Politics and Space in Antakya (2011-2019)

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Declaration of Originality

The intellectual content of this thesis, which has been written by me and for which I take full responsibility, is my own, original work, and it has not been previously or concurrently submitted elsewhere for any other examination or degree of higher education. The sources of all paraphrased and quoted materials, concepts, and ideas are fully cited, and the admissible contributions and assistance of others with respect to the conception of the work as well as to linguistic expression are explicitly acknowledged herein.

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Abstract

Politics and Space in Antakya (2011-2019)

Selin Burgaç Taş, Master's Candidate at the Atatürk Institute
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Associate Professor Seda Altuğ Bulut, Thesis Advisor

This thesis attempts to analyse the youth politics in the Armutlu neighborhood, a predominantly Arab Alawi place in Hatay, between 2012 and 2015. Two pillars of the youth movement were the Syrian War (2011) and the Gezi Protests (2012). September 12, 2012, a pro-Assad demonstration was a breaking point for the Armutlu people and it immediately merged with the Antakya-Gezi movement. The Armutlu youth is the main actor in this anti-government protest. The political mobilization of the youth has generated a huge revision in their own Arab-Alawi identities as well as the identity of the neighborhood. Besides, it brought about the reconfiguration of the urban space in the neighbourhood. This thesis aims to bring the questions of identity, space and politics in an Alawi working-class neighborhood between 2012 and 2015.

Keywords: Youth, Space and Place, Social Movements, Political Geography, Sect, Memory

31,140 words

Özet

Antakya'da Siyaset ve Uzam (2011-2019)

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Doç. Dr. Seda Altuğ Bulut, Tez Danışmanı

Bu tez, Hatay'ın Defne ilçesine bağlı olan ve Arap Alevi nüfusun yoğunluklu olarak yaşadığı Armutlu mahallesini ele almaktadır. 1980li yıllarda politik olarak bir hayli aktif olan mahalle, 1980'den sonraki süreçlerde çeteler, uyuşturucu ve fuhuş ile kötü nam salmıştır. Mahalle, 2011 yılında Suriye'de çıkan savaş ve ardından Gezi Parkı Protestoları ile eski şanına kavuşmuştur. Tezde mahalle; uzam ve mekan, siyasi coğrafya, toplumsal hareketler, hafıza, kimlik kavramları ile gençler üzerinden ele alınmaktadır. Bu bağlamda mahallede uzamın kime / kimlere karşı kurulduğu, hangi şartlar altında ve durumlarda uzamın sınırlarının daraldığı veya genişlediği tartışılmıştır. Uzamın en önemli unsurlarından biri olan Arap Alevi kimliği, bu kimliğin nasıl oluştuğu / oluşturulduğu, Arap kimliğinin ve Alevi kimliğinin aynı uzamda olduğu gibi hangi durumlarda terk edilip, hangi durumlarda sahiplenildiğine değinilmiştir. Böylece kimliğin ne kadar karmaşık ve savrulgan olduğu tartışılmıştır. Mahallede gençlerle yapılan görüşmeler ışığında, 16 Eylül 2012 tarihinin mahalle için bir kırılma noktası olduğunu, gerçekleşen protestoların Armutlu direnişi olarak adlandırıldığını, yaşananlar anlatılırken mekana sürekli atıfta bulunulduğunu, bu sürecin sonunda yeni bir grup gençliğin ortaya çıktığını ve kendilerini Armutlu Gençliği olarak adlandırdıklarını görüyoruz. Bu çalışmada Suriye mevzusu ve Gezi Parkı Protestoları salt politik süreçler olarak ele alınıp modernist devlet söylemi ile tartışılsaydı yerelin kökenlerinden uzaklaşılmış ve uzamın üretimi görmezden gelinmiş olacaktı. Bu yüzden bu tezde, anlatılan yerin tarihini, yaşanılan olayları ele alırken onları oluşturan "şeylerin" anlatılarından yola çıkarak bir hikaye oluşturulmuştur.

31.140 kelime

viii

To beautiful children of hopes and the streets…
&Leyla Lorin

x

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

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Writing this thesis has been an experience of what kind I cannot begin even to say. The thought behind it took many, too, too many, years in the making, and without the support of my family, friends and teachers I would have had to give up ages ago despite my personal credo never to do so. As I write these lines, I realize that I have come to the end of this work, which took much longer than I expected, gave up many times during this time, and thought I would never be able to finish it. These very, very long years included a marriage and a daughter. That's why, first of all, I would like to thank my partner Deniz, who has been by my side all this time, supported and encouraged me on this long and gruelling journey.

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What's known as an identity card carries the holder's family name,
given name, date and place of birth, photograph, a list of certain
physical features, the holder's signature and sometimes also
his fingerprints – a whole array of details designed to prove
without a shadow of doubt or confusion that the bearer of the
document is so-and-so, and that amongst all the millions of
other human beings there isn't one – not even his double or
his twin brother – for whom he could be mistaken.

– Amin Maalouf, Maalouf, Amin. "My Identity, My Allegiances." Story. In In the Name of Identity, 11. Kbh., USA: Penguin, 2003.

1

Introduction

One of the most important stops of the Gezi Park Protests that took place in many cities of Turkey, especially in Istanbul in 2013, was the Armutlu neighborhood in the Defne district of Hatay. The Armutlu neighborhood has written its name in history as the place where the Gezi Park resistance lasted the longest, called the stronghold of the resistance, and where two young people, Ahmet Atakan and Abdullah Cömert, were killed by the state in the neighborhood. The name of the neighborhood, symbolized by the Gezi Park Protests in 2013, actually goes back even further, to the 1980s.

Not only the Gezi Protests, but also the Syrian issue has a critical importance in the ways in which the political mobilization in Armutlu gained momentum. 2010 marked the beginning of anti-government protest movement in the Middle East, collectively called the Arab Spring. These demonstrations started in 2011 in Syria, and it was the beginning of political mobilization for the Armutlu neighbourhood. These anti-government demonstrations turned into a violent armed conflict between the Assad regime supporters and the islamist opposition. Turkey sided with the latter and announced that all diplomatic relations were suspended with Syria on May 25, 2012. Afterwards, relations between the Syrian and Turkish governments

came to a standstill. The narratives of the people who dwell in Armutlu explain the situation, however, is the opposite: "we have relations in Syria and there is a war in Syria."

Armutlu neighborhood has a predominantly Arab Alawi population, same as the President of Syria, Bashar al-Assad. This affinity is just one of the links between the Syrian issue and the Armutlu protests, in line with people's response to my question that that " they were protesting for, the war in Syria. therefore, the Gezi Protests and the Syria issue will be discussed together throughout this study.

Armutlu Neighborhood and its young people have been understudied. The neighborhood was very active politically in the 1980s. Since 1980, however, the neighbourhood has been associated with criminality. The Gezi Park Protests and the Syrian Issue became a turning point for these young people. The performance of the young people during the protests brought back the glory of resistance in the neighborhood, since, after 1980, the neighborhood had been known for its degenerate, uneducated, gang, and addict youth. When I was a child, we never wanted to walk through the Armutlu neighborhood because it was associated with crimanility, such as a fight in the neighborhood .Just before I started writing this thesis, I saw the other side of the neighborhood with the Syrian War. And this was actually the beginning of the neighborhood reclaiming its former glory.

There have been no protests in Antakya until 16 September 2012, except May Day. The important event that brought the Armutlu youth under public and political attention was the demonstration on 16 September 2012 for Syria. The 16th of September is crucial for my dissertation, because Antakya experienced tear gas and state violence for the first time after the 1980s. The uprising in Antakya protested against the Turkish intervention in Syria revealing that the Syrian issue became a turning point for the political movement in the Armutlu neighborhood. Subsequently, it is the Gezi Park protests, that brought the Armutlu youth into the center of political scene.

I stayed in Antakya for five months to make my fieldwork, between September 2015 and February 2016. I never lived in the Armutlu neighborhood, but my family home was located near Armutlu. Even though I am familiar with the neighborhood through friends, it was not easy to find people to interview. I found informants with the help of my family, relatives and friends but their presence at times worked in a negative way. During my fieldwork in Antakya, I have often been to ALİKEV (Ali İsmail Korkmaz Foundation), located in the city centre and there I met youngsters who live in Armutlu. Ultimately, I have had twenty-seven interviewees, which includes three women and nineteen men, and also five adult interviewees who experienced the Armutlu neighborhood during the 1980s.

Interviewee	Age	Gender	Education
A	29	M	High school
B	27	M	High school
C	30	M	Bachelor's Degree
D	25	M	Master Degree
E	25	M	Bachelor's Degree
F	31	M	High school
G	19	F	High school
H	21	F	University (student)
I	23	M	University (student)
J	27	M	Bachelor's Degree
K	19	M	High school
L	27	F	Bachelor's Degree
M	27	M	Master degree
N	17	M	High school (student)
V	27	M	University (student)

W	25	M	Bachelor's degree
Y	24	M	High school
Armutlu Youth A	30	M	High school
Armutlu Youth B	17	M	High school
Armutlu Youth C	23	M	High school
Armutlu Youth D	20	M	High school
Armutlu Youth E	27	M	High school
1	65	M	High school
2	55	M	High school
3	70	M	Bachelor's Degree
4	50	M	High school
5	55	M	High school

Table 1.1 Information of the Interviewees

In this thesis, I am going to explore how the neighborhood as a space and identity has been transformed during the protests. I will pay attention to the role of the youth as the main actor of this transformation and the political movement that they were involved in. I approach youth as a politically constructed category whose meaning changes with respect to time and space. In order to understand the social movements in the neighborhood that started with the Syrian War, I interviewed the youth who were active during the protests. The youth mobilization generated a huge change in both their own identities and the identity of the neighborhood with respect to its ethnic, religious and class belonging. The neighborhood spatially transformed in 2012 thanks to youth politics. Hence his thesis will examine the spatial reconstruction through youth politics..

In the second chapter, I draw attention to Hatay's local history to understand the present-day where I try to link between the past and present. In this chapter, I explain how vivid a memory the year 1939, the date of annexation of the Sanjak of Alexandretta by Turkey is still vivid and what it reveals in the making of the Armutlu space.

Chapter three focuses on the ethnoreligious ideneity of the neighbor-hood namely *Minnina[1]*. The image and associations of the neighbourhood is also explored in this chapter.[2] The inner borders of the space and the crucial themes related to the ideas of place and space form the subject of the third chapter. Concisely, I underline the relationship between spatial identity and social / political movements.

Chapter four is a case for understanding the study of how politics is informed by geography.[3] The notion of political geography has a strong mean-ing throughout the whole dissertation, since it comes with terms such as na-tionalism, border city, proximity of blood, being *minnina*, Bashar al-Assad and so on. These are all key points that need to be explored when arguing about the political geography and also how ethnic relations are defined by the people. In this chapter, we see the importance of the neighborhood as a place. During the protest, the neighborhood became a sanctuary for the protesters. It is also important, not only during the protests but also for daily life, that the neighborhood is a home for the people who live in the Armutlu neighborhood. This chapter introduces the new other, namely the Kurds to whose position-ality they have a compolicated relationship. In Eriksen's work on ethnicity and nationalism, he notes: "Ethnicity emerges and is made relevant through social situations and encounters, and through people's ways of coping with the demands and challenges of life."[4] In this sense, this chapter, tries to un-derstand how ethnic relations are being defined and perceived by the people.

For the Armutlu neighborhood people, ethnicity is as a cultural con-struct. In other words, when they refer to ethnicity in this thesis, it includes sect, culture and political geography, so to speak. It suggests that ethnicity is

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[1] An epitome in local Arabic signaling that the person in question is an Arab-Alawite.
[2] Ryan Jones, Martin Jones, and Michael Woods, An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics (London: Routledge, 2004).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Thomas Hylland. Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives(London: Pluto, 2010), pg. 1.

a social and cultural product.[5] Commenting on this situation, Eriksen states in his study; "[…] the relationship between culture, identity and social organisation; the relationship between meaning and politics; the multivocality of symbols;… Reasearch on ethnicity has opened up exciting new fields in social anthropology."[6]

This thesis is structured around the youngsters' narratives and their experiences in the Armutlu neighborhood. Chapter five is a history of the process of youth's gaining political visibility. Old and new generation's narratives, publicly and subjectively politization, and their sense of belonging to the neighborhood are some of the prominent issues in this chapter.

I pay special attention to space and attempt to make a space-centered analyses, because during my fieldwork, I realized that social relations and politics in the neighborhood give both a form and meaning to space, and this is important for understanding the transformations in the social relations and the way in which they transform. I assert 'space in theory' and try to concretize and buttress it with the examples from my fieldwork and also utilize the contemporary/recent works which are based on space. All in all, my aim in theis thesis is to show how the youth reproduced the space of the neighborhood, again and again, thanks to their involvement in the social movements in the neighborhood.

§ 1.1 Theoretical Background

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[5] Ibid., 161.
[6] Ibid., 162.

In the 1970s, Marxist geographers such as Lefebvre, Harvey, Massey, Soja and others drew attention to the relationship between the social and the spatial. Space-centered analyses started to be used, as opposed to time-centered social thought. This opposition makes a distance between the terms 'temporal' and 'spatial'. Space became an important part of the modernist project and the enlightenment. The idea that 'space is a social and political product' makes sense for the social sciences, and the question of 'how space is socially constructed and used' leads to understanding space. So, the importance of the title of Lefebvre's main work, *The Production of Space*, is clearly seen. As the name implies, it is not a coincidence.

The question 'What is meant by space?' becomes an important part of the discussion on space. It must be underlined that Lefebvre emphasizes that the writers who write about space have different analyses. Doreen Massey is eager to show this complication with respect to Henri Lefebvre's understanding on space:

> "In part this concern about what the term 'space' is intended to mean arises simply from the multiplicity of definitions adopted. Many authors rely heavily on the terms 'space'/'spatial', and each assumes that their meaning is clear and uncontested. Yet in fact the meaning that different authors assume (and therefore –in the case of metaphorical usage –the import of the metaphor) varies greatly. Buried in these unacknowledged disagreements is a debate that never surfaces; and it never surfaces because everyone assumes we already know what these terms mean. Henri Lefebvre, in the opening pages of his book *The Production of Space,* commented on just this phenomenon: the fact that authors who in so many ways excel in logical rigour will fail to define a term which func-

tions crucially in their argument: 'Conspicuous by its absence from supposedly epistemological studies is … the idea … of space –the fact that "space" is mentioned on every page notwithstanding."[7]

In his book, *Dialectical Materialism,* Lefebvre defines geometric space in brief, and in the beginning of *The Production of Space,* he puts forward the idea that 'space has a geometrical meaning' and, in this context, 'space' is an 'empty area.' Also, he makes inferences that the common meaning of space is a mathematical construction. According to this idea, Lefebvre notes,

> "[…] Thus mathematicians appropriated space, and time, and made them part of their domain, yet they did so in a rather paradoxical way. They invented spaces – an 'indefinity', so to speak, of spaces: non-Euclidean spaces, curved spaces, x-dimensional spaces (even spaces with an infinity dimensions), spaces of configuration, abstract spaces, spaces defined by deformation or transformation, by a topology, and so on."[8]

This is important because, after this argument, Lefebvre asks about the possibility of expansions of social life in space. So, it is clearly seen that space is not thought of only mentally; it is also related with nature and lived. For my thesis, it is also important, because after this argument, Lefebvre explains two triads which based on spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces. For understanding the triad, I am going to put cite from *The Production of Space*:

1. *Spatial practice,* which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's

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[7] Doreen Massey, "Doreen Massey, Politics and Space/Time, NLR I/196, November–December 1992," New Left Review, accessed March 1, 2016, https://newleftreview.org/issues/i196/articles/doreen-massey-politics-and-space-time, 66.
[8] Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991), 2.

relationship to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance.*

2. *Representations of space,* which are tied to the relations of production and to the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.

3. *Representational spaces,* embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces).[9]

In addition, according to the second point, space is divided into three: as perceived, conceived and lived. In that sense, he makes a distinction between social space, mental space and physical space. At this juncture, Elden[10] makes a Lefebvrian schema to show the unity between physical, mental and social space:

spatial practice	*l'espace perçu*	perceived	physical	materialism
representations of space	*l'espace conçu*	conceived	mental	idealism
spaces of representation	*l'espace vécu*	lived	social	materialism & idealism

Table 1.2   Lefebvrian Schema

According to this schema, Elden explains how space is viewed in three ways for Lefebvre. Elden gives some key words for understanding these forms. For instance, physical form and real space for perceived, knowledge and logic for conceived and produced, and modified for lived.

In that manner, the term of lived space is one of the central contributions for my thesis, because if the neighborhood is thought of as perceived and lived, the people, experiences, social, cultural and political relations in spatial,

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[9] Ibid., 33.

[10] Stuart Elden, "There Is a Politics of Space Because Space Is Political," Radical Philosophy Review 10, no. 2 (2007): pp. 101-116, https://doi.org/10.5840/radphilrev20071022, 110.

so to speak *daily life*, are taken into account. The *daily life* is crucial to realizing how space is directly lived and experienced.

The idea that 'space is a social and political product' makes sense for the social sciences. It is clearly seen how it is important, given the title of Lefebvre's main work, *The Production of Space*. As the name implies, it is not a coincidence. Also, it is crucial that the question 'how space is socially constructed and used' leads to understanding space.

All in all, in this work, it is very important how people experience and shape the place they live and how they denominate and describe social relationships. If I had dealt with the Gezi uprising and the Syrian issue as purely political processes and explained them with the modernist state discourse, I would have moved away from the origins of the local and ignored the production of space. What I am trying to do here is to try to create a story based on the narratives of the "things" that constitute them, while telling the history of a place and the events experienced.

2

Historical Background (1939-1980)

> *[…]I will spend my night among delicious wines and beautiful roses. All Antioch is mine.[1]*
>
> – Konstantinos Kavafis, *Bu Kenttir Gidip Gideceğin Yer,* trans. Alova, Barış Pirhasan (Istanbul: Can Yay., 2011), 95

The memory of 1939 is not very vivid for the locals in the neighborhood, but it is an important reference point in their narratives about the present where poverty and discrimination form the two main topos . The question of where Hatay belongs, Syria or Turkey, still continues to be a confusing one for the locals.

This chapter presents a quick overview of Hatay's local history. This historical issue is important to understand the whole story. During the field-work which is based in Antakya, I realize that the identity issue is very important for the people who live in Antakya, and the story they tell about identity starts from the Sanjak of Alexandretta (past) to Hatay (present). As Sarah

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[1] Auothor's translation

Shields explains in her book *Feezes in the River,* "The Republic of Turkey thus staked its claim to the Sanjak not on geopolitical grounds but on an assertion about identity the population of the Sanjak, they argued was Turkish."[2]

Identity is crucial for this study because we see that how people draw their own boundaries and how local identity is constructed and operated in space is crucial to understanding the neighborhood as a space. Here, rather than just showing why identity matters, I want to show the conditions under which this identity is constructed. In this context, the historical process that I will describe in this chapter is important to understand the background of the construction of identity.

My fieldwork shows that people are divided in their thinking about the local history of Hatay. The story told is either a salvation / liberation story or a story of assimilation / dispossession.

> While these people are landowners, they are taken from their lands. Turkish aghas were always placed here. Arab Alevis are called Fellah. This word is even used as a humiliation. We are displaced by forced harassment and rape. Who was there at that time? There is Mustafa Kemal. Our ancestors started working as farmers alongside Turkish aghas. Atatürk described us as Eti Turks who lost their identity. I saw it in a book. He even made Turkish necessary for us to be assimilated. My grandmother's mother used to explain [that] courses were opened at that time so that they could learn Turkish by force. After all this pressure, I think that man accepts this.[3] (author's translation_Interview W)

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[2] Shields, Sarah D. Fezzes in the River: Identity Politics and European Diplomacy in the Middle East on the Eve of World War II. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

[3] Bu insanlar toprak sahibi iken topraklarından alınıyorlar. Buralara hep Türk ağalar yerleştirilmiş. Arap Alevilere Fellah deniliyor. Bu kelime aşağılama olarak kullanılır hatta. Biz zorla tacizlerle, tecavüzlerle göç ettiriliyoruz. O dönemde kim var? Mustafa Kemal var. Atalarımız Türk ağaların yanında çiftçi olarak çalışmaya başladılar. Atatürk bizi kimliklerini kaybetmiş Eti Türkleri olarak nitelendirmiş. Bir kitapta görmüştüm. Hatta asimile olmamız için Türkçeyi zorunlu kılmış. Anneannemin annesi anlatırdı, zorla Türkçe öğrensinler diye kurslar açılmış o dönemde. Bu kadar baskıdan sonra, insan bunu kabulleniyor galiba.

The interviewee who voiced this issue is 19 years old. The story of displacement told here is about the period before 1939 and is told by a 19-year-old teenager. Therefore, although we are describing the process from 1939 to the present, it is not possible to consider these two periods separately, because they are not actually independent processes. A 19-year-old teenager can also evaluate the present tense by referring to 1939. That's why we're talking about a very vivid memory.

As Shields noted, "Long concentrated in the area around Latakia and living in the Sanjak for as long as people remembered, the Alawis by World War I had come to be mostly poor peasant farmers."[4] This situation, which Shields talks about, emerges among the interviewees between the ages of 50 and 70 whom I interviewed. As I have quoted here, my 2nd interviewee, 55, and my 3rd, who is 70, give examples of this situation when talking about their ancestors.

