the island are regarded as the last remnants of the Hellenic culture on the lost homeland. While being *Prosphygas* represents an identity that is impure, "not Greek enough," thus something unfavourable within the Greek society, the same cultural entity is regarded as a sign of Greek presence in Imbros in line with *I kath'imas Anatoli*.

Nationalist rhetoric paints these elderly Imvrii as outstandingly courageous Hellenes who stayed behind to protect a Hellenic homeland in alien territories. Evoking the Spartans who fell resisting

the Persian invasion in 480 B.C., they are referred to as 'the 300 [warriors] of Leonidas who guard Thermopiles' (i triakosii pou filoun Thermopiles'). (Tsimouris 2001: 10)

However, Tsimouris claims that this image of heroic guardians still resisting in the long lost homeland does not play a role in the self-representation of the Romiotes living in Imbros. He sees these people as trapped between a hostile host state and an indifferent mother nation, living a pre-national imaginary of belonging. This is the reason why Tsimouris sees the island as "marginal." Imbros, representing a place that remains in the margins of the Greek national imaginary, at the same time carries the capacity to push this imaginary to its limits and to show its inconsistency. "Margins" for Tsimouris do not represent only the sites of restriction where existing social norms and meanings are reproduced, but also the creative stages of the rearticulation of these hegemonic compositions.

From Margins to the Window

What does the term "margin" refer to? Do being in the margin, remaining in the margins and being marginal refer to the same thing? The word indicates an edge, a boundary line or an area immediately inside the boundary, thus it implies an inclusion. But at the same time margin means a deviation from normality, a difference, an exclusion from the centre (hooks 1984). But do to standing in the margins and being marginalized mean the same thing? While standing in the margins can mean

appropriating a critical standpoint to question the commonsensical, marginalization by “another” might signify unimportance, indifference or a dismissal.

The perception of the island of Imbros within the Turkish national imaginary can be defined as constituting a threat. Locality and neighbourhoods where the homogenising techniques of the nation are likely to be either weak or contested, represent a source of entropy and slippage for the project of the modern nation state. Hence, locality for the modern nation state is either a site of nationally appropriated nostalgias, celebrations and commemorations or a necessary condition of the production of nationals (which this thesis would claim to be the two sides of the same coin in the end) (Appadurai 1996). The locality of Imbros can appear as a threat for the Turkish nation state, both because it points out to “difference” with reference to minorities, and because it stresses pre-national forms of belonging that can have the capacity to rupture the nation-state’s national form of belonging codified in its laws of citizenship. Hence, it would not be too inappropriate to think of Turkish nation-state policies related to the island as the attempts of the state to eliminate the island’s marginality stemming from its locality, since its population does not seem to matter at least at the level of official discourse. Turkification, in that sense, points to an attempt of pushing Imbros from the margins to the centre, and an attempt to take the dismissed population into account. The irony here comes out when the policies of Turkification (which led to

the current ethnic composition and the creation of new institutions on the island) result in an even further appearance of Imbros as marginal.

On the other hand, Imbros within the Greek nation-state imaginary, points to the margins of the imagination of “Greekness” that forms the basis of Greek national identity. The Rum as a being (or the Rum condition,) signifies both an inclusion, and an exclusion depending on time and place. This in-betweenness outlines Imbros as a context in which the Greeks, and the Rums who are in an inevitable relation to this “Greekness” negotiate their own belonging over and over again (yet making them once more “suspect” in the eyes of the Turkish state.)

Following this line of thought, the island of Imbros may be regarded as a display window where the concepts and the claims of these two national imaginaries meet and get performed/negotiated/challenged within the relationships and meaning attributions of everyday life. The window connotes an exhibition (Gürbilek 2001), and to exhibit suggests a selection. The process implies a communication between the displayer and the audience, established through that which is displayed. Imbros can be thought as a window where the two national imaginaries are displayed, as a place where these two imaginaries become exposed in relation to one another. Imagining the island as such, leads to the possibility of looking at the ways in which these exposures operate, which means looking at the windows themselves (in their practices of displaying) along with the displayed.

It is only through the imagination of the island of Imbros as a window where the stories of marginalization are displayed, that this study on the island, and its questions about the struggles over belonging can become meaningful. The rest of this thesis will look at the ways in which belonging is displayed in this window with a view to understand how belonging is exercised in Turkey.

CHAPTER II THE PRACTICES: GOVERNING IMBROS

My preliminary visit to Imbros for field research took place in the week of August 16, 2001 during *Panayia*, the festival of the Virgin Mary, which the Rums of the island who now live in other places come back to celebrate. I was advised by the people who know the island to be there particularly during this period to see the island “alive,” crowded with people who come for the summer and the festival, throughout which celebrations, concerts, performances and religious ceremonies take place. After August, I was told, especially as the winter gets closer, the island “dies,” it all gets quiet. Deserted Imbros, under the snow waits for the next August to come.

Intrigued by the story, I telephoned the municipality of the island to get more information related to the schedule of the festival and accommodation possibilities. They asked for a fax number and proposed to send it that way. I agreed. After a short period, I was holding in my hand the press bulletin of the municipality organized “Traditional Gökçeada Film Festival” that would last for eight days between the 11th and the 18th of August, during which the year’s top Turkish movies would be projected and gatherings with actors/actresses and directors of the movies would be held. In the bulletin it was written:

This year, it is expected that the participation to the film festival, which is organized in order to promote Gökçeada, and to develop and renew the tourism of the island, will be as high as it was in the

previous years. In addition, the August 15th festival of Virgin Mary, which will fall in the same interval with the film festival, will turn the island into a festive land. During those days, Patric Bartelemous will also be in Gökçeada. The Rums and the Orthodox who come from all over the world to celebrate their religious festival would color the film festival.¹

According to the bulletin of the 4th Traditional Gökçeada Film Festival, the *Panayia* was just an isochronal “anonymous” Orthodox event that happens to take place at the same time with the film festival on the island, the significance of which was to crowd the place, and amplify the fun even more. Confused by the discrepancy of what I was expecting and what I received, I telephoned the municipality again, saying that there had probably been a misunderstanding; the festival that I was mentioning was not this one. I was answered that the municipality had nothing to do with the festival I was asking for. It was not a festival of Gökçeada or people of Gökçeada in general. They were not informed about the schedule of the *Panayia*, for it was “their” festival and I had to contact the Rum village *muhtars*² to get information.

Finally, when I went to the island, I figured that the synchronicity of the film festival and *Panayia* was an issue people talk a lot about throughout

¹ Gökçeada'yı tanıtmak, Ada turizmini geliştirme ve canlandırma amacıyla düzenlenen film festivaline geçtiğimiz yıllarda olduğu gibi bu yıl da katılımın fazla olması bekleniyor. Ayrıca Film Festivali ile aynı tarihlere denk gelen 15 Ağustos Meryem Ana Bayramı da Adayı bir şenlik havasına süründürecektir. Patrik Bartelemous da bu nedenle aynı tarihlerde Gökçeada'da bulunacaktır. Dini Bayramlarını kutlamak için dünyanın her yerinden gelen; Rumlar ve Ortodokslar da Festivale ayrı bir renk katmaktadır.” (Press bulletin of Gökçeada Film Festival held in 2001.)

² Officially elected heads of villages.

the island. One argument was that the reason for the municipality to hold the film festival during the same interval with the festival of the Virgin Mary, was to take advantage of the crowd, and that it should be regarded as a service to the islanders and the visitors. However, there was a second version claiming that the real intention of the municipality was to trivialize the *Panayia* by making it look like one among the many events happening on the island:

Bless him (our mayor,) for his aim is to spoil our religious festival by overshadowing it. At first, he tried to put it on the 14th, 15th and 16th.

So that, there is a festival in Gökçeada... But not of the Rums', but of the Turks'... Just like Nevruz is a festival coming from Central Asia!!! Got it? As if one day, Virgin Mary will also come from Central Asia! I told him myself. I said, what you do is wrong. This is our religious festival. Let it be... If you want to make a festival, do it earlier or later. I mean, if you want to do well to the island, if you want people to visit, don't aim for these two to overlap. Spread them in time. But he does it on purpose so that it would be overshadowed. This is my religious festival. You cannot overshadow it. I mean you cannot in the sense that... He can overshadow for the outsiders. But not in my heart. Other than that, it's OK, in other times, any kind of festivity or carnival is good for the island. But there is a religious

festival, you're doing whatever you can, to overshadow it... You're making a film festival... No way...³

Additionally, I learned that although the organization and budgeting of the events related to the festival is under the responsibility of the Rum community, it is practically impossible for the community to organize any gathering on the island without noticing the local government. First of all, the local governors were invited to almost all of the celebrations related to the festival of the Virgin Mary, and secondly some of the ceremonies, like the patriarch's traditional tracking to mount *Arusha*, accompanied by the youngsters of the community, required a special permission from the local authorities such as the local directorship of the Ministry of Forest. Hence, the municipality's claim to ignorance about the *Panayia* was quite dubious.

However, this traffic on the island does not have a long history. For a long time Imbros has been a restricted zone for foreigners. It was as late as 1993 that the obligation for foreign passport holders who want to go to Imbros to get permission from the governor's office at Çanakkale was lifted. Before that, the island was considered to be a military zone to which upon the

³Sağolsun (belediye başkanımız) bizim dini bayramımızı gölgeleyip yok edebilmek için, asıl derdi bu. 14-15-16 yapmaya kalkışmıştı ilk sefer. Ki, Gökçeada'da bir bayram oluyor da... Ama rumların değil, Türklerin... Nasıl Nevruz Orta Asya'dan gelme bir bayramdır!!! Anladın mı? Neredeyse, yarın öbür gün Meryem ana Orta Asya'dan gelecek! Ben kendisine söyledim. Bu senin yaptığın yanlışır dedim. Bu bizim dini bayramımız. Bırak... Festival yapmak istersen, daha önce veya daha geç yap. Yani adaya faydalı olmak istersen, insanların gelmesini temin etmek istersen, hepsinin bir arada olmasına bakma. Zaman içinde dağıt. Ama o, o zaman için ki, gölgelensin. Bu benim dini bayramım. Sen gölgeleyemezsin. Gölgeleyemezsin, şöyle... Dışa doğru gölgeler. Benim gönümde gölgeleyemez. Tamam yani, başka zamanlarda her türlü festival, her türlü şenlik ada için güzeldir. Ama bir dini bayram var, sen ne yaparsan yapacaksın gölgelemek için... film festivali yapacaksın... Olmaz...

entry, both citizens and foreigners were required to show papers. A Rum informant who used to go to school in Istanbul back then, recounts her memories about coming back to the island for the summer holidays:

For years, we used show our identity cards, whenever we came to the island. At the moment we arrived, as leaving the ship, the identity cards. You know it was a military zone here. Not everyone could enter. Even you couldn't have entered. Only the ones who were born in Gökçeada were allowed to enter. As the first thing to do... I was little; I held my identity card in my hand. To show it. And now, we come with our passports in our hands.⁴

Given that the way of transportation to Imbros was limited to the two steamships run by the state maritime enterprise, controlling the entrance to the island was quite easy. People who did not have the right papers were easily tracked down and sent back to Çanakkale. However, as another Rum informant told me, it was not always very easy to get the required permission:

Once in Çanakkale, I was about to strangle a policeman. My sister came with her husband. They are both French citizens. We are struggling; the only way to come here was to get a special permission from the governor's office. Through the police headquarters, from the governor's office. It was not allowed because

⁴ Biz senelerce bu adaya geldiğimiz zaman nüfus kağıdımızı gösterirdik. Adaya ayağımızı bastığımız an, vapurdan çıkarken nüfus kağıdı. Askeri bölgeydi ya burası. Herkes giremiyordu. Sen bile giremezdin. Doğum yeri Gökçeada yazan kişiler girebiliyordu. İlk işimiz... ben ufaktım, nüfus kağıdımı elimde tutardım. Göstermem için. Şimdi de, elimizde pasaportla geliyoruz.

here it was a special military zone. And they were literally torturing people and making them wait for fifteen days there and didn't give the permission in the end. What time were they giving it? "Man, the ship is about to leave!" "The governor has a visitor, wait." He could have entered Turkey, but not go to İmroz. So many people had waited for ten, fifteen days, one week; they gave up and went back. Now, my sister came with her husband and we went there. They said OK, first you go and change 200 \$ per person. We did that. This and that... "Man, the ship is about to leave." "So it leaves," he says, "what do I care? They better not come." he says. What??? I hardly stopped myself. I almost strangled the man. They don't let you without the permit. My sister, for example she managed to get the permission and she comes. They call from Çanakkale to inform that a foreigner is coming. The police wait at the ship, take you to the police office and you leave your passport there, they give you another special permission and everyday you should go down from the villages to the centre to show yourself. I mean, such a torture... Now, since 93-94s, this has been abrogated, everybody come with their passports.⁵

⁵ Az kaldı bir polisi boğazlıyordum seneler evvel, Çanakkale'de. Ablam geldi kocasıyla. İkisi de Fransız tebalı. Uğraşıyoruz, valilikten özel izinle gelebiliyordu ancak buraya. Emniyet vasıtasıyla, valilikten. Şimdi burası özel askeri muntika olduğu için verilmiyordu. Ve öyle bir eziyet çektiriyorlardı ve on beş gün orada bekletiyorlar ve vermiyorlardı izni. Kaçta veriyorlardı? Ya, kardeşim, gemi kalkıyor! Vali Bey'in misafiri var bekle. Türkiye'ye giriyor, İmroz'a geçemiyor. Kaç kişi o şekilde on gün, on beş gün, bir hafta bekledi, vazgeçti kalktı gitti. Şimdi, ablam geldi kocasıyla, gittik. Tamam dediler, gidin önce bankaya 200 dolar bozun kişi başına. Bozduk. Şusu, busu. Ya kardeşim, gemi kalkacak. Kalkacaksa, diyor, bana ne? Gelmesinler diyor. Ne??? Zor tuttum kendimi, adamı boğazlayacaktım. İzinsiz sokmuyorlar içeri. Ablam, mesela, izin koparabildi, geliyor. Çanakkale'den telefon ediyorlar, bir yabancı geliyor diye. Polis gemide bekliyor, alıyor seni, emniyete geliyorsun, pasaportunu teslim ediyorsun, başka bir özel izin veriliyordu burada ve her Allah'ın günü de köylerden inip görünecektin. Yani bu kadar eziyet... Şimdi 93-94'den beri kalktı bu, pasaportuyla herkes geliyor.

In fact, the year when the municipality first organized “the Gökçeada Festival”(which was not a film festival back then) coincides with the years of the lifting of the restriction related to Imbros. In 1995, the municipality of the island organized a music festival in which the famous Istanbulite Rum singer Fedon and the Kurdish arabesk singer İbrahim Tatlıses of Turkey gave concerts together. In 1998-1999, the Department of Tourism and the Tourism Administration department of the 18th of March University in Çanakkale moved to the island. Yet again, around the same years the Public Education Centre in Imbros began to offer public courses on tourism administration to the islanders, and started to provide cheap credit to tourism related enterprises. These events, I believe, indicate a remarkable transformation in the state policy from which it is possible to track the state project of Imbros changing from a restricted zone to a tourist attraction. This chapter is about how these policies operate throughout the island.

Anthropologists Cris Shore and Susan Wright propose to see policy as an anthropological phenomenon, as ethnographic data to be analysed, rather than as a framework for analysis (Shore and Wright 1997). According to them, if policy is a tool for government, it can also be a tool for studying government, and for tracing the links between different sites, agents and levels within the complex policy process. Adopting a Foucauldian perspective of the concept of government as “the conduct of conduct”(Gordon 1991) and an anthropological approach towards “policy as a tool of government,” they head towards a reconceptualization of the

anthropological field as a social and political space articulated through relations of power and systems of governance. Thus, an anthropological study of that space becomes an analysis of this articulation. Governance, for Shore and Wright, represents "... complex processes by which policies not only impose conditions, as if from 'outside' or 'above' but influence people's indigenous norms of conduct so that they themselves contribute, not necessarily consciously, to a government's model of social order." (Shore and Wright 1997: 5) Hence studying governance extends from making a discursive analysis of the state policies to looking at how 'the techniques of the self' work to produce new subjects of power.

Policy is something that implicitly "defines" by governing and organizing the present. It diagnoses "the situation" and acts upon it. It categorizes, reconfigures, sorts and decides. A study of how policies work as systems of making sense of "now" and acting upon it leads to "an anthropology of the present," which implies an awareness of the historical contingency and inventedness of our taken for granted present. Thus, my aim in this chapter is about understanding the way the island is defined, categorized, given meaning, diagnosed, and acted upon in the present. To this end, I will try and track the governance of Imbros through the workings of state policies related to it.

Nevertheless, as Colin Gordon states, "government" in the Foucauldian sense implies an activity or a "practice," rather than an institution (Gordon 1991: 3). And practice, as Bourdieu claims, with its emphasis on tempo,

spontaneity, and strategy, indicates a sphere that escapes theory (Bourdieu 1990). It is thus a realm in which “meaning” cannot be arrested, but is re-defined, affirmed and negotiated continuously through its performances over and over again. Therefore to study governance, which does not “impose,” but rather “works” through the governed, one needs to look at the ways it is practised at the everyday level by different “subjects of power.” What I will try to do in this chapter is to focus on how policy is practised and re-defined by and through the governed. Along the way, I will try to look at the transformation in the terms by which the island is defined in state policies for Imbros, and see how these terms emerge and operate at the everyday level. Following this, in the next chapter I will be focusing on the issue of how these policies produce techniques of the self through an analysis of the different narratives of belonging on the island.

Turkish state policies related to Imbros can be grasped in three following periods of different forms of governmentality. The first way of “making sense” of Imbros by the state can be traced through the Lausanne Peace Conference where the future status of the island was handled with reference to the international security concerns of the newborn republic. Throughout the conference, the significance of Imbros, along with Tenedos appears related to both its geographical position and its population. The two islands that are located at the mouth of the Dardanelles and very close to the Anatolian mainland (Çanakkale) are addressed as strategically important by the Turkish delegation. Looking from this point of view, the delegation’s insistence on the inclusion of the Rum natives of the two

islands to the Turkish-Greek compulsory population exchange becomes meaningful. The Turkish delegate in Lausanne, even though they argue for the insignificance of the ethnic origin of the people living in Imbros and Tenedos when related to the questions of sovereignty, actually concerns quite a lot about the presence of “foreign” elements on such strategically important territories. However, in the end the Conference decides the Rum population living on the islands of Imbros and Tenedos (along with the Rums of Istanbul) to remain in their native lands to form a minority-balance between Greece and Turkey. Hence the status of the Rum minority, which would remain in Turkey, is thought to form reciprocity with the Muslims who would be allowed to remain in Western Thrace. This point of view defines the terms in which both Greece and Turkey would address the political issues related to these two minority groups in the years following⁶ (Oran 1991, 2003).

However, the annexation of these two islands to Turkey in line with the Lausanne Treaty did not cease the Turkish state to perceive Imbros and Tenedos in terms of security. On the contrary, according to the Turkish state, the appropriation of the two islands only meant the nationalization of the problem of security. State policies related to the island of Imbros, such as the declaration of the island as a security zone with a settled military battalion, to which the entrance becomes subject to restrictions points out the state’s perception of Imbros as an internalised threat, mainly due to its demographic character. For the Turkish state, nationalization of the land

⁶ The political discourse related to the reciprocity of the Rums in Turkey and Muslims in Western Thrace as an issue of security now emerges as redefined for present puposes as demonstrated by the attitude of the *kaymakam* described in the introduction.

re-defines the problem of Imbros with reference to its problem of minorities, also related to the issue of security. As I have mentioned before, minorities, for Turkey represent the weak points of the national sovereignty. Following the Ottoman legacy, the republic has always perceived its minorities as potential tools for the international powers to interfere with its domestic affairs. Additionally, Imbros had served as a military base by the English and the Greek at the time of the First World War, and that was another excuse for Turkey to always keep an eye on the island. Therefore the island of Imbros, with its strategic position (both in terms of geographical location and political status) and its previously disloyal population, was doomed to remain suspect in the eyes of the Turkish state.

I am not willing to reflect on this period in more detail for I believe I have done so in the previous chapter about “emplacement.” Because of this reason, I will instead limit the analysis in this chapter to the following two different periods of governing the island through welfare policies and multiculturalism. However, it would be a fatal mistake to think of these three periods of governmentality as three successive stages terminating one another. On the contrary, these periods should be seen as three subsequent ways of the Republic’s making sense of Imbros, which do not end but rather transform and get jointed to each other. Therefore, I will first look at the operation of the earlier welfare state policies related to the possession of land and resettlement in Imbros. Then, turning to a more recent way of governing the island with reference to a discourse of multiculturalism and

co-existence, I will try to understand the way this governmentality works on the island today, and how this transformation came through.

Policies of Re-Settlement and the Re-Distribution of National Land

To secure the island to Turkey, a policy of resettlement was developed for the island. This would also be a way of really turning the natives into a population that does not matter. This policy was aimed at redistributing agricultural lands to villagers Anatolia who could not survive on their meagre resources in their native villages. Villages, which had lost their viability as a result of large-scale development projects that the state embarked upon, were also resettled on the island in line with the state's role as provider of welfare. Discourses of state distribution of welfare were used to address the villagers. For Imbros, on the other hand, ideas of developing the land, increasing production etc. were used to justify these policies.

"The people of Gökçeada" that are implied by the municipality through the film festival it organizes, does not exist as a homogenous, unified entity. On the contrary, as one of my Turkish informants states, there is no "local"/"native" on the island, everybody is "from somewhere." Therefore, Imbros, very much an emigrant site, also stands out as a place of immigration. Most of the current residents of the island are people who came from different parts of Anatolia as a result of the various state sponsored voluntary mass migrations. The earliest of those were the 10

households brought from Sürmene (in the Black sea region) in 1946 to develop fishing, from which today only one family remains on the island.

A family member recounts the story of their migration:

The state brought us by Istanbul. We stayed at a guesthouse in Sirkeci for one week. And we came here in one week. Back then, there was a ship called Kemal, like a coffin, we came with that from Istanbul to here. We came like that, the kaymakam looked after us. He was expecting us, for we came through the state. The state had announced for the ones who couldn't manage with their lands to register. I will give property, I will give animal. The animal it gave us, excuse me, was the ox. What does our men know about animal husbandry? We sold them...⁷

The first group of people who were brought to the island were selected from among those who had applied in response to the state's promise of improvement in welfare for those who took the chance of emigration. They were given a house, a certain amount of land for cultivation, and animals to earn their living. But the main economic activity the state had planned for them was fishing. They were all fishermen, additionally they used to plant hazelnuts back in their homelands. When they came to the island, they knew nothing else. As a result, most of them sold their animals and rented

⁷ Bizi devlet getirdi, İstanbul'a kadar. Sirkeci'ye bir hafta misafirhaneye kaldık. Bir haftada da buraya geldik. O zaman Kemal vapuru diye tabut gibi bir vapur vardı, onları bir haftada geldik buraya İstanbul'dan. Geldik işte o şekil, sahip çıktı bize kaymakam. Zaten bekliyordu, devlet tarafından geldiğimiz için. Devlet ilan ettirdi, arazisinden idare edemeyenler yazılsın. Mal vereceğim, hayvan vereceğim. Verdiği hayvan da bize, affedersin, öküz verdi. Erkeklerimiz ne bilir rençberlikten? Sattık onları...

their lands to the native Rums from whom the state had expropriated the land to grant the settlers.

The next group of settlers were 61 households brought in 1973 from Şahinkaya village in Çaykara, again from the Black sea. These settlers had lost their property because of a landslide and floods. These 61 households were settled in a district (under the same name, Şahinkaya) built by the state across Shinudi/Dereköy, which was the largest Rum village of the island back then. The state provided each household a house, agricultural land of about 10 acres, 20 sheep and some goats. In return, the settlers were obliged to pay a certain amount of money to the state within 14 years, which also meant that they could not sell their property before the term ended. Consequently, most of the settlers of Şahinkaya not only remained on the island, but also bought additional land and animals from the leaving Rums and became notable landowners in Imbros. One of the settlers gives an account of his current situation on the island:

The state gave me 40 donums of land, I bought 600 donums more. I bought, from Rums. From Dereköy, from the center, from other villages. When we first came here, it was forbidden to take out animals. We couldn't sell them out. It has been 8-10 years that it opened. It was forbidden for 20 years. I started raising livestock here, I have 2000-3000 animals. I raised livestock, I grew olives, I did beekeeping. In 96, I came to the centre from the village and began to do commerce. I have shops. I have a hardware store. I do real estate. I do livestock fattening. Cattles, goats... milk fattening... I have related machinery. I established my order. The children got older. I

gave everyone a job. I have four sons, they all are here. The work goes on. This is what I do.⁸

In 1985, the villages of Yeni Bademli and Uğurlu were constructed for settlers from Isparta Muğla and Burdur. These settlers had lost their lands as a result of state expropriation for the construction of dams, power plants and the like.

In 1986, the state brought another group of people from the Black sea to settle in Yeni Bademli, where there were “spare” houses. Twenty-five households were brought to the island to revive the island’s fishing, this time from various parts of the Black Sea. Those who applied for resettlement were obliged to fulfil certain conditions like having a family, not having any registered property, not being a former criminal and being a fisherman. Each was granted a house from Yeni Bademli, agricultural land, and animals. Three families were given credit, each to buy a fishing boat for the whole group to work on together. The story of decision-making about this settlement is one of the most interesting stories widely recounted in Imbros because it indicates the informal and arbitrary means of policy making rather than its legal formality:

⁸ Devlet bana verdi 40 dönüm arazi, ben aldım 600 dönüm arazi. Satın aldım, Rumlardan. Dereköy’den, merkezden, başka köyden. Burada biz geldiğimiz zaman hayvan dışarı çıkması yasaktı. Dışarıya satamıyorduk onları. 8-10 sene evvel açıldı. 20 sene burada yasaktı. Burada hayvancılığa başladım, burada 2000-3000 koyun yaptım. Hayvancılık, zeytincilik, arıcılık ile iştigal ettim. 96 senesinde de köyden merkeze indim, ticaret hayatına atıldım. İşyerlerim var. Nalburiye dükkânı açtım. Emlak işleri yapıyorum. Nalbur işi yapıyorum. Besicilik yapıyorum. Büyükbaş, küçükbaş... süt besiciliği... Besihanelerim var. Buna göre vasıtalarım var. Düzenimi kurdum, oturdum. Çocuklar büyüdü. Herkese birer iş verdim. 4 oğlum var, hepsi de buradalar. İşler devam ediyor. Çalışmalarım bundan ibarettir.

Kenan Evren comes here a year before we came. Kenan Evren comes here, he is going to eat in the municipality's facilities. "Is there any fish? Are there any fishermen?" he asks. There is so much fish, but not that much fisherman. At that time, there were 2-3 boats. "Then," he says, "there are 25 empty houses here." Let's bring families from Black Sea, to improve fishing here. So, he sends a paper to the fishing cooperatives of the Black Sea Region. You know, for the volunteering families... we came like that. We came as a fisherman's family. Fishermen's family but we were also given 10 dönüms of land each.⁹

The particular forms of legitimation, organization and rationalization of these policies of resettlement can be thought in line with the changing forms of governmentality of the Turkish state after 1950, according to the ideas of welfare state and planned development. Along with the re-definition of the political imaginary of "state" throughout the Democratic Party regime in terms of welfare and democracy, resettlement policies had to be justified on the grounds of development and welfare of the people resettled (Tekeli 1994). Accordingly, decisions as to the manner in which to resettle Imbros seem to be taken with reference to the state's developmentalist agricultural policy related to the island that is also designed to benefit the poor people of other regions, which in the end leads to the establishment of social justice by the state.

⁹ *Biz gelmeden bir sene önce Kenan Evren gelmiş buraya. Kenan Evren gelmiş, belediyede yemek yiyecek. Balık var mı? Balıkçılık yapan var mı? diye sormuş. Balık çok ama balıkçı az. 2-3 tekne varmış o zaman. O zaman, demiş, burada 25 ev boş. Karadeniz'den aileler getirelim de balıkçılık gelişsin burada. İşte o Karadeniz Bölgesi'ne balıkçı kooperatiflerine bir yazı gönderiyor. İşte gönüllü aileler... biz öyle geldik. Balıkçı ailesi olarak geldik. Balıkçı ailesi ama her aileye 10 dönüm de yer verildi.*

However, in the narratives of resettlement that circulate on the island, most often another point of rationalization appears:

We came here in 1946-47, as the first Turks. İnönü, I mean, with the aim of Turkification... gave land and house to poor people from the Blacksea. At first, those Rums did not want us to set foot on the land. We had a boat and we went up to the shore that way. (...) During those Cyprus events, they wanted Rums to leave here again. Thus, they brought Şahinkaya. They were also from the Blacksea. They built an open prison. Little by little, Rums started to leave. Their lands have been expropriated...¹⁰

In general, the settlers do not have happy memories about the conditions they found on the island and their resettlement that was supposed to be carried for the improvement of their situation. Most of them, along with the native Rums of Imbros, consider the Turkification of the island as the “genuine” intention of the state in conducting resettlement policies, and the re-distribution of land between the Rums and the Turks via policies of expropriation. Here, it is possible to trace how welfare policies conducted in Imbros are still formed in line with a governmentality based on the concern over security. A Rum informant talks about the wider policy he

¹⁰ *Biz 1946-47 senesinde buraya geldik ilk Türk olarak. İnönü burayı Türkleştirmek için yani... geçimi zor olan Karadenizli ailelere buradan ev verdi, toprak verdi. Bizi Rumlar çıkarmak istemedi ilk önce karaya. Teknemiz vardı tekneylen çıktık. (...) O Kıbrıs olayları sırasında yine Rumların buradan gitmesini istediler. O zaman da Şahinkaya'yı getirdiler. Onlar da Karadeniz'den geldi. Açık cezaevi yapıldı burada. Rumlar yavaştan gitmeye başladı. Arazileri istimlak edildi...*

calls "*Eritme Programı*"¹¹ aimed towards the native Rums of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos:

In 64 in Cyprus, maybe you know, an event called Bloody Christmas happened. The Rums and the Turks fought and killed each other. Of course, here we suffered because of it. However, actually was in the programme. This was only an excuse. In fact the programme, I mean the Turkification of these two islands, let's say the trial was held in 1927, and in '58 it was adopted in the MGK, then in 64 there was an excuse. The decision was implemented. (...) Supposedly, in 1927, law nr. 1151 was passed according to the Lausanne Treaty. However there are 22 articles of that law. Only one of them is against us, article 14 related to education. Only that was implemented, against the Lozan and only that article of the law was implemented. Till the Democratic Party came to power. When the Democratic Party came, relations with Greece got better. Curriculum was rearranged as both in Greek and Turkish. In '51, minority status was implemented. Education had started. There were Rum teachers, along with the Turkish. Reciprocally, in Western Thrace too. All our schools were renewed. All with our own savings, the state did not spend any money. In fact, till the year 64, nobody can claim that the state have spend 1 lira for this island... No investments, nothing. Our port, our

¹¹ This idea of a "Dissolution Program" aimed towards the gradual annulment of the Rum population living in Imbros and Tenedos should be thought along with the idea of a republican project of Turkification, which has been widely written about. (Akar 1994, 2000) (Aktar 1996a, 1996b) (Bali 1999) (Alexandris 1983) According to these writers, the Turkification project indicates a process of national homogenization, which is composed of anti-minority policies intending a systematic assimilation (or exclusion) of the non-Moslem elements in the Republican Turkey. Policies related to the occupational restrictions against non-Muslim citizens in the 1930's, the "Wealth Tax" of 1942, the events of 6th-7th of September 1955, and the deportation of the Rums of Istanbul along with the Greek residents in 1964 (all against the stipulations of the Treaty of Lausanne) can be seen as the cornerstones of this process.

roads, our bridges, our schools... All with our own labour. With our own money, by collecting 5-10 kurus from everyone. In the year of 64, by the means of these excuses, they said you don't need any education, and they closed the schools. They took the building and gave it to the Society for the Protection of Children. When the other schools were closed, for example our school had 84 children registered. No, no education. Greek curriculum was abrogated; the Rum teachers were discharged and even teaching Greek language at home was prohibited. So, what can you do? For instance, my brother has three children. What could he do? Nobody told us to go. Nobody said go, but my brother has three children. They need education. So... You should go. Besides, before that, they expropriated the lands, hence, people got deprived. You take my fertile land, you declare most of the hills as forest area. You cannot shelter your animals. Then, you set free the wild murderers in the prison on the island, armed fully... Then what? (...) Obviously, the first ones who came were not prisoners. Obviously, from the private military department... I mean, it was obvious. You can understand who he is, the person in front of you. They were all strolling with guns, rapes, and thrashings... (...) It was the year 1946 that the first Turks had come. And everything was caused by İsmet Pasha. Everything evil came out of İsmet Pasha. There were only civil servants here till '46. There were no settled families. (...) After that, the new villages were established, they were brought from this Şahinkaya and Çaykara, the most fanatics of the Black Sea and unfortunately, these fanatics were the ones that had accepted or had made to accept Islam the latest. And the most interesting thing is that, they are the most conservative ones in the Black Sea. That

Şahinkaya was established within three months. The only reason was to destroy Dereköy, the biggest village of Turkey. They were set free. I mean, they were said, do what you want to do, oppress, frighten... That's how the first village was settled. The prison had already been established... Of course, after that, the lands were expropriated, some were named as state production farm... Afterwards they brought people from Isparta, some were distributed to them. On some of the prison land Uğurluköy was built. Kefalos, where we call Aydıncık today, was expropriated and nothing was ever done there... It would be the Naval Academy, it would be this, it would be that... Nothing was ever done. After that, there is a village, Eşelek, in Biga; they brought people from there and settled them here, a new village was established. Then, the mission of the prison was completed. The prison was closed. The Turks who were brought from Bulgaria was settled on some of the lands of the prison. That's all!¹²

¹² 64'de Kıbrıs'ta, belki bilirsin, Kanlı Noel diye bir olay oldu. Kapaştılar Rumlarla Türkler orada, öldürdüler birbirlerini. Tabii bunun cezasını biz çektiğimiz burada. Ama aslında yani programdaydı. Bu bir vesile idi. Program zaten, yani bu iki adanın Türkleştirilmesi, 1927 senesinde mahkemesi açıldı diyelim, 58 senesinde karar alındı MGK'da, ondan sonra vesilesi çıktı 64'de. O karar tatbik edildi. (...) 1927'de güya Lozan Antlaşması'na istinaden 1151 kanunu çıktı. Fakat o kanunun içinde 22 tane madde var. Onlardan bir tanesi aleyhimize, eğitimle ilgili olanı, 14. maddesidir. O Lozan'a aykırı olarak kondu ve kanunun sadece bu maddesi tatbik edildi. Demokrat Parti gelene kadar. Demokrat parti gelince Yunanistan'la ilişkiler iyileşti. Tedrisat Rumca ve Türkçe olarak yeniden düzenlendi. Azınlık statüsü tatbik edildi, 51'de. Eğitime başlandı. Rum hocalar girmişti, Türk hocalar da var. Onun karşılığı olarak Batı Trakya'da da. Bütün okullarımız yenilendi. Kendi masrafla, devletin hiç bir masrafı yok. Zaten 64 senesine kadar çıksın birisi bana desin 1 lira devlet bu adada yatırım yaptı diye... yok, yatırım yok. Limanımız olsun, yollarımız olsun, köprülerimiz olsun, okullarımız olsun... Hepsini kendi emeğimizle. Kendi paramızla, herkesin 5-10 kuruş toplamakla oldu. 64 senesi gelince bu olayların vesilesiyle, size eğitim istemez dediler, kapatıldı okullar. Buranın binası alındı, çocuk esirgeme kurumu yapıldı. Öteki okullarımız kapatıldığı zaman, bizim okulda mesela 184 çocuk vardı. Yok, eğitim yok... Rumca tedrisat, bırak kaldırıldı, Rum hocalar azledildi ve kendi evinde özel ders vermesi bile yasaklandı. E ne yapacaksın? Benim ağabeyimin mesela, üç tane çocuğu var. Ne yapacak? Git kimse demedi. Gidin demedi kimse, ama ağabeyimin üç tane çocuğu var. Onların eğitimi lazım. E ne olacak? Mecbursun gitmeye. Zaten evvelden istisnalar oldu, olunca da insanlar aç kaldı. Verimli toprağı elimden alıyorsun, dağların ekseriyetini ormanla diye ilan ediyorsun.

Policies to secure the welfare of citizens and the development of the island were, therefore, in the eyes of both Rums and settlers also part of a policy to Turkify the island in line with Turkey's concerns over security and sovereignty. Writing about the process of nationhood construction in Greek Macedonia, Anastasia Karakasidou considers state policies of resettlement as a means of the state's reasserting its claims over land (Karakasidou 1997). However, as Karakasidou also shows, policies of resettlement, land expropriation and re-distribution are not only ways of governing the land but also of the people. The Turkish state, appropriating the welfare state model, does not only govern land and property, it also governs lives and forms of belonging by designing ways of living on the island.

Ferhunde Özbay and Banu Yücel analyse the early republican policies of migration in two models as migrations that emerge in relation to a search

Hayvanlarını barındıramıyorsun. E hapishaneye de azılı katilleri silahlı olarak salıyorsun bütün adaya... Ne olacak? (...) Zaten o ilk gelenler mahkum değildi. Belli ki özel harp dairesinden... belliydi yani. Karşıdaki insanın belli oluyor ne olduğu. (...) Hepsi silahlı geziyorlardı yok tecavüzler, yok dövmeleler, yok... (...) İlk Türklerin gelişi 1946 senesinde. Ve her şey İsmet Paşa'dan çıktı. Her kötülük İsmet Paşa'dan çıktı. 46'ya kadar ancak devlet memurları vardı burada. (...) Yerleşik aile yoktu. (...) Ondan sonra yeni köy kuruldu bu Şahinkaya ve Çaykara'dan getirildi, Karadeniz'in bu en çok fanatik olanları ve ne yazık ki o fanatik olanlar en son islami kabul etmiş veyahut da kabul ettirilmiş insanlardır. Ve acaip taraftı, Karadeniz'in en mutaassıp olanlarıdır. O Şahinkaya köyü üç ay içinde kuruldu. Sırf Türkiye'nin en büyük köyü olan Dereköy'ü yok etmek için. Serbest bırakıldı. Daha doğrusu, ne isterseniz yapınız, sıkıştırın, korkutun dendi... O şekilde ilk köy kuruldu. E hapishane de olmuştu... Ondan sonra tabii, ovalar istimlak edildi, bir kısmı, devlet üretme çiftliği olarak adlandırıldı... Ondan sonra Ispartalıları getirilmişti, onlara dağıtıldı birazı. Hapishanenin bir kısmı o şekilde Uğurluköy yapıldı. Kefalos, bugünkü Aydıncık dediğimiz, istimlak edildi, hiç bir şey yapılmadı orada... Yok deniz harp okulu olacak, yok şu olacak bu olacak... Hiç bir şey yapılmadı. Ondan sonra Eşek köyü var Biga'da, oradan getirdiler adamları buraya yerleştirdiler, yeni bir köy kuruldu. E hapishanenin vazifesi tabii bitti. Yapacak bir şey yok artık, hapishane kaldırıldı. Hapishanenin tarlalarının bir kısmına Bulgaristan'dan getirilen Türkler yerleştirildi... O kadar!

for national identity and those that happen through developmentalist models (Özbay and Yücel 2001). Following their models, I claim that Imbros represents a case where these two policies of migration intertwine. Seen from this perspective, resettlement policies on the island help to imagine the national population as a homogeneous unity on which the sovereign has certain rights of disposition. Additionally, they help to dissolve the old forms of belonging that stem from locality and to build the new republican form of belonging with reference to an imaginary of national unity. By being “the people of Gökçeada” immigrants from Trabzon, Isparta, Burdur, Muğla, Samsun, Biga and Bulgaria are re-defined as nationals of the Turkish state who live together harmoniously in a region, which to them has no other (local) significance than being a part of Turkish national territory on which they are settled. Thus, resettlement policies in Imbros work for the nationalization of the people re-settled as much as they work for the nationalization of the land and the native Rums who live there.

Settlers of the island are also made part of the national unity by policies that position them in opposition to the natives. Hence, both the settlers and the natives of Imbros are defined as equally uniform Turks vs. the locals as Rums, a dichotomy that embodies certain meanings and connotations. The local government armed the settlers in 1974, following the Turkish landing in Cyprus, thus providing an example of how these categories and their connotations emerge and operate at the everyday level. A settler from Şahinkaya narrates the event:

The military called us. I went there too. The policemen came and gave us the news. "You have to go, the ones that were born in such and such years are being put under arms." Then we went; they gave us guns and hundred bullets for each of us. They told us where to go... Now we came here, government appointed us, there is a water tank here above the hill. It pumps water from far. We came there. To the water tank... we were four people appointed as guards for the water tank. In order to guard the tank so that this Rums don't come and poison the water. That water doesn't go to the Rums. This water tank belongs directly to these 61 households. We were appointed there through the *kaymakamlık*. Four people as guards. 100 bullets for each of us. A gun for each. Some of them were sent to Kaleköy to wait a harbour I don't remember the name. Some of us went for help, there was a police office behind. Everyday a military car used to come and pick us up to take there for help. In case the soldiers may sleep and we used to patrol. The thing in 1974 gave us that authority. In order to protect ourselves from Rums. (...) There was a radiophone here. There was a monestry nearby it was in the forest across. Our youngsters destroyed it by the time we had come. Next day in the morning it was announced like "...our century old monestry is destroyed." And they ask for protection. The radiophone immediately reports to Greece. Greece says "Turkey insults our thing..." you know... I mean the radiophone used to report immediately. Now that radiophone is gone. (...) Of course, they gave the bullets according to name. For example to me, a gun, 100 bullets. Then I went returned them. There was also a water bottle... we

carried them for a month. I returned them after 27 days. This was the effect of the invasion in '74 in here.¹³

The incident of the state's arming a group of its citizens against another, besides being a scandalous event, helps to reproduce once more the state imaginary of "the settlers vs. the natives" on the island. The native Rums of Imbros, especially at such a significant "national" moment, are constructed as a "potential threat" both for the Turkish state and the settlers, whom they might attempt to annihilate. While the settlers are issued with weapons and given authority to patrol and to protect, Rums are treated as potential betrayers. Hence the settlers, having the right to control the land in the name of "the sovereign," once more become "the Turks" as opposed to the "suspect" Rums. This opposition happens through the reproduction of a homogeneous idea of Turkishness that surpasses local forms of belonging at once.

¹³ *Bize askeriye bağırdı. Ben de gitmiş idim oraya. Bize geldi polisler, verdi haber. Gideceksiniz bilmem kaç doğumlular, silah altına alınıyorlar. Biz gittik, verdiler bize silah, yüzer adet mermi. Dediler biz nereye gideceğiz... Biz geldik buraya şimdi, devlet bizi görevlendirdi, bizim burada su deposu var ha bu yukarda. Uzaktan motor basar. Oraya geldik. Su deposuna... Bizi dört kişi su deposuna verdiler bekçi. Bekçi verdiler, bu Rumlar gelip de zehir atmasınlar suya. Rumlara gitmiyor o su. Doğrudan bu 61 haneye aittir su deposu. Kaymakamlık yoluyla bizi oraya görevlendirdi. Dört kişi nöbetçi. 100'er mermi. Birer silah. Bir kısmını verdi Kaleköy'e bilmem hangi limanı beklemeye. Bir kısım yardımcı gittik, arkada bir karakol var idi. Bizi her gün gelir askeri araba alırdı bizi, oraya yardımcı olarak. Belki asker uyur, biz de orada devriye gezerdik. 74'deki şey bize o yetkiyi verdi yani. Rumlardan kendimizi korumak için yani. (...) Burada telsiz var idi. Bizim karşıda bir manastır var idi, o karşı ormanın içinde idi. Bizim gençler gitti yıktı onu. Bizim geldiğimiz sıralar bizim gençler o binayı yıktılar. Huylandı yıktılar onu, vurdu yıktılar. Ertesi sabah günü şeye bildirdi, "...bizim kaç yaşındaki manastır yıkılmıştır." Hemen buradan telsiz bildiriyor Yunanistan'a. Yunanistan Türkiye'ye, "...bizim hakaret ediyorlar," şey ediyorlar yani, korunmasını şey ediyorlar. Yani hemen telsiz bildirirdi. O telsiz şimdi kalktı buradan. (...) Tabii isme göre verdiler, mesela (bana) bir silah 100 mermi. Ben de gittim sonra teslim ettim onları. Matara da var idi... Bir ay taşıdık onları. Hatta 27 gün sonra gittim verdim. 74'deki çıkartmanın etkisi bu oldu buraya.*

TİGEM and the Kurds: Citizens vs. Subjects

However, the island of Imbros also bears certain moments when the implied national unity fails to prevail. Everyday life practices, through which the meaning is negotiated continuously, carry the possibility of rupture for the imagined national unity. Resettlement policies in Imbros as a form of governmentality can also be regarded as a way of taming a particular group of settlers by imagining them as part of the national unity, to which at other times they are seen as posing a threat.

The Kurdish population in Imbros represents the only immigrant community, which was not brought to the island directly by the state. However, this immigration happened in relation to state policy regarding the construction of a national agricultural production farm on the island in 1967. The farm was built on the 3320.668 acres of land that had been expropriated by the Ministry of Agriculture between 1964 and 1966. Over the years, the amount of land decreased to 946.998 acres due to the construction of new settlement villages on farm property.¹⁴ The law related to the establishment of TİGEM (General Directorate of Agricultural Enterprise) describes its object as the production of all sorts of goods and services necessary for agriculture and agricultural industry. But the implicit goal of the general directorate and its local enterprises emerge as the training and guidance of the “ignorant villager” about modern agricultural techniques and tools. This pedagogical discourse can be traced

¹⁴ For further information related to the enterprise, see:
<http://www.tigem.gov.tr/gokceada.asp>

within the web page of TİGEM, where the history of the institution is told in terms of a “massive state foundation” established with a mission of “providing guidance” to the “poor villager of the exhausted post-war Turkey,” who is unaware of the “new technical skills and means of production,” yet who would manage to survive if he was thought the needs of “technical agricultural production,” and was helped in terms of agricultural tools, machinery, and input.¹⁵

Thus, the establishment of state owned farms around Anatolia to educate local villagers stands out as another welfare state policy of Turkish Republic related to the modernization of agricultural production. Nonetheless, the enterprise established in Imbros did not employ the local villagers living on the island. Both the personel of the state farm, and the seasonal workers who were employed during the harvest were mostly from outside the island. While the temporary agricultural workers were mainly from Çanakkale, the permanent staff of TİGEM was composed of Kurdish people coming from Van. The ex-manager of the farm, who was from Van himself, is considered to be the person who is responsible for the chain migration of the Kurds to the island, related to the job opportunity created by the construction of TİGEM Agricultural Enterprise in Imbros. An ex-TİGEM worker tells the story of their arrival:

We came from Gevaş region of Van. We came here in 1976, 12th day of the 6th mounth. Eşref Bey brought us here. He was the director of the farm, he brought us here. (...) That director of the farm was from Van. He was from Van himself. He had come from Hakkari. Every year that he came to Van, he was bringing back 4-5 people

¹⁵ Drawn from the official website of TİGEM, www.tigem.gov.tr

here and finding jobs for them. Thanks to him... The majority here was brought by him. We couldn't know the name of this island at that time. We haven't heard about it. He brought us and settled us here. We came, many people from Van had come here. 4-5 years later that we came. They had come before us, they were working here. I rented a minibus from Van to here for 4.100 liras. I rented a minibus from Van and I came to Dereköy. We had our children, our furniture, our goods. I put all of them. We came up to here. 12 people. It is 2000 km from here to Van. (...) There are 60-70 houses from Van. All of them work in the farm. There are both youngsters and old people.¹⁶

The ex-manager of TİGEM, a legendary figure on the island is considered as the *velinimet*¹⁷ among the settlers from Van, thanks to whom they now can manage their lives. However, some others remember him as an uncivilized, loud and arrogant man who "stuffed" the island with Kurds. According to the latter, the immigration of the Kurds to the island represents the real violence that happened to Imbros. Kurdish people, who were not technically settlers brought by the state, were not granted the opportunities similar to those of the settlement villagers. Their houses and land were not ready when they arrived. Most of the workers first came to the island alone and then brought their families after arranging a place to stay. In general, they settled in the old Rum houses left behind. Today, the

¹⁶ Van'ın Gevaş kazasından geldik buraya. 76'dan 6. aydan 12. gün biz buraya geldik. Eşref Bey bizi getirdi. Buradan çiftlik müdürü idi, buraya getirdi. (...) O çiftlik müdürü Vanlı idi. Van'dan gelmiş buraya. Hakkari'den gelmiş. O her sene Van'a geldiği zaman 4-5 kişi getirip burada işe sokuyordu. Onun sayesinde... O buraya geneli hep o getirdi buraya. Bu adanın ismini biz bilemiyorduk o zaman. Duymamıştık. O bizi getirdi, buraya koydu. Geldik, bizim Van'lılar çok gelmiş buraya. 4-5 sene ondan sonra biz geldik. Onlar bizden daha evvel gelmişlerdi, burada çalışıyorlardı. Van'dan bir minibus tuttum buraya kadar 4.100 lira. Van'dan minibus tuttum, Dereköy'e kadar geldim. Çoluk-çocuk, eşyamız vardı. Hepsini koydum. Buraya kadar geldik. 12 kişi. 2000 km buradan Van'a kadar. (...) 60-70 hane var burada Van'dan. Hepsi çiftlikte çalışanlar. Genç de var yaşlı da var.

¹⁷ Benefactor, patron.

Kurdish population intensely lives in the Centre and the two old Rum villages Kastro/Kaleköy and Shinoudi/Dereköy. A Rum resident explains the situation:

90 % of the new comers who came other than the settlement villagers came in order to invade somewhere. They have been the most dangerous ones. Because they came here without anything. Without even shoes. When they saw the empty houses they entered and did not leave afterwards. Later, in the 80's the *kaymakamlık* felt the necessity to announce like "Don't invade the Rum houses". I mean, such a shame. The majority of the houses here were invaded in that way. They didn't pay anything. It was the same in Dereköy. How many families are there in Dereköy? They all knocked down the doors and entered, just like that.¹⁸

Hence the problem of invaded old Rum houses (an extensive phenomenon throughout the island) is thought especially with the recent return of the Rums, exclusively with relation to Kurdish immigration. This way of thinking about the Kurds as "the invaders" goes hand in hand with their portrayal as culturally inferior savages throughout the island. A Rum informant, who comes to the island in summer, talks about her Kurdish neighbours:

¹⁸ *İskan olmadan gelenlerin %90'ı bir yere konmak için geldi. Onlar en tehlikeli oldu zaten. Çünkü buraya geldi, çulsuz. Ayakkabısız. Boş evi gördü mü giriyordu, çıkmıyordu. Son zamanlarda, 80'li yıllarda Kaymakamlık hoparlorle ilan etme ihtiyacını hissetti. Rumların evlerini işgal etmeyin... Bu şekilde bir rezalet. Buradaki evlerin büyük bir kısmı o şekilde işgal edildi. Beş kuruş verilmedi. Dereköy'de de öyle. Dereköy'de kaç aile var? Vurdular kapıları girdiler, işte öyle.*

They are so backwards that they don't understand anything. My mother cleans up the door of her home and this road early in the morning. These Kurds get up at 10 o'clock. There is a wall, you saw it in the front. They lie down and sleep there. They eat there and they throw away the remainings of what they eat. It is like this. Their children are the same, adults are the same. They eat corn and they throw it away. They get up at 10, and sweep all of them. Hop! To our side. They don't gather them. Hoop! In the noon, in front of our house is awful. How come it becomes like that? My mother sweeps it every morning? Then I understood that they are throwing to this side what they sweep from that side. They smoke cigarettes and they throw, they eat and they throw. Moreover they made everywhere concrete. They are taking the water pipe and washing the garbage with water. That wastes hop! And water, mud... It comes and is collected in our side. Is this cleaning? When outside of your home is clean you can enter your home with shoes, because your home is clean. But when it is dirty of course you cannot enter with shoes. We are used to in a different way in Athens. We are not used to take off our shoes at home, because the streets are clean. If the streets are clean nothing happens to your shoes... we are not painting our shoes during winter in Athens. Only one or two times a year. It is very clean. But the outside is also clean! I cannot bring dust inside because there is no dirtiness outside. I tell it, but they don't understand. A little bit of logic!¹⁹

¹⁹ O kadar geri kafalılar ki hiç bir şeyden anlamıyorlar. Annem sabah sabah kalkıyor. Sabah sabah, erkenden evinin kapısını, bu yolu temizliyor, süpürüyor. Bu Kürtler 10'da kalkıyor. Bir beton var, gördün önde. Orada yatıp içiyorlar, orada yatıp kalkıyorlar, orada yemek yiyorlar, yedikleri gibi atıyorlar. Böyle, böyle... Çocukları da aynı,

This discourse, marking the differentiation between Turkish “settlers,” and Kurdish “invaders” does not only prevail among the Rums of the island. Some of the Turkish settlers also make a similar distinction between the Kurds and the Turks. A Turkish settler recounting his conversation with his Rum friends on the political affairs related to Greek-Turkish relations, explains the Greek government’s support of the PKK as an international relations strategy, and claims that this does not correspond to an actual Rum sympathy on the island towards Kurds:

I say “Ok, there are no Turks but Kurds... Turks have left here, abandoned and gone. Kurds took here. With Kurds...” I am asking, “...will your relation be better with Kurds? He says, “No, we can never get along with Kurds.” Of course you cannot. At least Turks are more civilized. How will you communicate with Kurds? You have nothing in common with Kurds. Now you are supporting them in terms of politics, but that is another issue. You cannot get along...”²⁰

büyükleri de aynı. Mısır yerler, atarlar ... yerler atarlar. Ve 10'da kalkıyorlar, süpürüyorlar hepsini. Hop! Bizim buraya. Toplamazlar. Hooop! Öğlen, evimizin önü berbat. Vre nasıl berbat? Annem her sabah süpürüyor? Anladım ki o taraf süpürüp buraya atıyorlar. Sigara içerler, atarlar; yemek yerler, atarlar. Üstelik bir de beton döktüler! Ön tarafa da beton. Alıyorlar hortumu, su... Suyla yıkıyorlar o çöpleri. O çöpler, hoop! Bir de su, çamur... Geliyor, aşağılarda birikiyor bizim burada. Al sana temizlik!!! Ki, evinin dışı temiz olursa ayakkabılarla girip çıkıyorsun, çünkü evin temiz. Ama evin dışı pis olursa tabii ki ayakkabılarla içeriye giremezsin. Biz başka türlü alışkınız Atina'da. Evde biz ayakkabı çıkarmayız, çünkü yollarımız temiz. Yol temiz olduktan sonra ayakkabılarına bir şey olmaz ki... Biz ayakkabı boyamıyoruz kışın Atina'da. Senede bir sefer veya iki sefer. Tertemiz. Ama dışı temiz!!! İçeriye pisliği getirmiyorum çünkü dışarıda pislik yok. Söylüyorum, anlamıyorlar. Biraz mantık!!!

²⁰ "Peki," diyorum, "hadi, Türkler yok, Kürtler var... Türkler bıraktı burayı, çekti gitti. Burayı Kürtler aldı. Kürtlerle..." diyorum "...sizin şeyiniz daha mı iyi olacak?" "Hayatta olmaz" diyor. "Kürtlerle hayatta bağdaşamayız." Tabii bağdaşamazsınız. Türkler hiç olmazsa daha medeni, daha kafa dengi. Kürtlerle sen nasıl anlaşıyorsun? Kürtlerle katiyen hiç bir şeyin bağdaşmaz. Ha şimdi politika icabı tutuyorsun, ayrı konu. Sen anlaşılamazsın...