> My grandfather is a cropper. Let's say the slave working for the dominant class. They came to their senses after the land reform.[5] (author's translation_Interview 2)
>
> Alawis made the biggest revolution here. They were all croppers. The lands were always in the hands of Sunni aghas. Now, Alawis have always owned land.[6] (author's translation_Interview 3)

In her book, Shields quotes Martel Durieux, who was the French High Commissioner in Antakya: "He also noted that most of the Arabic-speaking Alawis and Sunnis were like serfs on the land and under the domination of

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[4] Shields, Sarah D. Fezzes in the River: Identity Politics and European Diplomacy in the Middle East on the Eve of World War II. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

[5] Benim dedem marabadır. Hakim sınıfın yanında köle diyelim. Bu insanlar toprak reformundan sonra kendilerine geldiler.

[6] Burada en büyük devrimi Aleviler yaptılar. Alevilerin hepsi marabaymış. Topraklar Sunni ağaların elindeymiş. Şimdi Aleviler toprak sahibi oldular.

the Turkish landowners."[7]

As I mentioned before, this story is also conveyed as an assimilation story regarding the period of the Turkish Republic and the post-Ottoman period. Sarah Shields' account is crucial to understand the link between pre-1939 and post-1939 and gives a clue about the claim of assimilation:

> Captain Gacon reported that Turkish landowners in the Amık region were trying to coerce Arab peasants to inscribe themselves as Turks in the registration rolls. The local delegation of three Arab notables visiting him claimed that in the Amık region, the landowners and superintendents were Turks while the cultivators were Arab. In one of Amık's villages, Ayranji Sharki, the delegation complained that landowners had been pressuring their Arab peasants for the previous three months, demanding that they inscribe themselves as Turks. For the preceding ten days, owners had exerted financial pressure on their cultivators, locking the doors of the fodder depots necessary to feed the peasants' draft animals. On November 15, two of the owners called together all of the Arab peasants of the village and made them register on the spot. The plaintiffs claimed that peasants were forced to take an oath on the Qur'an committing themselves to inscribe as Turks within twenty-four hours; those who refused would be immediately driven from the village.[8]

As the only province to join Turkey after its establishment in 1923, Hatay is politically unique as well. In 1921, Turkey signed the Ankara Treaty with France, which put Syria under the French mandate at the time. The agreement stipulated that Hatay – then called the Sanjak of Alexandretta – would remain within French-Syria under a special mandate regime. This changed in

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[7] Shields, Sarah D. Fezzes in the River: Identity Politics and European Diplomacy in the Middle East on the Eve of World War II. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.
[8] Ibid, 140.

1936, when French colonial rule was being redefined next door, it and Turkey pressed Paris to make the Sanjak independent. France acquiesced, not wishing to alienate Ankara and push it toward the nascent Nazi-led Axis – the province gained independence in 1938 and was annexed by Turkey in 1939.[9]

The Hatay issue was a personal issue of Mustafa Kemal. Mustafa Kemal, who organized a country trip after the War of Independence, visited Adana on 15 March 1923. People who migrated from Antakya to Adana at that time established businesses in Adana. The people of Antakya, who learned that Mustafa Kemal was coming to Adana, organized a welcome ceremony for him.[10] In this welcoming ceremony, they shared the situation of Hatay with Mustafa Kemal. In the face of this situation, Mustafa Kemal emphasized that Hatay was a "national" issue and expressed, "The Turkish homeland of forty centuries cannot be captured by the enemy". However, the "liberation" day for the people of Antakya took place 15 years later due to some political issues.[11]

This controversial issue of 'Where does Antakya belong?' continued to be a political question for the Republic of Turkey until June 29, 1939. "Almost exactly a year later, on 29 June 1939, it announced the union of that state with Turkey – to the great anger of the Syrians, who even today depict the area as Syrian on their maps."[12] The slogan of 'Hatay (Antakya), 40 centuries old homeland' of course was not accidental, since after this time, the annexation of Antakya to Turkey caused other problematic issues. The 'Turkish History Thesis' makes trouble for the people who continue to live in Antakya,

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[9] Cagaptay, Soner. "Syria's War Could Inflame Turkey's Hatay Province." Syria's War Could Inflame Turkey's Hatay Province - The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Accessed March 07, 2020. https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/syrias-war-couldinflame-turkeys-hatay-province.

[10] Seyfittinoğlu, Sinan. Antakya'nın 50 Yılı Çok Iyi Adammış Benim Babam: Anı/araştırma. Ankara: Dafne Kitap, 2016.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Ibid.,203.

since the people who live in Antakya and define themselves as Alevis were accepted as Turkish. Also, they will have the same ethnic origin as the Turks.[13] Turkish historian Yücel Güçlü mentioned that, for Atatürk, the Sanjak was clearly Turkish. He also noted:

> When the President talked, more outspokenly than had been generally expected, about Alexandretta and Antioch, the House rose to its feet and applauded almost frenziedly. This official and authoritative statement was indicative of the persistence and tenacity behind the rising temperatures of popular feeling among the Turkish inhabitants of the Sanjak. Moreover, Atatürk himself had measured the tempo of the Turkish thesis and rights and this pronouncement made it clear, not only that the demands would be pressed, but also that the Turkish nation discovered that the fate of its brothers across the frontier was inspiring it with emotions it could hardly keep under control.[14]

Also, not only the slogan but also the name of Hatay is not accidental, as Zürcher states, "[…] the ethnically extremely mixed area known to Turkish nationalists as 'Hatay' (Land of the Hittites, who it will be remembered were considered proto-Turks at the time) with the towns of Antakya and Iskenderun (Alexandrette)."[15]

The story of Hatay's being Syrian territory before 1939, Atatürk's making the Hatay issue a personal issue and, as a result of being the last piece of land that joined the Republic of Turkey, it continues to operate in a different way with similar dynamics today. The effect of the past on what is experi-

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[13] Fulya Doğruel and Johan Leman, "'Conduct' and 'Counter-conduct' on the Southern Border of Turkey: Multicultural Antakya," Middle Eastern Studies 45, no. 4 (2009): pg. 601, doi:10.1080/00263200903009650.

[14] Güçlü Yücel. The Question of the Sanjak of Alexandretta: a Study in Turkish-French-Syrian Relations. Ankara: Turkish historical Society, 2001.

[15] Zürcher, Erik Jan. Turkey: A Modern History. London: I.B. Tauris, 2013.

enced today is quite significant. Although the historical backgoround presented here does not seem like a background specific to the neighborhood, the whole story is exactly the story of the neighborhood. This is very evident in the interviews and the narratives of the people. People still live in this duality, just as Hatay existed in before 1939. Where these people belong and what they define themselves as are based on this duality.

§ 2.1 Memory of 1980s and the Present

After its reputation of being the last province to join the Republic of Turkey, we begin to hear the name of Hatay frequently, this time in 1970. In the 1980s, Hatay became involved in right-left conflicts. The fact that the demographic structure of the region is very diverse, especially that it has a considerable Arab Alawite population, caused intense conflicts in this region during this period. As Nur Sinem Kılıç mentioned in her study, "With the 1960s, the Alevis also found chance to become actor in the political realm. After the long isolation period, they met with the left politics during the urbanization process."[16] It is at this time that we begin to hear the name of the Armutlu neighborhood. One of the most important reasons why the neighborhood is the subject of this study is that in the 1970s and 1980s, the neighborhood was an important position for leftist groups in the right-left conflicts.

In order to understand how the 1970s and 1980s were experienced in the region, besides the interviews, I also studied the news of the local newspapers at that time. When we look at the local newspapers of Antakya and Hatay in these times, in the 1970s and 1980s, it is understood that the situation was caused by the separation of ethno-religious communities into political

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[16] Kılıç, Nur Sinem. "The Fragmentation Af Alevilik as Exemplified in the Case of Gazi Mahallesi: Three Cemevis, Three Free Spaces," 2015.

camps: "At to these times local Antakya and Hatay newspapers contained stories of terrorism, provocations and unease in the region."[17] In his book,[18] Seyfittinoğlu, in the period from 1966 to 2016, compiled the news archives from the Antakya Newspaper. Here, I want to give some news examples from the book for understanding the period:

> Governor Yetkiner's intervention is expected! After the Education Institute, those who complain about the pressure of Ülkü Ocak militants who are not students at Antakya High School are growing like an avalanche.[19] (author's translation)

> Student events are starting. In the first days of the new year, Antakya was shaken with a murder case. According to the news, a 15-year-old teenager lost his life as a result of an attack on the street. Publications about student events that increased in Antakya in January are drawing attention. During this period, the news that fascist attacks increased in many districts of Hatay, while the Provincial Chairman of the Republican People's Party, Öner Miski, frequently warns about the issue.[20] (author's translation)

> Republican People's Party members from Antakya, Harbiye and Samandağ went to Reyhanli Market under the auspices of Reyhanli; the

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[17] Fulya Doğruel and Johan Leman, "'Conduct' and 'Counter-conduct' on the Southern Border of Turkey: Multicultural Antakya," Middle Eastern Studies 45, no. 4 (2009): pg. 601, doi:10.1080/00263200903009650.

[18] Seyfittinoğlu, Sinan. Antakya'nın 50 Yılı Çok Iyi Adammış Benim Babam: Anı/araştırma. Ankara: Dafne Kitap, 2016.

[19] Vali Yetkiner'in müdahalesi bekleniyor! Eğitim Enstitüsü'nden sonra Antakya Lisesi'nde öğrenci olmayan Ülkü Ocak militanlarının baskısından şikayet edenler çığ gibi artıyor.

[20] Öğrenci olayları başlıyor. Yeni yılın ilk günlerinde Antakya bir kan davası cinayeti ile çalkalanıyor. Habere göre 15 yaşında bir genç sokak ortasında uğradığı saldırı sonucu yaşamını yitiriyor. Ocak ayında Antakya'da artış gösteren öğrenci olaylarıyla ilgili yayınlar dikkat çekiyor. Bu dönemde Hatay'ın birçok ilçesinde faşizan saldırıların arttığı yönünde haberler dikkat çekerken, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi İl Başkanı Öner Miski konuyla ilgili sıklıkla uyarılarda bulunuyor.

day before they could not go, due to the intensified fascist attacks following the June 5 elections.[21] (author's translation)

In the declaration made by the managers of many non-governmental organizations and associations, the message "Alevi Sunni is equal, fascism is perfidious" was given.[22] (author's translation)

The state of emergency ended in 1987, but the conditions had not changed for the neighborhood, as mentioned above. As elucidated above, this chapter will proceed chronologically where the Syrian War (2011), the Reyhanlı Explosion (2013), and the Establishment of the Defne District (2014) will be dealt with one by one in order to establish the connection between events.

The Syrian War is already one of the main topics of this thesis. In chapter three, this issue is explored in detail. The reason we talk about this here is due to its links with the the local history of Antakya. This situation, which affects the Antakya population in general politically, economically and socially, has an important role in the constitution of Arab Alawi identities. It is under the aegis of the Syrian war Antakya recalled the past. Just like in 1980s, Antakya was tried to be "open to provocation" with the Syrian War. This situation was reinforced by the Reyhanlı Explosion in 2013. The 2013 Reyhanlı bombings were a terrorist attack that involved the explosion of two car bombs in Reyhanlı on 11 May 2013. 52 people were killed, and 140 more were injured in the attacks.[23]

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[21] Antakyalı, Harbiyeli ve Samandağlı Cumhuriyet Halk Partililer, 5 Haziran seçimlerini müteakip yoğunlaşan faşist saldırılar nedeniyle gidemedikleri Reyhanlı Pazarına önceki gün Reyhanlılar'ın himayesinde gittiler ve çalışıp döndüler.

[22] Birçok sivil toplum kuruluşu ve dernek yöneticilerinin bir araya gelerek yaptığı deklarasyonda "Alevi Sünni birdir, faşizm kalleştir" mesajı verilmiştir.

[23] The 2013 Reyhanlı bombings were a terrorist attack that involved the explosion of two car bombs in Reyhanlı on 11 May 2013. 52 people were killed, and 140 more were injured in the attacks.http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/274009/reyhanli-saldirisi-icin-vahim-iddialar.html.

As a result of the statements made by the government after the Reyhanlı explosion, it is clearly seen that the Alevi-Sunni conflict was triggered in Antakya. Also during my fieldwork, people expressed how disturbed this situation was. After the explosion, the statement made by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan[24], who was sitting in the seat of the Prime Minister, was reflected in the headlines of the newspapers as follows: "The expression of sectarianism from Erdoğan":

> Last year, for example, when a car bomb in the border city of Reyhanli killed 52 people, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan angered Alevis by referring to the victims as "martyred 53 Sunni citizens of ours."[25]

Turkey's then prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, caused anger with his comment. According to the interviews, many people mention this comment to highlight the polarisation which the government uses. As emerged from my fieldwork, the people think that the government support for the Islamist Syrian opposition group and this situation also angered the people who live in Antakya and define themselves as Alawis. 29-year-old interviewee A states that, with the Reyhanlı explosion, the state tried to organize the society along the Alawi-Sunni separation in this region, just as it did in the 1980s, but the Alawis acted smartly and prudently and did not allow this to happen.

> There was an explosion in Reyhanlı. In this case, as everyone knows, the deep state, the National Intelligence Service, the external forces had an impact. The explosion happened, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan's first

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[24] He previously served as Prime Minister of Turkey from 2003 to 2014. He is the current President of Turkey since 2014.

[25] Farooq, Umar. "Turkey's Alevis Beholden to Politics." News | Al Jazeera. December 18, 2014. Accessed January 30, 2020. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/12/turkey-alevis-beholden-politics-201412168438512717.html.

sentence was: "They killed my 52 Sunni citizens." They said the perpetrators were caught just an hour after the explosion. They gathered young people from our Alevi zone as if they were perpetrators. What was their purpose – let the Sunni people revolt and cause sectarian conflict. But what we did, we were smarter than them. As soon as the explosion occurred, within half an hour, we walked to the bridge in tens of thousands, Alawites only, for Reyhanli only. Only we got up again. We also called the people from Reyhanlı to come because we planted saplings for 52 citizens. Those who came were only families of the deceased. Among them, only those who voted for the Republican People's Party came. Those who voted for the Justice and Development Party did not come.[26] (author's translation_Interview Armutlu Youth A)

Two interviewees from the Armutlu Youth, aged 27 and 17, state that young people living in the Armutlu Neighborhood and Samandağ district were targeted after the explosion. These two places are the regions where Arab Alawis live as the majority.

Due to the Reyhanlı Explosion, one of the prisoners' brothers is from Armutlu Youth. He is still under arrest right now. During the incident, that man was lying in his house, taken by the police.[27] (author's trasnlation_Interview Armutlu Youth E)

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[26] Reyhanlı'da patlama oldu. Bu olayda herkesin bildiği gibi derin devletin, Milli İstihbarat Teşkilatı'nın, dış güçlerin etkisi vardı. Patlama gerçekleşti. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın söylediği ilk cümle: "Benim 52 Sunni vatandaşımı katlettiler" oldu. Patlamadan hemen bir saat sonra failler yakalandı dediler. Fail diye bizim Alevi mıntıkasından gençleri topladılar. Amaçları neydi, Sunni taraflar ayaklansın, mezhep çatışması olsun. Ama biz ne yaptık, daha akıllı davrandık. Patlama olduğu an, yarım saat içinde, onbinlerce kişi, sadece Aleviler, Reyhanlı için köprüye yürüdük. Yine sadece biz kalktık ayağa. Reyhanlı'daki halka da çağrı yaptık gelsinler diye çünkü 52 vatandaş için fidan diktik biz. Gelenler sadece ölen insanların aileleriydi. Bunların içinden de sadece Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi'ne oy verenler geldi. Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'ne oy verenler gelmedi.

[27] Reyhanlı Patlamasından dolayı, hapiste yatanlardan birisinin abisi Armutlu Gençliğinden. Şuan hala tutuklu. Olay sırasında o adam evinde yatıyordu, polis tarafından alındı.

Taken from Reyhanlı explosion: Two people were taken from Armutlu. One is from Harbiye, and one is from Samandağ.[28] (author's translation_Interview Armutlu Youth B)

Many of the people I interviewed have common discourses, but the most common among these narratives concerns the assimilation of Arab Alawis since 1939. These interviewees, aged 29, 30 and 31, respectively, have a common opinion about the Reyhanlı explosion. Even when commemorating the people who died there, the state does this by marginalizing the Alawis living in the region. Or the perpetrator is chosen from the other.

In addition, according to the people, Erdoğan's rhetoric and speeches on Syria have a Sunni undertone and, in this manner, what is desired is to create a faction between the two sides, dividing the city into two, just like in the 1980s:

This is one of the neighborhoods that experience sectarian conflicts the most. The neighborhoods opposite are Turkish and Sunni neighborhoods. In the 1980s, they fired a lot at each other from the roofs. This is what was the most feared when the Syrian war broke out. People were afraid that we would ever be like this again. Because that's what's planned. The most obvious and clear example of this is Reyhanlı.[29] (author's translation_Interview F)

Many Antakya residents, especially Alawis, are afraid and feel threatened because they argue to be encountering with "strangers" in their own city. These "strangers" are argued to be the members of some Islamist groups. In Antakya, Alawis firmsly argue that the government supports Islamist Syrian

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[28] Reyhanlı patlamasından alınanlar: Armutlu'dan iki kişi alındı. Biri Harbiye'den, bir kişi de Samandağ'dan.

[29] Burası mezhepsel çatışmaları en çok yaşayan mahallelerden biri. Karşıdaki mahalleler Türk, Sunni mahalleleri. 1980lerde çatılardan birbirlerine çok ateş etmişlerdir. Suriye savaşı patlak verince en çok korkulan şey bu oldu. İnsanlar acaba bir daha böyle olur muyuz diye korktular. Planlanan şey bu çünkü. Bunun en bariz ve net örneği Reyhanlı'dır.

opposition groups. These groups create fear and anger among Alawis in Antakya as the latter sides with Bashar al Assad. This fear affects people's daily lives negatively and causes negative thoughts towards the innocent people who escape from the war. This will be explained in the following chapters, supported by notes from the field.

§ 2.2 The Defne Project: A Line of Separation

Only one year after from the Reyhanli explosion, a decision was taken which had a huge meaning for Antakya and its residents. In 2014, ethnic and religious separation was supported by a law that would construct a new provincial boundary. In accordance with the decision, the boundary split Antakya along sectarian lines. With the boundary, all Alawi districts were to be collected under a new name, Defne. In addition to that, all Sunni districts would stay under the name of Antakya. Additionally, the new Antakya had industrial zones and the airport.[30] In my interviews with young people, this is clearly a situation that they are uncomfortable with this. Young people say that this situation will commove the society and the name Defne will turn into a label. Sunnis and Alawis lived together in the region that was previously simply called Antakya, but with this law, all Alevi neighborhoods in the Antakya district were merged in an exclusive manner under the name Defne. The 25-year-old interviewee also states that this situation, which has occurred with the new law, will create duality.

> They brought metropolitan law to Antakya. Before this law, Antakya had a mixed structure. Everyone was living together. But with this law, it became such that they established the Defne district, for example.

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[30] Ibid.

Who lives in the Defne district? Alawis are there. They drew such a line that with their new plan... Who is in Antakya? The Turks.[31] (author's translation_Interview W)

It is obvious that it is read as marginalization by people. The people I interviewed thought the same. The comments made by these people on different events are common. This is what we see in the example of the Defne project.

In his study, *European Local Administrations: Autonomy Condition and Alawite Culture Item in Determining The Borders of Antakya and Defne Districts,* Ali Açıkgöz explains:

[⋯] the formation of [the] district of Antakya borders of Defne, which was [a] district of Antakya that was [within the] county of Hatay, which was created with application of [Act] 6360, [did] numbered Act not considered [the] Europe Local Administrations Autonomy Condition and the request of the people living in the region; [it] has been investigated by the help of a fieldwork.