Another Turkish settler explains the current situation in Imbros as the island's corrosion especially after the Kurdish migration:

They all came, Kurds came, you came, I came. They have broken Rums' houses, they settled there, now noone cares. We don't know anyone. We know only a few from the past days, that's all. What I can say more? Robberies have begun. We had not known locking our doors. We used to sleep with our doors and windows open until morning. When we didn't have our husbands at home, noone with us. We stayed at home at night both with our husbands and without them, noone ever told a 'pist' to us [ever bothered us.]²¹

Within this discourse, Kurdish immigrants of Imbros are excluded from the imagined community of the island by not being perceived as exactly the same with the Turkish settlers. However, according to the state policy that poses them in opposition to the native Rums, they seem to partake of the national identity more than the Rums of the island. The Kurds represent the abject²² of society at the everyday level, through their exclusion in terms of modernity and civilization and are seen as dirty, dishonest, disrespectful, backward, and culturally inferior. Yet, at the same time they are tamed through state policy that considers them among the "settlers" to the island,

²¹ *Geldi, Kürtler geldi, sen geldin, ben geldim. Kırdılar Rumların evlerini kırdılar, oturdular, şimdi kim kime dum duma. Kimseyi tanımıyoruz, birkaç tane eskilerden kalanlardan tanıyoruz, o kadar. Başka ne diyeyim yani... Hırsızlıklar mı başlamadı. Eskiden biz anahtar çevirmesini bilmezdik. Kapıyı pencereyi aç böyle uyu sabaha kadar. Kocan yok, kimse yok. Kocasız da yattık biz, kocalı da yattık. Kimse böyle pşit diyen olmadı.*

²² Judith Butler, deriving from the Lacanian concept of "abjection" that designates a degraded or cast out status within the terms of sociality, defines certain abject positions within sociality that constitute zones of uninhabitability, which a subject fantasizes as threatening its own integrity. Following her, I argue that Kurdishness in Imbros indicates a zone of uninhabitability for the society, about which the members say: "I would rather die than do or be that!" (Butler 1993)

and by appointing them as civil servants employed by TİGEM. Following this line of thought, it can be said that “Kurdishness” on the island, not only works to establish an imagined “people of Gökçeada” but along the way it also gets tamed by, and loses its capacity to disrupt this imagination at the national-political level as it does in the South-East.

Nonetheless, the situation of Kurdish immigrants also works for the legitimization of state policies of resettlement throughout the island by representing them as a lot more acceptable alternative compared to the house invasions. The state, which did not exactly “plan” the Kurdish immigration becomes guilty of negligence, but not of harmful intention. This state of mind represents a recent “elite” position on the island, which gains significance through Imbros’ “opening” to tourism and travel. The change in state policy leads to an imaginary alliance of a new group of Turkish tourists –cum- settlers with the returning Rums on the island. I argue that this alliance defines the elite standpoint of a quasi-questioning of the state policy in Imbros. However, this point of view leads to a criticism of the state only in terms of its “wrong” policies without problematizing its claims of sovereignty, mainly because the elites, who already speak from within the position of the sovereign, have no problem with the concept of sovereignty.

Tourism and the Possibility of Return: The Process of Gentrification

Shifting state policy in Imbros, which defines the island as a tourist region rather than a restricted military zone, represents the emergence of the

security issue on the island as yet another level, for the change in state policy happens mainly as a result of significant reduction of the Rum population on the island. This change presents two major consequences for the island. First of all, by abrogating the obligation to get a special permission to travel the island, it enables the possibility of return to the island for the native Rums who emigrated. Secondly, it also enables a peculiar group of Turkish tourists to “discover” the island. These are mostly the intellectual elite Istanbulites who come to the island in search of “cultural authenticity” along with “the sea and the sun” for their summer vacation. Some of them buy summerhouses in Imbros, and become “islanders” rather than tourists. Their relationship to the island’s story and current actuality displays certain parallels with that of the returning Rums. This alliance which I believe to be essential in understanding the current situation in Imbros, is made possible by the local government’s partial appropriation of an existing elite discourse of Anatolian multiculturalism that can be traced to the following lines by Azra Erhat:

... as we entered the harbor we were surprised to see a beautiful beach. Behind this lay a green valley and two hills with a small village of clean white houses on one of the hillsides. It was a lively beach with a hotel, cabins and restaurants under trellis. And, what’s more, there were minibuses to carry travelers! (...) After a swim we sat in a beach restaurant. Old Barba Manol, the coffee house owner Kozma greeted us. The fountain behind the church flowed warm with a pleasing sound, and we washed our heads immediately. We chatted with the many madams from Istanbul. O! What a delightful, comfortable place it was! That night, I climbed to Tepeköy alone to

watch the sunset. It was only a village, but such a rare one. It was clean, orderly and neat. There were healthy children with a pink and white complexion; well-fed chickens in pens and the cats were fatter than the ones in Istanbul. Two girls sat under a ruined castle watching the scene. Peasants return their homes in the evening and a youngster with a mandolin under his arm climbed the hill chatting and laughing with his young female companion. (...) The central town was similar to one in the south of France. There was a photographer and a gift shop selling nice things like postcards, candy, wooden carvings, almond fondants, almond oil, embroideries, and bracelets. (...) During the church ceremony boys and girls collected money for the construction of a new high school. You dropped your money on a tray and girls attached a flower to your collar. The trays overflowed with banknotes. The literacy rate in Imroz is 60%. Like the other villages Dereköy had a primary school and that day they must have gathered hundreds of lira for the secondary school. (...) Imroz is a happy island, the unknown happy island praised in the ancient texts.²³

In this imaginary, Imbros represents a yearning to find the modern as the eternal in the essence of a Mediterranean civilization described in terms of cleanness, order, gender equality and literacy. In the elite point of view, Imbros signifies an ideal that has been ruined. The educated Istanbulites who come to the island in search of its authenticity feel closer to the native Rums than the Turkish settlers. They go to the *Panayia* rather than the film

²³ Excerpt from Azra Erhat, *Mavi Yolculuk*, İstanbul, 1960. Taken from Erol Saygı, *Gökçeada*, Motif Basım Ltd. Şti, İstanbul. (Translation original)

festival, visit the old Rum villages on the island and try to chat with the remaining old Rums about how things were in the good old days.

Some of them even go further and buy old Rum houses, being of course very sensitive about proper purchasing, and imagine themselves as part of that long lost dream. They consider themselves more as islanders than the Turkish settlers by claiming to “understand” the island and respect its authenticity. They renovate their houses very carefully, remaining faithful to the true Rum archaeology, and treat delicately the remaining furniture, like kitchen amphoras and looms for weaving. A retired professor of literature from Istanbul who has settled in Imbros once showed me the huge amphora (used like a refrigerator in the old times) that was buried under the kitchen floor when he first bought his village house. He told me how hard it was to carve it out and they even had to demolish the kitchen wall to take it out without ruining it. He was proud of his amphora, which was now a part of his garden decoration. Inside the house, on the walls, there were black and white pictures of the deceased old Rum villagers whom he had the chance to meet in the past.

Within the elite perception of the island, the Rums along with their remains become authentic cultural ornaments. These relics are purchased, renovated carefully, and proudly displayed. The Istanbulite summerhouse owners on the island see themselves as having the right to settle in Imbros because they are capable of valuing and understanding its genuine people and culture. What is more, they take on the mission to preserve the fading

authentic Rum structure in Imbros. In some old Rum villages, the elites care more than the Rums about who is going to settle in the village. Ayi Theodori/ Zeytinliköy for instance, is regarded as one of the protected zones on the island where people need personal reference to buy a house.

Within this imaginary, the Turkish settlers on the island are conceived in opposition to the natives, as the “Culture-less” savages who could not appreciate the island and therefore ruined it. An Istanbulite resident explains the present situation Imbros, which she sees as a case of cultural decay, in comparison to Tenedos:

Now what’s wrong here is that the cultural level of the newcomers is very low. The ones that consider themselves as islanders, or the ones that came from outside are either their friends or their relatives. That’s why the cultural level is very low. It is not like Bozcaada. Who was there in Bozcaada? Uğur Dündar was there, Cengiz Çandar was there. They brought their friends. There is an architect who works in the Patriarchate as an art director. His house is there, he brought his group. That’s why the culture level in Bozcaada is higher. The settlers in Bozcaada were more qualified also before. (...) Here, it is a place where only the farmers or the ones that used to live here... or the ones who had lost everything that they have and came here in order to gain some land, that is, the third class people would go. The ones without anything to lose... The culture that this people who have gained though invading the lands is television culture. And television had come here in the 90s. There are no antennas!!! You

cannot expect anything from someone who is brought up with that culture because his friends are also like him.²⁴

From this point of view, the explanation of the current situation on the island becomes the failure of the state to carry the right settlement policy in Imbros, and to organize the arrival of the “right” kind people to the island who would understand and appreciate its authentic culture. The Turkish state, then, is criticized for being “impotent” to govern the island, and incapable to pursue the traditional Ottoman governmentality of tolerance and multiculturalism. Another one of my informants from Istanbul who is now living on the island sees the situation as not being to the advantage of the state itself:

Moreover we are the descendants of an empire. That is, tolerance is in our culture. We are the grandchildren of a nation that kept ethnically different and religiously foreign subjects within the same empire and for centuries governed them within unity and solidarity.

If there were no external forces, Armenians, Rums, Albanians, Romanians, Bulgarians wouldn't uprising against the Ottomans.

Moreover, the states in the Middle East would not be against us.

²⁴ *Yani şimdi, buradaki yanlışlık, gelenlerin kültür seviyesinin düşük oluşundan kaynaklanıyor. Ada halkı olarak geçinen veyahut da dışarıdan gelenler de ancak onların ahababı oluyor veya onların akrabası oluyor. Onun için kültür seviyesi çok düşük. Bir Bozcaada gibi değil. Bozcaada'da kim vardı? Uğur (Dündar) vardı, Cengiz Çandar vardı. Onlar kendi gruplarını getirdi. (...)Patrikhane'de art director olarak çalışan mimar bir adam vardır, evi orada, o kendi grubunu getirdi. Onun için Bozcaada'nın kültür seviyesi daha düzeyli. Daha evvel de Bozcaada'da yerleşenler daha kalbur üstüydü. (...) Burası ancak çiftçi veya burada yaşamış insanların... veyahut varını yoğunluğunu kaybetmiş, gelip buralarda bir toprak edineyim falan, yani üçüncü sınıf insanların, kişilerin gidebileceği yer. Kaybedeceği hiç bir şeyi olmayanların yani... E bu insanların buralarda arazi çalıp çırpıp edindiği kültür, televizyon kültürü. Televizyon da zaten buraya 90'larda gelmiş. Anten yok!!! O kültürle yetişmiş bir insandan zaten bir şey bekleyemezsin çünkü onun ahababı da onun gibi.*

Unfortunately Turkish Republic has treated minorities very harsh, although we were the descendants of that empire, and although Turkish Republic should have treated them in a more tolerant way as a more libertarian, liberal, democratic state and as a republic which has an understanding of nationalism and Turkishness as the way Atatürk had defined it. That is, our republic had treated minorities in a way that we are ashamed of, and this harshness is partly still going on. This harms us, Turkish Republic, rather than causing any benefits. You know that today propaganda is very important. Lobbies are very important. Our smallest faults are causing greater events, greater issues, oppositions, and greater hatred in foreign countries. It is very wrong to insist on these faults in spite of being aware of those. It is also a fault. Moreover let me tell something beyond this. I find it stupid until someone comes and makes me believe to the opposite. (...) I did not understand how our state would benefit from this.²⁵

Opposed to this argument about the refusal of the Ottoman multiculturalist heritage by the Republican state, the local government in Imbros seems to

²⁵ Üstelik biz bir İmparatorluğun varisleriyiz. Yani hoşgörü, bizim kültürümüzde var. Etnik köken bakımından, din bakımından nice yabancı unsurları, aynı imparatorluk içinde tutmuş, birlik ve beraberlik içinde asırlarca, efendim, bunları yönetmiş bir milletin torunlarıyız. Eğer dış müdahaleler olmasaydı, Ermeniler de, efendim, Yunan... Rumlar da, Arnavutlar da, Romenler de, Bulgarlar da Osmanlı'ya, efendim, isyan etmezlerdi. Hatta Ortadoğu'daki devletler de bizim aleyhimize tavır almazlardı. (...)E biz o imparatorluklardan gelmiş insanlar olarak, TC çok daha ileri görüşlü, liberal, demokratik, Atatürk'ün tarifiyle milliyetçiliği ve Türklüğü anlayan bir devlet ve Cumhuriyet olarak, çok daha anlayışlı davranması lazım gelirken, maalesef çok katı davranmıştır. Yani azınlığa karşı bizim Cumhuriyetimiz maalesef bizleri utandıracak denli katı davranmıştır ve kısmen bu katı davranma halen de devam ediyor. (...)Bu bize, Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'ne fayda değil zarar getirir. Bugün propoganda çok önemli biliyorsunuz, lobiler çok önemli, dış ülkelerde bizim en ufak yanlışlarımız büyük olaylara, büyük infiallere, büyük nefretlere sebebiyet veriyor. Bunları bilerek hala yanlışlarda ısrar etmek çok yanlış, o da yanlış ve hatta ben daha da ötesini söyleyeyim. Biri gelip beni aksine ikna edinceye kadar ben bunu aptallık kabul ederim. (...) Bundan nasıl devletimiz için bir fayda sağlandığını da, onu da anlayabilmiş değilim.

be quite willing to revive the Ottoman imperialist idea of tolerance against its non-Moslem elements. In a tourist brochure prepared by the municipality, the history and the current situation of the island is described as:

Turkish and Rum citizens used to live in peace in Gökçeada under the governance of Ottoman Empire for 471 years. They practiced their religion, traditions and rituals without any restrictions. (...) Gökçeada where past and present can be lived together, is a wonderful natural beauty with its very long sea shores, the shiny sea, and with its unique texture that connects green with blue. In our island where several cultures meet one can find mosques, churches, monestries, old Rum houses and examples of modern architecture co-existing with each other.²⁶

According to the leaflet, the local government's way of seeing the Rum presence of the island can be thought in line with an idea of pluralism and peaceful co-existence. However, the meaning of the Rum returnees' periodical presence in Imbros (now regarded as habitual) emerges as a contested issue at the everyday level. Current settlers, mostly small scale trades people or house pension owners, are visibly quite pleased about this presence. For them, summertime, when the island is full with those rich tourists who are willing to buy things and spend money, is the only period

²⁶ 471 yıl Osmanlı idaresinde kalan Gökçeada'da Türk ve Rum vatandaşlar huzur içerisinde yaşamışlar, dinlerini, örf, adet ve geleneklerini sınırsız kullanmışlardır. (...) Gökçeada, doğasında göz alabildiğince uzanan kumsalları, pırıl pırıl denizi ile yeşil ve maviyi birleştiren kendine has örgüsü ile geçmişle bugünün birlikte yaşandığı harika bir doğa güzelliği. Çeşitli kültürlerin buluştuğu adamızda camiler, kiliseler, manastırlar, eski Rum evleri ve modern mimari örnekleri bir arada bulunmaktadır.

throughout the whole year when the economy runs well. Returning Rums are also aware of this situation. In fact, this is one of the reasons they now feel safe about coming back to Imbros. They are aware of the fact that being able to spend money enables them to show a presence on Imbros, that they are welcomed as people with money who are also now “the regulars” but no longer “the owners” of the island. A Rum informant describes the current situation:

We are in a different position now. At that time we were very weak, we could not say anything. We were very afraid, now we are not. Now we have a place. It is different now; we are coming with our money. If they scare someone in here, the whole island will become empty. Noone will come. And at the moment we are coming and leaving a lot of money. The island is very poor. If we don't come... you can ask anyone. People call me and ask when I am coming. They say that the shopkeepers are in misery. You are telling this to me. To me! Will the shopkeepers live with my help? They both live in my place and I make them earn their living. Are you telling this to me? (...) If we don't come, they would be miserable.²⁷

In contrast, things do not run that smoothly for them in the land registry office, which can be regarded as pointing to the limits of the discourse of

²⁷ *Bakma, şimdi farklıyız. O zamanlar çok kuvvetsizdik, ses çıkarmazdık. Çok korkuyorduk, şimdi korkmuyoruz. Şimdi yerimiz var artık. Üstelik başka türlü, paramızla geliyoruz artık. Bir kişiyi burada korkutsunlar, bütün ada boşalacak. Kimse gelmeyecek. Ve şu an geliyoruz ve çok çok para getiriyoruz. Ada çok fakir. Eğer biz olmasaydık... Na herkese de sorabilirsin. Açıyorlar bana telefon, diyorlar “Ne zaman geliyorsunuz? Esnaf kan ağlıyor.” Sen bunu bana söylüyorsun. Bana söylüyorsun?! Esnaf benden mi yaşayacak? Esnaf hem benim yerlerimde kalıyor, hem de onu ben yaşıtıyorum. Bunu bana mı söylüyorsun? (...) Gelmezsek, perişan olacaklar.*

multiculturalism. Returning Imbrians, who want to take advantage of the existing air of liberty on the island, increasingly apply for the return of legal titles to their old family properties²⁸. The process of reclamation causes several problems in the land registry office for various reasons.

The first cadastral survey of the republican era on the island was carried out as late as 1996. Until then, most of the old Rums who knew the land (thus could serve as experts) were either gone or dead. During that survey, most of the old Rum properties were registered as state property either because of the absence of their owners at the time of the survey, or simply because they were properties not “owned” like churches or monasteries. Some others were considered to be within the borders of SİT region, which caused them to be regarded automatically as state property by the officials surveying the land.²⁹ On the other hand, during the survey, some settlers were entitled to the legal deeds of the Rum property they were using because they held it in possession for over twenty years.³⁰ As a result, most of the Rums, who abandoned their properties in 1974, were dispossessed. Thus, many Rums who returned to the island in the 90’s found their property either occupied by settlers or registered to the state.

²⁸ Here, property mainly implies houses. However, there are also cases related to agricultural lands or *dams* near those lands, which the old Rum villagers used to stay during the harvest.

²⁹ In 1985, in line with the Law nr. 2863 related to the protection of the natural and cultural wealth, the island as a whole has been declared as a natural SİT region. This has introduced serious restrictions to the constructions on the island. After a while, the decision was abrogated by the administrative court as a result of the petition given by the Tourism Association in Imbros. In 1990, another government decision declared the island partially within the zones of natural, urban, and archeological SİT regions. This had effects on the cadastral survey for it was thought as a basis of dismissing some of the property claims based on naked possession, and disabled a lot of islanders to obtain the legal deeds for their properties.

³⁰ See Turkish civil law nr.639 (old) / nr. 713 (new)

To claim successfully their legal right to property seems quite impossible for the returnees for another reason too. Citizenship most often appears as a very important criterion in pursuing this claim. Turkish property law prohibits non-citizens from owning property in rural places and villages.³¹

This rule emerges as an obstacle for the returning, especially male Rums who have lost their Turkish citizenship due to their failure to complete their military service or who have just taken up the Greek (or other) citizenship for other reasons. However, at certain times, even citizenship fails to guarantee legal ownership of property. A Turkish lawyer in Imbros recounts his memories related to a case:

Look, let me tell you another event, one day a citizen of Armenian origin came from Istanbul, wanted to buy a house in the village from a citizen of Rum origin. They agreed among themselves and came to me in order to prepare and follow the legal procedures. That citizen of Rum origin was not able to come here very often because of his business and when he came he could not stay very long, he gave me his attorneyship. He said: "you can go to the office on behalf of me and you can follow this buying selling procedure" and he went. When the attorneyship was completed we applied for the proprietor certificate. The principle of the office that time, of course had the duty of examining the documents. While he was reading, he saw my client's name and asked: "This man is not Turkish is he?" I said "He is a Turk but with Armenian origin". "Aaa" he said, "I cannot do this". "Why?" "I have to ask this to Ankara". What does this mean?

³¹ Village Law article 87.

Look he is a Turkish citizen, in his identity card he is a citizen of Turkish Republic, what do you want else?" He says "there is a secret notice" (...) And I was very upset of course. I didn't want my client learn about this. I was ashamed and at the same time I didn't want my client to be upset. This man considers himself as a Turkish citizen. His father and mother were born here; he was born here. He was brought up with Turkish culture and Turkish civilization. He knows himself as a Turkish citizen and he accepts it as it is. Then it has bothered me to tell this man that he is an Armenian and the procedure for his work is not the same as ours, it has different formalities, we cannot arrange this proprietorship certificate without having the permission of Ankara. I didn't find it just and I hid it. I said, "There are missing things in the attorneyship that came from Australia, we have to complete it. I also didn't recognize it and when I went to the office they found out. It is necessary that a new attorneyship come from Australia, it may take a little while, we should wait." In fact there was also such a problem. We asked for a new attorneyship from Australia. Meanwhile we applied to Ankara and asked whether a Rum origin Turkish citizen can sell his property to an Armenian origin Turkish citizen or not. We asked for Ankara's opinion and that opinion was positive. By the way when an attorneyship came from Australia, we achieved the procedure of buying and selling. Now my client, may he live long, does not know what has happened and why the things have been delayed so much.³²

³² *Bakın ben size başka bir olay anlatayım, birgün Ermeni asıllı bir vatandaş geldi İstanbul'dan, Rum asıllı bir vatandaştan köyde ev almak istiyor. Anlaşmışlar kendi aralarında, bana, işte, hukuki muameleleri hazırlamak ve yapmak için geldiler. O Rum asıllı vatandaş da işleri icabı buraya sık gelemiyor, geldiği zaman da uzun kalamıyor, bana bir vekaletname verdi. Dedi ki: Siz de benim nam ve hesabıma tapuya gidersiniz, bu*

Another moment of discrimination that is said to exist on the island is when Rums apply to the municipality for a permit to do any construction on the houses, almost all of which are very old and ruined, and are in need of renovation to become habitable. This, however, is not that easy, since most of the houses remain in the SİT region on the island, a legal fact that prohibits the owners or users making any alteration without getting the required permission. There is a wide rumor on the island, especially among the Rums that there is a strong negative discrimination against the Rum petitioners about giving permission for renovation, compared to the non-Rum residents of the island, a rumour which the lawyer's account seems to corroborate.

alım satım işini yaparsınız, dedi, gitti. Vekaletnameler tamamlanınca tapuya müracaat ettik. Zamanın tapu müdürü, tabii, görevi gereği sunulan belgeleri incelemek durumunda. Okurken, benim müvekkilimin ismini gördü, bu, dedi Türk değil mi? O dedim Türk de Ermeni asıllı Türk. Aaa, dedi, bunu ben yapamam. Neden? Bunu, dedi Ankara'ya sormam lazım. Kardeşim ne demek bu ya? Bak Türk vatandaşı, kimliğinde Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşı, başka ne istiyorsun? Bize, dedi, gizli genelge var, taamim var. (...) Ve ben, tabii çok üzuldüm. Bunu müvekkilime de intikal ettirmek istemedim. Hem utandım, hem de müvekkilimde bir küskünlük, bir kırgınlık yaratsın istemedim. Adam şimdi kendini Türk vatandaşı görüyor, anası babası burada doğmuş, kendisi burada doğmuş. Türk kültürüyle, Türk harsıyla yetişmiş. Kendini Türk vatandaşı olarak bilmiş ve öyle de kabul ediyor. E şimdi bu adama: "Sen Ermeniymişsin" deyip de, "Senin muamelen bizim muamelemize benzemez, onun başka türlü formaliteleri varmış, Ankara'da izin gelmeden bu tapuyu yapamayız" demek benim gücüme gitti. Bunu doğru bulmadım ve ben bunu sakladım. Dedim ki: "Bu Avusturalya'dan gelen vekaletnamede bir noksanlık var, bunu tamamlatmamız lazım. Ben de farkına varmadım, tapuya gidince çıktı meydana. Tekrar Avusturalya'dan yeni bir vekaletname gelmesi lazım, biraz gecikecek, bekleyelim" dedim. Ve hakikaten böyle bir pürüz de vardı. Avusturalya'dan yeni bir vekaletname istedik, bir taraftan da Ankara'ya müracaat edildi, Rum asıllı Türk vatandaşı, Ermeni asıllı Türk vatandaşa malını satabilir mi satamaz mı diye. Oradan görüş istendi, o görüş olumlu geldi, bu arada Avusturalya'dan da yeni bir vekaletname de gelince, biz alım satım işini hallettik. Şimdi müvekkilim, kulakları çınlasın neyin ne olduğunu, neden bu işlerin geciktiğini bilmiyor.

Livelihood in Imbros: A Social Map

The current situation in Imbros in terms of livelihood emerges as very much effected by the re-imagination of the island as a tourist site. Government policies favouring small-scale enterprises in the tourism sector like providing cheap credit for pensions, hotels or restaurants, or the municipality's attempts related to the advertisement of the island like designing web pages or making offers to TRT for the production of a documentary on Imbros can be regarded as significant moments of this re-imagination. Hence tourism, as a large-scale state project of Imbros, emerges as the medium around which the present social map of appears. Different groups on the island organise their resources around this project to get a share from the island's tourism related income, which makes them get included into the project as subjects.

Small-scale retailers on the island like shop owners or restaurant managers are maybe the ones mostly affected by the tourism boom on the island. These are mostly small-scale entrepreneurs who came to the island from various regions like İzmir, Çanakkale or Siirt in line with the accelerating population, to take advantage of the available economic field in Imbros. Also there are lots of villagers from Şahinkaya who are now living and

working in the center as self-employed people like hardware dealers, butchers or grocers.

However, villagers of Şahinkaya (or the *Laz* as they are called throughout the island) occupy a unique position in Imbros, when compared to the rest of the settlement villagers. The *Laz* on the island are mostly referred to as being the richest and the most hard-working settlement villagers of Imbros who managed to survive and flourish economically. This finds explanation through their very strong familial and communal bonds, and gets articulated throughout the island as “*Lazlar birbirini tutar.*”³³ Hence, most of the *Laz* families on the island get involved with more than one business like running a shop along with farming or animal husbandry.

The rest of the settlement villagers like people who came from Samsun and Isparta, who are living in Yeni Bademli, and those from Muğla and Burdur, who are living in Uğurlu are not that well-off when compared to the *Laz*. Most of these villagers, who were given land and animals along with houses as they arrived, do not cultivate those lands. The villagers show the low profit rates in agriculture sector as the main reason for their choice. However, along with the low profit, other reasons like free animal husbandry and its bad effects on the crop or the villagers’ unfamiliarity with the flora of the region are mostly uttered. Hence, most of these villagers prefer to take advantage of the location of their villages in terms of their closeness to the beach and either rent their houses completely, or

³³ The *Laz* favour (take care of) each other.

turn them into house pensions to rent rooms and earn a living out of tourism in the summer time. However, their earning hardly suffices for the whole year. That's why most of the village youngsters prefer to leave the island for big cities, like İstanbul, in dream of better lives.

Kurds living in Imbros get included in this map through performing more in-between occupations like construction work. In fact, most of the Kurd population of the island is composed of the people who came here to work in TİGEM as agricultural workers. Today, aside from the ones who are retired (and continue living in Imbros,) most of the population is still employed in the farm. However, there is also a large amount of Kurdish people who arrived the island through their friends or relatives who used to work in TİGEM, although they have never worked for the farm themselves. For the most part, these are people who decided to come to Imbros because of job opportunities, and work as self-employed like small-scale tradesmen, although, they do not perform trade.

Construction work is a fastly growing sector throughout the island mostly because of the acceleration in the number of the Rum returnees. The returnees, who want to re-establish themselves in Imbros first of all repair and renovate their old and ruined family houses. Other than that, the field tends to enlarge as more and more people (mostly from İstanbul) discover the island and buy old Rum properties as summerhouses. Furthermore, more the island gets popular as a vacation place, more constructions happen like hotels and restaurants build by the entrepreneurs in Imbros

who want to invest in the tourism sector. However, construction work emerges as significant in yet another sense. As being mainly an inter-family business, construction work sometimes becomes the site of family based conflicts. In that sense, the sector operates within mafia like relationships, through which the island is defined in terms of different zones under the control of different families, and the violation of these zones mostly ends up in aggression. Accordingly, one can also talk about certain wealthy families in Imbros (not necessarily Kurdish) who show presence in more than one sector throughout the island like owning a couple of shops, a petrol station, a hotel and a construction firm.

Other than those, there is a large group of civil servants living on the island, composed of lawyers, district attorneys, doctors, teachers and local administrators who come to live on the island for a certain period of appointment, along with gendarmerie and military officers. These people mostly live in the center of the island in the apartment blocks provided by the state. Apart from the appointed civil servants, there is also permanent staff working for the state like secretaries, drivers or office cleaners. These are mainly employed among people living in settlement villages. Being a permanent staff of a state institution is quite a prestigious position among the settlement villagers not only because it guarantees a continuous fixed salary, but also it opens up the way to be included in certain webs of relationships throughout Imbros that would make easy for one to live on the island.

As for the elderly Rums inhabiting the island on a year round, most of them depend on the money sent either by their children living abroad, or by the Imbrian Associations in Greece. They live in their native villages and most of them still cultivate the very small amount of land they have left, only for supplying themselves. However, there are also very few people from the Rum community who are doing tourism related jobs like running authentic coffee-shops or taverns, and producing home-made wine to sell tourists.