In addition, the main opposition, Republican People's Party (CHP), was faced with this decision. CHP MPs objected to law 6360, which is against the Constitution. The objections of the appeal petitions to determine the borders of the Antakya and Defne districts are as follows:

The districts separated from the Antakya district and connected to the newly established Defne District are Akdeniz, Armutlu and Elektrik ve Sümerler Mahalle. It is not possible to say that the existing arrangement, which is not located among the 41 districts connected to the Antakya district and which is located only in the district of Defne as 4 districts,

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[31] Antakya'ya büyükşehir yasasını getirdiler. Bu yasadan önce Antakya karma bir yapıdaydı. Herkes iç içe yaşıyordu. Ama bu yasayla birlikte öyle bir hal aldı ki mesela Defne ilçesini kurdular. Defne ilçesinde kimler oturuyor? Aleviler oturuyor. Öyle bir çizgi çektiler ki yaptıkları yeni planla...Antakya'da kim var? Türkler.

shows consistency even geographically. For example: the distance between Kışlasaray District in Antakya District and Sümerler District in Defne District is 580 meters. Likewise, Cumhuriyet District in Antakya District is 700 meters away from Elektrik District in Defne District; the distance to Armutlu Mahallesi is 690 meters. While this is the case, the distance between the Electricity and Sumerler Districts in Defne District, 1.5 km, is a clear indication that the amendment made by the legal arrangement was made with "vote anxiety," because, according to the results of the 2009 local elections: 94.2% to CHP and 2.8% to AKP in Akdeniz Mahallesi; 91.7% to CHP and 4.4% to AKP in Armutlu District; in the Electricity Quarter, there were votes of 94.1% to the CHP, 3.2% to the AKP; and 90.2% to the CHP in the Sümerler District and 5.5% to the AKP. In the towns of Antakya district, it will be seen that the situation is opposite. For example: in Aksaray District, CHP is 10.6%, AKP is 67.7%; 19.3% AKP, 54.2% to CHP in Akbaba District; and 10.3% to the CHP in Aksaray District, and 74.1% percent of votes were cast for the AKP. As can be understood from all these data, the current regulation has been brought with the sole concern of "sharing the places that are difficult to win."[32] (author's translation)

According to the people who live in Defne, this situation causes a secterian line as in the words of Interviewee A:

Defne project is a project especially related to Armutlu. They cut the back part from Armutlu neighborhood to Samandağ. This is fascist behavior.[33] (author's translation_Interview A)

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[32] http://www.kararlaryeni.anayasa.gov.tr/Karar/Content/72e0a94c195c4789b08bba43e74c5449?excludeGerekce=False&wordsOnly=False

[33] Defne projesi özellikle Armutlu ile ilgili bir projedir. Armutlu mahallesinden arka tarafı, Samandağ'a kadar olan kısmı kestiler. Bu faşizan bir harekettir.
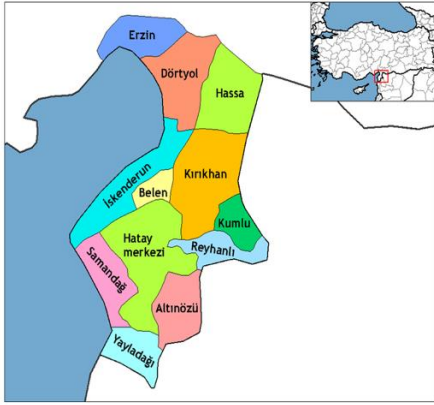
Figure 1.1 Hatay and its districts
before 2012[35]

Figure 1.2 After 2012[34]

Although this is a metropolitan law, when the Defne district was established, an artificial district with almost an 100% Arab Alawite population was created, regardless of which district the villages and neighborhoods were closer to, Antakya or Defne. This situation makes the people living in the newly established Defne very uneasy. That's why, while talking about the Defne district, young people always drew attention to ethnicity and the discrimination from the state. Interviewer A, 29, underlines that Arab Alawites are imprisoned in a certain region, along with the drawn border.

> Why are the people called Nusayri on this side and the others on the other? The Defne project is very important in this regard.[36] (author's translation_Interview A)

Since this is a policy of the AKP, the youth often say that the AKP is responsible for this situation. The 31-year-old interviewee refers to the AKP by "men".

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[34]http://turkiyebilgi.byethost8.com/mahalle_yerlesim/akdenizbolgesi/hatay/hatay.htm?i=1

[35] https://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatay%27%C4%B1n_il%C3%A7eleri

[36] Neden Nusayri denilen halk bu tarafta ve diğerleri diğer tarafta. Defne projesi bu konuda çok önemli.

Currently, the men have created a pure Alawi neighborhood / district under the name Defne.[37] (author's translation_Interview F)

To sum up, the Defne project, launched in 2012, was a project that deepened the ethnic and religious divisions in Antakya. This decision, made by the ruling AKP, caused a reaction from the people living in the city, and this situation was seen as a new step towards sectarian polarization. At the same time, with this project, it aimed to separate the spaces with neighborhoods and alienate people from each other.

All these events mentioned, the Reyhanlı Eruption, the start of the Syrian War and the Defne Project, provided a solid ground for the Gezi Protests in the Armutlu neighborhood. In the next chapter, we will see that how the people draw their own boundaries and what are the things that determine the borderline. I will introduce the people who dwell in the Armutlu neighborhood and their sine qua non conditions as the makers of the spaces.

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[37] Şu anda adamlar Defne adı altında saf bir Alevi mahallesi / ilçesi yarattılar.

3

The Neighborhood and the Alawi Identity

> *If the world burns, the wretch can make it happen,*
> *said Müslüm Gürses[1]. I was a little child and I did*
> *not recognize it but I guess on the other hand I knew*
> *it. Truly we were all poor, we did not have enough*
> *money, and we were all under difficult conditions.*
> *We tried to get warm in our stone house. Our*
> *school was always bad, and was not heated. We ex-*
> *perienced all these bad things together. And also*
> *the neighborhood is the Other's neighborhood be-*
> *cause we did not know if we are ,Turkish or Arab.*
> *We experienced this dilemma, I remember, and we*
> *are Alawis, and our family always cautioned us not*
> *to tell anybody.[2]*
>
> – Author's translation, *Interview G*

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[1] He was a popular Turkish arabesque singer and actor.

[2] Şimdi şöyle, Müslüm Gürses der ya 'Yakarsa dünyayı garipler yakar' diye… Yani küçüktüm tabii bunun farkında değildim ama galiba bir yandan da biliyordum bunu. Hakikaten hepimiz şeydik, yoksulduk, çok paramız yoktu, zor şartlar altındaydık. Sobalı evlerde ısınmaya

When I started this work, I realized that the youth make connection between the concepts which are place, identity and class. These three concepts appear as signifact notions in the narratives of the youth about the Armutlu neighborhood.

Compared to the other Alawi neighbourhoods of Defne, with its old houses and poor infrastructure Armutlu has more inward-oriented structure in terms of the profile of its residents and the self identification of the neighbourhood. Hence people rarely choose to move into Armutlu.

In this chapter, we will see how the youth becomes an active agent in the drawing of boundaries and the makers of these boundaries. accordingly the question of local identity, both its construction and reproduction become crucial for understanding the remaking of the boundaries within the neighborhood. Gupta and Ferguson's questions are a key for this chapter: "With meaning making understood as a practice, how are spatial meanings established? Who has the power to make places of spaces? Who contests this?"[3] Based on Gupta and Ferguson, I argue that the people who dwell in the Armutlu neighborhood and the concepts that these people put forward while reproducing and determining the boundaries of space.

These questions are particularly essential since the answers of these questions explore the making up of the space and ethnor-religious identity through politics Not only the neighborhood as a space but also the neighborhood as a place is crucial, because the location of the Armutlu neighborhood has an essential function to reproduce the "neighborhood resident".

çalışıyorduk, okulumuz hep şeydi mesela kötüydü, ısınmazdı, şuydu, buydu. Bütün bunları hep beraber yaşardık. Öyle bir mahalleydi yani, yoksulluğun mahallesiydi. Ve bir yandan da ötekilerin. Şöyle çünkü Arap mıyız, Türk müyüz ikilemini çok yaşardık ben onu hatırlıyorum. Alevi miyiz, bunu söylemeli miyiz yoksa söylememeli miyiz. Bunu çok yaşardık hep beraber arkadaşlarımla. Çünkü tembihlerlerdi söylemeyin diye ama neden diye sorardık, çok da ileri gidemezdik sorgulamalarımızda, korkardık.

[3] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," Cultural Anthropology 7, no. 1 (1992): pg. 11., doi:10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020.

The local identity of being from the Armutlu neighborhood is important to figure out the space for the residents. The affiliation between space and the local identity is crucial as it is the space where local identity is renegotiated and reproduced. Rhys Jones, in the "An Introducion to Political Geography," narrates a tale in their book:

> I was walking down this street in Mold, north Wales [in the UK] – years ago now – with some friends from my home town in Llanelli in south Wales. We were laughing, playing about and talking to each other in Welsh. A group of locals came down the street, and after hearing our accents, came up to us quite aggressively … obviously looking for a fight. They tried to taunt us by calling us 'Cymry plastic' or 'plastic Welsh.' Obviously, we didn't fit in with their ideal type of a Welsh person. We weren't local and we spoke south-Walian Welsh. That was enough for them. Anyway, we ran into the nearest pub and managed to get out of any trouble.[4]

The excerpt above resonates with my own experience during my fieldwork in the neighborhood. For the fieldwork, I needed to interview the local residents and despite I was sharing the same ethnoreligious background with them , I needed another person to connect with the local people. One reason why I was met with suspicion was because I do not have any fundamental ethnic markers such as my accent, which is an unfit in the Armutlu community. This chapter will demonstrate the markers of belonging in the neighbourhood, namely the role of local dialect/ language and being *Minnina* accompanied by a political dilemma of being an Arab or a Turk.

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[4] Ryan Jones, Martin Jones, and Michael Woods, An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics (London: Routledge, 2004), pg. 82.

§ 3.1   Construction of *Minnina*

Minnina, min qalbna, min ruhna[5]

– Author's translation, *Interview G*

As was mentioned before, the Armutlu neighborhood predominantly consists of an Arab Alawi population. Fundamental ethnic markers such as local language – accent – and being *minnina* create a close link with ethnicity. Being *minnina* and an accent indicate who is from the neighborhood and who is not . People attribute a value to these markers and produce their own space and boundary to exclude the others.

Here, we examine the question 'Why is ethnicity used?', which can be answered with the interviews where people talk about their own groups and also other groups; here, there is a group and its members who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups.[6] There are cultural and ethnic differences between the neighborhood residents and people who are defined as the other by the locals.

> The first fact of ethnicity is the application of systematic distinctions between insiders and outsiders; between Us and Them. If no such principle exists there can be no ethnicity, since ethnicity presupposes an institutionalised relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other to be culturally distinctive.[7]

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[5] "From us, from our hearts, from our soul."
[6] Thomas Hylland. Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives(London: Pluto, 2010), pg. 12.
[7] Ibid., 18.

This ethno-religious group, referred as Arab Alawis, constructed its own cultural geneology. The group members define themselves as *Minninas* and if someone is not *Minnina,* he/she is considered as an Other by Arab Alawis. This Other, the non-Minnina is imagined as culturally, ethnically and religiously different. Thus, this Other is supposed to be outside of the border-line.

Initially, being *minnina* is the thickest notion marking the border for the space. So what is being *minnina*? This word is Arabic and means 'from us' – our community, ethnicity, religion – but it has been changed in the local language. In this regard, the category of *minnina* creates a group of people and a 'We' category. So who is this 'we' and what is the identity of 'we'?[8] When you meet people from the neighborhood, it is the first question directed at you: Are you *minnina*? In other words, do you belong to the category of We or not. It identifies that the community consists of Arab Alawi people.

Being a *minnina* for Arab Alawi people who uses the local Arabic language is really crucial for the spatial boundary. The people who settle in the neighborhood always use the word *minnina* to characterize and categorize people.

Moreover, this ethnic differences makes trouble for people who are Arab Alawi. In Williams and Smith's paper, which is based on a geographical concept and nationalism, their ideas are based on the relationship between political geography and nationalism.[9] Likewise Jones, Jones and Wood draw

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[8] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): pg. 14., doi:10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020.

[9] Williams, Colin, and Anthony D. Smith. "The National Construction of Social Space." Progress in Geography 7, no. 4 (1983): 502-18. doi:10.1177/030913258300700402.

a strong link between nations and ethnic communities of people:[10] "The ability or inability to speak a language can often be used as a means of defining who actually belongs to, and who is excluded from, a nation."[11] My own experience, as mentioned above, showed that language and accent determine if you belong to the community. It was noted that ethnicity is a particular point in the space and that language and accent are inscribed within it.

All in all, language and accent are important for defining the space. Since the local Arab Alawis of Armutlu have Arabic as their mother tongue, when they speak in Turkish, they have an accent. One of the interviewers explained this situation: the language which they speak and the accent they have are like a code to understand who is *minnina* and who is not. Thus, whilst the language was a *stigma,* it becomes a code that helps them during conflicts. So, these two elements are crucial for the production of the boundaires of this space.

When we look at the new generation, we see that the number of people who speak Arabic is decreasing day by day. The reason is that families do not want to teach the language to their children, since, when they learn Arabic, it reverberates to their accent. In other words, the families wants their children to speak only Turkish, because the accent stigmatizes them as the Other. As Goffman stated:

> Society establishes the means of categorizing persons and the complement of attributes felt to be ordinary and natural for members of each of these categories. [...] When a stranger comes into our presence, then, first appearances are likely to enable us to anticipate his category and attributes, his "social identity" [...] We lean on these anticipations that

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[10] Ryan Jones, Martin Jones, and Michael Woods, "The Political Geographies of the Nation," in An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics (London: Routledge, 2004), pg. 84.

[11] Ibid., 82.

we have, transforming them into normative expectations, into right-eously presented demands. [...] It is [when an active question arises as to whether these demands will be filled] that we are likely to realize that all along we had been making certain assumptions as to what the individual before us ought to be. [These assumed demands and the character we impute to the individual will be called] *virtual social identity*. The category and attributes he could in fact be proved to possess will be called his *actual social identity*.[12]

According to the locals, there is another reason why people do not want to teach Arabic to their children: as was mentioned before, the principles and reforms of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk were supported by the people of Armutlu. In that sense, the issue of language became clear with the Language Reform in 1928.

Here, we need to mention 'language homogenization,'[13] which is crucial for nation-building. On the one hand, language is one of the fundamental ethnic markers that is really important to define ethnicity; on the other hand, this situation opens the way for otherization, since, when the people accept that Arabic is their language, they are the Others. That's exactly why they accept the Alawi identity easily, but when it comes to being an Arab, things change. It is much easier for young people to accept their Arab identity, especially those affiliated with a leftist organization, than other young people and other people over the age of 40. The people from the neighborhood who do not define themselves as leftists can distance themselves from their Arab identity at a certain point. In this context, the reference point is Mustafa Ke-

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[12] Erving Goffman, Stigma: Notes on the Managment of Spoiled Identity(Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pg. 2.

[13] Fulya Doğruel and Johan Leman, "'Conduct' and 'Counter-conduct' on the Southern Border of Turkey: Multicultural Antakya," Middle Eastern Studies 45, no. 4 (2009): pg. 601, doi:10.1080/00263200903009650.

mal and what he did for the region. Although the residents of the neighborhood took to the streets for Assad, and Syria as a whole, during the social movements, when it comes to Mustafa Kemal, they can immediately single out their Turkih affiliations. One of the interviewees, E, 25 years old, lives in the Armutlu Neighborhood and is a member of a leftist organization criticizes the acceptance of Turkish identity and the rejection of Arab identity by some neighborhood residents.

> He/she says I am Alevi and Turk. He doesn't accept being an Arab. He thinks that being an Arab is a degradation. We have a campaign about mother-language. We wrote a manifesto in Arabic and also in Turkish. One person from the neighborhood said that it is an obscurantism. And who said that he is an Arab. He says that because of the language reform. The state's campaigns of 'citizens speak Turkish' worked well here. They don't teach Arabic to their children and always warn them not to speak Arabic at school, to speak Turkish properly.[14] (author's translation_Interview E)

The state of reconciling with the makers of Arabness is more smooth for young political acitivists than for young unpolitized people. The excerpt here is from an interview with an activist interviewee. In most of the interviews I conducted with the activists, the awareness of owning their identity and mother tongue was higher compared to the others. We can also compare this situation with those who experienced the 1980s, because those who refuse to teach the language to the new generation never speak Arabic with their

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[14] Ben Aleviyim ama Türküm diyor. Araplık'ı kabul etmiyor. Araplık'ın aşağılanacak bir ırk olduğunu düşünüyor. Bizim bir anadil kampanyamız oldu. Arapça ve Türkçe bildiri yazdık. Armutlulu bir amca bize bunun gericilik olduğunu söyledi. Bunu söyleyen de Arap yani. Çünkü Harf İnkilabı var. Devlet burayla çok oynadı, vatandaş Türkçe konuş falan diye, bunlar tuttu burada. Mesela çocuklarına Arapça öğretmiyorlar. Okulda sakın Arapça konuşma, düzgün Türkçe konuş diye uyarıyorlar.

children so that their children will have much smoother Turkish; that is, those who do not accept the situation they are in can actually recall the 1980s.

As Doğruel and Leman mention in their paper, "The pressure on using only the Turkish language in public began to be applied across society from 1928, under single-party rule. Language was regarded as the primary element in the process of 'Turkifying' non-Muslims, Kurds and Arabs."[15]

In addition, when I look at the older generation's narratives from the field, there is another reason that people do not want to teach their mother-language to their children.

Interviewees over the age of 50 are important witnesses to understanding 1980 and what happened in those years. As can be seen in these two quotations, interviewees 2 and 5, who are 55 years old, are telling us this situation as witnesses.

> Kenan Evren forbade speaking in Arabic. Also, Arabic songs were always banned here at all weddings. As it is now, the police were not so effective. There is a weak spot in our people: they adopt the army. Maybe because of Atatürk. When the police came, things were growing. Then the police pulled back and sent the troop.[16] (author's translation_Interview 2)

> There was pressure against us. I did military service in 1983, 1984. I was on the phone with my mum. My mother spoke Arabic because she did not know how to speak Turkish. They were forbidden to speak Arabic. I am a citizen of the Republic of Turkey. My mother does not speak

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[15] Fulya Doğruel and Johan Leman, "'Conduct' and 'Counter-conduct' on the Southern Border of Turkey: Multicultural Antakya," Middle Eastern Studies 45, no. 4 (2009): pg. 602, doi:10.1080/00263200903009650.

[16] Kenan Evren Arapça'yı yasaklamıştı. Burada yaz günü bütün düğünlerde Arapça şarkılar hep yasaktı. Polis şimdiki kadar etkili değildi tabii. Halkımızda bir zayıf nokta var, orduyu benimsemiş. Atatürk'ten dolayıdır belki. Polis gelince olaylar büyüyordu. Polisi çekip askeri gönderiyorlardı.

Turkish. What am I talking to her? French? But we, as the people, did not react to it. We have not been politicized. Alevism means frustration. Even the names of our children are in Turkish because of the feeling that we have given this loser.[17] (author's translation_Interview 5)

According to locals the pressure of the 1980 military coup d'état is very intense in the neighborhood. As explained in Gambetti's study, "[…] the Turkish Republic was quite successful in effecting the traces of the "Other" in the eastern provinces where Armenians, Kurds, Syriacs, Arabs and other ethnies had lived for centuries."[18]

Also, this point is crucial to understanding the borders of space. The people from the neighborhood are currently renegotiating their Arab identity, since being an Arab also consists of not only being an Alevi but also a Sunni. The fact that being Arab has different meanings causes people, those living in Armutlu neighborhood, to renegotiate their Arab identity. It is the Alevi identity that comes to the fore here, because when they say "We are Arabs", this judgment becomes a very open-ended judgment for them. They say that this is due to the bad perception that comes to mind when people think of Arabs in Turkey. In fact, they explain that they are a kind of "white Arab", that they are different from other Arabs, and that they do this by using their Alevi identity. So, they emphasize their Alawi identity rather than an Arab identity. Importantly, it causes the shaping of places, since the neighborhood is a sort of safe haven for people who are Alawi. This situation will be looked at more closely in the following chapter.

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[17] Bize karşı bir baskı vardı. Ben 1983, 1984 yıllarında askerlik yaptım. Annemle telefonda konuşuyorum. Türkçe bilmediği için Arapça konuşmam gerek. Gelip yasak diyorlardı. Ben Türkiye Cumhuriyeti vatandaşıyım. Benim annem Türkçe bilmiyor. Ben onunla ne konuşayım, Fransızca mı? Ama biz bu duruma bir tepki gösteremedik. Politize olamadık. Alevilik ezilik demek ve o ezikliğin vermiş olduğu duygudan dolayı bizim çocuklarımızın isimleri bile Türkçe.

[18] Zeynep Gambetti, "Politics of Place/space: The Spatial Dynamics of the Kurdish and Zapatista Movements," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 41 (2009): pg. 64., doi:10.1017/s0896634600005379

Furthermore, being an Alawi is associated with being a political leftist. Both Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's and Deniz Gezmiş's, who was a Turkish Marxist-Leninist revolutionary, images adorn many souvenirs. In addition, in recent years, it is possible to see Bashar al-Assad's image and the Syrian flag, too.

> Along with the Syrian events, someone who has a Ataturk poster and a Turkish flag in his house now puts the Syrian flag and the Assad poster in his house. When someone asked us who defended us, Turkey or Syria? Arab Alawis answer, 'Syria.'[19] (author's translation_Interview V)

This situation is clearly visible in the field. In this manner, the knowledge of their past and being the Other plays an important role in this situation. However, this goes beyond just being a memory-related situation in the past. As a subject of this situation, 25-year-old interviewer W describes the discrimination she was exposed to at school.

> If you are Arab and Alawi, you have to be involved in politics. At school, they forbid us to speak Arabic. They were beating us if we talked. Every day we read 'Andımız.'[20] I know I'm Arab. I encountered Turkish at school. I was not even aware of the existence of Turkish. I saw a lot of pressure from the teachers at school. I cannot speak Turkish. How can I communicate without speaking Arabic? You are trying to get rid of a mother tongue. So we do not have to stop and think to be political. We have to be born politically. We have a population of 2 million in a country with a population of 80 million. But there is something like this, our elders were so frightened that they did not want us to speak

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[19] Suriye olayları ile beraber evinde Atatürk posteri ve Türk bayrağı olan biri artık evine Suriye bayrağı ve Esad posteri de koyuyor. Türkiye mi bizi savunur yoksa Suriye mi bizi savunur diye sorduğunda, Suriye bizi savunur der Arap Aleviler.
[20] Turkey's (national) oath

SELIN BURGAÇ TAŞ

Arabic after we started school. Because they always wanted us to be able to speak Turkish without an Arabic accent so that society does not realize that's what we are.[21] (author's translation_Interview W)

They say that being a minority in this country means always being in a struggle, and they say that one of the benefits of being minority as Alawis is being leftist. 25-year-old interviewee E describes this situation as follows:

In Arab Alawi society in general, also in Anatolia, the faces of all Alewis in Turkey have turned out to be leftist.[22] (author's translation_Interview E)

This situation is no different for the neighbourhood. F, 31, one of the youth who define themselves as the other, expresses this situation for the neighborhood as follows:

Being from the Armutlu neighborhood means being a rebel, since here it is socially excluded. So we have to survive against forceful conditions.[23] (author's translation_Interview F)

§ 3.2   The Dilemma: Being an Arab or a Turk

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[21] Okulda mesela, Arapça konuşmamızı yasaklıyorlardı. Konuşursak bizi dövüyorlardı. Her gün andımız okunuyor falan. Ben Arap olduğumu biliyorum. Türkçe ile okulda tanıştım. Türkçe'nin varlığından bile haberdar değildim. Okulda öğretmenlerden çok baskı gördüm. Türkçe bilmiyorum. Arapça konuşmadan nasıl iletişim kurayım. Bir anda anadilinden koparılmaya çalışılıyorsun. Bu yüzden de politik olmak için durup düşünmemize gerek yok. Doğuştan politik olmak zorundayız. Nüfusu 80 milyon olan bir ülkede toplasan 2 milyon nüfusa sahip değiliz. Ama şöyle bir şey de var. Büyüklerimiz öyle bir korkutulmuşlar ki biz okula başladıktan sonra Arapça konuşmamızı istemediler. Dilimiz bozulmasın diye, toplum tarafından ne olduğumuz anlaşılmasın diye.
[22] Arap alevi toplumu genelde, daha doğrusu Anadolu'da da, Türkiye'de bütün Alevilerin yüzleri sola dönüktür.
[23] Buralı olmak isyankar olmaktır. Çok zor şartlar altında yaşamak. Çünkü burası dışlanmış bir yer.

My aim in this chapter will be to show how people negotiate between being an Arab or a Turk.. While in some situations they opt for Arabness, in others they opt for Turkishness. As I mentioned above, for the neighborhood, there is a borderline which produces the space and the markers of belonging are inscribed in the space. So, the dilemma is which of the markers are is inscribed in the space.

Gupta and Ferguson mention the "memory of place" using the notion of a "homeland" in their article. As they note,

> "Remembered places have often served as symbolic anchors of community for dispersed people. This has long been true of immigrants, who (as Leonard [1992] shows vividly) use memory of place to construct imaginatively their new lived world. "Homeland" in this way remains one of the most powerful unifying symbols for mobile and displaced peoples, though the relation to homeland may be very differently constructed in different setting."[24]

The people who live in Armutlu who define themselves as Arab Alawis, are neither mobile nor displaced. There is a historical geneology about these people that argues that they came from Syria, and the story was finished in 1939 with the referendum which is called *İlhak* (annexation). I mention this historical background for understanding the "most powerful unifying symbol" for the people: They came from Syria, and they still have relatives in Syria, their "homeland" is not Syria. Altough it is, they adopt Syria with its all components, because the point is being an Arab and Alawi. So, I use sect, which is being an an Arab and Alawite instead of "homeland" in this context.

Not only sect, but also territory is a complicated issue for the people of Armutlu. Annexation of the Sanjak by Turkey (İlhak) has an important role

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[24] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): pg. 11., doi:10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020.

in the imagination of territory. This situation can be explained as the people of Antakya being in limbo. Much as they don't want to go back to Syria, they have the knowledge that their roots are in Syria. Thus, it causes a complicated situaiton, since the majority of people indicate their relationship with Bashar al-Assad. Needless to say, this kinship is not based on Syria, but on Turkey.

> We live in this district, Armutlu. It is close to the Syrian border, and also the (Syrian) president is from our neighborhood. Bashar is ethnically from Samandağ. So our blood is common, our race is common.[25] (author's translation_Interview F)

The reason Assad emphasized that he was from Samandağ is that the origin of the people living in the neighborhood is based on Samandağ. Samandağ is a district in Hatay where mostly dissident Arab Alevis live. However, according to the Armutlu neighborhood, it is cosmopolitan. The reason for this is that Samandag is a touristic place.

> When I was a child, my father told me that Esad is our cousin. Everyone who lives here has this feeling.[26] (author's translation_Interview G)
> Actually, we belong to Syria. Our sister/brother country. It is absurd that we do not even say the country, because there is only one border between us. We are all the same. We leave out of the door and go out there. It is like opening the house's door. It's so comfortable.[27] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth A)

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[25] Biz bu mahallede yaşıyoruz, Suriye sınırına yakınız. O ülkenin devlet başkanı bizim mahallemizden biridir. Esad etnik olarak Samandağlı'dır, bizim topraklardandır. Kanımız ortaktır, aynı ırktan gelmişiz.

[26] Ben küçükken babam Esad'ın amcamızın oğlu olduğunu söylerdi ve bu algı burada yaşayan herkeste var.

[27] Aslında, biz Suriye'ye aitiz. Bizim kardeş ülkemiz. Ülke bile dememiz saçma çünkü aramızda sadece bir sınır var. Her şeyimiz aynı. Bizim buradan, kapıdan çıkıp oraya gitmemiz sanki evin kapısını açıp giriyormuşsun gibi. O kadar rahat.

This imagined affinity explains how local identity has a strong impact on the space. The quotations noted above explain to us how the people construct and produce the space according to being Nusayri. In that manner, Bashar al-Assad is from the neighborhood, as conveyed by the people.

This situation also shows how the people appropriate Syria and its president. Then, they develop a meaning which inscribes personal, social and cultural meanings. So, the place – a part of Syria – becomes a part of everyday life, by which the local residents in the Armutlu neighborhood feel a sense of belonging. It is clearly seen that in the neighborhood, the people have a strong local identification. As I explained, this identification produces a space, and this space has the markers as its products. Such markers are critical for the meaning of place. The people make a connection between Syria and Bashar al-Assad. According to their declaration, it is because of their proximity of blood. So, cultural and ethnic reasons contributes to the place's identity. Being *Minnina* attaches to a cross-border place, and then this place becomes a local neighborhood.

> In sum, previous scholarship indicates that place identity uses enviromental meaning to display and situate the self and that place identity is a product of both the qualities of places and the characteristics and relations of people to places.[28]

Not merely with Bashar al-Assad, they also mention their relationship with the people who live in Syria. They shape this relationship as a proximity of blood, since they commonly note that the people who live in Syria are their own flesh and blood. Armutlu people feel an intimacy with Syrian people because their roots, sect, language and so forth are the same. Not only this similarity but also history affects this proximity issue. As described in the

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[28] Lee Cuba and David M. Hummon, "A Place to Call Home: Identification With Dwelling, Community, and Region," The Sociological Quarterly 34, no. 1 (1993): 115, doi:10.1111/j.1533-8525.1993.tb00133.x.

second chapter, until 1918, Antakya was a part of the province Aleppo[29] In 1939, Antakya, as part of the sanjak of Alexandretta became a part of Turkey.[30] For this reason, Antakya has become a border city.

As Eriksen reminds us, "The first fact of ethnicity is the application of systemtic distinctions between insiders and outsiders; between Us and Them. If no such principle exists there can be no ethnicity, since ethnicity presupposes an institutionalised relationship between delineated categories whose members consider each other to be culturally distinctive."[31] This dichotomy between Us and Them leads to the "construction of other-ness." In that sense, this situation manifests itself in that the people have a fear of their identity as being Arab. The people know that when they define themselves as Arab, they are the Others. So, they behave as if they are not Arab. Thus, they do not appropriate the identity of Arab-ness and only accept being Alevi. In this context, Arab-ness has different connotations for people, such as the fact that this identity is associated with radical Islam.

All in all, being an ethnic minority has an affective dimension. In this case, according to the fieldwork, it is clearly seen that there is an anxiety in the people. They are afraid, because they know that they are a minority. They define themselves as a disadvantaged group, as Nusayris, and the name of Nusayri refers to being both an Arab and Alawi. 19-year-old interviewer G expresses her family's fears about this situation as follows:

> We are always marginalised. Don't say Arab, don't say Alevi. Do not learn your mother-language, learn how to speak Turkish. When I was a child, my nana and grandpa, they taught me how to speak in Arabic, but

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[29] Today's Syria

[30] Fulya Doğruel and Johan Leman, "'Conduct' and 'Counter-conduct' on the Southern Border of Turkey: Multicultural Antakya," Middle Eastern Studies 45, no. 4 (2009): pg. 593, doi:10.1080/00263200903009650.

[31]Thomas Hylland. Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives(London: Pluto, 2010), pg. 18.

my mom and dad always worried about my accent. In that way, we had to give up our culture.[32] (author's translation_Interview G)

30-year-old interviewer C states that he feels that he is the other in every public place. However, the point I want to underline here is that C describes the opposition here as "nonresistant".

The Armutlu neighborhood has an opponent that inscribed in it. Why? Since we are marginalised, it is a fact. We all felt, wherever we go, such as university, the police station or another places, that we are the Others. This marginalisation is composed through an Arab identity. There is an effect against us, so every action leads to reaction. This reaction includes the dissidence, but I want to mention that this is a peaceful one.[33] (author's translation_Interview C)

This otherization causes another trouble in the neighborhood. As I mentioned at the begining of this section, there is a dilemma of being an Arab or a Turk. If the people need to deny their Arab identity, they have another haven, and this is being Turkish. Thus, for the insiders who dwell in the Armutlu neighborhood, they have not just one nation, but also nations. These people define themselves as Arab and support Syria and its president, but they also

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[32] Biz her zaman ötekileştirildik Arap deme, Alevi deme… sen anadilini değil, Türkçe öğren. Mesela ben küçükken nenem ve dedem bana Arapça öğretirlerdi. Sonra bir anda annemler falan aman dili bozulmasın, aksanı bozulmasın diye Türkçe öğretmeye başladılar. Ve aslında biz bir yerde kendi kültürümüzden vaz geçmek zorunda kaldık.

[33] Armutlu yıllardan beri içinde bir muhalefeti barındırıyor. Neden? Çünkü, ötekileştirilmiş bir toplum, bu bir gerçektir. Gittiğimiz her yerde, üniversite olsun, karakolun içi olsun, polisle konuşurken veya başka yerlerde, hepimiz öteki olduğumuzu hissediyoruz. Bu ötekileştirme Arap kimliği üzerinden yapılıyor. Şimdi burada ister istemez tepkisel olarak etkiye karşı bir tepkisel olarak bir muhalefet var ancak bu muhalif olma hali düzenle barışık bir muhalefetlik.

have always supported, and still support, the principles and reforms of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.[34] Thereby, they define themselves as Turks, too as exemplified in the following quotations:

> My ex-political organisation was a little funny, it was TGB,[35] because all of us were Kemalists once upon a time. We all were born as Kemalists, but I realized that I am an Arab, a son of an Arab. My origin is Arab. In my house, my family speaks Arabic, but out of the house, they speak Turkish. One day, we went to Ankara with my father, and he recommend to me not to speak Arabic there. I asked him, "But why, our mother-language is Arabic," and he said, "Don't, we'll speak Turkish here." When I was a part of TGB, we had lots of demonstration, and we yelled "Mustafa Kemal'in askerleriyiz," "Apo'nun piçleri yıldıramaz bizleri," "Ya Türksün ya piçsin, ya Türksün ya hiçsin." Then I thought that I am not Turkish; why I am shouting like this?[36] (author's translation_Interview K)

19-year-old interviewer K is a high school student in open education. When I met him and had this interview, he had just met a leftist organization that was very influential in the neighborhood.

> I remember we had a dilemma: are we Turkish or Arab? In our house, Arabic is spoken, but when we went to school, Turkish was spoken, and

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[36] Benim eski örgütüm biraz komikti, TGBli'ydim ben. Hani hepimiz bir zamanlar Kemalist olduk, hepimiz Kemalist doğduk. Ben bir Arabım, Arap çocuğuyum, benim özüm Arap. Ailem evde Arapça konuşuyor ama dışarıda Türkçe konuşuyorlar. Birgün babamla Ankara'ya gittik ve babam bana orada asla Arapça konuşamamı söyledi. Neden, bizim anadilimiz Arapça dediğimde ise, burada Türkçe konuşmamı söyledi. TGB'nin bir parçası iken bir sürü eyleme katıldım. Mitinglere çıktığımızda Mustafa Kemal'in askerleriyiz, Apo'nun piçleri yıldıramaz bizleri, Ya Türksün ya piçsin, ya Türksün ya hiçsin gibi sloganlar atıyorduk. Sonra düşündüm ben Arabım, özümArap neden böyle sloganlar atıyorum diye.

we also said, "How happy is the one who says I am a Turk" at school. So this situation was really complicated.[37] (author's translation_Interview G)

Employing the term Arab only evokes reactionism and Islam and is greetd with uneasiness by the locals. Thus, some people define themselves as Nusayris so that they distance themselves from the general category of Arab. They emphasize that Assad and his family are modern people and that Assad's Baath and Mustafa Kemal's CHP are similar to each other. Interviewer E, 25 years old, a member of the leftist organization, explains this situation as follows:

These people who are Nusayri, when they say something about a matter, they are Turkish nationalists and Kemalists, except on the Syrian Issue. For the Syrian Issue, they are Arab and Alevi. In fact, most of them are only Alevi since they refuse to be Arab. These people strongly advocate Kemalism, and they link Kemalism and Partia Baas.[38] (author's translation_Interview E)

The above section demonstrated the process of negotiation between these arabness and turkihness, as they are intimately related to each other in the armutlu context. They are not unattached to each other. In this manner, the people who form the neighborhood redefine the borders of these two nations. So, belonging to the Arab nation and the Turkish nation negotiates the border of the space.

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[37] […] Arap mıyız Türk müyüz ikilemini çok yaşadık ben onu hatırlıyorum. Evlerimizde Arapça konuşulurdu, okulda Türkçe. Bir de okulda "Ne mutlu Türküm diyene" derdik. Bu durum çok karışıktı bizim için, anlam veremezdim.

[38] Halkımız Suriye meselesi dışındaki her şeyi yorumlarken ulusalcı, Türk ulusalcısı ve Kemalist. Ancak işte şey meselesinde Suriye meselesinde Arap Alevi, hatta Arap da değil Aleviler. Bu insanlar Kemalizmi destekliyorlar ve Kemalizm ile Baas Partisi arasında benzer özellikler buluyorlar.

§ 3.3   Class and the Neighborhood

[…]If you want to find the neighborhood, just follow the darkness.[39]

– Author's translation, *Interview A*

In this section, I will handle another marker which is inscribed in the space. In the Armutlu Neighborhood, the people always emphazise their poverty, without any inquiry at my end regarding class in my interviews.

The Armutlu neighborhood was established in the 1940s. The people who founded the neighborhood were the people living in the villages of Altınözü and the Samandağ district of Hatay. While the number of households was 10 or 15 when the neighborhood was first established, this number is increasing in the present day, and the Armutlu neighborhood is divided into four regions: Armutlu, Elektrik, Gazi and Akdeniz. Although there are four different names, all of the people living here are from Armutlu. While the houses were single-storey houses when it was first established, today, with

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[39] Mahalleyi bulmak istiyorsan, karanlığı takip etmen yeterli.

the rapid increase in the population of the neighborhood, single-storey houses have been replaced by apartments. The streets in the neighborhood are quite narrow. At the same time, the houses are built very close to each other. These two situations have sometimes become an advantage for the social movements in the neighborhood. People living in the neighborhood describe themselves as other and poor. As Merrifield notes,

> Everyday life becomes a practical and sensual activity acted out in place. The battle becomes the moment of struggle between conceiving space through representation and living place through actual sensual experience and representational meaning. Place is synonymous with what is lived in the sense that daily life practices are embedded in particular places. Social practice is place-bound, political organization demands place organization. Life is place-dependent.[40]

So, it is important how the place reproduces social relations. For the neighborhood, the urban sprawl creates close relations between the people who dwell in the neighborhood. They say that there is no private life for them, and they all know each other's secrets because their house is alongside the others.

As was quoted in the introduction to this chapter, the people of Armutlu make an analogy between their own lives and the neighborhood as a place.

They define themselves as the "Other," and the neighborhood is "Other," too. Although the neighborhood is in a very central location, for most interviewees, the neighborhood takes the form of a ghetto. The neighborhood is defined as a ghetto because it has not been served as neighborhood for many years by the municipality.

The analogy between the class and the neighborhood is also clear. The streets of the neighborhood are rough; the houses in the neighborhood are

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[40] Andrew Merrifield, "Place and Space: A Lefebvrian Reconciliation," Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers 18, no. 4 (1993): 525. doi:10.2307/622564.

jerry-built.

Hence, people make connections between their own lives, poverty and the neighborhood. As Gieryn notes, "Places are made as people ascribe qualities to the material and social stuff gathered there: ours or theirs; safe or dangerous; public or private; unfamiliar or known; rich or poor; Black or White; beautiful or ugly; new or old; accessible or not."[41]

Let's say indiscoverable streets for the neighborhood. I grew up on those streets as a child whose family's income was low.[42] (author's translation_Interview A)

Not only in the present, but also in the 1980s, the discourses and the situation is the same for the neighborhood. According to the newspapers,

In December, it was determined that the neighborhood, where none of the 19 streets in the Electric District of Antakya center was illuminated, remained in the dark.[43] (author's translation)[44]

The streets in Armutlu Mahallesi are not passed through mud.[45] (author's translation)[46]

As we can see from the notes on the field, when we come to 3o years later, the situation regarding the neighborhood is not much different. Here, the 29-year-old interviewer refers to the neighborhood 30 years ago, perhaps through stories he heard from his elders, and states that the situation is the

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[41] Thomas F. Gieryn, "A Space for Place in Sociology," Annual Review of Sociology 26, no. 1 (2000): 472, doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.463.

[42] Balta girmemiş sokaklar diye tabir edelim. O sokaklarda büyümüş, maddi geliri belli olan bir ailenin çocuğuyum ben.

[43] Seyfittinoğlu, Sinan. Antakya'nın 50 Yılı Çok Iyi Adammış Benim Babam: Anı/araştırma Ankara: Dafne Kitap, 2016, 85.

[44] Aralık ayında Antakya merkeze bağlı Elektrik Mahallesi'nde mevcut 19 sokaktan hiçbirinin aydınlatılmadığı mahallenin karanlıklar içinde kaldığı tespit edildi.

[45] Ibid.,129.

[46] Armutlu Mahallesi'nde sokaklar çamurdan geçilmiyor.

same 30 years later. Here I want to quote a good part of the fieldwork:

> "Also, if you want to find the neighborhood, just follow the darkness. It has been declared as a extraordinary region by the state. This situation continues for thirty years that still the neighborhood is lightless. Armutlu's roads are bad, Armutlu's sidewalks are not sidewalks" [47] (author's translation_Interview A)

Despite this similarity, the people of the Armutlu neighborhood have 'strong emotional bonds' to the neighborhood. Since, according to them, the place 'defines group boundaries, and stabilizes memories.'[48] Thus, the place is one where the boundaries are known, it also includes the meanings and values that produce the space. "Put positively, place is space filled up by people, practices, objects, and representations."[49]

So far, I have tried to show the differences of the Armutlu neighborhood in terms of cultural norms, memories, identities and values. It is with these differences, the place comes into being as a space.

For instance, there is always a comparison between the Armutlu neighborhood and Sümerler. Sümerler is another neighborhood located very close to the neighborhood of Armutlu. But there are many differences between the two. Sümerler has a cosmopolitan structure. Despite the majority of its residents are Arab Alawis, the people in the neighborhood have also migrated from outside, and it is a neighborhood preferred by civil servants. Most of the people in Armutlu go to Arab countries, especially Saudi Arabia, to work. Accordingly, the people of Armutlu always define Sümerler as a rich neigh-

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[47] Bir de Armutlu'yu bulmak istiyorsanız o bölgeye geldiğinizde Armutlu kendini ışıksızlığından belli eder. Devlet tarafından ne derler ona olağan üstü bir bölge ilan edilmiştir orası. 30 yıldır devam ediyor ki bu olağanüstülük, Armutlu hep ışıksızdır. Armutlu'nun yolları kötüdür, kaldırımları kaldırım değildir.

[48] Thomas F. Gieryn, "A Space for Place in Sociology," Annual Review of Sociology 26, no. 1 (2000): 481, doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.463.

[49] Ibid., 465.

borhood. While the Armutlu neighborhood is defined as of the poor This duality is very clear even in the narratives of the young people. the young people of Armutlu define themselves as poor and young, while the young people from the Sümerler neighborhood are described as wealthy and snobbish by the Armutlu youth.

> The Armutlu neighborhood is known as dignified. The way these young people grow is always the same. These young people do not have cars. There are no job opportunities. We, the Alawis, are imprisoned here. Our grandfathers are not company proprietors, they are people who labor on the land.[50] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth E)

As described in the previous section, not only language and the accent but also being from Armutlu is a stigma for people. If someone says, "I am from the Armutlu neighborhood," it means, "I am Arab and Alawis."