Besides all these people, there remains still another group to be mentioned. This group is mainly composed of people who came to Imbros from close regions like Çanakkale to work as seasonal agricultural workers for TİGEM and stayed on the island after their work ended. Mostly referred to as Gypsies, this group represents the poorest section of the island. Deprived of the most basic resources to survive, they live off the grants provided by the municipality now and then or through personal aids made by their neighbours. They stay in the abandoned Rum houses and try to earn a living through daily jobs, or wait for the harvest to be employed by TİGEM.

The *Panayia* as Open Contestation

It is at the time of *Panayia*³⁴ that all those relationships and confrontations hidden in lawyers' offices and everyday encounters take on a symbolic

³⁴During *Panayia*, each day the festivities take place in a different village. They are composed of morning mass and fairs that last all through the following day and night.

ritualistic turn. The festival plays quite a central role in the Rums' return to the island. Most Rum returnees see themselves as being in their native land at the time of festival and see their obligation "to keep the tradition going" as their main reason for coming back.

Festival time on the island becomes a time of reunion for the Rums. Family members or close friends who live apart come together in the small churches of their native villages where most of them have been baptized. After mass, the gardens of those churches become literally packed, where people salute each other and get the latest news about the ones they have not seen for long. The meat of the sheep sacrificed on the previous day, which has been cooking in huge cauldrons for the whole night, is distributed to people with *kurkudi*.³⁵ While the religious ceremonies in the villages are attended exclusively by the natives of those villages, the fairs following the ceremonies where there is food, drink, dancing and music, house Rums of all villages.

The significance of the festival for the local authorities seems to lie in its "insignificance." The municipality represents its attitude of indifference to the *Panayia* as an act of "tolerance," as the sovereign's grant to "allow" the existence of "other" cultures on its land of sovereignty, which in turn works to affirm the island as belonging to the sovereign, thus under its authority. However, from another point of view, it is possible to say that

However the main ceremony takes place on the 16th of August in *Balomeni/Yamali Meryem* Monastery where Rums coming from various villages on the island gather early in the morning and sacrifice sheep.

³⁵ A dish made of pounded meat and wheat.

this authorization works in two ways. The Turkish state, shifting its policy from a total denial to a conditional allowance of Rum existence in Imbros, provides the Rums with a space of possibility to confront these state set terms of presence on the island albeit unintentionally.

Rums of Imbros, strategically extending the limits of “celebration”, a relatively legitimate way of claiming visibility, organize homecoming parties and concerts with groups coming from Greece, and youngsters wait for the summer to get married in the small churches of their ancestral villages. These parties, to which the local governors are particularly invited, become sites for the performance of mutual “hospitality” where both sides race with each other to act like the host and welcome the other to the island. The *kaymakam* and the mayor pay special attention to attend the events they are invited to, and give salutary speeches welcoming the guests from all over the world to the island. However, celebrations held during the *Panayia*, where locality is performed, become sites of confusion for the local governors. They miss the steps when invited to join the dance or do not understand the songs sung in a language they do not recognize. Hence the governors are at once rendered to the status of a “guest” of a cultural performance in which they cannot fully participate. While the local government’s attribution of a guest status to the Rums constructs the government as multicultural and democratic, the Rums’ invitation of the governors to the celebrations they are hosting provides them with the space where they can make their claims about the genuine ownership of the island through performances of culture and authenticity.

Rums and the local government of the island, by contesting each other's meaning attribution to Imbros, also argue about the meaning and the terms of presence (of return) on it. This struggle over definition gets informed by various discourses, and makes Imbros the site on which mutual strategies available at the time to both parties are applied. Rum property claims and the celebration of *Panayia* emerge as the moments of crystallization for the ongoing dispute in Imbros. The festival, along with the attempts to have their property back, become one of the main moments of Rum construction of Imbros as "the homeland," which is the place to return to for special/holy days. The local government, on the other hand, tolerating the celebration of the festival but opposing the house claims made by the non-citizen Rums, once more defines the island as a part of Turkish land under state sovereignty.

Unlike local governors, the *Panayia* seem to signify something else to the settlers on the island. They do not get invited neither the religious ceremonies nor the festivities. Most of the settlers think of the *Panayia* as an event for which lots of tourists come to the island and spend money. Festival time really becomes the peak of the tourism season of the island and the settlers mostly take advantage of the crowd gathered for the events and set up a display of various things (like embroideries, souvenirs or food like honey or olive oil) to sell.

Some of the elderly settlers think of the fairs as infidel parties where both men and women drink alcohol and dance together. However, young men like to go to the fairs and watch, even though they sense that they are not welcomed. Rums, on the other hand, feel quite uncomfortable about these young men coming to their festival, sitting in a distance from the dancing floor and staring young women dance. They accuse those of not respecting their religious festival and understanding it's meaning all wrong. They argue that the *Panayia* is actually a sacred period where the community members come together and commemorate the death of the Virgin, and along the way find a chance to see each other and remember the old days. They argue that settlers, on the other hand, see the period as a fairground attraction where they can sell things and watch people having fun.

Another moment when the settlers on the island become visible during the *Panayia* emerges as the distribution of *kurkudi*. At these times, the poorest of the settlers living on the island line up in front of the churches to get meat. Rums, even though they are not very fond of the sight, comment on the poor conditions those people are living in, and explain that the *Panayia* is perhaps the only time of the year that they can eat meat. Rums refer to these very poor people as either "Kurdish" or "Gypsy," clearly distinguishing them from the rest of the settlers, while they use the word "Turks" in general to mention the men coming to the festival to watch them.

The *Panayia* also stands out as a time when the security forces become quite visible throughout the island. The gendarmerie puts checkpoints on the roads heading to the Rum villages where the nighttime festivities are held, and shows presence at the festival places in case a problem arises. While Rums regard this as an act against them, aiming for their disturbance, the local administration explains those as “measures” taken for the safety of the “visitors” themselves.

The elites, however, only attend the festival when they are invited. When they do, they seem to be disturbed just like the Rums about the settlers who are ignorant of the meaning of the *Panayia* or the Kurds and Gypsies who come in front of the churches or community picnics, asking for food. However, the imaginary alliance of the elites on the island with the native Rums, while locking away the Rum presence on the island into a culturalist discourse of “authenticity” vs. a “counterfeit,” poses the problem of Imbros as one of state impotency rather than a form of governmentality. This way of perceiving the island leads to an imperialist nostalgia (Rosaldo 1993), which basically appears as a form of mourning that presents itself as a quasi-critical point of view. Within this way of thinking (that itself refers to a sovereign position,) being critical becomes an exceptional standpoint to which only the educated elites are entitled both because they are endowed with the resources of the sovereign (in terms of cultural, economic and political capital) and because they get to socialize with the natives (like being invited to the Rum wedding ceremonies) as a result of their “understanding” of cultural authenticity. However, in the end this

criticism adds up to another form of governmentality that presents the “alternative” cultures within the national borders as the “cultural wealth” of the nation along with its “natural beauties” which works as a marketing strategy to appeal tourists. Thus, the Rum Imbros becomes a fairy tale, depoliticized and imprisoned to an irreversible past that is commemorated in a museumized cultural fair, *Panayia*, which, however also enables the Rums to play the host, and to perform to the rest of the world and (at most) to themselves that this wealth actually belongs to them.

CHAPTER III THE WORDS: NARRATIVES OF SELF AND BELONGING ON THE ISLAND

Governance, as I have stated in the previous chapter, is not a simple imposition of certain norms and regulations to the subjects that are governed. It is rather a more complex process that works through the governed by producing them as the subjects of governmental power taking part in the governance in an active way. This chapter, in which I will focus on narratives of “me and the state” throughout the island of Imbros, is about the production of these governmental subjects. I argue that narratives of “me and the state” emerging through people’s talking about themselves and their stories related to the island, provide me with a good means of studying how policies operating in Imbros produce techniques of the self. However, before proceeding with this issue, I would like to dwell on the evolution of the concept of “the subject” in contemporary social and political theory.

The conceptualisation of “the modern subject” in post-Enlightenment European political thought was based on an assumed presence of a tension between “the private” and “the public.” Within this way of thinking, while the private signified a realm of emotions, feelings, sentiments and desires, the public was thought as the domain of universal “reason.” The modern subject was formed through a pedagogic relationship between the public and the private, at the end of which emerges “the citizen” (the public-universal and political side of the subject) of the modern public realm

whose inner feelings and emotions are tamed by universal reason (Chakrabarty 2000).

What Foucault did on his part for the conceptualisation of the “modern subject” was to problematize, in terms of what he called governmentality, the process of its formation through this assumed tension between the private and the public. Focusing on the formation of the modern subject as a technique of governmental power, he renamed the process “the subjection of the subject,” which stands for the transformation of human beings into subjects (Foucault 1982). Foucault’s understanding of the term “subject” indicates two mutually constitutive acts of “being subject to someone else” by control and dependence, and “being tied to his own identity” by a conscience or self-knowledge, both assuming a power that subjugates and makes subject to. This conceptualisation stands at the basis of Foucault’s thought of modern productive power and governmentality that governs through the governed (i.e. the subject) via the production (and interruption of the process of production) of the subject in a certain way, depending on the form of governmentality.

Hence, it was Foucault’s approach to the formation of “the modern subject” that tied it closely to a governing process that stems from an understanding of governmentality as the conduct of conduct, or as acting upon the actions of others by shaping their self-formation. However, as Hall argues, Foucault’s elaboration of the production of the modern subject through what he calls “techniques of the self” still left out the question of

why certain individuals occupy certain subject positions rather than others (all enabled by different forms of governmentality) (Hall 1996). The problem of “identification” emphasising the response of the subject to the production process, the way s/he assumes the offered subject positions was still not addressed. At this point, for an elaboration of the matter of subjection that takes into account the point of “identification,” Hall draws on the work of Judith Butler, through which he claims bring together the Foucauldian and the psychoanalytic perspectives.

According to Hall, Butler’s introduction of the notion of “performativity” to the question of “subjection” enables her to concentrate on the previously overlooked issue of “identification.” Butler explains “performance” as the reiterative power of discourse to produce the phenomena that it regulates and constrains (Butler 1993). Through performance, Butler’s subject emerges “within and as” this reiterative power, and this makes it possible for her to ask about its conditions of emergence and operation. Her understanding of the production of subjects through performance establishes the subject as both being enabled by, and “assuming” a subject position offered by the form of governmentality at hand. The act of assumption refers to a constrained act of “citation” of the governmental norms. However, according to Butler, this constraint is a productive one for the term “reiteration” standing at the basis of her theory of performativity points to a “disruption” as much as “repetition” because it contains a possibility of wrong reiteration.

What I would like to do in this chapter draws very much from Butler's conceptualisation of the "assuming" subject that receives in an active way the subject positions offered by governmental discourse. My questions, similar to hers, are also related to the conditions of emergence and operation of the governed subjects on the island of Imbros. Regarding that second phase of governmentality, which is about the way the governed subjects "assume" subject positions, I intend to look at the ways people narrate their stories of the self, in relation to the island. However, as I will argue throughout this chapter, the stories of self and belonging in Imbros always emerge as stories narrating (hence constructing) some sort of relationship with the state. The state as an actor, interfering in the lives of people living on the island through governmental policies (by re-settling them, rearranging the status of their property, and even deciding on economic activity - through indirect ways of providing credit or offering courses along with the more direct ways of granting agricultural land or animals) displays an acute presence in everyday life. This, I believe, is why the stories of belonging in Imbros precisely appear as mediated by an idea of being in relation to the state. It is thus through this relation, which is so omnipresent, this dialogue that the person assumes a particular subjectivity, becomes a subject and is governed at the same time.

Narratives, with their emphasis on the active, self-shaping quality of human thought and their power to create and refashion identity, enable one to trace the stories that inform the actions and judgements of people and institutions and connect the mind to the social world (Hinchman and

Hinchman 2001). Hence, narratives, although not always pointing out to “reality” per se, are capable of indicating the ways people make sense of these realities to themselves (and to others) by positioning themselves as “the authors” with a certain authority to speak or explain. As Hall also mentions (however shortly,) the analysis of self-narrativization can be meaningful for a study of the question of “identification” of the subject within governmentality, for it brings together “the fantasmatic field” (i.e. the imaginary) and “the discursive” (Hall 1996: 4).

As I have tried to show in the earlier chapters, Imbros is a place where state intervention is especially visible in the everyday realm through the governance of lives. This, I believe leads to the presence of “the state”, as an actor of everyday life for people living on the island. I also believe that making sense of the self on the island can best be traced through the narratives of belonging to/on the island. Ever since the Lausanne Treaty, the question of whom does the island really belong to has been the major issue for all parties concerned. As I have tried to show, the issue of “belonging” in Imbros (both in the sense of people’s belonging to the island and the island belonging to the people) stands out as the main point of governmentality on the island. While the Rum claim to belong to the island, their opponent, the Turkish state has claimed that the island belongs to them. For the Turkish state, in other words, the insignificance of “the presence of a few thousand men of whatever race” to quote İnönü once more, is to a large extent an important guiding principle. Belonging in Imbros, therefore, always carries connotations related to an idea of “the

state” as a unified imaginary category in relation to which inhabitants of Imbros construct themselves as the governed subjects with equally unified “selves.” The stories about self and belonging appear both as people’s definitions of the relation between themselves and the state, and become the means through which Imbros, as an idea, is appropriated and governed.

The narrators, while constituting their own story on the island, and making sense of the events (both for the listener and for themselves), also position themselves and others in the story along the way. I believe that studying narratives of belonging in Imbros, the process of narration and the functioning of those narratives in the present as instances of self-formation/transformation, enabling imaginations of today and tomorrow can help me look at the issue of “identification” for the Imbrian case. Hence, what I intend to do throughout the following pages would be an attempt to analyze different accounts of belonging. I will try to understand how through the appropriation of different narratives and discourses about belonging in Imbros, different forms of self-assertions become possible. During the analysis, I will be paying special attention to the different ways of talking about “me and the state,” for the question of “belonging” always emerges and is told with reference to a relationship with the state. It is this idea of belonging, mediated by an imagination of “me and the state,” by which this modern form of governmentality, or governing “through the governed” is made possible.

Belonging Through Settling

Among the state brought settlers of Imbros, the narration of the self on the island mainly emerges as a positioning of the self being subject to the state, primarily because the settlers' current presence in Imbros appears as a result of the state decision of re-settlement. The settlers tell their story of arrival in terms of being brought to the island by the state, on which they did not have much to say:

There has been a dam construction in *Isparta*, Karacaören Dam. It dislocated seven villages. Some of them went to the places they preferred. But they brought us here 97 households. They gave us house, lands. We searched a lot for other places to go, from Antalya, from İzmir, not to go to the sea, we asked from the state. But they said this place is better for us. They kind of tricked us a bit. Since our village was flooded, we were obliged to come here. We have applied to go to other places. (...) They said no. If you want to go you have to go there, if not take your expropriation money. So we had to come here. A cooperative had undertaken the task of moving us. They rent cars, trucks, wrapped us all and brought us here from Isparta. In 1984, 17th of 11th month. We came here without knowing if the house is good or bad. (...) They made a lottery for the houses before we came here, so that everybody could settle the moment we arrive. They made the lottery for the lands in here. 23 dönüms of land for everyone. They brought us here under the name of agricultural re-settlement. Mechanical agriculture, it means land that you can sow with the help of combine harvester. (...) Even if you are

not content, there is nothing to do. I used to have 80 dönüms of land back home. We used to plant pistachios, it's all gone. We are only left with the rural lands, you cannot live with it...¹

In these accounts, people who are moved, along with their lands back home are defined as beings under the disposition of the state. The state verdict related to those are posited as being inevitable and unchallengeable, for the state is equipped with the full power of the sovereign to decide and act, while those that are subject to it have limited resources. Hence, moving to Imbros becomes a consequence of the dam construction as a national state project, to which people living in the region have to be subjected. Re-settlement, no matter how unchallengeable on the decision making level, is not recounted happily on the personal level of memories. Coming to the island is usually narrated in terms of disappointment and misery. A settler from Isparta tells how they arrived the island:

We came here then, we cry, we shout. (...) Some of us fainted on the road, some of us cry shout. Even I fainted on the way. We left our home, our lands and came here. We left our place. There was no

¹ Isparta'da bir baraj yapıldı, Karacaören barajı. 7 köyü kaldırdı. Bir kısmı istediği yere gittiler. Fakat bizi 97 hane buraya getirdiler. Ev verdiler, yer verdiler. Biz çok aradık. Antalya'dan aradık, İzmir'den aradık, denize gitmeyelim şeklinde, istedik yani devletten. Ama onlar burası daha iyi dediler, sizin için yani. Biraz da bizi kandırdılar. Bizim köy su altında kaldığına göre, çaresiz geldik. Müracaat ettik, başka yerlere gidelim diye. (...) Hayır dediler. Giderseniz, oraya. Gitmezseniz, alın istimlak paranızı dediler. Mecburen geldik biz de. Getirme işini bir kooperatif aldı. Araba tuttular, kamyonlar, sardılar sarmaladılar getirdiler bizi Isparta'dan. 84'ün 11. ayın 17'sinde. Ev iyi mi kötü mü bilemeden bile, geldik bulduk. (...) Evlerin kurrasını Isparta'da gelmeden çektiler, herkes evine gelsin diye. Tarlaların kurrasını burada çektiler. Herkese 23 dönüm tarla. Tarım iskan diye getirdiler bizi. Tarımlı iskan. Makinalı tarım, biçerdöverle ekilebilir tarla, ova demek. (...) Memnun kalmasan da, çare yok. 80 dönüm tarlam vardı benim memlekette. Fıstık yapıyorduk, gitti hepsi. Anca kırsalda kaldı arazi. Onunla da geçinilmez ki...

other way, even if we didn't want to. Our home has become sea, you know...²

However, it is not only in the cases of compulsory resettlement (like from Isparta, Burdur and Eşele) that arrival to Imbros is recounted as painful stories of leaving home and moving to another place, causing grief and illness. The settlers who were moved to the island by the state on the basis of their own application also recount their arrival in similar ways. A settler from Samsun describes her experience:

They announced that fishermen's families would come here from the Black sea region. From the Blacksea, at the cooperative. My husband said, "We are enrolled but I better go and check. We will go if we like it." He came here, he liked the place, he tricked us and he brought us here. You cannot come if you don't have a family. He came back, he describes the place so beautifully, like it's this beautiful, that wonderful... He describes such a house; it's a villa, only without a swimming pool... And I dream of villas in my sleep... And we came. There is no garden, no road. It's a mess everywhere, no order... I was shocked of course. I became sick for six months. I had a brain circulation disorder. I got treatment, and then I came back.³

² O zaman geldik, ağlarız, bağırırız. (...) Yarımız yolda bayıldı, yarımız ağlar, bağırır. Ben bile yollarda bayılmışım. O kadar evimizi, yerimizi koyduk geldik. Yerimizden kalktık... İstemesek çaresi yoktu ki. Deniz oldu ya evimiz...

³ Yazı çıktı, Karadeniz Bölgesi'nden balıkçı aileler gelecektir buraya diye. Karadeniz Bölgesi'nde, kooperatifte. Eşim dedi ki, "Yazıldık buraya ama, gidip bir göreyim. Beğenirsek gidelim." Geldi, beğendi, kandırdı bizi getirdi. Aile olmadan da gelemiyorsun. Geldi, öyle bir anlatıyor ki, işte şöyle güzel, böyle güzel... Bize anlatıyor ki villa ev, bir havuzu eksik yani. Ben de rüyamda villaları görüyorum... Geldik mi? Ne bahçe belli, ne

Feelings of discontent caused by re-settlement mainly come out as the result of horrible living conditions the settlers had to face upon their arrival. The state, in these narratives, mostly personified in local authorities such as the local governor or the mayor, appears as being responsible for the misery the settlers had to experience, because of its ignorance about the actual well-being of the people it settled. A settler from Sürmene recounts how they found the houses they were promised:

Of course we didn't like it in here we wanted to go back. There was a *kaymakam* in here. He begged us, he said to our fathers, "Don't make me ashamed in front of the Rums. I am going to do whatever you want." When we came, the houses were all mud. No planking no nothing. *Kaymakam* brought wood from the store, he laid them on the ground, we made our beds on those woods, and we slept there. Then he fixed the floor of the houses. And we stayed, they gave us property, they gave land.⁴

These narratives of resettlement appear as the main point of reference for settlers to make sense of themselves and their presence in Imbros. However, settlement policy defines a relationship not only between the people and the place, but also between the people and the state. The state, being the policy maker, acts on the settlers by making decisions about their

yol belli. Pislik her taraf, düzen yok... Önce bir şok oldum tabii. 6 ay üzerine hasta oldum. Beyin damarlarımın dolaşımı bozulmuş... Tedavi oldum, geri döndüm.

⁴ Tabii biz burayı beğenmedik, sürekli geri dönmek istiyorduk. Burada bir kaymakam vardı. O bize yalvardı, babalarımıza: "Beni Rumlara karşı mahcup etmeyin, beni rezil etmeyin ben sizin istediğinizi yapacağım." Geldik ki burada evler toprakta. Döşeme falan yok, kalasları getirdi depodan kaymakam, dizdi kalasları, onların arasına yatak serdik yatık. Sonra döşeme yaptırdı evlerin altını. Sonra kaldık, mal verdiler bize, tarla verdiler.

lives and where they are going to live. Accordingly, settlers are defined as the subjects of the state, on whom it can act and govern. Nevertheless, the relationship between the people and the state as the governed and the governor is not imagined as a one-way relationship defined in terms of people being totally submitted to the state, but also of the state carrying certain responsibilities towards the people. In line with this thought, the settlers' stories of resettlement in Imbros as the accounts of unhappiness and disappointment that signify the failure of the state to meet its responsibilities, are coupled with stories of deception and swindling of the people by the state. These stories of fraud do not only refer to accounts of being brought to the island with promises that did not come true, but also signify a more general condition of state treatment of the settlers in Imbros. Among those, I would like to point out two particular narratives of deception throughout the island. I believe that these two narratives, both related to the violation of property rights of the settlers in Imbros by the state, work to establish the relationship between the self and the state on the island in a similar way based on the imaginary of "I, deceived by the state."

The first story is about the 1964 land expropriations that mainly aimed at Rum property in Imbros. A settler who came to the island in 1946 narrates the event:

They expropriated the lands of the Rums. Our lands have been expropriated too, for the State farm of Agricultural Production. For free of course. For 15 kuruş, 35 kuruş at most, per square meter. In

1965. They told us “Don’t say a word. You will be rewarded afterwards.” But only in words. Of course we didn’t say anything, so that the Rum lands will be gone, that they would give our lands back anyway... But of course they didn’t. They gave them to the newcomers. People from Isparta came here, they gave them lands from the Production Farm. Nothing for us, we were left out naked.⁵

This story, recounting the state’s winking at the settlers implies the assumption of a certain complicity between the settlers and the state, based on an opposition to the native Rums living on the island. According to this assumption, the settlers on the island believe themselves to be different than the Rum population living on the island. The state promises to return their expropriated lands as opposed those of the Rums, and the implicit approval of the anti-Rum state policy by the settlers point to the terms in which the settlers imagine their difference. However, the breaking of this alliance by the state, by not keeping its promise of rewarding the loyalty of its subjects, leads to an ambiguity in the narrator’s imaginary of national belonging and identity:

Our lands has gone like that, to the air, we are still going to be rewarded. They didn’t tell us “Well, you have come from Turkey, but you shouldn’t live like Turks in Turkey. You have to leave this place now.” They both expropriated the lands and we couldn’t see

⁵ Rumların arazileri istimlak edildi. Bizim arazilerimiz de onların arazilerinin yanında istimlak edildi, Devlet Üretim Çiftliği için. Tabii bedava. 15 kuruş, en pahalı yer 35 kuruş metrekaresi... 65’de... Bizimkilere “Siz sesinizi çıkarmayın.” dediler, “Sonradan siz mükafatlandırılacaksınız” dediler, ama laflan. Tabii biz hiç sesimizi çıkarmadık Rumların arazisi gitsin diye, nasıl olsa bizimkini bize geri verecekler diye... Ama tabii vermediler, sonradan gelenlere verdiler... Ispartalıları geldiler buraya, onlara Üretim Çiftliği’nden yer verdiler. Bize hiç bir şey yok, aynen biz öyle çıplak kaldık.

the rewards, we couldn't get them. Yet they didn't show us another state to go to... They distributed it to the ones who came afterwards. It's like we were the stepchildren. (...) Once, during the elections a Rum nominee came to me and said: "Vote for me and I will give you my house and my boat." I said: "Since my name is Ahmet and not Yiannis and I am a Turk, I would not sell you my vote." But afterwards, when ours came out like this, I regretted. I mean, we had opportunities like that, and still we did not convert. We always pursued nationalism. Where is nationalism now?⁶

Within this account, the main point of distinction, which the narrator imagines to exist between themselves (i.e. settlers) and the native Rums with regard to their relationship with the state, is told in terms of a "real child vs. step child." Hence, the deception of the settlers by the state leads to the questioning of the impured father-son relationship. Throughout the narrative, the expressions of "being the real child of the state" and "being Turkish" are used interchangeably. This imaginary relationship between the settlers and the state (which stands for the definition of Turkishness) is told in terms of a tacit pact of "reward for loyalty," which the narrator believes to be violated by the state.

⁶ *Bizim araziler de öyle gitti havaya, hala mükafatlandırılacağız, ama demediler bize ki "Yahu siz Türkiye'den geldiniz ama, artık Türk olarak yaşamamanız lazım Türkiye'de. Artık gütmeniz lazım buradan." Hem istimlak ettiler arazimizi hem de mükafatları göremedik, alamadık. Başka bir devlet de göstermediler, gidelim oraya... Bizden sonra gelenlere verdiler. Yani, sanki biz üvey çocukmuşuz gibi. (...) Seçimlerde bir kere Rum aday geldi bana dedi ki, "Oyunu bana ver, sana evimi vereceğim, teknemi vereceğim." Ben de dedim ki "Benim adım Ahmet'se, Yanni değilse, ben Türksem oyumu sana parayla satmam." Sonradan bizimkiler böyle çıkınca pişman olmadım da değil. Yani, bizim elimizde böyle fırsatlar varken bile biz dönmedik. Hep milliyetçilik güttük. Şimdi nerede milliyetçilik?*

However, within the narrative, being the victim of state deception is only reserved to the settlers in Imbros, excluding the Rums who have been subject to the same state treatment. This shows an implicit approval of the anti-Rum state policy by the narrator through a silent act of “understanding” and being a part of it, which I argue forms an essential part of the settler’s imaginary relationship between themselves and the state. Yet, the violation of this alliance does not cause the narrator to question state policy per se, but it rather leads him to question the state’s way of perceiving him. Having been made to believe that they are the real children of the state, (by being Turkish as opposed to Rum) the settler recounts angrily his memories of one of the incidents that led to an ambiguity in his belief:

Celal Bayar came here, he did not talk to any of the Turks. He only saw the Rums, the Despot. I was there on the wall; I was listening from there. Then our people sent the Mufti to Celal Bayar. Thinking that he is good with the clergy. He didn’t even look at our Mufti’s face. The Mufti came back in tears. He went down from these stairs. He was that ashamed in front of the Despot. Then he told the Rums, “You will directly contact me even for the least problem.” And he told the same to the *kaymakam* “You will not touch my dear *gavurs*.” That’s history alive; this is what we know... we heard those with our own ears. Just like that...⁷

⁷ Zaten buraya Celal Bayar da geldi, hiçbir Türklerle görüşmedi, hep Rumlarla görüştü, Despotla görüştü. Aha şu duvarın üstündeydim ben, oraya çıkmıştım, oradan dinliyordum. Sonra bizimkiler bizim müftüyü gönderdiler Celal Bayar’ın yanına. Hani din adamlarınlan iyidir diye... Bizim müftünün yüzüne bile bakmadı Celal Bayar. Müftü ağlayarak geri döndü, şu merdivenlerden aşağıya gitti. Yani o kadar mahçup oldu bir Despotun yanında. Sonra Rumlara, “En küçük şikayetinizi doğrudan doğruya bana

In the next step, the wrongdoings of the state on the island become part of a wider story about the corruption of the Turkish State in general. Within this story, corruption is defined in terms of illegality, bribery, and the favouring of some influential people by state representatives:

They expropriated our lands in the name of the State Agricultural Production Farm. With a purpose, you cannot just expropriate like that. Then, in 1984 people from Isparta came along, they gave them places from the Farm. Our places, for instance... Since we came as immigrants, it is not possible to expropriate the lands of the immigrants. Since our lands have been taken away for a reason... you know, they established a State Farm of Agricultural Production... I mean they had to give them back if they've had expropriated for that reason... says the law, the constitution... But our Turkish laws are elastic you know, they go wherever you pull them. (...) Here in Turkey, you don't say a word as long as you have the aspirin. It's like that. Even in the traffic, if you agree to pay half the amount to the officer as carrot, you don't get a ticket. It's the same thing. It's just as the name goes: TÜRKİ-YE!!!⁸

yapacaksınız” dedi. Kaymakama da aynısını, “Gavurcuklarıma ilişmeyeceğin” dedi.... Canlı tarih, işte biz bunları biliyoruz... bunları kulaklarımızla duyduk. O şekil...