> Even if you do not say it, you are dwelling in the Armutlu: all your ethnic identity is coming out. Something is stuck on you. When you go out of the neighborhood, the question 'where do you live' actually means 'who are you.' They do not directly ask if are you Alawi or Sunni. 'Where do you live:' the question is already clear.[51] (author's translation_Interview W)

Therefore the Nusayri identity stands out as a stigmatised identity and Armutlu is deeply associated with Alawis hence its stigmatization.

As Charles Piot says, in his ethnographic research,

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[50] Buradaki gençlerin büyüme tarzları hep aynıdır. Bu gençlerin arabaları yoktur. İş imkanları yoktur. Biz Aleviler buraya hapsedilmişiz. Bizim dedelerimiz şirket sahibi değil, onlar toprakla uğraşan insanlardır.

[51] Armutlu'da oturuyorsan, söylemesen bile, bütün etnik kimliğin açığa çıkıyor. Üzerine damgalanmış bir şey. Mahalle dışına çıktığın zaman, nerede oturuyorsun sorusu alttan alta aslında nesin sorusu. Yani sana direkt Alevi misin, Sunni misin diye sormuyor. Nerelisin sorusu yeterince açık.

If however, social relationship is presupposed, if the person is always an aspect of various relationships, we should see this person as composed of, or constituted by, relationships, rather than as situated in them. Persons here do not "have" relations; they are relations.[52]

The place examined here, Armutlu, involves certain meanings, rules, identities, cultures, memories and values.

[…] place: stabilizes and gives durability to social structural categories, differences and hierarchies; arranges patterns of face-to-face interaction that constitute network-formation and collective action; embodies and secures otherwise intangible cultural norms, identities, memories – and values […] These consequences result uniquely (but incompletely) from material forms assembled at a particular spot, in part via the meanings that people invest in a place.[53]

Therefore, what is meant by 'place' goes hand in hand with what is meant by 'local,' because the locality produces the space and turns it into a place. Space itself becomes a kind of memory of place and place making is embedded in stuggles of identity and social movements where the youth stands out as its main agent.

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[52] Charles Piot, Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999), 18.

[53] Thomas F. Gieryn, "A Space for Place in Sociology," Annual Review of Sociology 26, no. 1 (2000): 473, doi:10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.463.

4

Political Geography and Social Movements

*Armutlu was a good emplacement for the protes-
tors. There is a yeast in the neighborhood because
of the 1980s, and the yeast became fermented over
the years. The awakening was lived, and the neigh-
borhood went to the past[1].*

– Author's translation, *Interview E*

September 16, 2012, the day of the pro-Assad demo was a breaking point
for Armutlu Neighborhood. The glorious neighborhood of the 1980s was
awakened on this date.

This chapter will demonstrate how the borders in the armutlu space has
changed and become more visible through political acitivism, as the neigh-
borhood was remade as a space during the struggle. With this changing, we
will also see that new Others are constructed. In this chapter, we will see the
struggles which happened in the neighborhood on September 16th and during

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[1] Armutlu protestocular için iyi bir mevziydi. Bir maya var orada ve yıllar sonra bu maya
tekrar tuttu. Daha doğrusu tutmaya yüz tuttu. Tekrar bir uyanış, geçmişe dönüşü yaşanmış
oldu.

the Gezi Protests, which are critical for understanding the re-conceptualized politics of identity. Also, this chapter explores the importance of the neighborhood as a place during the protests. All in all, at the end of this chapter, we will see how the neighborhood was re-shaped with these struggles as a space and how the border of space was changed by the aftermath of September 16th.

This chapter explores how place has a significant impact on social movements, and I want to show the importance of place making and its effects on discourse and practise.[2] In that manner, the structure of the neighborhood has a crucial role that composes the social movements because of the meaning of the neighborhood. Thus, in this case, place has a crucial role in bringing people together.

In that manner, the question of 'What is ignored?' has a critical role in producing the space. With respect to Gambetti and Jongerden and their study, they note,

> What is ignored is the actual production of space: an analysis of the relations and practices constituting particular productions of space and the performativity of spatial practices, or how people experience and shape the places they live in, how social relations co-define and institutions occupy geographical location as territory.[3]

An inspiring study by Zeynep Gambetti entitled as "Politics of place/space: The spatial Dynamics of the Kurdish and Zapatista movements." In her study, she gives two examples of collective action: the Zapatista movement in Chipas, Mexico, and the Kurdish movement in Turkey. The study was

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conceptualized to understand how important place-making is and to understanding the "appropriation of space." As she stated in her paper, there are two aims: one is to see how place-making has affected the discourse and practice of these movements, and the second is to discuss the broad outline of what she calls the "appropriation of space."[4] Regarding Gambetti's study, in this chapter I am going to explain how the neighborhood was constructed by the spatial variations and the movements. I use place to refer to the geographic location with its sociopolitical implications[5] and the neighborhood as a pure location where the people experience their everyday social practices. All in all, there are meanings for these people that create the neighborhood, which are mentioned in Chapter 3.

In the previous chapter, the neighborhood was considered as a space with its markers. We have seen the border of the space and how thick and inflexible the neighborhood boundaries are. In this section, first we will look at how important the neighborhood is as a place. It is important to understand its importance as a place, since we need to make a connection between location and the protests to understand what happened in the neighborhood.

In the neighborhood, place has an important role in keeping a comon collective identity. Here, I use "place" to refer to physical and geographical space. The Armutlu neighborhood had an important role during the protests for its actors, since the answer to the question "Why did these protests happen in this neighborhood?" is that the neighborhood has a symbolic meaning as a historical memory for the actors, as well as Antakya's location as a border town.

In other words, it is a "homeplace" of resistance, which is bell hooks' concept. Gambetti mentioned Bosco's study, which elucidated the concept according to the *Madres* example:

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[4] Ibid., 44.

[5] Colin Williams and Anthony D. Smith, "The National Construction of Social Space," Progress in Geography 7, no. 4 (1983): pg. 507, doi:10.1177/030913258300700402.

place-based collective rituals – the rootedness and frequent practice of activities in particular places of symbolic importance for a group – play a role in the sustainability of activism and of a shared collective identity even among members of geographically extensive networks of activists.[6]

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the people negotiated between an Arabness and Turkihness. this is played out in the construction of various identifications in the neighborhood.[7]

As mentioned in chapter 1, Lefebvre makes a distinction between social, mental and physical space, and for him, "social space will be revealed in its particularity to the extent that it ceases to be indistinguishable from mental space (as defined by philosophers and mathematicians) on the one hand, and physical space (as defined by practico-sensory activity and the perception of 'nature') on the other."[8] In that sense, I am going to refer to the Armutlu neighborhood as a physical space as conveyed by one of my informants:

> The Armutlu neighborhood consists of three regions as a place (Armutlu, Elektrik and Gazi), but it is only one region, as the soul is Armutlu. There are two main streets and one bridge among them. Semt Pazarı is called Gelincik. The center of the resistance, the center region, is BP side, I mean Gündüz Street. I say the center of the resistance because this place was exposed in lots of fascist movements. The main barricade has been BP side since 1980. The people know this. It is also the entrance to the neighborhood. There has been an oil office there for

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[6] Fernando J. Bosco, "Place, Space, Networks, and the Sustainability of Collective Action: The Madres De Plaza De Mayo," Global Networks 1, no. 4 (2001): pg. 317., doi:10.1111/1471-0374.00018.

[7] Colin Williams and Anthony D. Smith, "The National Construction of Social Space," Progress in Geography 7, no. 4 (1983): pg. 502, doi:10.1177/030913258300700402.

[8] Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991), 27.

years. Also, if you want to find the neighborhood, just follow the dark-
ness. It has been declared as a extraordinary region by the state. This
situation has continued for thirty years where the neighborhood is light-
less. Armutlu's roads are bad, Armutlu's sidewalks are not sidewalks,
and it is crucial that this region is important, because it is a main road
which goes to Samandağ, Syria and Latakia.[9] (author's translations_In-
terview_A)

Figure 1.1   5 June 2013, Armutlu Neighborhood
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

As the quotation underscores, it is clearly seen how the neighborhood
has a critical role in social and political movements. Certain meanings are

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[9] Armutlu mahallesi mahalle olarak üç bölgeden oluşur: Armutlu, Elektrik ve Gazi mahal-
leleri. Ancak ruh olarak tek bir bölgedir: Armutlu. Bunların arasında da iki büyük cadde bir
tane de köprü vardır. Semt Pazarı Gelincik diye geçer. Direnişin bölgesi, merkez bölge, -
böyle diyorum çünkü en çok faşizan harekete burası maruz kalmıştır- her zaman BP tarafı,
Gündüz Caddesi olarak geçer. Orası 1980'den beri ana barikattır. İnsanlar bu şekilde empoze
olmuşlardır. Mahallenin girişi orasıdır. Orada yıllardır bir petrol ofisi vardır. Bir de
Armutlu'yu bulmak istiyorsanız o bölgeye geldiğinizde Armutlu kendini ışıksızlığından belli
eder. Devlet tarafından ne derler ona olağan üstü bir bölge ilan edilmiştir orası. 30 yıldır
devam ediyor ki bu olağanüstülük, Armutlu hep ışıksızdır. Armutlu'nun yolları kötüdür,
kaldırımları kaldırım değildir. Ancak çok önemli bir bölge olmasının nedeni merkez olarak
Samandağ, Suriye ve Lazkiye'ye kadar giden bir ana cadde olmasıdır.

attached to the Armutlu neighborhood by the people. The memory of place has a crucial role in understanding these meanings attached to the neighborhood. in this respect the 1980 military coup d'état and its effects on society were formative events. Following movements too are made through and get their strength from the place, therefore both Gezi and Syrian war related protests will be defined as place-based events. So, in this respect, place becomes a cogent thing for the social movements in the Armutlu neighborhood. As Gambetti notes,

> Place, then, is likely to have a significant impact on the structure of the movement itself. A social movement is not only constituted by the motivations and/or limitations of its actors, but also by the ways in which it interacts with and is marked by place.[10]

Accordingly, place has an important role in continuing common collective identity. Armutlu is an important place, and when people refer to the neighborhood, they mention how it was important during the 1980 military coup d'état and how it had a strong impact; this still continues, and so the recent social movements happened in the neighborhood. As Akhil Gupta and Jameson Ferguson noted, "culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient." For the Armutlu neighborhood, the place becomes more salient than the other places which are located in Antakya, too, Not only is being a Nusayri crucial for this situation, but also the heritage which comes from the 1980s is a critical point to explain this salient position. So, not only sect and culture but also "memory of place" is another powerful unifying symbol for the space. The youth usually uses the "memory of place" to ground their protests, and they refer to the 1980s to support their arguments. This becomes clear in the following quotations:

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[10] Zeynep Gambetti, "Politics of Place/space: The Spatial Dynamics of the Kurdish and Zapatista Movements," New Perspectives on Turkey 41 (2009): pg. 50., doi:10.1017/s0896634600005379.

Armutlu is a place which is a selected location. These kinds of social movements have appeared in Armutlu since 1980, and also the name Armutlu has become well known in the state of The Republic of Turkey. It is one of the suburbs, and people who are oppressed by the state live in Armutlu. We all hear about Armutlu from our fathers, and Armutlu embodies the soul which we are talking about.[11] (author's translation_Interview A)

Most of the Armutlu youth I interviewed gave reference to the 1980s when describing the social movements that took place in the neighborhood in the most recent period. Most of these young people's families are people who were politically involved in neighborhood events in the 1980s. That's why the stories told affect young people a lot. In fact, as can be understood from the quotations, this situation is a source of pride for young people.

Armutlu is a rebel zone of the 1980s, which means the rightists cannot come here, and only leftists live there. It was such a sanctuary for Acilciler,[12] and we grew up with their story. And also the neighborhood is a specific place by location, since it is the important entrance where you can go to the other Alawis regions.[13] (author's translation_Interview I)

"The rightists are not allowed the neighborhood. Here is the safe zone and the center of the leftists. The new generation grew up with their

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[11] Armutlu ruh olarak seçilmiş bir yer. Armutlu 1980'den beri bu tarz kitlesel hareketlerin başlangıç noktası olmuştur. Yıllardır da Armutlu ismi Türkiye Cumhuriyeti'nde nam yapmış bir isimdir. Kenar arka mahallelerden biridir, ezilmiş halklar burada yaşar. Babalarımızdan büyüklerimizden duyduğumuz Armutlu, o ruhu hep içinde barındırır.

[12] The Urgent Ones is a group that split from the TPLP-F.

[13] Armutlu 1980 döneminin kurtarılmış bölgesidir. Yani oraya sağcıların girememesi sadece solcuların olması, Acilcilerin korunma merkezi olması ve bizim jenerasyonun onların hikayeleriyle büyümemiz. Bir de Armutlu konum olarak diğer Alevi bölgelere önemli giriştir.

stories, and these stories have a strong impact on us" (author's translation_Interview H)[14]

In addition, I am eager to show how specific places were crucial during the insurrections and the aftermath of the insurrections. When I look at the interviews which I conducted during the fieldwork in the Armutlu neighborhood, the specific places important during the insurrections still make sense for people. For instance, Gündüz Street, which divides the neighborhood into two parts, was really crucial during the protests. There is an oil office located at the beginning of Gündüz street. It has same influence for both protests which occurred in the 1980s and the aftermath of 2012. That is, the meaning of the oil office is the same, in spite of the time and space. As Lefebvre notes, "Everyone knows what is meant when we speak of a 'room' in an apartment, the 'corner' of the street, a 'marketplace', a shopping or cultural 'centre', a public 'place', and so on. These terms of everyday discourse serve to distinguish, but not to isolate, particular spaces, and in general to describe a social space."[15]

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[14] Armutlu 80 döneminin kurtarılmış bölgesidir. Solcuların merkezidir, sağcılar giremez. Bizim yeni jenerasyon onların hikayeleri ile büyüdü ve bu hikayelerin bizim üzerimizde önemli bir etkisi vardır.

[15] Henri Lefebvre, The Production of Space (Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991), 16.

Figure 2.1   The Oil Office (BP)
SOURCE: *Yaser Çapar*

Armutlu went back in time. What the meaning was of 'up from BP' in the 1980s is the same now. It means no one who is rightist can enter here. It is the place which rightists cannot enter.[16] (author's translation_Interview A)

So, it is clearly seen that these movements which happened in the Armutlu neighborhood cannot be conceptualized without reference to the particular places in which they emerged, similarly to the way Gambetti notes that "the 1989 Tiananmen uprising in China, the Madres de Plaza de Mayo movement, and the 1968 student revolts in California and Paris cannot be conceptualized without reference to the particular places in which they emerged."[17]

In other words, the Armutlu neighborhood is a place where place-making happened during social movements and this had a crucial influence on the structure of the movements. The Armutlu neighborhood was a "homeplace" for the resistances of both the Syrian Issue and the Gezi Uprising.

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[16] Armutlu geçmişe dönüş yaşadı. BP'den yukarının anlamı 1980 döneminde neyse şimdi de o. Orası yani mahalle BP'den yukarı sağcıların giremediği bir alan idi.

[17] Zeynep Gambetti, "Politics of Place/space: The Spatial Dynamics of the Kurdish and Zapatista Movements," New Perspectives on Turkey 41 (2009): pg. 49., doi:10.1017/s0896634600005379.

§ 4.1   Armutlu Neighborhood as a Space: Relationship between Territorial Identity and Social / Political Movements

In the previous chapter, the link between territorial identity and social / political movements was elaborated. Space and ethnicity arose as important markers. These markers suggested the rules of who can belong to the neighborhood and who cannot.

This chapter examines the effect of the aftermath of 16th September on the space and identity, since, with the political struggle, the border of the space was re-shaped by the people.

First of all, we need to figure out what the connections are between the Syrian war and the Gezi Park Protests and also the link between these concerns and the struggle. The insurrection of 2012, which was an anti-war protest for Syria in the Armutlu neighborhood, has an essential position for understanding the reason for the Gezi Protests in the neighborhood. It is important because, the people commonly refer to 16 September 2012 to make statements about the Gezi Protests.

"These anti-war protests were like a preparation for the Gezi Park Protests. The neighborhood seemed to be sleeping since the 1980s" are commonly conveyed statements. These words demonstrate that the protests that started with the anti-war protests and continued with the Gezi Park Protests were viewed as an awakening, mobilizing more and more people.

Well, September 16th is an inception per se: it is the beginning of the Gezi Park protests for Hatay. These people were comfortable from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk's period. If we leave the 1980s aside, there were not really struggles here. On September 16th, we were subjected to pepper

gas; then we said that's enough, and it continued to the Gezi Park Protests.[18] (author's translation_Interview A)

I was there, in the neighborhood, on September 16th. The police responsed to us, and nobody knew how to clash with the police. The water cannon vehicle was driven along Gündüz Street for four or five hours. It sprayed water and pepper gas at all of us, but the people only ran away. This situation was an experience for the people, since in the Gezi Park Protests, the people knew what they had to do.[19] (author's translation_Interview C)

Another link between the Gezi Park protests and the insurrection of 2012 is the participation of the youth in the former. In brief, the youth who are not a part of any political organizations attended the Gezi Park protests as a continuation of September 16th.

On 16th September, the youth who were part of a political organization organized a campaign against imperialism. The apolitical youth of the neighborhood and our friends created a rapport. For example, there is a group and its leader. I mean it's big brother, and there is nothing about politics. We mobilised these people according to the Arab Alevi issue. In the Gezi Park protests, they knew how to barricade, how to clash

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[18] 16 Eylül aslında bir başlangıçtır. Hatay için Gezi'nin başlangıcıdır. Bu halk Atatürk döneminden bu yana rahat yaşamış bir halktır. 1980 dönemini bir kenara koyarsak çokfazla olay yaşanmamıştır burada. 16 Eylül'de gazı yedik ve artık yeter dedik ve bu Gezi'ye kadar devam etti.

[19] 16 Eylül olayında ben de vardım. Polis müdahale ediyordu ancak kimse nasıl çatışması gerektiğini bilmiyordu. Polis mahalleye girdiğinde müdahale etti, tomalar Gündüz Caddesi'nde 4, 5 saat boyunca gitti geldi ve insanlara su sıktı, biber gazı sıktı. İnsanlar sadece kaçıyordu. Ancak bu bir deneyim oldu çünkü Gezi'de insanlar ne yapmaları gerektiğini biliyorlardı.

with the poliçe, because this all information was in their bag from 16th September.[20] (author's translation_Interview E)

In addition, the quoatation which I mentioned above promotes how the youth made themselves ready on 16th September for another struggle:

There was struggle here before the Gezi Park protests. The people were shouting for Bashar al-Assad. It was a beginning. Also, it happened in the Armutlu neighborhood again. Immediately afterwards, the Gezi Park Protests occured. The youth were on the alert; they settled easily. Just imagine they barricaded from the first day.[21] (author's translation_Interview J)

The Gezi Protests were a political demonstration that ocurred in many cities in Turkey in May 2013, but for the Armutlu neighborhood, the Gezi uprising became a deeper issue due to city's political geography. The Syrian war affected the Gezi uprising in the neighborhood. In that manner, ethnicity was re-shaped through the Gezi uprising and the Syrian Issue. In other words, ethnicity was being emphasized over and over again. Needless to say, it has already been important, too, with its religious context or in making a difference between nationalists and radical Islamists,[22] but it has become a political issue as an ethnic group.

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[20] 16 Eylül'de örgütlü gençlik emperyalizme karşı bir kampanya örgütlemişti. Mahallenin apolitik gençleri ile bizim arkadaşlarımızın arasında bir bağ kuruldu. Mesela bir grup var, bu grubun lideri yani abisi var. Politik bir şey yok tabii. Bunlar Arap Alevilik ve Suriye meselesi üzerinden harekete geçirildi. Gezi'de bunlar nasıl barikat kuracaklarını, polisle nasıl çatışacaklarını biliyorlardı. Çünkü bütün bu bilgiler onların heybesinde vardı, 16 Eylül 2012'deki deneyimlerinden.

[21] Gezi Parkı olaylarından önce de Antakya'da yürüyüşler oluyordu zaten. Beşar Esad için sloganlar atılıyordu. Bu ilk başlangıçtı. Olan yer neresi, yine Armutlu'ydu. Bunun akabinde hemen Gezi eylemleri başladı. Gençler hazırdı, mahalle hemen adapte oldu. Düşünsene ilk günden barikat kurdular.

[22] Tahire Erman and Emrah Göker, "Alevi Politics in Contemporary Turkey," Middle Eastern Studies 36, no. 4 (2000): pg. 100., doi:10.1080/00263200008701334.

Thus, ethnicity's political significance has grown in the neighborhood, particularly since the Syrian Issue and the Gezi uprising. Now, being an Arab Alevi is at the forefront of local and political life.

In the Gezi Park Protests, the people of the Armutlu neighborhood organised themselves politically on an ethnic basis, since they connected the Syrian issue with the Gezi Park protests. Several demographic, political and historical factors are at play in this issue. The following quote shows why the Syrian issue was so effective in the Gezi protests in the Armutlu neighborhood:

> By that time, Hatay had avoided the powerful Kemalism campaign that swept the country in the 1930s, spreading nationalist consciousness and rooting the Turkish language among non-Turkish groups. As a result, Hatay Arabs still differ from ethnic groups elsewhere in the country today, maintaining a strong Arab identity and continuing to speak Arabic even among the educated elite. Hatay is also the only province that mirrors Syria's key ethnic divides. In addition to ethnic Turks, it is home to Alawite Arabs (co-religionists of the Assad regime), Sunni Arabs, Kurds, Circassians, Armenians, and Arab Christians. Moreover, Hatay's Alawite and Sunni Arabs are connected to Syrian Alawites and Sunnis through familial and tribal links.[23]

The Armutlu neighborhood is a political space with its markers, and there are the spatial variations which are inscribed in it. As a case in point, the Gezi protests happened in many cities in Turkey against the government. The starting point was Istanbul, and then it diffused all over the country, but the main issue was initially to hinder the urban development plan for Istanbul's Taksim Gezi Park. When it diffused across the country, it turned into a wider,

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[23] Cagaptay, Soner. "Syria's War Could Inflame Turkey's Hatay Province." Syria's War Could Inflame Turkey's Hatay Province - The Washington Institute for Near East Policy. Accessed March 07, 2020. https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/syrias-war-could-inflame-turkeys-hatay-province.

anti-government protest. For the Armutlu neighborhood, the Gezi uprising became a deeper issue with the political space that it took place. The Syrian issue affected the Gezi uprising in the neighborhood. The people were in the streets with Syrian flags, Assad's posters and protesting the government, shouting slogans in Arabic and supporting Syrian government. So, the people made their own event which is more complex and different from the other Gezi protests. By means of this, they produced their own political space with their spatial variations, and they used the Gezi uprising to attract attention to another political issue as it became a site of resistance of the anti-war protests for Syria in the neighborhood. Political geographic knowledge makes sense, as Jones, Jones and Wood suggested: "'geography', represented by place, territory or spatial variation."[24]

As mentioned before, in the Gezi Protests, the people from the Armutlu neighborhood organised themselves politically on an ethnic basis as being Nusayri.[25] For instance, the protests were conducted in a language related to their own. So for these protests, ethnic identity functioned politically in certain contexts. They acted that way because they found it meaningful for ethnic reasons.

When I asked people why Armutlu, one of the interviewees answered that, "*Minnina, min qalbna, min ruhna*" which means 'from us, our hearts, our soul.' In other words, this quotation refers to the social/cultural structure in the neighborhood; that is, because of these markers, the struggle takes place in this neighborhood.

> The war has affected to us in a psychological manner. Yes, we are Alawis, or rather, Nusayri. There are people in Syria who want to drink

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[24] Ryan Jones, Martin Jones, and Michael Woods, An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics (London: Routledge, 2004), pg. 2.

[25] Nusayri is used for the people who are Arab Alevi. Some people prefer to use Nusayri, however some people do not.

Nusayris' blood, and of course we are afraid. We are very sensitive about the Syrian issue, and everybody must know it.[26] (author's translation_Interview A)

The 25-year-old interviewer E is not an Arab Alevi and lives in Antakya, as his family are civil servants. He also states that the reason for the uprising in the neighborhood is the Syrian War.

In the neighborhood, the Syrian issue is a matter that brings people to the street.[27] (author's translation_Interview E)

If somebody says that we are going to drink Nusayris' blood, we have Nasrallah's[28] posters to carry and also Bashar's posters. For instance, I do not appreciate Hafız al-Assad's polity, even though I do carry his posters, too, but also I criticise his polity. The whole world fights against Syria. One's announced as "angry youth" to refer to ISIS, and these angry youth yell 'we came to Syria to drink Nusayris' blood,' so let us support Syria.[29] (author's translation_Interview A)

The Gezi Park protests happened and were shaped according to the flow of the Syrian issue in the neighborhood and shifted around other denominational and cultural issues. The neighborhood was affected socially, politically and economically, because the neighborhood was constructed from these is-

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[26] Savaş bizi psikolojik olarak etkilemiştir. Evet biz Aleviyiz, daha doğrusu Nusayriyiz. Şuanda Suriye'de kanımızı içmek isteyen, Nusayri kanı içmek isteyen insanlar var ve korkuyoruz. Suriye olayları bizim için çok hassastır ve herkesin bunu bilmesi gerekiyor.

[27] Burada insanları sokağa çıkaran şey doğrudan yani bunu yadsımamak gerek tamamen Suriye meselesi. İnsanlar buradan doğru harekete geçtiler.

[28] The current Secretary General of the Lebanesse political and paramilitary party Hezbollah.

[29] Eğer birileri Nusayri kanı içmeye gidiyoruz diyorsa biz de hem Nasrallah hem de Beşar Esad posterleri taşırız. Ben şahsi olarak Hafız Esad'ın yönetimini takdir etmemekle birlikte göğsümü gere gere onun posterini de taşırım ama eleştiririm de. Bütün dünya Suriye'ye karşı savaşıyor. Birileri çıkıp öfkeli gençler diye İŞİD'i tabir edebiliyorsa ve bu gençler "Suriye'ye Nusayri kanı içmeye gidiyoruz" diyorlarsa, bırakın biz de Suriye'yi destekleyelim.

sues, and for that reason, Gambetti's notion of *appropriation of place* is crucial, since, when the Syrian and Gezi Park protests in Antakya are mentioned by someone, the Armutlu neighborhood comes to mind. During the fieldwork, it was clear that there is a strong link between the Syrian issue and the Armutlu protests, because when I ask people what they protested in the Gezi Park Protests in Antakya, one of the answers was the war in Syria. The war created lots of troubles for them effecting the economy, tourism, and people's psychology.

> This war is our war. If Esad loses, we also lose. It is clear.[30] (author's translation_Interview F)

21-year-old H is a member of a leftist organization and, although she said throughout the interview that the Syrian issue should not be viewed purely as sectarian and that it was an imperial occupation, she also explained the situation in this way:

> The only Arab Alevi leader in the world is Bashar al-Assad, and Syria is our hometown.[31] (author's translation_Interview H)

They intimately link Assad's victory with their own cuurent day and future survival. In their imagination, they hardly make a distinction between Syria and their home in Armutlu, on the contrary combine these two distinct sites to each other:

> We support Bashar al-Assad because we are from Armutlu. We live close to the border, and also Assad is from our neighborhood. He is from our land. Our blood and race are common. There is no difference

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[30] Bu bizim savaşımız. Esad kaybederse, biz kaybederiz. Bu çok net.
[31] Dünyadaki Arap Alevi tek lider Beşar Esad, ve Suriye aslında bizim memleketimiz.

between the war in Syria or our house.[32] (author's translation_Interview F)

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the category of 'us'[33] refers to the actor's negotiations about the definiton of their ethnic groups. However the category of 'us' draws ethnic and cultural boundaries, and this situation causes trouble between the 'us' and the 'other'. Kurdish Issue, which will be elaborated more closely in the following chapter is one such trouble. If we return to the category of 'us' "we must try to understand what it is about ethnic classification and categorical belongingness that makes sense to the people involved."[34]. Not only Kurds, but also refugees are excluded from the Armutlu space. Thus, this situation generates the formation the others of other-ness. After looking into the links between geography, war, struggles, ethnicity, culture and proximity of blood, we must inquire as to the victims of this war. In other words, the war has many effects on this side of the border, so what about the people within the boundaries?

Although we are talking about exclusion and contraction when we talk about the space of the neighborhood, we see that the space of the Armutlu Neighborhood expanded at one point during the Gezi Park protests. The boundary of space expanded ethno-religiously throughout the protests. The reason for this is that the neighborhood became a hub during the protests. The fact that the neighborhood became the hub caused people from other neighborhoods, many of whom are not Arab Alevis, to come to the neighborhood for the protests. Of course, the memory of the place has a big role in the beginning of the events in the Armutlu neighborhood, but the police had a large role in squeezing the protests into the neighborhood. The squeezing of the

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[32] Esad'ı destekliyoruz çünkü biz Armutlulu'yuz. Sınıra yakın oturuyoruz. Esad da bizim mahalleden, bu topraklardan. Kanımız ortaktır, aynı ırktan gelmişiz. Savaşın bizim evimizde olmasıyla Suriye'de olması arasında bir fark yok.

[33] Thomas Hylland. Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives (London: Pluto, 2010), pg. 30.

[34] Ibid., 60.

protests into the neighborhood is similar to the stuck lives of the young people that I describe in the fifth chapter.

§ 4.2   The Border of the Space: Kurds and the Refugees

In this section, I attempt to unfold the complex nature of the Arab Alawite identity in relation to the Kurds and refugees. It refers to the situation where the boundaries of space get narrower or expand or point out to the abandoned or claimed identities.

As was pointed out in Chapter 3 the people of the Armutlu neighborhood define themselves as Arab and Alawite. Despite their claim an Arab and Alawite identity, they are also proud of being Turkish. The locals when they claim the Turkish identity, the Kurds are construed as outside the boundaries of the space. The refugees are in the same situation as Kurds. There is a double and ongoing otherization for the people who are defined as the Other by the people from the neighborhood. Before the protests, the Kurds were already defined as the Other because of political reasons as in the words of a local "We are the Others, but not like Kurds." As mentioned below, with the Syrian war, the Kurds' otherization has doubled, too, because they do not support Bashar-al Assad. This situation is the same for the refugess. Before the war, they were the Others because they were not *Minnina*; with the war, they are both represented as not *Minnina* and traitors. They are treated traitors because they do not fight for Bashar-al Assad. These two situations that I have mentioned will become clearer with the examples given below.

Despite the fact that people living in the neighborhood are constantly saying that they are minorities, even though they define themselves as the other and even say they have been subjected to genocide since Karbala, when the issue comes to the Kurdish movement, the rhetoric becomes very different. The activists support the Kurdish movement, and others adopt an official

stance blaming the Kurds for dividing the country. The acitivist youth's stance is shaped based on the relation between the Kurds and the Syrian war. Bashar al-Assad is an important figure for them, and Syria, too, as a country. According to the youth, the person/group who does not fight for Bashar al-Assad is considered as the enemy. So, they have one more reason to politically differentiate between the Kurds and Arab Alevis. It becomes clear in the following quotation:

> Here, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers' Party) is a terrorist organization, the enemy. The alliance of the PYD (Democratic Unity Party) with the Free Syrian Army in Syria had a negative impression on the people. The issue of Kobane was as follows, on I guess, October 6th or 7th – the protest was organized here for Kobane, but the youth we talked about blocked the protest. Also, they blocked the HDP (The Democratic Party of People) and shouted slogans such as "Allah Suriye Beşar u bes.[35] Here is Armutlu; there is no exit from here." Thus, they made counter-protest. Since the PYD allied with the Free Syrian Army, they are terrorist, separatist. They are fighting against Assad. The Free Syrian Army slaughtered the Alawis, but the Democratic Unity Party allied with it. For all these reasons, the Kobane issue did not find a correspondent here. For example, Halil Aksakal is a Marxist-Leninist Communist Party warrior and also an Arab and Alawi. His funeral was very crowded. The funeral was owned by people, but even there they said, 'Why did he fight on the side of the Kurds but not on the side of Assad?'[36] (author's translation_Interview E)

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[35] Only God and Bashar-al Assad.

[36] Burada PKK terör örgütü, düşman. PYD'nin ÖSO ile ittifakı burada kötü etki yarattı. Galiba 6, 7 Ekim'di. Burada Kobane için eylem örgütlendi. Ama bu dediğimiz gençlik bizim önümüze çıktı, HDP'nin önünü kesti. Allah, Suriye, Beşar u bes, burası Armutlu buradan çıkış yok diye sloganlar attılar, karşı eylem yaptılar. Çünkü işte PYD ÖSO ile ittifak yapıyor, terörist, bölücü. ÖSO Alevi katletti ama YPG onunla ittifak yaptı. Bu nedenlerden dolayı

This is clearly evident in the Gezi Park events. As the political mobilization continued, a group of young people from the Armutlu Youth demolished the HDP tent in the park, which was called Sevgi Park and was renamed Sevgi Resistance Park during the resistance, and they had clashes with the HDP youth.

Alawi society does not demand a state for their own at all. They want to have peace and equal rights under this flag like everyone else. However, after the 1990s, the Kurds began to demand land under the name of Kurdistan. And we drifted away.[37] (author's translation_Interview F)

Locals argue that their ways are different from Kurds because they like their homeland, Turkey and the Turkish flag. Despite the ethnic or cultural assimilation of Arab Alawis, a pro-state stance is obvious among the Alawis.

I think we are stepchildren of this country. But we're good. Let's live our Arabs within ourselves, but let's say we are Turkish. Kurds are not good children of this country. They've always been naughty. They are against lots of thing. But because we are just love, we are silent from our fear.[38] (author's translation_Interview G)

Locals refer to two basic reasons for this perception against the Kurds. The first is that the locals have very strong ties with Syria and the president of Syria, unlike the Kurds, and the second is that they claim a Turkish identity where Kurds are depicted as enemies because the latter betrayed the country

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Kobane meselesi çok karşılık bulamadı burada. Mesela Halil Aksakal, MLKP savaşçısı ve Arap Alevi. Cenazesi kalabalık oldu, sahiplenildi ama orada bile dediler ki ne işi var Kürtlerin yanında, neden Esad'ın yanında değildi.

[37] Alevi kesiminin hiçbir zaman devlet talebi yoktur. Bu bayrak altında barışçıl, eşit haklara sahip olmak isterler, herkes gibi. Ama Kürtler 1990lar'dan sonra Kürdistan adı altında toprak talep etmeye başladıkları zaman ayrı düştüğümüze inanıyorum.

[38] Ben şöyle düşünüyorum, biz bu ülkenin üvey evlatlarıyız. Ama akıllı uslu duran üvey evlatlarız. Biz korktuğumuz için ses çıkarmamışız. Araplığımızı kendi içimizde yaşayalım ama Türküz diyelim dışarıda. Kürtler bu ülkenin uslu evlatları değillerdir. Onlar hep yaramazlık yapmışlardır. Karşı çıkmışlardır. Ama biz üvey olduğumuzdan dolayı sırf sevilelim diye, korkumuzdan susup kalmışız.

and its savior. Just as Assad is a unique figure for the Syrian issue, Mustafa Kemal is seen just as important and unique for the land they live in. This pro-state stance caused conflict in the neighborhood during the protests between the locals who support the Kurdish movement, and others. Throughout the protests, people in the neighborhood banned the flags of political parties and organizations. In addition, they accused the members of these parties and organizations as being assimilated to Kurdishness. The politicized youth in the neighborhood at times violently encountered the ordinarly youth- ie the Armutlu youth during the protests. The young people who are members of leftist organizations are declared as traitors by the unorganized youth, especially by young people who introduce themselves as Armutlu Youth. Among the female interviewees, 19-year-old G and 21-year-old H are members of the leftist organization. They say that during the Gezi Park protests, some young people in the neighborhood gave them difficulties.

> We, the politically organized people, are always accused of being Kurdish nationalists by the people who live in the neighborhood.[39] (author's translation_Interview H)

> They always accuse us. They say, 'You don't like Atatürk. You support PKK. You are with the Kurds.'[40] (author's translation_Interview G)

This is also an effective example from the fieldwork: when I talked with the youth about the recent social movements in the neighborhood, I asked how they were on the street. The answer was:

> The thing which most impressed me was that the PKK joined these kinds of protests.[41] (author's translation_Interview N)

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[39] Mahalledeki insanlar biz örgütlü insanları hep Kürt milliyetçisi olmakla suçladılar.
[40] Mahalledekiler bizi hep suçladılar. 'Siz Atatürk'ü sevmiyorsunuz. PKK'yi destekliyorsunuz. Kürtlerin yanındasınız' diye.
[41] Böyle eylemlere girmemde beni en çok PKKliler etkilemiştir.

The interviewee differentiates between Kurds and Arab Alawis by underlining that, "I am not a part of any political group, and we never used molotov cocktail" Suggesting the presence of a distance between himself and the Kurdish movement.

As I mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, not only Kurds but also refugees are excluded from the boundaries of space. Following the refugee flow during the war in Syria, according to the explanation of the Governor of Hatay in 2015, 15% of the Hatay population consists of Syrian refugees, creating huge anxieities in the neighborhood. The people of the neighborhood are afraid of the newcomer Syrians and this fear turns into anger. The refugee issue has caused public indignation, accompanied by rumours of fear and hate speech where the newcomers are thought to displace all of the people from the neighborhood or that they are terrorists to stir up society. 27-year-old interviewee L and 21-year-old H say that refugees from Syria create social unrest in the region.

> On the one hand, I say, dammit, go away, go away. But on the other hand, when you see women and children, I think you are thinking too much barbarously. But the rationale for placing those refugees here is very different. Their purpose is to stir up things.[42] (author's translation_Interview H)

> I saw with my own eyes that the armed men were walking down the road. In fact, in Bankalar Street, a man had a long barreled gun on his back and withdrew money from the cash machine. I had an argument with a woman. She was speaking about everyone's clothes in Arabic. I said you did not come here forcibly. You do not have to dress like us, but you have to respect us. You came to my hometown, not me. She

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[42] Bir yandan ben, lanet olsun, defolun gidin diyorum. Ama bir yandan da o çocukları, kadınları görünce çok fazla insanlık dışı düşünüyorsun diyorum kendi kendime. Ama burada o mültecileri yerleştirmenin mantığı çok farklı. Amaçları burayı da karıştırmak.

said, "We will take this place soon, we will take your houses, Tayyip Dad promised us." I heard them individually. It bothered us. Therefore, we were angry and angry with the people of Syria. Maybe we've been bad to people who have never been guilty. I still think I should help when I see a Syrian. Then what am I telling myself. My conscience is never comfortable, because I see that the children and women who come here have very difficult lives. But I would not have left my hometown; I'm not thinking about it.[43] (author's translation_Interview L)

However the same people embrace Syria and its president on ther basis of their ethnoreligious affinity as it becomes clear in the following quotation:

The people who are in Antakya and from Syria, they are all Sunnis. There is nobody coming here from our group.[44] So the people who escape the battle are from the other side. This is a contradiction, and I am not satisfied with this situation. Also, it causes unemployment. This is a self-recrimination. I am an employer, and I have four workers from Syria. They work very cheaply, and there is no insurance. I have to do it because the economy is so bad.[45] (author's translation_Interview J)

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[43] Silahlı adamların yolda dolaştığını kendi gözlerimler gördüm. Hatta Bankalar Caddesi'nde, adamın sırtında uzun namlulu, adam para çekiyor. Ben bir kadınla tartıştım. Ona buna laf atıyordu kıyafetlerinden dolayı. Ben de siz buraya geldiniz, biz sizi zorla getirmedik, dedim. Evet, bizim gibi giyinmek zorunda değilsiniz ama saygı duymak zorundasınız. Sen benim memleketime geldin, ben değil. Dedi ki, "Yakında burayı alacağız, evlerinizi alacağız. Siz buradan gideceksiniz. Tayyip Baba bize söz verdi." Bunu birebir ben duydum. Bu durum bizleri rahatsız etti. Haliyle onlara karşı öfkelendik, kinlendik. Belki de hiç suçu olmayan insanlara karşı kötü davranmak zorunda kaldık. Ben hala bir Suriyeli gördüğümde yardım etsem mi diye düşünüyorum. Sonra yok yahu bana ne diyorum. Vicdanen rahat değilim. Çünkü buraya gelen kadınların ve çocukların çok zorlandığını düşünüyorum. Ama ben olsam memleketimi bırakır mıydım diye de düşünmüyor değilim açıkçası.

[44] Referring to *minnina*

[45] Şuan Antakya'daki Suriyeliler'in çoğu Sunni, bizden gelen yok. Bu bir tezat, demek savaştan kaçanlar hep o taraftan. Bu durum hiç hoşuma gitmiyor. Ama özeleştiri yapayım,

> If we ask the people of Armutlu about the refugees, many of them say these are all dissidents, they don't like Bashar al-Assad. If they love Assad and Syria, they wouldn't leave their countries. They would fight for their homeland.[46] (author's translation_Interview G)

All in all, under these circumstances, the Syrian issue became a turning point for the Gezi Park Protests. In this regard, there is a strong relationship between territorial identity and social/political movements. Accordingly, the people were on the streets during the Gezi Park Protests because of the Syrian war, the government's hostility towards Assad and the fact that Bashar al-Assad is Nusayri. As Eriksen notes, "The ethnic group is defined through its relationship to others, highlighted through the boundary, and the boundary itself is a social product which may have variable importance and which may change through time."[47] And similarly, as Charles Piot says in his ethnographic research,

> If however, social relationship is presupposed, if the person is always an aspect of various relationships, we should see this person as composed of, or constituted by, relationships, rather than as situated in them. Persons here do not "have" relations; they are relations.[48]

Gupta and Ferguson use the concept of "culture-play of diaspora" in their paper by giving examples from India, Pakistan and Tehran that show the blurring between "here" and "there,"[49] although they also mention blurring

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işsizlik oranı da arttı, ben işverenim ve benim 4 tane Suriyeli çalışanım var. Çok ucuza çalışıyorlar, sigorta da yok. Mecburum ama ekonomi çok kötü.

[46] Armutlu'ya gidip sorsak birçok insan gelenlerin hepsinin muhalif olduğunu, Esad'ı sevmediklerini, sevselerdi ülkelerini terketmezlerdi, ülkeleri için savaşırlardı, der.