⁸ Devlet Üretme Çiftliği adı altında bizim yerlerimizi istimlak ettiler. Bir gaye için, öyle başka türlü istimlak edemezsin. Sonra 84'te Ispartalıları geldi, Çiftlik'ten yer verdiler onlara. Bizim yerlerimizi mesela... Göçmen olarak geldik ya, göçmenin yeri istimlak edilemez. Bizim yerlerimiz bir gaye için, hani Devlet Üretme Çiftliği yapıldı ya... onun için istimlak edildiyse, geri iade etmeye mecburdular... kanunen, anayasaya göre... Ama bizim Türk kanunları lastiklidir, nereye çekersen oraya uzar. (...) Bizde aspirini yedin mi sesini çıkarmazsın. Öyledir. Bugün trafikte bile ceza yediğin zaman yarı yarıya parayı verdin mi polise cezayı kesmiyor, cebine atıyor adam. Aynı şey işte. Türkiye burası. Adı üstünde Türki-YE!! (Türkiye means Turkey in Turkish. Here, the suffix -ye also stands for the word “to eat” in Turkish. Through this word game, the narrator implies how corrupt the country is.)

Hence, the acts of the state on the island that disappoints the settlers find explanation in a larger narrative of the Turkish state portrayed as dishonest and deceitful. The second story on the island, which I would like to mention as leading to a similar construction of “I, deceived by the state” also draws from this idea of state corruption. The story is about a recent land takeover that concerns another group of settlement villagers in Imbros. A settler from Yenibademli narrates the event:

They’re building an airport in here. They took all our lands from one end to the other. People are left with almost nothing. They neither expropriated, nor gave another registered land. There are bits and pieces that belong to the Treasury. The constructor told us: “Plant those,” and now he left. “For now, we are going to pay for whatever you have on the land, then you either will be given money for your lands through expropriation, or we will give you new lands” he said. The *kaymakam* was also with him. The governor obliged him to help the constructor. There has been pressure from above, from some parliament members. They gave us some land now, but it has no guarantee. Yes, you plant it but... I mean they tricked us down here. They cheated us and took the lands. We are only left with one fourth of the land we were given. The *kaymakam* gave his word to bring the deeds within four months. It has been five years since then. He told the ones who went to ask for the deeds, “We didn’t give you the lands officially, we gave them as to cover the damage in the first place.” Also, there’s this rumour going on about the Treasury renting the lands they gave us to the constructor for five years. Within five

years, he would finish the construction anyway. If nobody says a word till then, nobody opposes, he would take off like that...⁹

According to this story, what happened in Imbros becomes a reflection of the general condition of Turkey where the state operates not according to the codified rules and principles, but mainly in accordance with the unrecorded silent deals on how these rules are going to be applied. The state, again personified in the figures of state authority such as the local governors and the deputies, allows its subjects to be robbed by certain people in line with this silent deal. Hence it becomes impossible to act against corruption within the system, for there remains no addressee for petitioning. Another villager from Yenibademli explains the situation:

They made this airport so that the constructor could earn money, without any other reason... That constructor is associate with Mesut Yılmaz you know. Of course... They could have just enlarged the old airport, if they wanted a longer one. All that money, all that land... gone for nothing. They didn't even expropriate the land, they took it by force. They deceived us one by one, and they took our

⁹ Havaalanı yapıyorlar buraya. Bize verdikleri tarlaların bir yanından girdiler, öbür yanından çıktılar. Milletin elinde tarla çok az kaldı. Ne istimlak ettiler, ne de ondan sonra tapulu bir yer verdiler. Hazinesinin olan kıyıda köşede yerler var. Müteahhit, "Onları ekin" dedi, sonra da gitti şimdi. "Tarladaki mahsülün parasını ödeyeceğiz. Sonra da ya tarlalarınız istimlak olacak, ya da yeni yer vereceğiz size" dedi müteahhit. Yanında da kaymakam vardı. Mecbur koymuş onun müteahhide yardım etmesini vali. Ta yukardan, milletvekillerinden baskı geliyor. Şimdi verdiler biraz tarla ama bir güvencesi yok. Ekip diktiğinle kahyon. Yani bizi gafil avladılar burada. Tavladılar, tavladılar aldılar. Verdiklerinin dörtte biri kaldı yani. Kaymakam söz verdi, 4 ayda tapuları getirttireceğim diye. 4 ay yerine 5 sene geçti. "Ne oldu?" diye gidenlere, "Biz size o araziye tapulu vermedik ki, zararı olmasın diye verdik" dedi. Bir de şöyle bir söylenti var: "Hazine, tarlası gidenlere verilen arazileri 5 seneliğine müteahhite kiralamış" diyorlar. 5 senede nasıl olsa yapar bitirir havaalanını. O zamana kadar ses çıkmazsa, itiraz olmazsa da çeker gider...

lands. Who are we going to petition? The state itself is doing this... They gave us two-three hundred millions, lands for use from somewhere else... They showed us place from the Treasury land. Land that belongs to the State Farm, I mean. Still, they say the deeds will be given. Impossible... Since the *kaymakam* is gone too, there is no way we will have the deeds.¹⁰

Within these stories of state corruption in Imbros, there emerges a distinct imaginary relationship between the people and the state, which in turn forms the basis of a relationship between the island and the people. In this sense, the discourse of being subject to the state is translated into a discourse of being victims of its corruption, thus enabling another form of imagined community on the island that wipes out certain (regional) differences between the “Turkish” settlement villagers while underlining some others. According to this, in line with the stories of corruption, the settlers on the island are imagined as being members of a unified category of state victims, from which the Rums on the island are excluded.¹¹ Membership to this community imagined through corruption, also works to define the acts of the state as just or unjust. Hence, the exclusion of the Rums from the imagined category of victims on the island both

¹⁰ *Havaalanını da boş yaptılar zaten, müteahhit para yesin diye... Mesut Yılmaz'ın ortağıdır o müteahhit. Tabii... Eski havaalanına ekleseydiler, gitseydi, madem uzun istiyordular. O kadar arazi boşuna gitti. O kadar para boşuna gitti. İstimlak etmediler bile araziye. Metazori girdiler. Bizi tek tek kandırdılar, aldılar. Şikayet etsen kime edecen... devlet kendisi yapıyor... İkiyüz üçyüz milyon para verdiler, başka yerden tapusuz yer verdiler... Hazine arazisinden yer gösterdiler. Gene yani Üretim Çifliği'nin. Daha tapuları verilecek. Tapu mapu gelmez, mümkün değil. Kaymakam gitti, daha da tapu gelmez.*

¹¹ For an elaboration of the idea of corruption as the basis of a new imagined community in the case of Istanbul and Turkey, see Nazan Üstündağ, “Ehlileştirilmiş Yoksulluğumuz, Millileştirilmiş Yolsuzluğumuz: Bir Esenyurt Hikayesi” in *Cogito*, sayı:35 – Bahar 2003.

consolidates the idea that argues for the justness of the Turkification policy in Imbros, and constructs the imagined unity of the state brought settlers on the island as anti-Rum. This, I argue, forms the basis of an idea of Turkishness as the reference of belonging in/to Imbros.

However, the Turkish settlers' idea of "us" in Imbros, which is formed through an imaginary of being the victims of state deception, does not only emerge through the exclusion of the native Rums, but also of the Kurds. According to this discourse, the position of the Kurdish settlers on the island is considered as yet another trick of the state against the Turkish settlers. Kurdish immigrants who mainly came to the island to work in TİGEM are thought as having invaded the former Rum properties, and having got well off through the black economy by taking the chance of the vague legal and political status on the island, as opposed to the Turkish settlers who were forcibly brought to the island by the state, and in the end became poorer and unhappy:

They (the Kurds) came here running and escaping, where would they find a place to stay? These places all belong to the Rums who went away from that village. They are all abandoned. They (the Kurds) didn't even pay for them, how could they buy even if they want to? With which money? But now, they all became rich. They took over the Rum properties and became rich...¹²

¹² *Yahu onlar (Kürtler) zaten kaçak göçek geldiler buraya, nereden yer bulacaklar? O köyden giden Rumların o yerler. Sahipsiz yani. Satın da almadılar, hangi parayı bulacaklar da satın alacaklar! Şimdi hepsi zengin oldu ama. Rumların yerlerine kondu kondu zengin oldu hepsi...*

By contrast, among the Kurdish settlers on the island, there prevails another imaginary of belonging in/to Imbros, mediated by an idea of being thankful to the state. In these accounts, the state does not emerge as the authority deciding on re-settlement against the wish of its subjects, but rather is imagined as the benefactor who enabled the settlers to find a job and earn a decent living. A Kurdish settler retired from TİGEM recounts why he chose to settle in Imbros:

We were farmers back in Van. We didn't own lands. I used to plant your land, his land... we couldn't manage. (...) Eşref Bey was the director of the Farm. Each time he came (to Van,) he brought back 4-5 people to work here in the farm. He used to say, anyone who wants to work, I'll put him to work. He said so... and since there was nothing to do there, no job... it was impossible to manage. Because he had to, he came here to work, he got retired, and thanks to god he came here, settled in comfort. I worked too, for I saw that there was nothing to do back in Van, I would be ruined. I came here and worked for fourteen years. I am now retired, I sit in comfort. (...) Thanks to him, we are eating bread in here. (...) I am now retired here. We are now getting our retirement salary thanks to the state, we are managing thanks to god... (...) It's good that we've come here. We are pleasant in here, thanks to God. We are very happy.¹³

¹³ Biz Van'da çiftçi idik. Çiftçilik yapıyorduk. Arazimiz yoktu. Senin tarlayı ekiyordum, onun tarlayı ekiyordum... idare olamıyordu. (...) Eşref Bey Çiftlik Müdürü idi. O geliyordu (Van'a) her seferden burada 4-5 kişi işe sokuyordu. Adamlara diyordu, kim isterse gelsin ben onu işe sokarım. Öyle deyince, e tabii orada da iş yoktu, güç yoktu... idare olamıyordu. Mecburdu, geldi burada çalıştı, emekli oldu, elhamdülillah geldi burada rahat oturdu. Ben de çalıştım, baktım burada (Van'da) işimiz yok gücümüz yok, perişan olacağım. Geldim burada çalıştım 14 sene, şimdi emekli oldum oturdum. (...) Onun (EşrefBey'in) sayesinde biz burada ekmeğe yiyoruz. (...) Emekli oldum artık, şimdi buradayım. Artık o zamandan şimdiye biz maaşımızı alıyoruz devlet sayesinde, idare

In this account of re-settlement, the main point of migration emerges not as the effect of a state policy, re-arranging its subjects' lives, regardless of their desires. As opposed to the settlement villagers on the island Kurdish settlers who came to Imbros through TİGEM recount their settlement on the island in terms of the improvement of their welfare thanks to the state. Within this story, the state appears more as a father figure, personified in the legendary ex-manager of the farm, to whom the narrators feel grateful for their current status.

The imaginary of belonging emerges from this account in terms of religion. The narrator, using the terms Turkish and Muslim interchangeably, imagines a position of Turkishness on the island by being a Muslim, and assumes his membership to this community on this basis. Hence, once more the idea of a Turkish commonality gets constructed in opposition to the Christian native Rums:

Before we came, there were very few Turks living in here. There was only one police station Turks in here, there was no other Turkey than that. (...) (They tell that) One Friday, the Hodja and the congregation were all inside mosque for the Friday prayer. During the prayer, the Rums break into the mosque. They slaughter 40 people along with the hodja, those son of daemons. All in once, they slaughter them, and then run away. There used to be only one mosque here, before we came. The central mosque. They did it before we arrived. Now,

ediyoruz elhamdülillah. (...) Geldik, iyi oldu burada. Biz buradan memnunuz Allah'a şükür. Biz burada çok memnunuz.

thanks to God, there are not much Rums here. Now it's all Turkish here thanks to God. It's all in the hands of the state thanks to God. (...) Now Turks are everywhere. Everywhere there are Turks thanks to God.¹⁴

However, for another group of Kurdish settlers living in Imbros, the main point of positioning the self on the island, of imagining belongings, emerges in a different way. This group is composed of Kurdish people who came to the island through a friend or a relative mainly because of economic reasons. These settlers, who never worked for TİGEM, mostly own small family enterprises related to construction work, currently an important source of revenue on the island. The establishment of construction work as a sector throughout the island has started off in line with the state projects related to infrastructure (such as road constructions) and housing development. Mainly in private hands, the sector keeps growing mostly because of the accelerating Rum return to Imbros, which generates a wider field of employment for the enterprises. However, at the same time this enlargement creates frictions related to the job competition within this group that leads to a black economy and mafia – like relations.

¹⁴ *Biz gelmezden çok önce az Türkler varmış burada. Bir karakol Türk var idi, o karakoldan başka Türkiye yoktu burada. (...) Bir Cuma günü hocaylan, müslümanlar beraber camiye girmişler, camide namaz kılıyordu, Cuma namazı kılıyordu. Namazın üzerine bütün Rumlar kapısı kapanınca girmiş içeriye. 40 kişiyi birden, hocayla birden kesiyorlar, zalim oğlu zalimler. Birden bir anda kesmişler hepsini, sonra kaçmışlar. Bir tek bir cami var idi burada. Merkez camisi. Biz daha gelmeden yapmışlar. Şimdi çok şükür Rumlar burada az var. Şimdi hep Türk oldu buralar elhamdülillah. Hep devletin elinde buralar şimdi elhamdülillah. (...) Şimdi her yerde Türkler var. Türkler her yerde dolu elhamdülillah.*

These settlers explain their situation on the island mostly in relation to their economic activity, told in terms of not living off (i.e. being burden to) the state. A Kurdish settler from Van, who came to the island in 1986 through a friend who was a TIGEM worker, explains his point of view:

I, myself have never demanded anything from the state till now. I still wouldn't. I even went to the doctor the other day for the first time, to get medicine. Even the doctor got surprised. He says, "Haven't you ever become sick?" So I haven't... (...) The first time I got here, I worked real hard. I used to work in one construction during the daytime, and in the nighttime I used to work in another. I used to attach window, I used to build wall... Now, thanks to God we are doing well. We established our company together with my brother, we are doing construction work. We opened our hotel the previous summer, we started tourism business...¹⁵

Throughout these accounts, narrators draw their distinction from state-brought settlers in terms of laziness vs. hardwork. While the Kurdish settlers in Imbros are portrayed as hardworking people who came to the island out of their own will to work and prosper, the state-brought settlers are described as lazy people who are used to living off the state:

¹⁵ Ben kendim şimdiye kadar devletten hiçbir talepte bulunmadım. Bulunmam da. Doktora bile daha geçen gün ilk defa gittim, ilaç almak için. Doktor bile şaşırdı, dedi ki "Sen hayatta hiç hasta olmadın mı?" Olmamışım demek ki... (...) İlk geldiğimde çok çalıştım. Gündüz başka inşaatta çalışıyordum, gece başka inşaatta çalışıyordum. Cam takıyordum, duvar yapıyordum... Şimdi, Allah'a şükür işlerimiz iyi. Şirketimizi kurduk kardeşimle, inşaat işleri yapıyoruz. Geçen sene otelimizi açtık, turizmciliğe başladık...

They've never worked those people from Isparta... They're all used to ready-made lives. Most of them live on a daily basis. They already sold all their lands and went away. (...) 90% of the Easterners who came here still work, except for the ones who got retired. They are doing construction work, agriculture, animal husbandry, something... to stand on their own feet... They came here to work in the first place you know. Why would he come if he wouldn't work?¹⁶

In this narrative, the narrator relates himself to Imbros through a discourse of labour and builds his claims about settling on the island through his hard work. In line with this imaginary of the self in relation to the island, the narrator considers himself as an islander through his maintenance of the livelihood of the island. Hence, this idea of belonging through labour both works for the narrator to relate himself to the island in terms of "living together," and to a larger imagined community of people living in Turkey, in which he includes himself as *Türkiyeli*¹⁷:

I mean as islanders we are, there are no Easterners, Westerners or Southerners. We are all mixed up with each other... and we all live together. At least I believe so anyway. I am from Gökçeada. Of course I came from Van. But if anyone asks me where I am from, I say I am from Turkey myself.¹⁸

¹⁶ *Ispartalılar hiç çalışmadı ki... Onlar alışmışlar hazırda konmaya. Çoğu günü birlik yaşıyor. Zaten çoğu yerlerini sattı gitti. (...) Buraya gelen Doğulular'ın yüzde doksanı çalışıyor. Emekli olanlar dışında. İnşaatçılık yapıyor, hayvancılık yapıyor, tarımcılık yapıyor, zeytincilik yapıyor... bir şeyler yapıyor, ayaklarının üzerinde duruyor yani... Zaten buraya çalışmaya gelmiş. Çalışmayacaksa niye gelsin ki?*

¹⁷ Being "from Turkey" instead of being "Turkish."

¹⁸ *Yani şimdi biz Ada'lı olarak, Doğu'lu, Batı'lı veya Güney'li yok. Yani hepimiz birbirimize katılmışız... ve hep birlikte yaşıyoruz. En azından ben böyle düşünüyorum.*

Another group of Kurdish narrators describe their situation of not depending on the state, as the genuine form of loyalty. Their economic independence becomes an issue of pride both by not being a burden to, and working for the state at the same time serving as evidence of their devotion to the country. A Kurdish settler from Iğdır, living in Kastro/Kaleköy talks about the people of his village, who are mostly his relatives:

There are no retired people in our village. We all work with our hands. We work all the time. We go where work is. Long live our state. We give ourselves to our state. When we came here all of our administrators took care of us. Even the governor of Çanakkale came here to ask how we are... From then on, we are here. (...) And we were not brought by the state you know, we came here ourselves, willingly.¹⁹

In this particular narrative, it is interesting to see the transformation of a discourse of loyalty to a discourse of total submission of the citizen to the state. Through this discourse of sacrificing the self for the state, there emerges the narrator's claim to the island as a piece of national land. According to this line of thought, the citizen who is most loyal to his/her state, in turn becomes entitled to call any piece of land under state control

Gökçeada'lıyım. Tabii ki Van'dan geldik. Ama "Memleket nere?" diye soran olursa ben, "Türkiye'liyim" diyorum.

¹⁹*Bizim köyde emekli yoktur. Biz hep el emeğimizle çalışırız. Boyuna çalışıyoruz. Nerede iş varsa orada çalışırız. Devletimiz var olsun yeter ki. Biz kendi şahsımızı devletimize veriyoruz. Biz buraya geldiğimiz zaman, bütün idare amirleri bize sahip çıktılar. Hatta, Çanakkale valisi köye geldi, dedi ki sizin halınız nasıldır... O günden bu güne kadar biz buradayız. (...) Ve biz devlet kanahylan da gelmedik, kendimiz isteyerek gelmişizdir.*

his/her homeland, on which s/he would have the right to exist. Loyalty, on the other hand, emerges through being the soldier of the state, meaning to guard it constantly, at the expense of one's life:

We have rights anywhere on which the red flag of crescent and star flutters. I am the child of the country. My six children, and four grandchildren have done their military services. I served myself in the military for 30 months. First the God, then virtue, and then the state. All together in the front lines. Turkish, Kurdish, Laz, Rum, Circassian, this, that... No! They all became martyrs in the front lines wearing the same battle dress. There are 8 martyrs in Cyprus. 19 martyrs in Korea only from our tribe. As my father told me, there are 17 martyrs in Çanakkale from our relatives. The country belongs to all of us. Whoever betrays this country, he will become contemptible both in this world and in the eternity. (...) Iran and Russia in the east, Syria, Iraq and the Mediterranean in the South, Greece, Bulgaria and the Aegean in the west, Black Sea and the old USSR in the North... the country with those borders... wherever on which the red flag of crescent and star flutters, it is our country, we are loyal to our country, we shall live there freely. If this country collapses, we all will. If it wasn't for the late Atatürk İsmet Karabekir Kazım Pasha field-marshal Fevzi Çakmak, we would today... there wouldn't be any religion, virtue or faith left. At that glorious time, the dress of those soldiers... at those times of hardship and scarcity from one front line to the other how many martyrs there were, thousands of them... What does it mean this is Turkish, this is Kurdish, this is Circassian, this is Arab... We end up with this mess... Thousands of people live in this building. We would all go

together if someone puts a dynamite at the base. You can go wherever you wish in this country freely... Nobody would ask you where you go. Why aren't you working? Because this is a democratic country. (...) As long as a guard is faithful to this state like a president is, no power can resist... (...) Europe is our friend during the day, in the night time it fills our shoes with scorpions. Once there was ASALA, now it's over and they brought out the PKK... why? Europe tries to overthrow this country from the inside. If we are the citizens of this country, we have to be faithful to the country no matter what religion... Turks, Kurds, Arabs, Circassians together saved this country through fighting from one front to the other. Even a handful of the soil of this land is watered with the blood of one thousand *Mehmetci*s. What is the meaning of country? (...) The country is the heaven. It is superior to the mother or the father, or faith, or virtue... (...) Which one should the state concentrate on? The foreign states or the interior? Everybody should know this. Men and women, old and young, everybody should be their own inspector. We are through today, what will happen tomorrow? (...) We all should be the guardians of the red flag with crescent and star. It has been 49 years since I've done my military service. I still recall what they taught me there. Why haven't I forgot? We should all see ourselves as soldiers, all the time. We are the children of this country. If they ask me to join the military now, I would go. (...) The soldier is the guardian of this country.²⁰

²⁰ *Kırmızı ay yıldız bayrağı nerede dalgalanırsa biz orada hak sahibiyiz. Vatanın evladıyım. Benim altı tane çocuğum, dört tane torunum askerlik yapmış. Ben kendim de 30 ay askerlik yaptım. (...) Evvel Allah'dan, sonra namus sonra devlet. El birliğiyle cepheden cepheye... Türkü Kürdü Lazı Çerkezi Rumu şudur budur... Hayır! Askeri resmi elbiseyi giydiğiyle el birliğiyle cepheden cepheye şehit oldu... Kıbrıs'ta 8 tane şehit var.*

Throughout this account, the definition of citizenship, on which the narrator lays his identity claims, emerges in terms of being the soldier of the state, meaning to guard it continually against a steady potential threat. The idea of being in constant danger also works for the trivialization of any kind of difference among the people living within the borders of Turkey, and makes it possible to imagine a national unity homogenized through the militarization of the nation. However, the possible danger is not located only outside the borders, but also within. Hence the idea of betrayal, being the worst thing that can happen to the state, is defined as any kind of separatist inclination within the nation (on the basis of religion and ethnicity) and once more consolidates the imagined national unity, based on security. And loyalty to the state, which is the basis of the idea of

Kore'de 19 tane şehit var bizim aşiretimizden. Çanakkale'de babam anlattığına göre 17 tane kendi akrabalarımızdan şehit var. Ülke hepimizin. Bu ülkeye hainlik yapan hem dünyada hem ahirette rezil olacak. (...) Doğu'da İran Rusya, Güney'de Suriye, Irak, Akdeniz, Batı'da Yunanistan, Bulgaristan, Ege denizi, Kuzeyde Karadeniz, eski Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler... hudutlar olan bu vatan... kırmızı ay yıldızlı bayrak nerede dalgalanırsa orada vatan bizim, biz vatanımıza sadakatliyiz, orada hür ve serbest yaşayacağız. Bu vatan batarsa hepimiz birden batacağız. Rahmetli Atatürk İsmet Karabekir Kazım Paşa Mareşal Fevzi Çakmak olmasaydı biz bugün... ne bizim namus kalırdı, ne din kalırdı, ne iman kalırdı... O kutlu zamanda, askerlerin elbiseleri... o katlik yokluk zamanda cepheden cepheye kaç şehit verdi, binlerce şehit var... Ne demektir bu Türktür bu Kürttür bu Çerkezdir bu Araptır... Sonunda bu pislik çıkmış ortaya... Bu binanın içinde binlerce kişi oturur. Birisi bu binanın temeline bir dinamit koysa hepimiz gideceğiz. Bu vatanda kolunu sallayarak doğuda batıda gez... Hiç kimse demez ki sana neden geziyorsun... Niye çalışmıyorsun? Çünkü bu memleket demokratik bir memlekettir. (...) Bir bekçi Cumhurbaşkanı kadar devlete sağlam sadakatli olduktan sonra hiçbir güç bu işe karşı gelemes... (...) Avrupa gündüz bize dosttur, gece pabuçlarımıza akrep dolduruyor. Bir tarihte ASALA vardı, o bitti PKK'yı çıkarttı... gaye? Avrupa bu ülkeyi içten çürütmeye çalışıyor. Biz bu ülkenin vatandaşıysak ne din olursa olsun biz bu ülkeye sadakatli olmamız gerekir, bağlı olmamız gerekir. Bu memleketi Türkü, Kürdü, Arabı, Çerkezi cepheden cepheye savaşıarak bize kazandırdılar. Bu memleketin bir avuç toprağı bin tane Mehmetciğin kaniyla sulanmıştır. Vatan demek ne demektir? (...) Vatan cennettir. Vatan anadan da üstündür, babadan da üstündür, imandan da üstündür, namustan da üstündür. (...) Devlet hangi biriyle uğraşacak? Dış devletlerle yoksa içle? Bunu herkes bilmelidir. Kadın olsa, erkek olsa, yaşlı olsa genç olsa kendi kendinin müfettişi suretiyle görmek lazım gelir. Bugün geçti, acaba yarın memlekete ne tehlike gelecek? (...) Hepimiz o kırmızı ay yıldız bayrağı beklî olmamız gerekir. 49 sene oldu ben askerlik yaptım. Hala bana askerlikte verilen dersleri unutmamışım. Neden unutmadım? Her an biz kendimizi asker görmemiz gerektir. Bu vatanın evladıyız, bu vatanın çocuğuyuz. Bugün de beni askere alsa gideceğim. (...) Asker bu vatanın bekçisidir.

citizenship, is described as total obedience to the state (and its actions) without ever questioning it:

We are faithful to our country, our nation, our service. Our statesman, the President, the Prime minister do not sleep most of the nights. They work till morning. To make sure that you sleep well in your home with your family. (...) What does the Kur'an say? Obediance to the sublime command. What is sublime command? The president. Sometimes the *kaymakam*, or the colonel is the guardian head of the country. All they do is good. They can beat us if they want to, or caress. It is up to their authority and conscience.²¹

Within this narrative, the narrator's claim of belonging to an imagined community of nationals based on loyalty (feeding from a discourse of security) also enables him to claim a certain belonging in Imbros. The narrator regards himself as an islander because he is a Turkish citizen, and this defines Imbros as Gökçeada, signifying any piece of land within the borders of the Turkish state, in which the loyal citizens of different ethnic and religious origin live together happily ever after:

Turkish citizens on the island, no matter if they are Turkish or Kurdish, or Laz, or Arab, or Persian, they all love me from my point of view. I love them too. Only they shouldn't misbehave to the red flag with crescent and star. (...) We got to know everybody

²¹ *Biz vatanımıza milletimize hizmetimize sadakatliyiz. Devlet büyüklerimiz, Cumhurbaşkanı, Başbakan çoğu geceler yatmıyorlar. Sabaha kadar çalışıyorlar. Sen çocuğunla çoluğunla evde rahat rahat uyu diye. (...) Kur'an ne der? Ulul Emre itaat. Ulul emir nedir? Cumhurbaşkanı. Yerinde Kaymakam, yerinde Kurmay Albay vatanın koruyucu başkanıdır. Onlar ne yapsa iyi yaparlar. İsterse bizi döver, isterse sever. Onun yetkisine, vicdanına bağlıdır.*

throughout the island Rums and Turks and Kurds and Circassians. At the moment we see each other, hello, hello, hi! When I go back home [İğdır] I feel strange. As if I am from another country. When I come here, to Çanakkale, as if I came to heaven. When I see the ship, as if all my relatives are in it... The Laz, the Kurd, the Turk, the Rum we all caress each other. Hello, hello... We got used to here... For 25 years we've been here... We became Çanakkale, Gökçeada, Kaleköy. (...) We forgot about the other homeland. Our homeland is here. Our graves are here.²²

Even though the flamboyance and passion of this particular account can not be generalized as a characteristic of all the Kurdish narratives on the island, I believe that it would be safe enough to say that the belonging to the island for the Kurdish settlers, happens through some kind of investment to a position of Turkishness, all corresponding to different ways of defining an essential bond that constructs citizenship. The condition of this Turkishness in Imbros while mainly building on an imagination of harmony throughout the island (that also represents some sort of homogeneity within the national borders) seems to be defined in different terms by different narratives. Accordingly, the point of reference for the claim of being an islander emerges either as religion or labour or

²² *Adanın içindeki Türk vatandaşı Türk olsa, Kürt olsa Laz olsa, Arap olsa, Acem olsa, ne olur olsa bana göre hepsinin bana sevgisi var. Ben de onlara karşı sevgiliyim. Yeter ki kırmızı ay yıldız bayrağına yan bakmasın. (...) Daha burada Rum olsa, Türk olsa, Kürt olsa, Çerkez olsa onlarla tanışmışık. Birbirimizi gördüğümüz anda merhaba, merhaba, merhaba!!! Gidince ben memlekete (İğdır'a) yabancılık çekiyorum. Sanki ben başka memlekettim. Buraya gelince, Çanakkale'ye sanki cennete geldim. Gemiye görünce, sanki tüm akrabalarım içindeymiş gibi... Laz, Kürt, Türk, Rum olsa birbirimizi kucaklıyoruz. Merhaba merhaba... Daha buraya alıştık. 25 senedir burada. (...) Biz Çanakkale, Gökçeada, Kaleköy olduk. (...) Öbür memleketi unuttuk. Memleket buralı olduk. (...) Bizim memleketimiz bura. Bizim mezarımız bura.*

loyalty. Thus, religion, labour or loyalty each in turn becomes the essence of the citizen. Within each account, citizenship becomes the main claim of belonging to the island. In turn, being an islander is equalized with being a part of that imaginary harmony, which in turn constructs Imbros with reference to the nation, a unity which one belongs to as citizen.

Another way of imagining the relationship of “me and the state” in Imbros can be traced in the narratives of the elites on the island. Throughout these narratives, the idea of Imbros stands out as a project, which the narrators discuss in terms of socio-economic, political, and cultural issues. Within these accounts, the narrators place themselves as equals to the state and conduct political or legal criticism regarding the current situation of the island. Their story of belonging to Imbros is told not in terms of their private experiences or life stories, but rather in terms of an elaboration of the economic, social, and political problems on the island that usually leads to a proposal towards the solution. A retired employee of the municipality who is currently a member of ANAP district administrative committee evaluates the current situation of Imbros:

For whatever reason, the Rums, after the battle of 74, but we didn't chase them, they just left... Perhaps they thought it might be their turn next... After the Cyprus... there was uneasiness like that. (...) After they left, this had bad effects on the island in terms of production. Turks came in their place. (...) Little by little, a Turkification has come through. Settlement villages came from Burdur, Isparta, Çanakkale and Çaykara. State granted some... well

not some but all of them lands and houses. Gave them caterpillars to cultivate. As if it would accelerate the production. But let me tell you honestly, I think it didn't do any help. (...) Actually, the ones who brought those people, when they brought them, they had to bring here people who knew about agriculture, or at least they should have been familiar with it. (...) Now, let's say you take people on top of the mountain and you put them at the centre of Istanbul. They would have difficulties, they would drown there. Settlers who were brought here have drowned as well. They haven't seen... (...) Now, when I say that they haven't seen anything like this before, it is not true to blame them. We haven't succeeded in teaching them, giving them anything. There is the district institution of agriculture; there are agriculture engineers here. According to me this was what should have been done, you should have gathered those citizens and you should have informed them about farming: "This is what happens when you do this, that is what happens if you do that." Under your control. If required, there is the vine growing station in Çanakkale, you would bring vine seedling from there, and they would plant it under you supervision. (...) There, at these times, there emerged state vacuity.²³

²³ 74 Kıbrıs savaşıdan sonra Rumlar, ne hikmetse, biz kovalamadık kendileri gittiler yalnız... Belki de hani, sıra bize mi geliyor diye düşündüler... Kıbrıs'tan sonra... Öyle bir tedirginlik oldu. (...) Gittikten sonra da tabii bu üretimde olumsuz yönde adayı etkiledi. Onların yerine, işte Türkler geldi. (...) Yavaş yavaş bir Türkleşmeye, Türkleştirmeye doğru gidildi. Burdur'dan, Isparta'dan, Çanakkale'den, Çaykara'dan iskan köyler geldi. Bunlardan bir kısmına devlet, bir kısmına değil hemen hemen hepsine toprak verdi, ev verdi. Ziraat yapsınlar diye, traktörünü verdi, ekipmanını verdi. Güya üretimde katkı olacak. Ama samimi söylüyorum, hiçbir katkıları olmadı, bana göre. (...) Ha bunu buraya getirirken zaten, getiren kişiler ya da, ziraattan anlayan, becerisi olan, bu konuda becerileri olan insanları getirmesi gerekiyordu. (...) Şimdi insanları dağın başından alıp, İstanbul'un, diyelim ki göbeğine oturtunuz. İnsan orada bocalıyacaktır, boğulacaktır. Buraya gelen, iskan gelen kişiler de burada boğuldu. Görmemiş... (...) Şimdi bunlar görmedi ya, bunları suçlamak da doğru değil. Bunlara bir şey öğretememişiz, verememişiz. İlçe Tarımı var, burada ziraat mühendisleri var. Bana göre yapılması

I believe that the most striking thing about this account emerges as the way the narrator addresses the state in terms of “us.” He describes the current situation of Imbros as a failure of the state that led to the ruining of the island in economic terms. Throughout the account, the narrator imagines the position of the state on the island as one of a project maker and educator who should have performed better. However, as opposed to the critical position of the Turkish settlers through a discourse of corruption, the narrator, appropriating himself a sovereign’s point of view, imagines himself not among the governed subjects but as a candidate governor who diagnoses the problems of the island and proposes solutions for them:

People must be educated in terms of tourism; they should be educated in terms of agriculture. Educate, educate... But I do believe that a lot of things will be better in time; that people would be conscious. Now that a junior college has opened up on the island, it would help the education of the people of the island. (...) However, if people here would be educated through the principles of the state by the people it would appoint, if the departments of the junior college would multiply, if a branch of the 18th of March University would be established here, I believe that it would do huge contributions to the island. In both material and spiritual terms.²⁴

gereken şeydu, o vatandaşları toplayacaksınız, bunlara ziraat konusunda bilgi vereceksiniz: “Bunlar yapılırsa böyle olur, şöyle yapılırsa bu olur.” Sizin kontrolünüz altında. Gerekirse, Çanakkale’de bağcılık ve kovukculuk istasyonu var oradan bağ çubuğu getireceksiniz, asma getireceksiniz, sizin nezaretinizde dikecekler. (...) Buralarda işte devletin boşluğu meydana çıktı.

²⁴ *İnsanları turizm yönünden eğitmek gerekir, insanları tarım yönünden eğitmek gerekir. Eğitmek eğitmek. Ama ben inanıyorum zaman içerisinde birçok şeyin düzeleceğine, insanların bilinçli olacağına. Şimdi Gökçeada’da yüksekokul açıldı, onların ada halkının*

In general, stories of the self, told in Imbros among settlers are constructed through an idea of belonging to an imagined community. This imagined community always appears as mediated by an imaginary relationship to the state, composed of certain rights and duties. Within the Turkish settlers' stories of belonging to Imbros, the community to which they claim membership is imagined through a common status of being the victim to the state deception. Throughout these narratives, the idea of a corrupt state that treats its "real children" the same as the Rums produces a discursive ambiguity in the settlers' perception of themselves as Turkish. On the other hand, throughout the narratives of the Kurdish settlers' making sense of themselves on the island, the claim is made to an imagined national unity of Turkishness, based on an idea of harmony, and loyalty towards the state. Yet at the level of performance, the Turkish settlers continue to reproduce the nationalism that they seem to doubt, by not voting for a Rum candidate through a motto like:

There can never ever be friend from a *gavur* (infidel) and coat from a pig... They would always look for the place where you fall.²⁵

As for the Kurdish case, by claiming to be an islander with reference to a national unity, settlers conduct business on the island, and occupy the in-between positions within the society both in economic and social terms.

eğitimine katkıları olacaktır. (...) Ama, devletin kuracağı prensiplerle ve de tayin edeceği kişilerle buradaki insanlar eğitilirse, yüksekokulun bölümleri çoğalırsa, 18 Mart Üniversitesi'nin bir kolu buraya gelirse, ben adaya çok büyük katkıların olacağına kesinlikle inanıyorum. Gerek maddi yönden, gerek manevi yönden.

²⁵ Hiçbir zaman için gavurdan dost, domuzdan post olmaz... İlla ki senin düştüğün yeri ararlar.

Being the only group throughout the island whose socio-economic status is not clearly defined by the state, they engage with the state and with daily life in a strategic ambiguity and become the actors of the black economy.

However, in the end, both of these imaginaries work for a certain assumption of a subject position on the island as "the governed." While the Turkish settlers' assumption emerges as a discursive ambiguity related to their Turkishness (yet in the end reconstituting it,) the Kurdish settlers assume their subject position in line with a certain investment into a discourse of being somehow Turkish. Finally, both of these subject positions draw from an imaginary national standpoint in which the narrators include themselves, and become the means through which the settlers appropriate the island, and lay their claims to it.

By contrast, in the elite narrative of relationship with Imbros, the assumed subject position emerges closer to the sovereign status rather than the governed. Elites of the island, narrating their story of Imbros with a claim to an objective standpoint that enables them to make an analysis of the island and talk about its problems, define the island as a project on which they can argue and decide.

All of these discourses amount to a certain view of citizenship, one in which the citizen is the recipient of the benevolence of a just authority. As long as justice, here in the sense of welfare, is received by whatever means, neither the status of the sovereign, nor the status of the self is put

into question. The elites' role here thus becomes one of the enlightened advisor that points to the modern, technical ways in which this welfare (and thus justice) can be actualised.

Belonging Through Authenticity

The native Rums' imaginary of belonging in Imbros appear to be quite different from that of the settlers'. Within this imaginary, the idea of belonging does not emerge primarily through an idea of a relationship between the self and the state. On the contrary, the idea of belonging in Imbros, for the native Rums, emerges in more intimate terms such as remembering, feeling, loving, and knowing by heart, all of which work to address the island as "the homeland." The relationship between the island and the self is imagined as something natural and essential. A Rum islander who left the island with his parents when he was very young, and came back after a long time describes the way he feels about his relationship to Imbros:

My relationship to the island is something natural. If I like it or not, I am an islander since the day I was born. I love its wind, its smell, its stone, its everything...²⁶

The idea of belonging in Imbros, even though the narrator has not spent most of his/her life on the island, is imagined as an idea of belonging that

²⁶ *Adayla bağım tabii bir şeydir. İstesem de istemesem de, doğduğum günden beri adalıyım. Rüzgarını severim, kokusunu severim, taşını severim, her şeyini...*

is often told in terms of an ancestral and autochthonous relationship with the island. At the outset, Rums tell their story of belonging to the island through the stories of their parents and grandparents and their grandparents' parents who were born and raised, and died in Imbros. Another Rum islander who was born in Imbros, educated in Istanbul, and left Turkey as she graduated, tells her belonging to the island through the history of her family house:

Here! In this house! My mother was born here, my grandmother was born in this house, my grandmother's mother here, my other grandmother's mother, too, here. This is a very very old house. Look, see how old its side parts are.²⁷

The Rum narratives of the island are usually told in terms of life stories, of the memories of old times as if one can trace them through their marks on the whole existence of the narrator. At the same time, they construct Imbros as a place where all these memories and lives are inscribed. Hence, at some point, relating one's self to Imbros turns from the claims of belonging to the island through remembrance, to claims of the island's belonging to the people who remember it. Accordingly, the narratives of "me and the state" turn out to be quite different than those of the settlers' throughout the island. Within these narratives, the idea of the state appears in terms of an interruption of the belonging of the Rums to Imbros. This interruption refers mainly to the policies of Turkification that had

²⁷ *Burada! Bu evde! Annem burada doğdu, anneannem bu evde doğdu, anneannemin annesi burada, öbür anneannemin annesi yine burada. Çok çok eski bir ev. Na bak, yan tarafa gör ne kadar eski.*

significant effects on the island. This is why, as opposed to the settlers' imaginaries of "me and the state," Rum imaginaries of the self as the governed do not emerge as imaginaries enabling the belonging of the self to the island.

However, not all the narratives of "me and the state" are told similarly among the Rum islanders. The imagined relationship of me and the state, and the way it is talked about (especially to a total stranger with a tape recorder in her hand) differs quite strongly between the older Rums who stayed on the island and still live there, and the younger islanders who fled to other places and now come back to the island for a visit during the time of festivals. In this part of the thesis, I will look at the Rum narratives of belonging on the island of Imbros, and the way they are imagined through the stories of "me and the state." While in the returnees' narratives, the idea of the state emerges as a hindrance (or an intrusion) to the belonging of the self to the island, throughout the narratives of the remaining Rums in Imbros, the idea of the state emerges as personified in the appointed local administrators, soldiers and teachers with whom they have good memories of living together.

Coming back to Imbros is usually told in terms of contradictory feelings. In the stories of making sense of coming back to the island, Imbros, with the trauma it signifies, comes out as a burden. A narrator describes what the island means to her, and why she comes back every summer:

I go for one or two days in the summer, I go to the other places for one or two days in the winter. But for a holiday, I don't go to any place for 10, 15 days. I come here. My head!!! Of course... I could have gone other places. Walking back and forth, I come here again. Every year, I say that this year was the last, I won't come next year. Since what I do is not a holiday, I get tired here, I don't rest. But still I come here. I get in a lot of trouble, two-day trip... Also, clean this house, repair it. We repair it every year... We strive. I don't even rest... But still I come here. Why? Ah ah ah... Those memories. Those childhood years, we always remember. Always when I and my brother chat, "Do you remember, we had a neighbor, we were doing those, it was like that..." We don't forget... Photographs of here even in our house in Athens. This big photographs, particularly in our bedrooms. Of the villages, of the island... We always carry this island on our shoulders.²⁸

For the returnees, belonging to Imbros and thinking about this belonging is a passionate issue, and coming back every summer is a desire full of contradictions. This paradoxical feeling about returning to the island can be traced in most of the narratives. Another returnee explains his feelings on this matter as "weird":

²⁸ Yazın bir iki günlüğüne gidiyorum, kışın bir iki günlüğüne gidiyorum başka yerlere. Ama tatil için, 10 gün 15 gün öyle bir yere gittiğim yok. Buraya geliyorum. Kafamdan!!! Tabii... Başka yerlere de gidebilirdim. Ben dönüyorum dönüyorum yine buraya geliyorum. Her sene de diyorum bu sene sondu, gelecek sene gelmeyeceğim. Çünkü bu yaptığım tatil değil, burada yoruluyorum, tatil yapmıyorum. Ama yine de buraya geliyorum. O kadar eziyet çekiyorum, iki gün yolculuk... Ayrıca bu evi temizle, tamir et. Her sene tamir ediyoruz... Uğraşıyoruz. Ben hiç dinlenmiyorum ki... Ama yine de buraya geliyorum. Niye? Ah ah ah... O anılar... O çocukluk yılları, hep aklımızda. Hep kardeşimle konuştuğumuzda, hatırlıyor musun, bir komşumuz vardı, şunları yapıyorduk, şöyleydi ... unutmuyoruz... Atina'daki evimizde bile buranın fotoğrafları. Hele odalarımızda bu kadar fotoğraflar. Köylerden, adadan... Devamlı sırtımızda taşıyoruz bu adayı...

Each year, before I go back to Greece, I promise myself that this would be the last time that I come to the island. We come here to celebrate our festival. We come here and see our old villages ruined. We see our homes occupied by strangers. We come here to see that everything we remember about our island has been destroyed. And what do we do? We dance and celebrate. Instead of mourning and crying for what we have lost, we sing. Look at this place. It's a mess. Most of the people who spend the summer on the island stay in an old village house literally packed with lots of relatives, which is not comfortable at all. The houses are very small and they need serious renovation. Their bathrooms are outside. These are nowhere near the conditions we live in Greece. What is the meaning of holiday? One wants to rest, no? This is not holiday. But each year, when the summer gets closer, we find ourselves thinking about Imbros. We can't wait to come back. I don't know. Something draws us here.

Seeing the island as "in ruins" causes grief among the returnees. It makes those who lived the bad days remember them, and the others to picture what it was like. In both, coming back to the island is a matter of dealing with (and making sense of) the past, and the present sense of self both on the island and in Greece.²⁹ An islander describes how he found the island when he first came back:

It was an unbelievable situation. How I left, how I found... Here was a place full of life. Everywhere was enclosed by barbed wires,

²⁹ Tsimouris, in his article shows how "Imbriannes" becomes a basis of identity also for the Imbros origin people living in Greece. The Imbrian Association plays a central part in the maintenance of this identity by publishing periodicals, organizing gatherings and events to keep people together, and in touch. (Tsimouris 2001)

soldiers here, gendarmes there... This island has been swept away by merciless, brutal men. I was hearing what was going on. I had to find strenght in myself to come to see. (...) I went to talk to ex-prisoners, they, too, confessed. One of them even cried, told us how they were being provoked against us. Those, who confessed were very brave men.³⁰

Hence, coming back to the island, and seeing it ruined and all wiped out is described as a traumatic event in itself. Then why come back? In most of the narratives, the answer to this question is told in terms of the feelings of belonging to the island and being drawn to the soil in some metaphysical way. However, among the narratives, another explanation still related to the issue of belonging arises. The General Secretary of the Imbrian Association in Athens explains why they are trying to convince more Imbrians living in Athens to come back in the summer:

We are trying to convince our people to go back to the island. We say "Come back, it's your land!" We are trying to make things better so that more people will come back every summer. Older people say: "How can you go back after what they did to us?" They are afraid. But the young ones want to come because it is our place.

³⁰ İnanılmaz bir durumdu. Nasıl bıraktım, nasıl buldum... Burası çok canlı bir yerdi. Her taraf dikenli tel olmuş, burası asker, orası jandarma... Canı, vahşi adamlar tarafından silip süpürüldü bu ada. İştiiyordum neler olduğunu. Gelip bakmak için güç toplamam gerekti. (...) Gidip eski mahkûmlarla da konuştum, onlar da itiraf ettiler. Hatta bir tanesi ağladı, anlattı nasıl zehirliyorlardı onları, bize karşı. İtiraf edenler çok cesur adamlardı.

Thus, for the younger Imbrians living in other parts of the world, returning to Imbros signifies a claim related to belonging. Coming back to Imbros in the summer means to make a claim about their past and present ownership of the island, a claim that refers to an ongoing argument of the returnees with the Turkish state. Visiting the island every summer, celebrating *Panayia* and going to court to contest the recent cadastral survey that caused the nationalization of most unclaimed Rum properties throughout the island requires showing presence on the island, not leaving it behind, deserted, dead, ruined. Some of the Rums describe their return to the island in terms of a mission. A Rum islander who left Imbros to study in Istanbul, and moved back to the island after 38 years explains his reasons for moving back:

... In fact, my parents were still living here. Both of them were elderly. My father died in the age of 70. My mother was alive, very clever and agile... she had goats, a garden. She had a garden, which could feed two families. She used to go there every day. She used to fill them up in sacks, although she used to eat like a bird. On the way home, she used to distribute them lavishly. I used to visit regularly, to take care of mother. I used to come at least 7-8, 10 times in a year. I used to come approximately once a month, stay a little more in summers. When my mother died, believe me my girl, a voice inside of me said that you had to take the task. I thought that up till now my mother has carried the flag of your house, now it is your turn. Ancestors were calling, soil was calling... I had so many problems in Istanbul, 90 percent of my dreams was taking place here. I said, That's it. Since I didn't have any child at that time... In 96, my idea

to return had already clarified. (...) And I came this way. I came here, habitually I can't stand without doing anything, I must do something. My intention was to revive the village, because in 93-94 I repaired the family home, everybody thought I was crazy. "Why are you spending money? They'll soon take it over." I said "I will do it anyway." When I did, they saw that nothing happened. In the past they used to prevent me, due to this or that... Now we have a magazine in Athens, I wrote an article there. Look here, move and come... See, nothing happened to me. Conditions changed, mentalities changed. They started to come little by little. I think in 94, there happened a sudden flow of people... After my article, 2000 people from us came to the island. Now, everybody came, everybody goes to her/his own house. Everybody here got surprised, the administratives got surprised. *Kaymakam*, being surprised, asks me: "Do these people come to stay?" They came here, to the center, one of them buys a refrigerator, another one buys a bed... everybody got surprised. Both frightened and pleased. They say "these people will come, what will our position be if these people come?" On the other hand, these people consume everything in the shops. Do you understand? In that sense, it was a start. I said come on, people will come, there wasn't any place to stay. Let me open a pension... But then, these people will want breakfast... Let me open a small restaurant... Then we became a restaurant owner, then a tavern owner, now everybody knows us... Now I employ 7 people near me. The village got revived. I don't mean to boast, but I think I have made the start. It seems to me that probably I have made the start for the island too, since everybody was fearing... This is my honor. It seems to me that I undertook a mission and this mission became

quite successful. It should be others who should appreciate it rather than me.³¹

Undertaking the “revival” of the island, as a mission also appears in similar terms in the account of a narrator from another village in Imbros:

My aim is... I am trying to revive this island as much as I can, and I have revived it. Otherwise, it would be barren. Nobody from the real people of this island would have set foot here. In fact, the real people of this island revive the economy here. Retailers wait for this month to come.³²

³¹ ... Zaten annem babam kalmıştı burada. İkisi de yaşlıydı. Babam vefat etti 70 senesinde. Annem yaşıyor, cin gibi... Keçisi var, bahçesi var. Bir bahçesi var, iki aileyi doyuracak kadar ekiyordu. Her gün giderdi. Torbalara dolduruyordu, zaten kendisi bir kuş kadar yemek yiyordu. Eve gidene kadar dağıtıyordu. Ben gidip geliyordum, anneye bakıyordum. Senede en azından 7-8 defa, 10 defa geliyordum. Aşağı yukarı ayda bir geliyordum, yazları biraz fazla kalıyordum. Annem vefat edince, inanırmısın kızım, içimden bir ses dedi ki, bayrağı sen alman gerekir. Şimdiye kadar evinin bayrağını annen taşıdı, bundan sonra sen alman gerekir diye düşündüm. Atalar çekişiyordu, toprak çekişiyordu... Bu kadar problemim vardı İstanbul'da, yüzde doksan rüyalarım hep burada geçiyordu. Dedim, bu iş buraya kadar. O zaman çocuk da olmadığı için... 96'da, Geri dönme düşüncem iyice netleşmişti. (...) Ve o şekilde geldim. Buraya geldim, tabii oturamam, bir şeyler yapmam lazım. Benim derdim köyü canlandırmaktı, çünkü 93'te 94'te, ben baba evini tamir ettim, herkes, bana deli dedi. “Ne para harcıyorsun? Yarın öbür gün alılar.” “Ben yapacağım” dedim. Yapınca, baktılar bir şey olmuyor. Eskiden engelliyorlardı, şusu busu... Bu sefer bizim bir dergimiz var Atina'da, tuttum bir yazı yazdım. Yahu, kalkın gelin... Bakın bana bir şey olmadı. Şartlar değişti, zihniyetler değişti. Ufak ufak başladılar gelmeye. 94'te mi ne bir akın oldu... 2000 kişi bizimkilerden geldi, benim yazımdan sonra. Şimdi herkes geldi, herkes kendi evine gidiyor. Buradakiler şaşırdı, idare şaşırdı. Kaymakam şaşırdı bana soruyor: “Bu gelen insanlar kalmaya mı geldi?” diye... Merkeze, buraya geldiler, biri buzdolabı alıyor, biri yatak alıyor... herkes şaşırdı. Hem ürküdü, hem sevindi. Çünkü, diyor “Bunlar gelecek, bunlar gelirse bizim pozisyonumuz ne olacak?” Bir taraftan, bu adamlar her şeyi silip süpürüyorlar dükkanlardan. Anladın mı? O şekilde bir başlangıç yapıldı falan. Haydi dedim, insanlar gelecek, yer yoktu. Bir pansiyon kurayım. Sonra e bu adamlar kahvaltı isteyecek... Hadi bir küçük lokantacık yapayım... Ondan sonra lokantacı olduk, sonra tavernacı, şimdi herkes tanıyor bizi... Şimdi 7 kişi çalışıyor. Köy canlandı. Övünmek gibi olmasın ama, galiba ben başlatmışımdır. Ada için de ben başlatmışım gibi geliyor bana çünkü herkes ürküyordu... Benim gururum bu. Ben bir misyon üstlenmişim ve bu misyon biraz başarılı olmuş gibi geliyor bana. Takdir başkalarınındır, benim değil.

³² Benim gayretim, elimden geldiği kadar bu adayı canlandırmaya gayret ediyorum ve canlandırdım da. Yoksa bitmişti. Bu adanın esas halkından kimse buraya ayak basmazdı. Zaten buranın ekonomisini bu adanın esas halkı canlandırıyor. Esnaf bu ayı bekler.

Coming back to the island represents a mission undertaken against the “death” of the island caused by the Rum exodus. Therefore it clearly represents an action, which positions the returnees and the Turkish state (that is responsible for the exodus) in opposition to each other. In most of the returnees’ narratives, the state, embodied in certain institutions such as the municipality, the police, the gendarmerie, and the court is considered to be a threat or an obstacle to actualizing and performing the narrators’ belonging to the island in very practical terms. An islander who left a long time ago tells of his first return to Imbros:

My first arrival was terrible. Everywhere was horrible. In order to come here you had to go to Çanakkale, make a petition, your passport be seized. The permission was given 15 minutes before the ship departs. Later, when you arrive here, to the seaport, oh my God!!! Soldiers... whatever you want, gendarmerie. If one would come as a tourist, though they wouldn’t come at that time, s/he would get afraid. S/he would say what a disgrace. Afterwards, (soldiers) used to come, as do marching feet, take your passport, and that stupid envelope too, to the Center. From the Center to the gendarmerie, then he used to tell you that he gives you permission for five days, to stay...³³

³³ İlk gelişim korkunçtu. Her taraf perişandı. Buraya gelmek için Çanakkale’ye gidecektin, dilekçe verecektin, pasaport alıkonulacaktı. Geminin kalkmasına 15 dk kala izin gelirdi. Sonra burada limana geldiğinde, vay efendim asker... ne istersen, jandarma. İnsan turist olarak gelseydi, ki o zamanlar gelmiyordu, korkardı. Derdi ki ne bu rezalet. Ondan sonra, rap rap rap gelirdi, pasaportu alırdı, o salak zarfı da, Merkez’e. Merkez’den jandarma karakoluna, ondan sonra da sana derdi ki sana beş gün izin veriyorum, durmana...