[47] Thomas Hylland. Eriksen, Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives(London: Pluto, 2010), pg. 38.

[48] Charles Piot, Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1999), pg. 18.

[49] Gupta, Akhil, and James Ferguson. "Beyond "Culture" : Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference." Cultural Anthropology 7, no. 1 (1992): 10. doi:10.1525/can.1992.7.1.02a00020.

places which are culturally and ethnically distinct. As they note, "The irony of these times, however, is that as actual places and localities become ever more blurred and indeterminate, *ideas* of culturally and ethnically distinct places become perhaps even more salient."

The term 'lived space' is one of the central contributions of this chapter, since the neighborhood is thought of as perceived and lived, the people and their experiences, as well as their social, cultural and political relations, in spatial, so to speak *daily*, life would be taken into account. In that sense, *daily life* is crucial to realizing how space is directly lived and experienced. As Lefebvre notes,

> Everyone knows what is meant when we speak of a 'room' in an apartment, the 'corner' of the Street, a 'marketplace', a shopping or cultural 'centre', a public 'place', and so on. These terms of everyday discourse serve to distinguish, but not to isolate, particular spaces, and in general to describe a social space.[50]

My argument here is that the Armutlu neighborhood is a place. It is a common place with its roads, buildings, streets, shops and so on. But now it is not just a place like an empty area. Some corners remind people of the resistance, the walls of buildings tell something with their graffiti and monuments are for the youth who were killed by the state during the Gezi Park protests. So, the neighborhood becomes an entire place with its spatialized markers.

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[50] Lefebvre, Henri. *The Production of Space*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell, 1991.

5

The Youth

> *Gamin, I mean, the child of Armutlu, needs to be stern. In other words, a fighter, brash, nimble. Well, we are[1].*
>
> – Author's translation, *Interview N*

After the 1980s, gangs and drug trafficking entered the neighborhood, and the number of drug users and sellers increased dramatically. As mentioned before, the neighborhood is known for its youth, but it has a bad reputation. This reputation is about the neighborhood, but not as a place. It is because of the people who live in the neighborhood. As mentioned in the introduction of the thesis, after the 1980s, the neighborhood had a bad reputation. When someone speaks of both the neighborhood and the Armutlu youth, they certainly do not talk positively about them. Despite the fact that throughout the struggle, the Armutlu youth were able to craft a political agency that has potentially transformed these exclusionary discourses, there

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[1] Mahalle çocuğu. Yani bizde böyle Armutlu çocuğu denince sert olmak gerekiyor. Yani kavgacı, atılgan, çevik. Öyleyiz de.

are certain aspects that have not changed. These discourses are not only salient among adults, but also among other "youths" as well.

Sharkey and Shields discuss "the complex and contradictory nature of 'abject citizenship' as it is experienced by teenagers from a small town youth centre."[2] In the Armutlu case, we see abject citizens who are on the one hand considered to be outsiders in the eyes of the others, who identify the youth as ignorant people, but on the other hand, these outsiders are the insiders as the very owners of the neighborhood.

> Youth may be citizens by fortune of birth or through bureaucratic process, but from the vantage point of the full citizens, that is where the inclusion stops for those perceived as deviant and delinquent. Building on existing literature of abjection and citizenship, the experiences of disadvantaged youth provide telling examples of how individuals and spaces can be labelled and rejected yet never fully excluded.[3]

There is no homogenous Armutlu youth in the neighborhood. There are two main groups of youth in the neighborhood. One is the the youth of Armutlu and the other is other youngsters in Armutlu.

> The visible does not need guidance. I, as a young person in the neighborhood of Armutlu, have always been on the street. For example, I beat up my aunt's son in the neighborhood, through which I declared that I'm in the gang business. We grew up fighting. We grew up beating each other up. The Armutlu neighborhood has been doomed to drugs and mobs after 1980. We are the children of Armutlu; we are blessed. Fights and kerfuffles… We discovered alcohol at a young age. Later on, the

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[2] Sharkey, Andrea, and Rob Shields. "Abject Citizenship – Rethinking Exclusion and Inclusion: Participation, Criminality and Community at a Small Town Youth Centre." Children's Geographies 6, no. 3 (2008): 239-56. doi:10.1080/14733280802183973.
[3] Ibid., 239

state imposed drugs in the neighborhood.[4] (author's translation_Interview A)

As mentioned above, socially exclusionary discourses in the neighborhood are also adapted by other young people. As noticed above, there is no homogenous youth in the neighborhood. So the discrimination against the Armutlu youth is made not only by adults, but also by other young people. It became very clear in the field that people had prejudices against the Armutlu youth. The Armutlu youth is always accused of being aggressive, vagrant or ignorant. These discourses remain unchanged during and after the protests. Throughout the protests, the same people continued stigmatizing the youth on the basis of lacking a political perspective or judged their activism and street presence as playing a game.

On the one hand, there are gangs in the neighborhood who consider themselves to be mafia. On the other hand, there are young people who mature really well in the neighborhood.[5] (author's translation_Interview B)

Most young people were on the street for adrenaline. The clashes were like an action, like a game to them. There was no control mechanism.[6] (author's translation_Interview C)

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[4] Görünen köy kılavuz istemez. Ben, Armutlu Mahallesi genci olarak, kendimi bildim bileli sokaktayım. Mahallede teyzemin oğlunu döverek ben de çete işlerinde varım dedim mesela. Biz kavgayla büyüdük. Birbirimizi döverek büyüdük. Armutlu Mahallesi 1980 yılından sonra uyuşturucuya ve çeteleşmeye mahkum edilmiştir. Biz Armutlu çocuğuyuz, kutsanmışız. Kavgalar, gürültüler, patırtılar... Küçük yaşta alkolle tanıştık. Daha sonra, devletin bize mahalle içinde dayattığı uyuşturucu.

[5] Çeteci tayfalar var, kendini mafya sananlar. Bir de gerçekten çok iyi yetişen gençler var Armutlu'da.

[6] Çoğu genç adrenalin istediği için sokaktaydı. Çatışma ortamı onlar için bir aksiyondu, oyun gibi. Bir kontrol mekanizması yoktu.

I don't think the Armutlu youth is a political youth. In our childhood, in the 1990s, this youth was vagabonding, crazy and uneducated. We have been fighting together in the protests. Some of them were martyried, and some were seriously injured. These young people were involved in the movement without knowing what was what.[7] (author's translation_Interview D)

There is significant evidence that these young people, the Armutlu Youth, were politically active during the protests. They took political action, but despite this, other people who are both inside and outside the neighborhood and who never believe in this youth did not take the Armutlu youth seriously as political actors. Tracey Skelton criticises this type of attitude in her study entitled "*Taking young people as political actors seriously: opening the borders of political geography*," and she notes,

"In this paper, first, I cite evidence to show the limited 'institutional' Political Geography focus and begin to make a case for it to open its borders and take young people seriously. I argue that Political Geography needs to recognise that young people are political actors now; they are not political subjects 'in-waiting'."[8]

The Armutlu youth is seen as a subgroup by the people who do not take the Armutlu youth seriously. These young people are usually constructed as

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[7] Armutlu gençliğinin politik olduğunu düşünmüyorum. Bizim çocukluğumuzda, işte 1990larda, sağda solda haraç kesen, zibidilik yapan, okumamış gençlerdi bunlar. Biz beraber çatıştık. Belki bir kısmı şehit düştü, bir kısmı da ağır yaralandı. Bu gençler neyin ne olduğunu bilmeden hareketin içinde yer aldılar.

[8] Skelton, Tracey. "Taking Young People as Political Actors Seriously: Opening the Borders of Political Geography." Area 42, no. 2 (2010): 145-51. doi:10.1111/j.1475-4762.2009.00891.x.

excluded, marginalised or alienated.[9] As mentioned above, exlusion is justi-fied in various ways. In her study, Sarah James argues about the reasons for the exclusion of children from geographical studies.[10] In this paper, she lists the explanations of this lack of interest in the geographical study of children as *socio-spatial relationships, spatial behaviour,* and *environmental cogni-tion.* In addition, she states:

> First, in terms of *socio-spatial* relationships there is the idea that chil-dren are not prominent members of society, and that their spatial distri-bution is so similar to that of adults, suggesting that separate investiga-tion is not worthwhile. Secondly, in terms of *spatial behaviour* there is the implicit suggestion that children's spatial behaviour is a poor indi-cation of the complexity and sophistication of their minds (but surely this could be said about any human subject) - related to this is the im-plied assumption and criticism of *environmental cognition*, that is, that any evidence we have of children's behaviour is unconvincing. Finally, perhaps the topic has been largely ignored because of the indisputable and intrinsic difficulties associated with the study of children and their 'natural' and humanly created environments.[11]

For the Armutlu neighborhood, the situation is different. It is not that the youth has no vote or that they have no explicit roles in the political system. The youth in the neighborhood is labelled as psychopaths and unacceptable because of their drug use and aggressive behaviour. Thus, the yougsters and some of the adults in the neighborhood argue that politics is not their job.

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[9] Panelli, Ruth, Karen Nairn, and Jaleh Mccormack. ""We Make Our Own Fun": Reading the Politics of Youth With(in) Community." Sociologia Ruralis 42, no. 2 (2002): 106-30. Ac-cessed 2019. doi:10.1111/1467-9523.00205.

[10] James, Sarah. "Is There a 'Place' for Children in Geography?" Area 22, no. 3 (1990): 278-83. Accessed February 8, 2020. www.jstor.org/stable/20002871.

[11] Ibid., 279

When we look at those young people, they lacked a political conscious-ness and a constituency. I even thought that they seemed to rise to the bait.[12] (author's translation_Interview H)

I don't really like them much. May I tell you something? They don't even know what they are doing. These young people don't agree, even with God. They walk around and say, 'we're not afraid of anyone.'[13] (author's translation_Interview J)

In this chapter, I focus on the constitution of identity and its various practices among different Alawi youth living in the same neighborhood. Like the preivous chapter, there are two important events that I refer to while doing this. One of them is the Syrian War and the other is the Gezi Park protests. The reason why I use the word youth in the plural is that the youth of the 2000s were heterogeneous, grappling with important problems and emerging with new demands. This heterogeneity also applies to the youth in the neigh-borhood.[14]

As I have shown in the Table 1.1, I examined young people in two sep-arate groups while conducting my interviews. Young people A to Y, aged 17 to 31, are those who live in the neighborhood, mostly Arab Alawis, except for E, who are still studying or have a regular job. The young people I refer to as the Armutlu Youth, on the other hand, are those who did not continue to higher education after graduating from school, do not have regular jobs, spend most of their time in the neighborhood, on the street, are in constant fights, are known as the mafia, and have to constantly deal with the police.

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[12] O gençlere baktığımız zaman bir siyasi taban, bir bilinç yoktu. Ben bile gaza gelip başladıklarını düşündüm ilk başta.

[13] Ben aslında pek sevmiyorum onları. Sana bir şey diyeyim mi? Onlar neyi ne için yaptıklarını bile bilmiyorlar. Bunların Allah'a eyvallahı yok. Biz kimseden korkmayız diyerek ortalıkta dolaşıyorlar.

[14] Lüküslü Demet, and Yücel Hakan. Gençlik Halleri: 2000'li Yıllar Türkiyesi'nde Genç Olmak. Ankara: Efil Yayınevi, 2013.

When I first started this study, I did not treat the young people I interviewed with as two separate categories.. All of these young people were referred to as the youth of the Armutlu Neighborhood. They all carry the label of being from Armutlu. However, the interviewees I call "the Armutlu Youth" refer to a particular group of young people among the general youngsters who openly self defined themselves as such after the protests.

In addition, the categorization rests on the cleavage among the young people in Armutlu which rests on whether they become a part of/participant in social and political upheavals in the neighborhood or not. During protests, youth have always been at the forefront of the demonstrations. The Syrian issue was compatible with values, not individual/collective interests, for these young people. These non-homogeneous groups of young people had a common purpose in being on the street. Whether a member of the mafia or not, whether they smoke marijuana or not, whether they belong to a political organization or not, there was a youth homogeneously politicized by the Syrian War.

This chapter is going to be about the Armutlu youth and their social and political empowerment through the political activism of the Syrian Issue and Gezi uprising. These young people took an active part in the social movements between 2011 and 2019. The next section concerns the general representations of the young people who refer to temlseves as the Armutlu Youth.

For the neighborhood, this group of youth is never identified as a proper youth. This group of young people has been known as having a lower socio-economic status, poor education, criminal records, and drug and alcohol addictions.[15] However, throughout the political mobilization around the Syrian Issue and the Gezi Uprising, they appeared as political actors. This chapter is the process of their gaining visiblity.

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[15] Sharkey, Andrea, and Rob Shields. "Abject Citizenship – Rethinking Exclusion and Inclusion: Participation, Criminality and Community at a Small Town Youth Centre." Children's Geographies 6, no. 3 (2008): 239-56. doi:10.1080/14733280802183973.

However, although I have differentiated the youth in this way and presented them as a heterogeneous group, we see in the majority of the thesis that being an Arab Alevi in daily life is not enough to come together for this heterogeneous group but that this separation among the youth has been broken with the Syrian War and then the Gezi Park protests. Thus, the reason why the youth in the neighborhood has become a homogeneous structure is the AKP government and its policies, both inside and outside the country.

One of the first questions that this chapter poses is *What does the youth think about their political actions, and how do they explain it*? *Does memory play an important role in the construction of the political subjectivities of the youth in the Armutlu neighborhood?* The answers lie in the strategies they develop, the ways they narrate their experiences and the meanings they give the movement and their life. Besides, the neighborhood has a symbolic value which is transmitted through memories in the family history as the neighborhood gains importance for young people as both a historical heritage and a home.

§ 5.1 The Armutlu Youth

> *When you say the youth of Armutlu, they say that these youngsters are ignorant and do not have a clue about what they are doing.*[16]
>
> – Author's translation, *Interview B*

Two events brought the youth of Armutlu into the political agenda of the city. 16 September 2012 was a turning point for the youth of Armutlu, as

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[16] Armutlu çocuğu dediğin zaman işte bunlar cahil ne yaptığını bilmeyen insanlar derler.

it marked the beginning of their political acitivism. On this date, tens of thousands of people came together to say no to the war in Syria. Despite the fact that the place of the protest was blockaded by the police, people came together years later.

In June 2013, people from the Armutlu neighborhood took over the neighborhood for two months. These young people were on the street day and night. Some changed off, and some did not even go to their homes. All the side streets were occupied by these young people. For this reason, they always refer to the 1980s by saying "we did not allow the police to enter the neighborhood as same in 1980s." In a word, these youngsters occupied the streets.

This section analyzes the experiences of the Armutlu youth in the city of Antakya. It is through the political struggle between September 2012 and June 2013 that the Armutlu youth formed their own political spaces and were thereby included in the neighbourhood public spaces, hence becoming visible.

Everyone thinks that the new Armutlu youth is ignorant and not sensible. We were thinking about how to cope wth this issue. We said we should use our constitutional right of assembly and demonstration. We follow what happens in Turkey. We heard that the Antakya Bazaar was preparing for protest. Already, everywhere in Turkey was in an uproar. When we went to the bazaar, the explanation was made by the people who called for the protest. We were late. As soon as we got there, the people said it had already finished and we had to disperse. Well, we said that we should not share what is accumulated within us. Then we decided to sit there and make the demonstration. There was disagreement. What should we do, what should we do? Everyone was asking me because I was the eldest one. Suddenly, we had the space. At that moment,

SELİN BURGAÇ TAŞ

everyone wiggled. This was the first time that happened.[17] (author's translation_Interview A)

The Armutlu neighborhood in Antakya, immediately after the resistance, came to be known as the last bastion of resistance. The reason for this is that this was the city where the protests lasted the longest. When the uprisings came to an end in other cities where the protests took place, young people were still on the streets in Antakya's Armutlu neighborhood.

Usually, the hours were indicated on social media. For example, 'at 7 pm, we will meet at the Uğur Mumcu Square.' And then we would walk towards Armutlu BP, and we would clash with the police there. It was written directly in this way. We are a bit belligerent, and this call was encouraging us to go out. We had an excuse to go out. Even if our family didn't let us go.[18] (author's translation_Interview N)

We've had things that we were not familiar with. In the beginning, we were terrified. We were running away when they threw the sound bombs. We didn't know anything. We didn't know how to chant slogans. We didn't know how to march. We didn't know what to do when faced with police violence. Later, this fear began to turn into something promising. We saw that we could achieve something. It was the first real

[17] Herkes kötü bir gençliğin yetiştiğini düşünüyordu. Biz nasıl baş kaldırırız diye düşünüyorduk. Anayasal hakkımız olan toplanma ve gösteri hakkımızı kullanalım dedik. Türkiye'de olan olaylara ayak uydurduk. Antakya çarşıda eylem hazırlığı olduğunu duyduk. Zaten bütün Türkiye ayaklanmıştı. Çarşıya gittiğimizde açıklama yapılıyordu. Biz geç kalmıştık. Oraya yetiştiğimiz anda, dağılalım diyorlardı. İyi de bizim içimizde birikenleri biz neden paylaşmayalım dedik. Sonra biz de orada oturup eylem yapma kararı aldık. Her kafadan bir ses çıkıyordu. Abi ne yapalım, ne edelim, diye. Herkes bana soruyordu çünkü yaş olarak en büyükleri ben idim. Birden baktık, alanı ele geçirmiştik. O anda herkes kıpır kıpırdı. İlk defa böyle bir şey oluyordu.

[18] Genellikle sosyal medya üzerinden saatler belirtiliyordu. Mesela akşam saat yedide Uğur Mumcu Meydanı'nda buluşacağız. Armutlu BP'ye doğru yürüyeceğiz ve orada da polisle çatışacağız, diye doğrudan, olduğu gibi yazıyorlardı. Bu da bizi biraz kavgacı olduğumuz için artık gaza mı getiriyordu, teşvik mi ediyordu. Evden bir bahane ile çıkıyorduk. Ailemiz izin vermese bile çıkıyorduk.

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example of social solidarity that I witnessed in Turkey's history.[19] (author's translation_Interview W)

For example, we had problems. Five or six people used to run away when pepper gas was fired, which caused confusion. We, as the Youth of Armutlu, held meetings. We have a division of labor at these meetings. We said that when the police throw pepper gas, some friends bring lemon, some friends will carry the hurt friends, etc.[20] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth A)

For the Armutlu youth, these protests gave a new way to have public visibility. They have opened a new page for themselves. As mentioned before, these groups of young people have a bad reputation among other people. So with the struggle, maybe this disrepute has changed.

We were visible in public. Each time we went to the neighborhoods, people were applauding us. Our helmets, masks. The people protected us. When we went to neighborhoods, we resisted at the forefront but not with guns, with our bodies.[21] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth C)

It is through this increasing visibility and political activism that the Armutlu youth has formed their political space and constructed/formed their

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[19] Alışık olmadığımız şeyler yaşadık. İlk başlarda çok korkuyorduk. Ses bombası attıklarında mermi sanıp kaçıyorduk. Hiçbir şey bilmiyorduk. Slogan atmayı bilmiyorduk. Nasıl yürünür bilmiyorduk. Polisle karşılaşsak ne yapacağız, onu da bilmiyorduk. Daha sonra bu korku umut verici bir şeye dönüşmeye başladı. Bir şeyler başardığımızı gördük. Türkiye tarihinde tanık olduğum ilk gerçek anlamdaki toplumsal dayanışma örneğiydi.

[20] Şöyle problemlerimiz oluyordu mesela, biber gazı atıldığı zaman beş altı kişi birden koşuyordu müdahale etmek için ve bu da karmaşaya neden oluyordu. Biz Armutlu Gençliği olarak toplantılar yaptık. Bu toplantılarda iş bölümü yaptık. Dedik ki biber gazı atıldığında şu arkadaşlar limon getirecek, zarar gören insanları bu arkadaşlar taşıyacak gibi.

[21] Biz halkın içinde belli oluyorduk. Mahalleye geldiğimiz zaman bizi alkışlıyorlardı. Baretlerimiz, maskelerimiz…Halk bizi aşırı sahipleniyordu. Biz geldiğimiz zaman en ön saflarda direniyorduk. Ama silahla değil, bedenimizle.

political subjectivity. Being Arab and Alevi were important markers of membership in this political space, however, they were not enough. In the meatime, Arabness and Alawiness were being redefind.

> The whole world heard our voice during the Gezi Protests. Since Armutlu was the center of the protests, other Alevi districts were jealous of us. But we have always said that here is the biggest castle.[22] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth B)

> For example, our brothers from Samandağ were coming along for support. They were chanting slogans such as, "Samandağ, Armutlu hand in hand, together for Gezi." One of the leaders of the Armutlu youth, he is a friend, not to give the name, said, "This is Armutlu, you can only chant here, "Armutlu""[23] (author's translation_Interview K)

Figure 2.2   Samandağ Youth
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

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[22] Gezi olaylarında bütün dünya bizim sesimizi duydu. Merkez burası olduğu için diğer Alevi mıntıkaları tarafından da çekememezlik oldu. Ama biz hep dedik, burası en büyük kale.