In this account, the state emerges at the moment of the regulation of the relationship between the island and the narrator. It describes the basic point of ratification (entrance to the island) of the relationship between the narrator and the island. However, state intervention to the Rum ideas and practices of belonging does not arise only at the moment of entrance to the island, but it also becomes visible during the definition of the terms of existence on the island once one enters. One very specific moment related to this is about the dispute between the returning Rums and the local government about the legal status of the deserted Rum properties in Imbros. I claim that at the core of this very significant problem lies the local government's approach to the basis of proprietorship and belonging in Imbros. The form of governmentality in Imbros does not recognize the returnees' claims to their ancestors' properties (hence to the island) that are based on pre-national, local forms of belonging. These claims mainly refer to lawsuits for the return of the legal titles of the old Rum houses to their inheritors. These cases are referred to in almost all Rum narratives of belonging in Imbros. A native Rum who now lives in Greece, explains the situation:

Anyway, there is the cadastral office now. Things got complicated. Except for our houses, everything we have belongs to the Treasury. I asked to the lawyer, he wants too much money for 12 acres of land, and cash in advance. That can't happen in any other place!!! Too much money, far too much money he wants. If I attempt to sell those lands, they wouldn't even cost that much. (...) My uncle came (during the cadastral survey) and had everywhere measured. But we

didn't have a title deed. Okay, say we don't have a title deed. They didn't consider naked possession as valid. They didn't even regard naked possession. It was their mistake, but it was we who suffered. They don't correct it. They should at least say, "Yes, it is our mistake." Last year, they (cadastral team) were imprisoned but nothing has changed. (...) Okay, there might be a mistake but they should correct it... Now they tell us to go to the lawyer, go to the lawyer... (...) Never mind the money, but if you give that money to the lawyer, it will be like re-buying your own land. And those lands were left to me from my grandfather, from even older times. We didn't even buy them; we found them. And if we give that money now, we will be buying our own lands.³⁴

I believe that this account is a good example of the current situation on the island best described in terms of an opposition between the Turkish nation state and the Rum locality. In line with this thought, while the cadastral survey is itself a typical mechanism of state ratification over property (thus belonging) on the island, the dismissal of naked possession (based on local information) in forming a basis for the constitution of legal titles of properties can be regarded as one of the best examples of the opposition of state versus locality based on claims of the native belonging throughout the

³⁴ *Zaten şimdi Kadastro da var. İşler karıştı. Evlerimiz hariç her yerlerimiz Hazine'nin elinde. Avukata sordum 12 parça yer için kaçbin dolar istiyor, hem de peşin. Bu hiçbir yerde olmaz!!! Çok para, çok çok istiyorlar. Ben o yerleri satmaya kalksam, o kadar etmez. (...) Dayım geldi (kadastro geçerken,) ölçtürdü her yeri. Ama tapumuz yoktu. Tamam, de ki tapu yok. Zilyetliği de saymadılar. Zilyetliği bile saymadılar. Onların yanlıştydı ama olan bize oldu... Düzeltmiyorlar da. Desinler ki "Evet yanlışımız oldu." Geçen sene onları (kadastro ekibini) hapse soktular ama bir şey de yapmadılar. (...) Tamam, yanlış olmuş olabilir ama düzeltsinler o zaman... Şimdi bize avukata başvur, avukata başvur... (...) Hayır, bırak parayı, şu an o avukata o parayı verirsen kendi yerini satın almış gibi oluyorsun. Ve o yerler dedemden, daha eskilerden kalma. Satın bile almadık, bulduk. Ve şu an o parayı verirsek kendi yerlerimizi satın almış olacağız.*

island. However, the main point the narrator underlines within the account is related to a situation of being obliged to buy your own house from the state in order to become its legal owner. From another point of view, this means that one has to go through the law (i.e. the court) to be a recognized proprietor of his/her house. Nevertheless, this recognition works through certain stipulations such as citizenship. Thus, no matter how strong his/her claims to the island in terms of ancestry or remembering are, no Rum islander who is not a citizen can officially become the legal owner of his/her family property. Citizenship is defined as the only recognized official form of belonging as opposed to Rum imaginaries of belonging based on primordial ties and being a native. This requires the Rums, who want to pursue their claims in Imbros officially (i.e. in the court, or the deed office, or the municipality,) to translate their imaginary of belonging that of being a native, to that of citizenship, which stands out as the recognized form of the relationship between “me and the state.”³⁵

For most of the Rum returnees of Imbros, claiming recognition of their native rights of belonging happens through the citation of the Lausanne

³⁵ At this point I would like to point out the similarity of the Rums in Imbros with other indigenous people (like Indians and Aborigines) within settler societies (such as the United States or Australia) in terms of their “native land claims.” These claims mainly refer to the arguments related to the territorial native rights on the lands, which at the time of colonial settlements were referred to as “terra nullius” (i.e. no man’s land). These arguments, mainly taking place around the state’s recognition of the natives’ claims of their rights related to their homelands, stand close to the arguments about Rum belonging in Imbros. Just like it is in Imbros, recognition of the indigenous peoples’ claims requires the articulation of those claims within the legitimate terms, and refers to “being drawn into playing out the conditions and limits of multicultural law in late modern societies” (Povinelli 1998, 1999, 2002). However, issues related to native rights and autochthonous land claims indicate a very important field that has not yet addressed in Turkey. In that sense, this thesis may be seen as an initial attempt to start thinking about these concepts and their practices in the Turkish context.

Treaty that stands as the basis of their legal status on the island. A returnee explains this status:

In 23, the Lausanne Treaty was signed. According to the 14th clause that is about Imbros, the administration of the island was going to be autonomous, and the people were going to be subject to the minority status. To those 38th and 40th clauses. But it wasn't put into practice. It has never been practiced. Besides that, in 1927, when the law nr. 1151 (which is about the autonomous administration of the island) was passed, prominent people of the two islands have applied to the state to establish an administration as such. You want to establish an administration, collect them, send them to exile, to Anatolia... And things have remained that way.³⁶

Although the articulation of the counter claims of the Rums regarding the valid form of belonging in Imbros does not draw directly from citizenship, it still stands on an idea of a legal relation that binds the state and defines the relation of the Rum to the state as one of a minority status, which is of course a way of recognizing native claims. Within this discourse, the anti-Rum policies of the Turkish state that led to the Rum exodus from the island (the land expropriations and education policies) are defined as being against the law. Another islander who went to Istanbul when she was a

³⁶ 23'te Lozan Antlaşması imzalandı. İmroz'la ilgili olan 14. maddesine göre ada hem özerk yönetilecekti, hem ahali azınlık statüsüne tabi olacaktı. O 38 ila 40. maddelere. Ama işte tatbik edilmedi. Hiç hiç uygulanmadı. Hatta 27'de (adanın özerk yönetimiyle ilgili) 1151 kanunu çıkınca buradan iki adanın da ileri gelenleri müracaat etmişler devlete, biz böyle bir yönetim kurabilir miyiz diye... Yönetim mi kuracaksınız, toparla onları, sürgün, Anadolu'ya... Ve o şekilde kaldı.

young girl, got married to a Turkish man, and still lives there, talks about the land expropriations in Imbros:

Even though these places are not expropriated, they are still writing them to the Treasury. State expropriates. Why does it take? To do something. Okay, all right. I don't have any objection to that, I can't say anything about it. A road was going to be built, so it was expropriated. But these ones are not expropriation... From Kefalos road to Eşelek village??? What is the relevance? How can you take my property away from me? With what right? Biga, they say became homeless, I am going to build houses... Are you going to do that by taking away my property? Is it called expropriation? Expropriation as far as I know, (means that) the state is going to build something. Something important. A road? An hospital? Or, something else, something very crucial for the state? Will the state build something that everybody, all of the people will benefit from? That is called expropriation. And under the condition of paying a reasonable price in return. Take those villages built in Dereköy. They were all our lands. You take my own land from me, build houses for others... What kind of a law is this? I don't understand. Above all, It is my land... I can sell it if I like or keep it, or just watch it... I don't know... Probably this is a special law for Imbros, a new law... (...) I don't call it expropriation, I call it taking away by force. When do people go mad? They go mad when the state doesn't pay. Cadastral survey was carried out, just because they felt like that they registered under the

Treasury. What does the Treasury refer to? The state. That is not expropriation...³⁷

Here, the main point of criticism towards the Turkish state's expropriation policy lies in the idea of the violation of the rule of law. Hence, the Rums redefine what has happened in Imbros in line with the Turkification policy as the defiance of the law by the state. In this case, the issue goes beyond the legally binding minority rights provided by the Lausanne Treaty, and gets defined as a contravention of Turkish coded law. Hence, the expropriation policy in Imbros is not defined as a positive act of the Turkish state acting within the rights of the sovereign, but as a deviation from implementing this sovereignty. What is challenged in the narrative is not Turkish sovereignty over Imbros or the expropriation law per se, but the illegitimate way that sovereignty is exercised in this particular place. An islander talks about a trial currently in court, related to her family house:

Six years we are in the court, they don't give us the title! I want to have the titles! To know that I have something... Because the house,

³⁷ *Buralar istimlak olmamış ama, hazineye yazıyorlar. İstimlak olanı devlet alıyor. Ne için alıyor? Bir şey yapmak için. Tamam, tamam. Ona ses yok, ona bir şey diyemem. Sonuçta yol geçecekti buradan, istimlak oldu. Ama bunlara istimlak denmez ki... Şimdi Kefalos yolundan Eşelek köyüne istimlak mı oluyor??? Ne alaka? Sen nasıl benim elimden yerimi alıyorsun? Ne hakla? Biga, efendim evsiz kalmış, ev yapacağım... Benim yerimi alarak mı yapacaksın onu? O, istimlak mı diyor ona? Benim bildiğim istimlak, devlet bir şey yapacak. Önemli bir şey. Yol mu? Hastane mi? Veya başka, devlete çok önemli bir şey mi yapacak? Herkesin, bütün insanların yararlanacağı bir şey mi yapacak? O istimlak. Onun da bir karşılığını ödemek şartıyla. Dereköy'de yapılan köyler. Hep bizim yerlerimizdi oralar. Sen benim elimden yerimi al, başkasına ev yap... Böyle nasıl bir kanun bu? Ben anlamıyorum. Sonuçta benim yerim ya... İstar satarım, ister tutarım, ister karşısına geçip seyrederim... Bilemiyorum... Bu Gökçeada'ya ait bir kanun herhalde, yeni bir kanun... (...) Ona ben istimlak demiyorum, zorla elinden almak diyorum. İnsanlar ne zaman feveran eder? Devlet ödemediği zaman feveran eder. Kadastro geçti, canları istedi, hazineye yazdılar. Hazine ne demek? Devlet. O istimlak değil ki...*

the lands... they were all taken for national reasons! I don't have anything in my hand. We had almond trees, grapes, apricots... I want at least this [house] to belong to me. I said to the *kaymakam*, "I want my father's house back. You took it for national reasons; you don't do anything with it. I want it back." He says, "How much do you pay?" I said, "What?! To buy my father's house from you?! No way!!! I'll go to the court in Strasbourg. I have plans like that, to go to the international court... I am so mad at what they did. I am not talking of the 14 acres of land they got from me. They took it and they gave it to *Çiftlik*. They say they needed the land. I am not going to fight for that, although when the place was my father's, we had trees... plenty... It was a paradise. Now it's barren! But I can't do anything about it. For that, I won't dare to talk. They took it for national reasons; it's some administrative matter. Whatever is taken for national reasons, I cannot say anything about it. But the house!!!

Here, again the reference of the argument is to an idea of justice and legitimacy in the application of the law. Within the narrative, "national reasons," as an idea, representing the rights of the sovereign is not questioned. It is understood, although not approved. The real disagreement is about the definition of what counts as "national reasons." Hence, once more Turkish sovereignty on the island is not disputed, but the limits of this sovereignty as defined by Turkish and international law are made an issue.

Similarly, another Rum narrator explains the reasons of her discontent with the nationalization of her registered property during the recent cadastral survey in terms of her rights on the island as a regular taxpayer of the Turkish state:

Look, these places are taxed since 1945... At that time it was the foundation, the foundation distributed deeds for these places. We still have the papers, you should see them, old yellow papers. I went to the foundation, I don't exactly remember when. They said that they are not valid. They told me to go back to Çanakkale. "The deed office will set the price for those places, you will pay the the amount you are told..." (...) Do you know how the office operates? I mean, I have a deed, not given by Sultan Süleyman (the foundation,) a new title deed given by Turkish Republic. I have two acres of land. They had registered it as one point two. My deed was given after a survey, not by imagination. How can two acres of land become one point two? I don't know what to do? Should I go to court each time? Despite my two deeds my lands are registered under the Treasury. Besides that, now I am going to pay for the court expenses. Shame on you, shame!!! I wouldn't expect this, I swear I wouldn't expect this. In the past, I didn't want anything bad to be told for Turkey. Because I love Turkey very much... But my mind has changed, I lost my respect. Justice is very vague!!³⁸

³⁸ Bak 45 senesinden beri vergi ödeniyor bu dediğim yerlerde... O zaman vakıfı, vakıf tapu dağıttı bu yerlere. Hala var kağıtlarımız, görsen, eski sarı kağıtlar. Ben işte kaç sene önce vakıflara gittim. "Onlar geçmiyor" dediler. "Tekrar Çanakkale'ye gideceksin, buradaki tapu dairesi, değer biçecek o yerlere, işte ne kadar derse onu ödeyeceksin..." (...) Kadastro da nasıl işliyor biliyor musun? Benim tapum var sonuçta, Sultan Süleyman değil, yeni tapu, TC tapusu. İki dönüm arazim var. Onu bir iki yüz diye yazmışlar. Benim tapum de yine keşifle verildi, öyle havadan verilmedi. İki dönüm yer nasıl oluyor da bir iki yüz oluyor? Ne yapacağım ben her dakika mahkeme mi açacağım? İki tapuma rağmen

Thus, in the narrative, what has been going on in Imbros is explained in terms of the ill functioning administration and the absence of the rule of law. This discourse displays similarities to that of the Turkish settlers' related to the corruption of the state. Here too, the situation in Imbros is related to a general condition in Turkey:

Do things happen like that in abroad? Everyday we are facing injustice here. Talk to the authorities, get mad, the result is always zero. Can there be any improvement like that? Can anything like this happen? No!!! If that is the rule exercise it, without any exceptions. Shouldn't there operate such a system? Here, everything is arbitrary... Who sets the rules? State, or the government, or whatever... But then they have to make it function. The ones who find an influential person go and make his/her issue taken care of... It should be what it is!!! Regardless of who you are. That is the order!!!

(...) We went to the court, we won, got the deed. We found an architect. (...) He got the required permissions for us, we didn't face any trouble. But we were a Turkish family. Even if my husband doesn't intervene and I ask for permission, I hold a Turkish name, not a Rum one. This Turkish name changes so much. Unfortunately. If there is a law, it shouldn't discriminate between people.

hazineye yazılıyor yerlerim, üstüne üstlük bir de mahkeme masrafı ödeyeceğim şimdi. Yazıklar olsun, vallahi yazıklar olsun. Ben eskiden Türkiye'ye laf söylettirmek istemezdim. Çünkü ben Türkiye'yi seviyorum... Ama şimdi düşüncelerim değişti, saygım azaldı gerçekten. Adalet var-yok!!

Everybody that holding a Turkish Republican ID should be equal.

Shouldn't they?³⁹

The narrator, married to a Turkish man, and carrying a Turkish passport with a Turkish name on it, emphasizes the local government's favouring of some of its citizens against others. This, she argues, is not legal but an arbitrary act of the local government that stems from the lack of law and order. Another Rum islander also talks about the unfairness in the administration matters related to the ill functioning of the municipality:

I have paid lots of money to the municipality just to have the permission to replace this roof... Kurds supplement their houses by extra rooms from outside, inside, sideways... they swipe the road, do whatever they want, nobody dare to say anything. The municipality has abandoned here. Here it is the Kurdish neighbourhood. It is Texas here, Texas... What would happen even if you go to the municipality... They wouldn't care.⁴⁰

³⁹ Yurt dışında böyle mi? Burada ise adım başı bir haksızlıkla karşılaşıyoruz. Git hangi yetkiliye söylersen söyle, feveran et, gene sonuç sıfır. E bunda bir ilerleme olur mu? Bir şey olur mu? Olmaz!!! Kural mı? Kural işlesin, onun dışına çıkılmasın. Böyle bir sistem işlemesi gerekmiyor mu? Burada, keyfiyet... Bu kuralları kim koyuyor? Devlet, işte hükümet, her ne ise. Ama o düzeni işletsinler o zaman. Torpilini bulan gidiyor, düzeltiyor... Ne ise o!!! Kim olursa olsun. Düzen bu!!! (...) Mahkeme açtık, kazandık, tapumuzu aldık. Mimara verdik evi. (...) İzinleri aldı bizim yerimize, bir zorlukla karşılaşmadık. Ama biz bir Türk ailesiydik. Kocam devreye girmese bile şimdi ben gitsem, sonuçta Türkçe ismimle gidiyorum, Rumca ismimle değil. Bu Türkçe isim çok şeyi değiştiriyor. Maalesef. Eğer bir kanun varsa, kanunun insan ayırmaması lazım. TC kimliği taşıyan herkes, eşit olması lazım. Öyle değil mi?

⁴⁰ Ben sadece bu çatıyı değiştirebilmek için bilmem ne kadar para verdim belediyeye izin parası... Kürtler istedikleri gibi oda ekliyorlar eve, dıştan, içten, yandan... yolu alıyorlar, istediklerini yapıyorlar, kimse bir şey diyemiyor. Zaten belediye de burayı terk etti. Kürt mahallesi burası. Texas burası, Texas... Belediye'ye gitsen, ne olacak... Buradan girecek, buradan çıkacak...

However, although the Rum discourse related to state corruption in Turkey seems similar to that of the settlers, an important difference among the two should be noted. While the settlers consider the misbehaviour of the state towards them only as a sign of corruption, in the Rum narratives, the Turkification policy is itself regarded as introducing illegitimacy, since it makes possible and justifies the violation of both the national and the international legal status of the island, and the islanders by the Turkish state. But again the two discourses are similar in the sense that rather than being contested, the sovereignty of the Turkish state in Imbros is taken as the starting point of the argument rather than against it, a point which works for the consolidation of the idea of sovereignty. Hence, the Rum narratives on the island do not appear to be against the idea of Turkish rule in Imbros, no matter how much they are opposed to its actions. The imaginary relationship between the self and the state for the returning Rums gets shaped through this discourse. A returnee talks about his feelings toward the politicians whom he sees as responsible for what has happened on the island:

I left the island in 1964. These disgusting impositions started in then. It is my earnest desire that may those men who are responsible never rest in peace. What they have done is an awful sin. I am with the people. But I am proud of my Turkish friends. All of the politicians are dirty. All of them are utterly worthless. None of the Greek politicians or the Greek government could tell me that Turks are bad, etc. Forgive me, I would tell them to fuck off. Be it the president, or the prime minister. He is just a civil servant to me... That what he is, he should be. They are not God. They are laborers appointed by the

poor people. If they do their job well, let them do. If not, they should be sacked at once.⁴¹

Here, the idea of “me and the state” is shopped through the politicians as a homogeneously corrupt group despite of nationality. Thus the politicians accused of being responsible for ruining the island are damned by the narrator and defined as “dirty” men who should have been no more than the labourers appointed by the people. Hence, the narrator clarifies that he is not anti-Turkish in his opposition to what has happened on the island. Rather, he defines himself as anti-politics and anti-state in general. However, in his personal life, the narrator, considered to be a distinguished member of the community, makes good friends with the mayor and the *kaymakam* of the island, whom he regularly invites to concerts and events he organizes during the *Panayia*. He explains why he does not see this as contradicting himself:

I have a friendship with the mayor and the *kaymakam*. They are good men. That is why I invited them. Not due to any other reason. They invited me in the New Year’s Day, for me not to stay alone. (...) In the 1970s, the *kaymakams* of that period used to think how to sack here. Ahhh!!! What has changed? What has changed is, maybe the central administration has come to its senses. I hope that, they tell

⁴¹ Ben 64’de gittim adadan. 64’de başladı bu iğrenç hareketler. Benim temennim buna sebebiyet veren adamlar tabutlarında hiçbir zaman rahat olmasınlar. Bu yaptıkları, korkunç bir günahdır. Ben halkla beraberim. Ama benim Türk arkadaşlarımla ben övünüyorum. Bütün politikacılar kirlidir. Beş para etmez hiç biri. Bana hiç bir Yunan politikacısı ya da Yunan hükümeti Türkler kötüdür vs diyemez. Affedersiniz, siktir ederim onları. İsterse reisi cumhur olsun isterse başbakan olsun. Alt tarafı benim memurum o... Öyledir, öyle olması lazım. Onlar Allah değildirler. Onlar zavallı halkın getirmiş olduğu işçilerdir. İşlerini iyi yaparlarsa yaparlar. Yapmazlarsa tekmeyi vurmak lazım.

themselves “What have we done? We have made things worse.”

Kaymakams of today think more humanely. They know that I am not a savage man. I always side with them. How nice if we can help each other. I would never exploit them, they would never exploit me. I hope I am not wrong, but I believe that I am not. (...) They behave quite humanely. Issues that are discussable are discussed. They want to help but... the central administration... Those bureaucrats write whatever comes to their minds.⁴²

Here, the state, personified in the central administration and the bureaucrats is distinguished from the local administrators whom the narrator defines as “good people” who would help if they could. This emerges as another moment of positioning the locality in opposition to the center, and favouring the first when compared to the second. Still, he harbours his hope towards a change in the state mentality that would cause the central administration to feel sorry for what they have done, and act in more humanitarian terms. Another returnee defines the situation as being shameful for the Turkish state itself:

I mean for the state... it is shameful for a state. A shameful situation.

(...). They clubbed with the rifle butts, broke the doors. They went,

⁴² Belediye başkanı ve Kaymakamla bir arkadaşlığımız vardır. Onlar iyi adamlardır. O yüzden çağırdım. Başka bir manası yok. Onlar da beni yılbaşında çağırmışlardı, yalnız oturmayayım diye. (...) 70’li yıllarda, o zamanki kaymakamlar burasını nasıl talan edelim diye düşünüyorlardı. Ahhh!!! Değişen ne? Değişen, merkezi yönetmenin belki de akalları başlarına gelmiştir. Diyorlardır ki kendi kendilerine “Biz ne yaptık? Kaş yaparken göz çıkardık.” diyorlardır, inşallah. Şimdiki kaymakamlar daha insani düşünüyorlar. Benim vahşi bir adam olmadığımı biliyorlar. Ben hep onlarla birlikteyim. Birbirimize yardım edebilirsek ne iyi. Ben onları asla istismar etmem, onlar da beni edemezler. İnşallah aldanmıyorum, ama aldanmadığıma inanıyorum. (...) Gayet insani davranıyorlar. Konuşulabilecek konular konuşuluyor. Yardım etmek isterler ama... Merkezi yönetim... O bürokratlar oturup kafalarına geleni yazıyorlar.

fired their guns on three families like bang, bang, bang... As a result, people ran away. And thus the houses were occupied and now the state gave them deeds. The real owner goes with the the deed in hand, they throw stones at people. This is shameful for a state. Especially in this era. And, we want to enter the Europe... Don't we?

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Hence, the state in Imbros is described as having destroyed its own honour and reliability by harming its own international credibility. It is quite common for the returnees to draw on international legitimacy in pursuing their own argument related to the island. Discourses such as humanism, and the rule of law often become the means through which the Rum claims in Imbros get to be articulated. The returnees, who are mostly educated young people considering themselves to be endowed with a mission of reclaiming their ancestral land are well equipped to speak within this discourse. The general secretary of the Imbrian Association in Athens talks about the way she feels about the case of her father's house that has been in court for six years:

I'll go to the court in Strasbourg. Really, I have plans like that. I'm so mad at what they did!!! You know, if they delay your case more than five years, you have the right to go to the international court!

⁴³ Yani devlet için... bir devlet için utandırıcı. Utanılacak bir durum. (...). Vurdular dipçikleri, kırdılar kapıları. Gittiler, üç aileye böyle dan dan dan kurşun sıktılar... Öyle kaçtı insanlar. Ve bu şekilde işgal edildi ve devlet şimdi onlara tapu verdi. Tapusu elinde sahibi gidiyor, çocuklu çocuklu, taşıyorlar insanları. Bir devlet için bu utanç vericidir. Hele bu zamanda. Bir de Avrupa'ya girmek istiyoruz.... Değil mi?

The returnees, who are well informed of their rights in the international arena, use that as a strategy to become visible, and to get into a dialogue with the Turkish State. The state, on the other hand, while capable of dismissing Rum claims on the island, as a matter of sovereignty within the national realm (by casting them as matters of citizenship,) cannot act that freely on the international arena. The Imbrian Associations in Greece organize to go to the OSCE meetings on a yearly basis, to have the chance to speak about Imbros to the Turkish government in a platform where they are legally recognized as minorities, and given the floor as equals. The general secretary of the Athens association describes her last visit to Warsaw, where a meeting was held:

I sat there with the representatives of all minority groups from all over the world with even, shame on us, the homosexuals... So there I'm sitting next to the representative of the homosexuals. During the meeting, each representative is given five minutes speech allowance and answering back is not allowed. Anyway, I stand up there and talk about Imbros and the settlement policies and everything. After my speech, the Turkish ambassador rises and says that, "Since Imbros is within the borders of Turkey, and people who come to the island are Turkish, this cannot be called as 'settling' because they are all Turkish people who come to live in another place in their own country." As soon as he finishes, I get up and say, "Well I know that I am not allowed to speak but since Mr. Ambassador answered me, I feel free to talk, anyway." And I say, "Mr. Ambassador, you say that Imbros is in Turkey, and I have no objection to that, but still, what has happened in Imbros is settling. You brought those people there;

you built settlement villages on the land that belonged to us! You have taken them for national reasons. What are those national reasons? To build villages to bring people from the mainland Turkey? That is settling! And until someone in this room proposes some other, better word to explain what has happened, I will keep on calling it settling.” Anyway, the next morning, during the breakfast the Turkish ambassador who is on the last year of his duty comes to me and says, “Congratulations to your love for your island. I want you to know that I am going to do my best for things to be better. It’s a pity, because one day all those things will be forgotten, for our destiny is to be together.”

Hence, to be able to speak in an international forum points to a chance for the Imbrian Rums both to be recognized by (and get into a dialogue with) the Turkish state, and to say what they cannot articulate on the national level, in the courts or in the land registry office. The international arena, then, offers an opportunity for the Rums of Imbros to pursue their claims related to the island in the terms that international law provides them with. There, they find the chance to name what has happened on the island in terms of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law, all of which are internationally recognized discourses.

However, not all Rum imaginaries of “me and the state” get articulated in this way throughout the island. Old Rum people of the island, including the ones who did not leave the island and live there the year round, and the ones who left but come back every summer with their kids who are now

adults, talk about their relationship to the state in quite a different way. A Rum informant who lives in Athens with her daughter and her son, narrates the old days in Imbros:

Because I was fatherless, my teachers used to give me things for free. Pencils, books... My school principal. I grew old now, god knows what they have become. My teacher, Abidin... They loved us so much. But we loved them too. We lived all together. Now life has changed ... (...) In the past, people used to love each other more, but now, I don't know... (...) They used to forbid us to speak Greek in the school... the hodja here, there was a mosque... His name was Şevki... children of the hodja used to speak Greek with us. The teachers used to get angry with the children. But, they used to speak Greek just like us, since we were together all the day. We used to get along like sisters and brothers. I have had good days... I was born here but very good days have passed... (...) Ah ah ahhh!!! Good days, good... They used to take us to... to picnics. Together with our teachers... We used to put cheese and bread in our bags, sit together with the teachers, eat... Good days, good days... Abidin Bey had two children. He was a teacher... There is a photograph. On his both sides. There were the *kaymakam*'s children. Of course, all together... (...) We didn't go to their house. They were like, how to say... Grand... What could we ever have to do with them... But we used to speak with the children at school. (...) There were *bayrams*... At one side we used to go, wearing... aprons, white collars... At the other side there were the soldiers. We used to sing songs, recite poems... At these days, the *kaymakam*, etc. all of them used to stand in a row. The mansion used

to be full of people. All of the cream people used to come, big people... Teachers, hodjas, etc... Those good days...⁴⁴

In this narrative of 'the good old days,' the Turkish state is personified in the figures of the *kaymakam*, the schoolteachers, and the soldiers who used to live on the island happily with the native Rums to love, and being loved by them. National events such as the national *bayrams* are told in terms of nostalgic childhood memories with white school collars, poems and ceremonial parades with soldiers. These local authorities are pictured as being the notables, governors as opposed to the poor Rum villagers who cannot even think of socializing with them. However, throughout the stories of the old Rum elites on the island, these local authorities are not seen as that unreachable. An old Rum *madam* who was the wife of the wealthiest man on the island talks about her 'good old days':

We used to get along very well with each other. Such entertainments... The *kaymakam*, the judge, military officers, the deed officer... Dinner, all together... My husband was hunting,

⁴⁴ Ben babasız olduğum için benim öğretmenlerim hepsi bedava veriyorlardı. Kalem, kitap... Başöğretmenim. Şimdi ben ihtiyarladım, onlar kim bilir ne olmuşlardır. Öğretmenim, Abidin... Çok seviyorlardı bizi. Ama biz de seviyorduk. Hepsi beraber yaşıyorduk. Şimdi değişti hayat ama... (...) Eskiden daha birbirini severdi insanlar ama şimdi, bilmiyorum... (...) Okulda, bize yasak ediyorlardı Rumca konuşulmasını... Hoca burada, cami vardı... adı Şevki... bizimle beraber Rumca konuşuyorlardı, hocanın çocukları... Öğretmenler darılıyordu çocuklara. Ama onlar bizim gibi konuşuyorlardı Rumca'yı, çünkü her gün beraber idik. Kardeş gibi geçiniyorduk. İyi günler geçirdim ben... Burada doğdum ama çok iyi günler geçti... (...) Ah ah ahhh!!! İyi günler iyi... Bizi şeye götürüyorlardı... piknik. Öğretmenlerimizle... Çantamıza ekmek peynir alıyorduk, öğretmenlerle oturuyorduk, yemek yiyorduk... İyi günler, iyi günler... Abidin Bey'in iki çocukları vardı. Öğretmen idi... Fotoğraf var iki önünde. Biri burada biri burada. Kaymakamın çocukları vardı. Tabii hep beraber... (...) Evlerine gidip gelmezdik. Onlar böyle, nasıl diyeyim... Büyük... İşimiz ne vardı bizim öyle... Ama çocuklarla okulda konuşuyorduk. (...) Bayramlar oluyordu... Bir taraftan biz gidiyorduk, şey giyiniyorduk. Önlük, beyaz yaka... Öbür sıra askerler. Şarkı söylüyorduk biz, şiir okuyorduk... O zaman Kaymakam falan hepsi sıra oluyordu. Konak dolu oluyordu. Bütün krem insanlar da geliyordu, büyük insanlar... Öğretmenler, hocalar bilmem işte falan... İşte iyi günler...

fishing... he was very good. (...) My husband said "We will invite the *kaymakam*, etc., all of them, eat together." Probably, it was the New Year's Eve or something like that. Well, all right. What shall I cook? Let me roast a lamb. Well, what else? My husband says "Cook a pig." Well, but they don't eat pig. He says, "You cook, cold meat, like ham, let whoever wants to eat." There were also Rums. We sat on the table, a big, long one. We said, "This is pig, this is lamb, up to you." The commander and the *kaymakam* are thinking. Binbaşı says "I will eat." Zuhâl, her wife, says "I will not sleep with you tonight." *Kaymakam* is thinking, thinking, "Well if the commander eats..." We used to have pretty good days. One of the *kaymakam*'s wife used to make very delicious *sucuk*, in a piece of cloth, but I don't remember how... (...) They were very good men. Whoever lived in Imbros, doesn't forget it. (...) In the past, there was nothing in *Kastro*, only a shop that was closed at night. One day my husband says "We are going out fishing. I, the commander, the *kaymakam*... You come with us, bring the automobile back because we will return very late. Around 10 o'clock come and pick us." They went on fishing. In fact, their real purpose was something different... A yacht had come, there were many women in it. It had come a year ago, too, so they knew it. The husbands said, "We are going there, both to fishing," and my husband had already prepared some fruits, "and to eat. At ten o'clock come pick us." All right. I say to Zuhâl, "What do you think? Our husbands are there. Would you come with me?" The *kaymakam*'s wife was there, too. She says, "Why wait until ten o'clock? Let's go around 7-8 and sit and wait there." All right. We took the children, went... It is 9, 10... Neither yacht, nor the husbands... I say, "They found other women there, why should they

return?" It was 12 am, we were still sitting. Only we. There were nobody else. Zuhal tells me, "If we were in Anatolia, we – three women - could never sit like this on our own. But here, it is like Sweden. Neither fear nor anything else." Then, the husbands came. They say, "The engine broke, so we were late." "Come on" we say, "don't lie, we know why you didn't come back."⁴⁵

According to the young returnees, these nostalgic yearnings for the good old days described in terms of the good relationships between the Rum community and the local governors are not considered to be fully representing the truth. The daughter of the first narrator whom I interviewed with her mother describes her as a housewife who never used to go out of the house, hence as a person who could know nothing about the settlement villages or anything. Similarly, the daughter of the second

⁴⁵ *Aramız çok iyiydi. Ne eğlenceler... Kaymakam, hakim, subaylar, tapucu... Yemek, beraber... Kocam avcılık yapıyordu, balıkçılık yapıyordu... çok iyiydi. (...) Kocam dedi ki "Kaymakam'ı falan hepsini çağıracağız, yemek yapacağız beraber." Yılbaşı falandı galiba. Eh, iyi peki. Ne yapacağız yemek? Kuzu yapayım. İyi, başka? Kocam diyor "Domuz yap." İyi ama yemiyorlar. Dedi, "Sen yap, soğuk et, jambon gibi, kim isterse yesin." Rumlar da vardı. Oturduk masaya, kocaman, buradan oraya kadar. Biz dedik, "Bu domuz, bu kuzu, nasıl isterseniz." Binbaşı, kaymakam düşünüyorlar. Binbaşı diyor "Ben yiyeceğim." Zuhal diyor, karısı, "Yatmayacağım bu akşam yanında." Kaymakam düşünüyor, düşünüyor, "Eh madem ki binbaşı yiyor..." Çok güzel geçinirdik. Bir Kaymakam'ın hanımı sucuk çok güzel yapıyordu, bezin içinde, ama hiç hatırlamıyorum nasıl... (...) Çok iyi adamlardı. Kim geçti İmroz'a, unutmuyor. (...) Eskiden Kastro'da hiçbir şey yoktu, bir dükkân vardı, o da kapanıyordu geceleri. Bir gün kocam dedi, "Biz balığa gideceğiz. Ben, binbaşı, kaymakam... Sen gel bizimle beraber, otomobili geri getir, çünkü çok geç geleceğiz. Saat 10'da falan gel al bizi." Gittiler balık tutmaya. Ama balık tutmaya falan değil... Bir yat geldi, içinde bir çok kadınlar var. Bir sene önce de gelmişti, biliyorlar. Kocalar dedi, "Oraya gideceğiz, hem balık tutmaya," hem de kocam meyve kesmişti, "onları yiyeceğiz. Saat 10'da gel al bizi." Olur. Zuhal'a dedim, "Ne diyorsun? Kocalarımız orada. Gelirsin benimlen gidelim?" Kaymakamın hanımı da orada. Dedi, "Neden 10'u bekleyelim? 7-8 gibi gidelim orada oturalım bekleyelim." Olur. Çocukları da aldık, gittik... Saat 9, 10... Ne sandal, ne kocalar... Dedim ki, "Orada buldular kadınları, neden gelsinler?" Saat 12 oldu, hala oturuyoruz. Yalnız biz. Başka kimse yok. Zuhal diyor bana, "Şimdi Anadolu'da olsak imkanı yok kalalım tek başımıza üç kadın. Ama burası İsviçre. Ne korku var, ne bir şey." Sonra geldiler kocalar. Diyorlar, "Motor bozuldu, geç kaldık." "Hadi hadi" diyoruz biz, "yalan söylemeyin, biliyoruz neden gelmediğinizi."*

narrative tells how much her mother likes coming here because she has not lived the worst days of the island since they left early. The younger generation Imbrians, who come back to the lands from where their ancestors have been thrown out, consider their parents to be ignorant of what has happened on the island. The older generation, on the other hand, does not fully approve of their children's political visibility on the island through acts like objecting to the cadastral survey and speaking out loudly. In fact, the first old Rum narrator, during the interview, warned her daughter who was complaining about the unfairness of the cadastral survey, not to talk too freely as something may happen.

At the root of the difference of the imaginaries of "me and the state" between the older and the younger generation Imbrian Rums lies the difference of the understanding of the concept of the state. While the older generation Rums make sense of their relationship with the sovereign in terms of an imperial understanding of subjection to the state, the younger generation considers it more in terms of a legal relationship that is based on mutual rights and obligations. However, both of these imaginaries in the end make way for the strategic performance of these relationships by the Rums of the island, in pursuing their claims related to belonging.

The educated and wealthy younger generation returnees, who have their established lives somewhere else, come back with a mission of claiming their right to belong on the island by drawing on their memories of the past and their current visibility. This visibility is achieved either through

applications to state institutions like the court, the municipality, or the land registry office, or in the international area where the representatives of the communities are recognized as the interlocutors of the Turkish state, and have the chance to speak to the state outside the terms set by sovereignty. There, they translate their claims to be recognized as natives of the island into a language informed by the international discourses of human rights, democracy, and the rule of law. On the other hand, within the national realm, they build their arguments about belonging to the island by questioning the policies of Turkification in terms of legitimacy, where reference is always made to the Turkish law itself and the Lausanne Treaty that is considered to be equal to the force of law in Turkey.

However, Rum visibility in Imbros emerges as a recent development in line with the policy shift in Turkey favouring tourism and multiculturalism. Answering the question whether this shift indicates a broader policy change of the Turkish state related to, as for instance, Turkey's attempts to get into the EU, is beyond the scope of this study. However, the question, I believe, is worth at least to be posed. Tourism policies in Imbros enable the returnees with new cultural, political, and economic resources to come back to the island as tourists for they are able to spend money, and also incorporate them to the elite stratum on the island who produce projects of Imbros within the discourse of tourism and multiculturalism. The old Rums of Imbros, on the other hand, with their authentic ways of existence and making sense of themselves, based on a primordial understanding of

pre-nationalist locality, become the object of gaze for all other groups on the island.

The older Rums of Imbros build their claims of belonging on an imperial discourse of loyalty and co-existence. On the way, they convert their understanding of belonging as a native claim, to a right of existing on the island through their loyalty. An old Rum *madam* asserts her belonging to the island ultimately to her rights as a citizen:

We are from here. Our mother, father, grandfathers, grandfathers...
we are all from here... We get on very well. Our country, everthing...
We were born here, we stayed here, always here. We are here. We
were born here, we will die here. Our country... Where shall we go?
We are Turkish citizens.⁴⁶

Here, the discourse begins by emphasising primordial ties and native rights, and then goes on to underline loyalty through good relations in the past. Citizenship, here, does not refer to a national understanding of a rights and duties relationship that in the end leads to a public identity. It rather refers to an idea of being loyal to the state in terms of being the imperial subject who in turn asks for the sovereign to approve his/her stay in his lands. Another old Rum narrator proves his loyalty by recounting his military service:

⁴⁶ *Biz buralıyız. Annemiz, babamız, dedelerimiz, dedelerimiz... hepimiz buralıyız... Çok güzel geçiniyoruz. Memleketimiz, her şey... Burada doğduk, burada oturuyoruz, hep burada. Biz buradayız. Burada doğduk, burada öleceğiz. Memleketimiz... Nereye gideceğiz? Biz Türk vatandaşlarıyız.*

Of course we are loyal to Turkey. We are Turkish citizens, we all live here. I have done my military service in Ankara, Etimesgut.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, this always emerges as a citizenship claim that remains suspect in the eyes of both the central and the local authorities.

Belonging to the Island

In this chapter, I looked at narratives of belonging throughout the island by tracing various accounts of “me and the state.” Through these accounts of “me and the state,” emerge diverse imaginaries of belonging on/to the island. While the settlers tell their relationship of “me and the state” as something enabling their belonging to the island, the Rums of the island narrate their relationship of “me and the state” in terms of the disruption of their belonging that is based on an autochthonous understanding. For the settlers, the narratives of belonging immediately get told in terms of a relation to the state that describes the island as a piece of national land and belonging as mediated through an imagined community of Turkishness. Opposed to that, the Rum narratives of “me and the state” emerge as a result of a struggle against the state, which has interrupted their belonging to the island. The Rum narratives of “me and the state” indicate a legal status rather than a way of belonging on the island, and turn into the language of struggle with the state, which has violated this legal status.

⁴⁷ *Türkiye'ye bağlıyız canım. Türk vatandaşıyız, hepimiz burada yaşıyoruz. Ben askerliğimi Ankara, Etimesgut'da yaptım.*

Belonging, for them, is a primordial and native right only ratified at the Lausanne treaty, the level of international law.

However, neither the Turkish, nor the Rum imaginaries of “me and the state” are homogeneous. Turkish settlers’ imaginaries that explain undesirable developments on the island as a result of state corruption, serve in the end to produce a new imagined community of islanders whose solidarity is based on devising new, corruption-free projects for the island as a whole. This is primarily an elite construction, to which the settlers are invited piecemeal and the Rum returnees presence on the island is converted into. This imagined community on the island, which constructs claims of belonging and rights in Imbros through a community of Turkishness is formulated as Turkish citizens although in effect it turns out to be a community of Turks. This community excludes the Kurds and the Rums. The Kurds for their part define another community in which they would be included, based on the ideas of loyalty and hard work. This, in the end, becomes another definition of the position of Turkishness on the island, and enables its members to make claims on the island as Turkish citizens. The Rum imaginaries of “me and the state” represent a violated legal status in case of the returnees, and an imperial loyalty in case of old Rums, which they share with Kurds. However, for all Rums, the relationship between the self and the state is not considered as establishing belonging to the island, but rather in actualizing it, which leads to a consolidation of Turkish sovereignty on the island once more.

Nation state sovereignty on the land establishes itself in opposition to locality, and the native rights stemming from that locality. Hence, the legitimate way of "belonging," the relationship between self and place has to be imagined as always mediated by the state. This is the reason why the narratives of "me and the state" arise as the articulations of belonging. The legitimate form of belonging imagined through the relationship between the self and the state emerges as "citizenship."

The idea of citizenship in Imbros is always thought in terms of being loyal to the state. The rights stemming from citizenship status only go to the locals. However, the description of loyalty is itself thought in line with categories of ethnic and political affiliation actualised in localities that the nation-state attempts to diffuse by introducing citizenship. Thus, while the loyalty of the Turkish settlers is imagined as something implicit and taken for granted, the Kurds and the Rums are put in a position of being obliged to prove their loyalty. However, the situation of the Rums and the Kurds differ at the point of the actualisation of this proof. While the Kurds in Imbros, especially because they are in Imbros and not in the South-east, are endowed with a wider array of discourses that would make it possible for them to prove their loyalty, the Rums of Imbros are doomed to remain as forever suspect, since they stand in the very locality that makes them suspect since they stand in the very locality to which they have claims that can by-pass the state.

However, everyday practices on the island contain also the contestations of those imaginaries. While the Turkish settlers' questioning of their belonging happens within the state's own terms of rights in return for loyalty, the Rums derive their oppositional point from international legal discourses. However, no matter how diverse they are in pursuing their arguments, both the Rums and the Turks base their claims on the perceived idea of illegality of state action. They thus call the state to act according to its own legally recognized obligations. Kurds, on the other hand, do not question the state, and only thus are able to prove their loyalty, and rightfully assume the rights of the citizen.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have tried to trace the stories of Imbros through the narratives of the self and belonging that are recounted, practiced, and performed throughout the island. However, my aim has not been to reconstitute the past for the sake of producing an alternative history. I have rather aimed to follow the ways in which the story of Imbros and the self is told and practiced in the present in order to pose larger questions about the terms through which belonging can be imagined and practiced in Turkey. I have tried to show that citizenship emerges as the main term, around which belonging can be negotiated by the different groups that populate Imbros. What remains to be done is to elucidate what citizenship means and to link it to the forms of governmentality that are practiced in Imbros and in Turkey at large.

Throughout the narratives of belonging to/on the island that are told in terms of a definition of the relationship between “me and the state,” the story of the island emerged as a story of İmroz turning into Gökçeada. No matter how diverse the meanings they attributed to this process were, all of my informants named the story as the Turkification of the island. Hence, throughout the thesis, I focused on the operation of the process of Turkification. I have tried to understand what kind of possibilities this process of Turkification open up and who can realize these possibilities. Combining an ethnographic analysis of the island with the analysis of the narratives I have collected throughout Imbros, I tried to see how my

informants position themselves within this process and what kinds of claims they can raise from these positions. I have tried to argue that the process of the Turkification of Imbros, cast in terms of the application of citizenship law, produced new subjectivities, new citizens and new islanders.

I have therefore claimed that the policy of Turkification is part and parcel of the regime of governmentality in Imbros. This process is not only a state mission completed through the transfer of populations and the establishment of state institutions, or by re-naming the places on the island. Turkification rather symbolizes a wider project that still goes on through the multiple negotiations happening in the everyday realm, over the definitions and meanings of the past, the present, the place and the self at the level of both discourses and practices. But Turkification appears above all through the subjectivation of the people. Analysing the narratives has shown that law and citizenship constitute the key terms according to which all Imbrians become the subject of governmentality on the island.

Policies of security, welfare and multiculturalism, indicating the successive forms of governmentality on the island of Imbros, all define categories of belonging to the island through an idea of citizenship, a concept that becomes operative because of its ambiguity. The process of transforming the island, of turning its inhabitants into proper Turkish citizens refers on the one hand to subjugating all its population to the law of the land and yet on the other hand it also refers to substituting this population with ethnic

Turks, people who are always already the state's rightful citizens. Thus two distinct notions of citizenship, one based on territorial rights and the other based on notions of ethnicity coexist.¹ According to the letter of the law only the former is recognized. Nevertheless, the other meaning of citizenship lies very close beneath the surface of this. This means that the category citizenship becomes the site of contestation and redefinition through the various strategies applied by different groups on the island enabled by the current form of governmentality.

Different forms of contestation that happen throughout the island indicate the different ways of understanding citizenship. Turkish settlers question their citizenship in terms of a story of corruption, and breach of an implicit contract between themselves and the state from the part of the state. The idea of corruption assumes an ethnicity-based idea of citizenship that stands on an implied difference between the elements of the state through which some are considered to be more citizens than the others. In that sense, the settlers on the island of Imbros question the state for not keeping its promise of "more" rights and favouring, related to their implied higher status as being the real citizens of Turkey because of their ethnicity. Rums of Imbros, on the other hand, question the Turkification policies on the island through setting forth an idea of citizenship, which refers to a minority status that stems from the Turkish state's international legal

¹ According to the Turkish law, citizenship is regulated according to the idea of "jus sanguini" as opposed to "jus soli." Thus, one automatically becomes a Turkish citizen by birth if only his/her parents are Turkish citizens, regardless of religion and ethnicity. Thus, being a Turkish citizen does not have to refer to being ethnically Turkish, as in the case of minorities. However, the term "Turkish" is used to define both the citizen and the ethnic origin in the Turkish language, which points to a very important realm of ambiguity.

obligations. In that sense, Rum contestations to the idea of citizenship are mostly made in the international platforms where their arguments related to the state's violation of its international obligations might become most effective. As opposed to these two groups, Kurdish people living in Imbros employ an idea of citizenship that derives from an idea of loyalty and total obedience of the self to the state that leaves no room for any contestations. This idea of citizenship enables the Kurds to lay their claims related to the island that is imagined to be part of the national land, on which all citizens are endowed with equal rights regardless of their ethnicity.

This shows that citizenship in the discourses and practices in Imbros cannot be treated as a frozen analytical category universally referring to the status of the individual in the public realm with regard to his/her relationship to the state within a framework of mutual rights and obligations.² It rather indicates a cultural process of "subjectification" (i.e. subjectivation) (Ong 1996) and the opening up of a realm of negotiation related to the valid form of the relationship between "me and the state" as the basis of belonging to the island. The narratives analysed show that the citizen can refer to at least three mutually exclusive subject positions: a subject loyal to the state, a subject who by fulfilling obligations to the state lays claim to certain rights, and a subject defined as a minority. Being all constituted as subjects of these different notions of the citizen, different groups on the island develop their own strategies to pursue their particular claims vis-à-vis the state. However, even though it is not a singular

² For contemporary discussions of citizenship as a status of the individual in the public realm, see (Üstel 1999), (İşin and Wood 1999) and (Turner 1993)

category, citizenship, as the legitimately accepted form of relation between the subject and the state, still enables the latter to ultimately define the valid form of belonging to/on the island in terms of ethnicity. This is made possible through the intervention of the concept of loyalty in defining the ground on which the contractual relation implied by citizenship is expected to operate most smoothly. Loyalty, which becomes one of the duties of the citizen to his/her state, is not defined through the citizens' actions, but it appears to be pre-defined in terms of ethnicity, almost exclusively. Hence, citizenship, instead of being judged on the basis of performativity as would be implied in a contractual relation, turns out to be ascribed on the basis of ethnic identity. The practice of defining the citizen in terms of loyalty implicitly casts the Turkish settlers on the island as already loyal, thus unambiguously full citizens. The status of the Rums and the Kurds, on the other hand, appears to be vague since they have to prove their loyalty.

This variable practice of regulating state-citizen relations produces in Imbros a constant engagement with the rule of law on the part of the citizens. To the extent that the various meanings of citizenship can all co-exist under the rubric of the rule of law, all state practices get to be judged and contested according to whether it is legal or not. All the narratives deploy ideas of legality/legitimacy to claim the right(s) of belonging in Imbros, and policies or actions of the state that defy these claims of belonging are always referred to as being illegitimate or against the law. In that sense the law defines the basis of legitimacy. However, state actions that are deemed illegal vary in the settlers' and the Rums' narratives in a

very important way. While the settlers see the arbitrary applications of state policies as illegal because of corruption, Rums refer to the whole process of Turkification as such, including policies of re-settlement or land expropriation, whether they may be carried out according to the law or not. This discourse, as articulated either by settlers or by Rums, explains the moments of illegitimacy or the violation of the law by the state as a case of deviation from the norm, as the failure of the state to act in accordance with the law.

I would like to argue that, beyond this explanation, looking at the practice of citizenship on Imbros provides us with important clues regarding how the Turkish state imagines sovereignty. I would therefore like to think of the illegitimacy of state actions, or the violation of the law by the state, in a different way. Here, I would like to turn to the elaboration of the idea of sovereignty by Carl Schmitt, who describes the sovereign as “he who decides on the exception” (Schmitt 1985). Schmitt, arguing against classical Rousseauian theories of sovereignty, claims that sovereignty does not emerge through the exercise of the law, but rather at the moments of its contravention. According to him, sovereignty emerges not at the level of the execution of rules defined by law, but rather at the level of decisions that contradict it. Thus, the sovereign appears as the one who is entitled to decide the interruption of the application of law at a certain moment in a certain place, by calling it an exception.

Following Schmitt's description, sovereignty in Imbros emerges at the very moments of illegitimacy, which the corruption discourse on the island sees as the absence of the state. Hence, moments of the violation of law by the state work both to define the island within the terms of the exception, and to constitute the sovereignty of the Turkish state on the island as the one who decides on the exception. Here, both the arbitrary ways of policy making on the island, and the unequal application of these policies in their everyday practices all point to the moments of decision from which sovereignty truly emerges. Hence, Turkification appears as the moment of the establishment of Turkish state sovereignty on the island, and exclusively through moments of illegality.

Looking at Imbros, the exception, I therefore argue, enables us to understand the absent term that makes the rule (regarding citizenship) in Turkey possible. This perspective calls for an analytical practice through the "space off." Going "space-off," as proposed by Teresa De Lauretis indicates an attempt to understand social constructions through the employment of "a view from elsewhere." Thus, it is about paying attention to the blind spots, the lacks and the voids of the discourse, from where the revelation of its mechanisms of construction and their questioning may become possible (De Lauretis 1989). I believe that Imbros, as a state of exception, represents the "space off" of the order in Turkey. As many of my informants stated, to them, it feels like the rules that prevail for the rest of Turkey do not seem to have any effect here. And yet, it is Imbros that

reveals the mechanisms that construct the establishment and operation of the idea of state sovereignty throughout Turkey.

State sovereignty in Turkey is not only established through an "exclusionist self-defined republican public space" that is based on the idea of citizenship as an all-inclusive "public persona," indifferent to the multiplicities of "self identity" in terms of religion and ethnicity (regarded as remnants of the Ottoman past) (Birtek). Republican sovereignty is also established through the opening of the idea of citizenship as a realm of practices and a field of negotiations and contestations about the inclusion and/or exclusion of certain groups of people to/from this category. In this sense, citizenship does not emerge exclusively as defining a public status for the self in terms of a relationship with the state, based on mutual rights and obligations. It rather becomes a reference point in claiming the validity of different forms of belonging to the place. In that sense, the basis of being a citizen, thus rightfully belonging is also discussed in terms of pre-national, primordial forms of belonging or being loyal to the state, both of which had a rightful place in the Ottoman order. The Republican order which claims to have overthrown its precursor thus can resort to some of its practices in establishing its sovereignty (loyalty), while implicitly rejecting others (such as minority status) that are included in the international treaty that recognized it as a sovereign state. Thus sovereignty is established through seemingly arbitrary practices of inclusion and exclusion to the category of citizenship that is the valid form of Republican belonging.

Situating oneself in Imbros and looking at this valid form of belonging from this perspective, on the other hand, reveals a further twist to this seemingly arbitrary practice. Comparing the situation on the island of the Rums and the Kurds as citizens who are not ethnically Turkish with that of ethnically Turkish settlers points to another implicit rule that constitutes the proper citizen, and therefore of governmentality in Turkey: the role of religion and ethnicity in defining the citizen. The Kurds are regarded as the abject in a society that espouses modernity and the values of civilization. This view, another established Ottoman idea (Deringil 2003)³, stems from their cultural differences with the rest of Turkish society in terms of subsistence patterns, family organisation (in short, ethnicity) and more recently, their political revolt against the state. I have shown these ideas to be quite current in all sections of Imbrian society. However, their citizenship is accepted by the state on the condition of their proving their loyalty. But Kurdish claims of belonging that are approved by the state in Imbros are rejected when they are located in their native land, the Southeast. The Kurds in Imbros build their claims of belonging to the place on citizenship, thus through loyalty to the state. Nevertheless, when they articulate such claims in the Southeast, they refer to the same primordial ties to a locality that the Rums refer to when claiming Imbros. That is why

³ Outlining the difference between the Ottoman forms of governmentality towards its periphery, during the pre- Tanzimat and Tanzimat periods, Deringil argues that during Tanzimat the Ottoman center's way of governing its periphery borrows from the European colonialism in terms of its project of modernity and the civilizing mission of the state aimed towards those "lands where people still live in a state of nomadism and savagery." Although his analysis is exclusively related to the Arab provinces of the empire, I believe that the Kurdish situation on the island displays similarities to the Ottoman "borrowed colonialism" in which the Turkish elite takes on the task of educating and civilizing the savage, mainly with an aim of ensuring its sovereignty.

the Kurds in the Southeast, as another definition of the exception (OHAL)⁴ become suspects in their locale just like the Rums are in Imbros.

The Rums of Imbros, and the dismissal by the state of their claims of belonging as natives, point to their suspect position on the island that stem from their "otherness" in terms of religion and ethnicity, two terms that have no place in the letter of the law concerning citizenship. However, a further qualification needs to be added. Religion and ethnicity begin to matter only when linked to territory. Rums are suspect in their own locality just as Kurds are. That is why the Kurds can claim a rightful place in another territory only through the state, and through this dislocation, become guaranteed loyal citizens. Thus the implicit rules governing citizenship are once more linked to issues of territorial security. This reveals the continuity of Ottoman categories of governmentality (religion and ethnicity) in the operation of republican sovereignty that is ostensibly based on an idea of citizenship as an all-inclusive "public persona," indifferent to the multiplicities of "self identity." The existence of Ottoman categories of governmentality in Republican practice is not recognized and as such constitutes the space-off of the rule of law in Turkey.

⁴ OHAL, refers to a special government decision in the power of law, related to the South-eastern provinces of Turkey where the Kurds make up the majority of the population. The decision is mainly about the interruption of the application of "normal" laws throughout certain provinces, related to a wide array of civil and political rights. The reason for this government decision is articulated as the extreme situation of the province in terms of security, related to the frequency of terrorist activities (i.e. PKK) throughout the region. In that sense, OHAL, which is actually the abbreviation of "the state of exception" in Turkish (*olağanüstü hal*) fits perfectly to the definition of a state of exception in the context of Schmitt's thought, made by George Schwab as including "any kind of severe economic or political disturbance that requires the application of extreme measures" (Schmitt 1985: 1).

It is thus that Imbros, as the exception, turns out to embody the “space off” of the Turkish republican imaginary. It appears to be marginal, but does not remain in the margins. On the contrary, the project of Turkification, which refers to the establishment and the exercise of Turkish state sovereignty throughout Imbros, puts the island’s marginality (which is the reason of its Turkification) at the centre of the nation-state imaginary. Hence, Imbros appears as a display window in which the operation of state sovereignty is put on show both for the national and international audience, as for the Turkish nation-state itself.

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