[23] Mesela Samandağ'dan bizim abilerimiz geliyorlardı yardım için. Slogan atıyorlardı, "Samandağ, Armutlu elele, hep beraber Gezi'ye" diye. Armutlu reislerinden biri, arkadaşım adını vermeyeyim, burası Armutlu, burada sadece Armutlu diye bağırabilirsin, dedi.

Being an Arab and Alawi shape their politics and are detrimental in the shaping of their political subjectivities and forming their own political space. The youth which was politicized through the Syrian Issue and the Gezi Uprising and who smoke hashish and/or are partly involved in gangs, all define themselves as the Others. As well as this, they characterize the place as a stigmatized space.

> All those who died in Gezi were Alevis. The Prime Minister expressed his condolences: to whom? He expressed his condolences for a single person, for a child from the Nationalist Movement Party, for Burak. Why did he die? He died on his way to kill our Alevi brothers. Is it a mere coincidence that the dead people are all Alawi?[24] (author's translation_Interview the Armutlu Youth E)

> We are not very popular people. We know that. This is the reason, I think, that the Alawi youth was massacred.[25] (author's translation_Interview A)

> Being from the Armutlu neighborhood means being rebellious. Living under challenging conditions, against life conditions. Because this is a corrupted province. What Gazi is in Istanbul, Armutlu is in Hatay.[26] (author's translation_Interview F)

> I'm proud to be a child of the neighborhood of Armutlu. The neighborhood embraced Ali İsmail, Abdullah. And again, the young people of

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[24] Gezi'de ölenlerin hepsi Alevi. Başbakan hangi birine başsağlığı diledi? Tek bir kişi için başsağlığı diledi, o da Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi'nden bir çocuk için, Burak için. Neden öldü o? Bizim Alevi kardeşlerimizi öldürmeye giderken öldü. Ölenlerin hepsinin Alevi olması tesadüf mü?

[25] Biz sevilmiyoruz. Bunu biliyoruz. Bu yüzden Alevi gençlerin katledildiğini düşünüyorum.

[26] Armutlu mahallesinden olmak demek isyankar olmak demektir. Hayat şartlarına karşı, çok zor şartlar altında yaşamak. Çünkü il olarak dışlanmış bir yer burası. İstanbul'da Gazi neyse, Hatay'da Armutlu odur.

Armutlu embraced Ahmet Atakan, Ethem and all of them. But we have made these three martyrs legendary. These young people died for their people. When Turkey kept quiet, Armutlu was not silent. That's why we have declared Armutlu as the last barricade. This is not Ankara, this is not İstanbul. This is the center of Armutlu; there is no exit from here.[27] (author's translation_Interview Armutlu Youth A)

As mentioned in the introduction of this section, the Armutlu youth form their own political spaces. During the interviews, they all noticed the difference between the Gezi Uprising in Antakya and İstanbul, since, according to them, they made a great effort during the protests and made history. Even the slogans they chanted throughout the uprising were original and different from the versions in İstanbul and other cities because they wrote their own slogans vis-à-vis their own political space and reality.

§ 5.2 Older Generation's Narratives and the Neighborhood

Memory plays an essential role in the construction of the political subjectivities of the youth in Armutlu neighborhood. In Chapter 4, we analysed the role of space in the social movements, and accordingly, we have discovered the meaning of the neighborhood along with the memory of place. In this section we will see the impact of narratives on the youth, as well as the importance of how the local youth constructs itself on the streets of the Armutlu neighborhood.

Armutlu is a rebel zone of the 1980s. That means the right wing people

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[27] Armutlu çocuğu olmak gurur verici bir şey. Ali İsmail'i sahiplendi, Abdullah'ı sahiplendi. Ve yine Armutlu gençleri Ahmet Atakan'ı sahiplendi, Ethem'i, hepsini sahiplendi. Ama bu üç şehidini dillere destan bir şekilde efsane yaptı. Bu çocuklar halkı için öldü. Herkes Türkiye sustuğu zaman Armutlu susmadı, onun için biz burayı son barikat ilan ettik. Burası Ankara değil, burası İstanbul değil, burası Armutlu merkez, buradan çıkış yok.

cannot come here, and only leftists live here. It was such a sanctuary for Acilciler,[28] and we have grown up with their stories. And also the neighborhood is a specific place because of its location, since it is the important entrance that you can use to go to the other Alevi regions.[29] (author's translation_Interview I)

As detailed in Chapter 2, the 1980s was an important period for the people of the Armutlu neighborhood. Many of the locals in the neighborhood were involved in active politics at the time. Many of the youngsters I interviewed are the children of these families. So there are narratives that families pass on to their children. The older generation's narratives have a strong influence on the youth. this inheritance from family history also shapes the youth's political subjectivities, and this situation clearly shows itself in my interviews with the young people.

Of course, the old stories, the memories of our families, have a great impact on the way people take these actions.[30] (author's translation_Interview E)

In 1980, my father was a political activist. He would tell us about those days. Of course, at that time, the events were very different.[31] (author's translation_Interview V)

I learned about the 1980s from my father. There was a series, Hatırla Sevgili. As he watched it, he always sighed. I always asked, 'so you've lived like this.' Three of the five houses in the Armutlu neighborhood

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[28] The Urgent Ones is a group that split from the TPLP-F.

[29] Armutlu 1980 döneminin kurtarılmış bölgesidir. Yani oraya sağcıların girememesi sadece solcuların olması, Acilcilerin korunma merkezi olması ve bizim jenerasyonun onların hikayeleriyle büyümemiz. Bir de Armutlu konum olarak diğer Alevi bölgelere önemli giriştir.

[30] İnsanların bu eylemleri sahiplenmesinde elbette eski hikayelerin, ailelerimizin anılarının etkisi çok büyük.

[31] 1980 döneminde babam olayların içindeydi. Konu arasında anlatırdı. Tabii o zamanlar olaylar çok başkaydı.

are politically active houses.[32] (author's translation_Interview I)

This is a remote place. It didn't come up much in the news. It's one of the strongholds of the Resistance. The reason why the resistance is in Armutlu is because it reflects the spirit of 1980.[33] (author's translation_Interview A)

In addition to all of this, most interviewees stated that their family did not want to share these stories with them. Young people see it as a fear for their families.

My father was actively involved in politics during the 1980s, but he did not tell me much about it. Maybe he doesn't want me to get involved, or maybe he's afraid of what he's been through.[34] (author's translation_Interview J)

They do not talk about the 1980 days. I think they are scared. It is fair enough that they are afraid, but also I do not think that it is right.[35] (author's translation_Interview W)

In this section, there is a story which comes from their families as a heritage. But with the struggle, the youth starts to write their own stories. In the following section, we will see how a new place-based memory is created. In this context, how the space transforms is an important point for us and how different meanings are attached to the space.

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[32] 1980 dönemini babamdan dinledim. Hatırla Sevgili diye bir dizi film vardı. Onu izlerken hep iç çeker anlatırdı. Ben de hep sorardım, siz de mi böyle yaşadınız, siz ne yaptınız diye. Armutlu Mahallesinde her beş haneden üçü eskiden mücadele veren insanların yaşadığı evlerdir.

[33] Burası uzak bir yer. Çok fazla gündeme gelmedi. Direnişin kalelerinden biridir ama. Direnişin isminin Armutlu olmasının nedeni ise buranın 1980 ruhunu yansıtmasıdır.

[34] Babam 1980 döneminde aktif olarak siyaset içerisindeymiş ama bana çok anlatmaz. Belki de olaylara karışmamı istemiyordur. Belki de onun yaşadığı şeylerin başıma gelmesinden korkuyordur.

[35] 1980 dönemini çok da rahat anlatmazlar. Korkuyorlar bence. Haklı yanları da var, haksız yanları da.

§ 5.3   The Neighborhood as Home

Armutlu is my home. We made our fight here so that the glass would not break and people would not be harmed[36].

– Author's translation, *Interview A*

On the one hand, it is very important to say that the memory from their families opened up a space for the youth to rethink the Armutlu neighborhood. On the other, this heritage is the honor of the neighborhood, and it is quite effective on the youth. The fact that the neighborhood was politically active in the 1980s, when the neighborhood was called the castle of the left and the right-wingers never entered the neighborhood, meant that this legacy was the dignity of the neighborhood for these young people. In addition to this, there are gangs in the neighborhood, the big brothers, and no one wants to tease someone from Armutlu; in other words, the criminal record of the neighborhood is another reason for honor for the young people of Armutlu. In these ways, the youth attach meaning to the place, and the place has become a home for them.

The youth have a strong sense of belonging to the neighborhood.[37] They see Armutlu as their home. Street corners provide the youth with spaces which they call their own,[38] bringing logistical advantages during the protests.

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[36] Armutlu benim yuvam. Biz burada cam kırılmasın insanlar zarar görmesin diye savaştık.

[37] Darıcı, Haydar. "Violence and Freedom: The Politics of Kurdish Children and Youth in Urban Space." Master's thesis, Sabancı University, 2009. Accessed 2019. http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/16666/.

[38] Sharkey, Andrea, and Rob Shields. "Abject Citizenship – Rethinking Exclusion and Inclusion: Participation, Criminality and Community at a Small Town Youth Centre." Children's Geographies 6, no. 3 (2008): 239-56. doi:10.1080/14733280802183973.

During the struggles, the neighborhood became a private labyrinth that made possible violent encounters with security forces.[39] This situation is seen in my interviews with the youth:

> Armutlu is a place that we all know step by step, and we know the entrances and exits of the neighborhood very well, so that we could build barricades easily.[40] (author's translation_Interview A)

Figure 3.1   The Struggle
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

> Armutlu was favourable to us because we were in our own neighborhood. We know the streets step by step, know who would react how, and where to go at times of police intervention.[41] (author's translation_Interview E)

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[39] Darıcı, Haydar. "Violence and Freedom: The Politics of Kurdish Children and Youth in Urban Space." Master's thesis, Sabancı University, 2009. Accessed 2019. http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/16666/.

[40] Armutlu'nun giriş çıkışlarını çok iyi bildiğimiz için sokak sokak, adım adım, ev ev bildiğimiz için rahat bir şekilde barikat kurduk.

[41] Kendi mahallende olmanın, sokakları adım adım biliyor olmanın, kimin ne tepki vereceğini biliyor olmanın, polis müdahalesinde nereye gideceğini biliyor avantajıydı Armutlu.

Figure 3.2   The Barricade
SOURCE: *Yaser Çapar*

When the police entered the neighborhood during the bust, we always escaped to the right places.[42] (author's translation_Interview B)

You know the whole place point by point. Also, the place is a site of resistance, it has the potential.[43] (author's translation_Interview Y)

Such imaginaries of the space point to a blurring of the thick line between public and private space. Throughout the movement and political struggle, the private became public by the practices of the youth.[44]

All the doors were open during the protests. A place you know step by step. You feel safe. We went out on the street, lemons were thrown up from above, cloths were thrown at us. They brought us bathtubs and washing machines to build a barricade. The police were throwing gas; we went home. Infirmaries were established inside homes. People who

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[42] Baskın olduğu zaman polis mahalleye girdiğinde hep doğru yerlere kaçtık.

[43] Nokta nokta bildiğin bir yer. Fiziki olarak da işte mahallenin bir mevzi olması, bunun olanaklarının olması.

[44] Darıcı, Haydar. "Violence and Freedom: The Politics of Kurdish Children and Youth in Urban Space." Master's thesis, Sabancı University, 2009. Accessed 2019. http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/16666/.

could not go out on the street to join the protests supported us in this way. They opened their doors to us. Something happened, the police went into the neighborhood three or four times in total. Two of the three of our friends died. I remember well. We were thousands. The police entered the neighborhood, and those thousands disappeared in five minutes. The police were mad. Because at one time, all the people disappeared. At that moment, there were thirty people in our house.[45] (author's translation_Interview E)

Figure 4.1   The Solidarity
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

When the people refer to any resistance, they all mention the Armutlu neighborhood as the bastion of the resistance. Needless to say, the neighborhood is also described as a home by the people. During the fieldwork, the

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[45] Protestolar boyunca bütün kapılar açıktı. Adım adım bildiğin bir yer. Güvende hissediyorsun kendini. Sokağa bir çıktık, yukarıdan limonlar atılıyor, bezler atılıyor bize. Barikat kurmamız için küvetler, çamaşır makineleri getiriyorlar. Polis gaz atıyor, evlere çıkıyoruz. Evlerde revirler kuruldu. Sokağa çıkmayan insanlar bize bu şekilde destek oldular. Kapılarını açtılar bize. Şöyle bir şey oldu, polis mahalleye toplamda üç veya dört defa girdi. Üçün ikisinde kayıp verdik zaten. Ben iyi hatırlıyorum. Binlerce kişiydik. Polis mahalleye girdi ve o binlerce kişi beş dakika içerisinde yok oldu. Polis kudurdu. Bir anda bütün insanlar yok oldu çünkü. O anda bizim evde otuz kişi vardı mesela.

interviewees mentioned that there is no difference between their home and the streets. The gas station is the door where they can enter the home (neighborhood), and Uğur Mumcu Boulevard is another door where the neighborhood ends, and it is also the exit gate of the home/neighbourhood. In other words, there were solid reasons why all these incidents took place in the in Armutlu neighborhood and not somewhere else. First of all, the Armutlu neighborhood is seen as a bastion of the resistance. As elucidated above, the Armutlu neighborhood is described as home, and this home has a crucial function.

As was pointed out in the introduction to this chapter, it is important to know how the local youth locate themselves on the streets of Armutlu. This positioning is a situation that occurs when young people are on the street. Because, according to them, there are reasons why they are on the street. For instance, the safety of the neighborhood.

The youth secured the neighborhood space and its residents like they protected their homes. In the eyes of the youth, this is compared to controlling the the honor of the neighborhood. According to the youth, the neighborhood is their honor. The neighborhood is protected in different ways: others, i.e 'non-Armutlu men,' were prevented from entering the neighborhood. By this way, the neighborhood turned into a gendered space. However, neither honour nor terms of gender are static concepts, but they were being redefined throughout the uprising.

As described in the previous chapter, throughout the war in Syria, the Armutlu people have re-constructed the markers of difference in the neighbourhood in spatial terms. In addition, in Chapter 3, we saw the border of the space and how thick and inflexible the neighborhood boundaries are. So, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Syrians are excluded from the space for various reasons. With the Syrian war, the refugees became the men (non-Armutlu men) who wanted to penetrate the neighborhood, which means that the youth had to protect the neighborhood against not only the men who are

not Arab Alevi or not from the neighborhood but also from the refugees. According to them, before the war, they had to protect the neighborhood only from men who were not from the neighborhood, but now with the war in Syria, the refugees were added to the list. So, here we see once again that the youth in the neighborhood changes depending on time and space.

> The neighborhood provided its own security before the Gezi Protests. When an incident occurred in the neighborhood, the police would not have been informed. The incident was sorted out in the neighborhood.[46] (author's translation_Interview W)

> The neighborhood began to have its own defense. This applies to all the neighborhoods where Arab Alewis live. The youth of the neighborhood form their own security. There was an incident. A Syrian man in the neighborhood stole a woman's bag and ran away. The Armutlu youth chased the man in the neighbourhood and they beat him until they killed him. Then they called the police and turned him over to the police. There was another incident. Men in a car with an Arab license plate on Uğur Mumcu Boulevard were fired for catcalling at a woman. The woman ran and told the situation to the youth who were from the neighborhood. Then the youth stopped the car, and they beat up the young people in the car. Far more than the Gezi events, this is due to fear of Syria. People are afraid of terrorists from Syria. They think that they're going to kill us. Armament has increased. Nobody can defend us except ourselves.[47] (author's translation_Interview V)

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[46] Mahalle kendi güvenliğini Gezi'den önce de kendi sağlıyordu. Mahallede bir olay olduğunda en basitinden polise haber verilmezdi. Olay mahallede çözülürdü.

[47] Mahalle kendi savunmasını almaya başladı. Yani bu Sadece burası için değil, Arap Alevilerin yaşadığı bütün mahalleler için böyle. Mahallenin gençleri kendi güvenliğini alıyorlar. Bir olay yaşandı. Mahallede Suriyeli biri, bir kadının çantasını çalıp kaçıyor. Mahallenin gençleri yakalıyorlar adamı. Döve döve öldürüyorlar resmen. Ondan sonra polisi arayıp polise teslim ediyorlar. Başka bir olay daha yaşanıyor. Uğur Mumcu Bulvarında Arap plakalı

During and after the protests, the youth used to do identity checks of people who seemed to be suspicious Also, they were checking the drivers of cars with Syrian license plates and did not allow some to enter the neighborhood. Similar to the otherization of the refugees from the neighbourhood space, the practice of identity checks and the removal of certain people demonstrates a similar point. This whole process demonstrates how the terms of belonging to the neighbourbood have been getting more rigid.

All these examples demonstrate the relation of space with gender. In the neighborhood, gender roles were clearly recognized, and this recognization was reproduced with the struggle.

> During the protest, we, men, were in the frontline. Of course, there were ladies in the front lines. The ladies were firm like us. But we were trying to keep them at the back. Because the police was very harsh, so were we. We were trying to protect ladies.[48] (author's translation_Interview A)

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bir araba bir kadına laf atıyor. Kadın gençlerin yanına koşuyor, durumu anlatıyor. Arabayı durduruyorlar gençler ve içindekileri dövüyorlar. Bir özsavunma oluştu. Gezi olaylarından çok aslında bu Suriye'den gelen korkuya bağlı. Oradan gelen teröristlerden korkuyor insanlar. Bizleri öldürecekler diyorlar. Silahlanma arttı. Bizi bizden başkası savunamaz.

[48] Protestolar boyunca biz erkekler olarak en öndeydik. Bayanlar da vardı tabii önlerde. Onlar da atarlıdır bizim gibi. Biz onları geride tutmaya çalışıyorduk. Çünkü polis çok sertti, biz de öyle. Bayanları korumaya çalışıyorduk.

Figure 4.2   The Women at the Barricade
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

I can tell you about lots of women who clashed with the police. Who founded the infirmary? The women. For sure, there were no women in front of the barricade, those were predominantly revolutionaries. The clashes were male-dominated.[49] (author's translation_Interview E)

There were girls, you go mad. They are like men. But in dangerous situations, we kept our ladies away. We directed them to things such as bringing lemons and water.[50] (author's translation_Interview Armutlu Youth B)

We were there, as we have become mannish. Once they (men) see that you can really clash, they never tell you that you are a lady and ask you

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[49] Ben sana bir sürü kadın anlatabilirim çatışmada olan. Reviri kuran kimlerdi mesela, kadınlardı. Evet, en önde barikatta kadınlar yoktu. Devrimciler vardı daha çok. Erkek ağırlıklı bir durumdu yani çatışmalar.

[50] Her bir kız var kafayı yersin. Erkek gibiler. Ama son tehlikeli durumlarda biz bayanlarımızı uzak tuttuk. Onları daha çok şeye yönlendirdik işte limon, su falan getirmeye.

to stay back. But they really need to see this. You have to prove your-selves. As I said, you need to become mannish.[51] (author's translation_Interview G)

For the both 1980s and the Gezi Park Protests, the meanings of some places were the same, such as Gündüz Street, the oil office and the narrow streets. However, with the Gezi Uprising, the meanings of some places changed for the youth.

When you take the road from Rüya Pharmacy, on the first side street, on the left street, Abdullah Cömert was killed. He was shot in the cor-ner. A monument was built there. It was bad. It was the first time that we encountered such a thing. It was bad. We still keep that monument alive there.[52] (author's translation_Interview B)

All our martyrs have monuments. However, a problem occurred with the monument of Ahmet Atakan. We memorialized the place where Ah-met fell, but of course, it was right in the middle of the road, Gündüz Caddesi. So there was trouble, and those stones were removed. Then we made a sign called Ahmet Atakan Street. We always sit there. We remember them all. When we went down from Uğur Mumcu, we built the Gezi Martyrs Park.[53] (author's translation_Interview A)

Another important thing about the neighborhood that was emphasized during the interviews with the youth was the examples of solidarity during

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[51] Biz biraz da erkekleşen kadınlardık orada. Senin gerçekten çatışabildiğini gördüklerinde sen bayansın geride dur demediler. Ama gerçekten bunu görmeleri gerekiyor. Kendini kanıtlaman gerekiyor. Bunun için de dediğim gibi biraz da erkekleşmiş olman gerekiyor.

[52] Rüya Eczanesi'nden yola çıktığında ilk ara sokakta, soldaki sokakta, Abdullah Cömert öldürüldü. Köşe başında vuruldu. Orada bir anıt yapıldı. Kötü oldu. İlk defa böyle bir şeyle karşılaştık. Kötü oldu yani. Hala o anıtı yaşatıyoruz orada.

[53] Şehit olan bütün arkadaşlarımızın anıtı var. Ancak Ahmet Atakan'ın anıtında şöyle bir sıkıntı oluştu. Ahmet'in düştüğü yeri çevirdik biz tabii ama yolun, Gündüz Caddesi'nin, tam ortasına denk geliyordu. Bu yüzden sıkıntı oldu ve o taşlar kaldırıldı. Sonra Ahmet Atakan sokağı diye tabela yaptırdık. Hep orada oturuyoruz. Hepsini anıyoruz. Uğur Mumcu Bul-varı'ndan aşağı indiğinde Gezi Şehitleri Parkı yaptık orayı.

the protests. The protests which happened in the Armutlu neighborhood witnessed some of the rare examples of solidarity in Turkey. The youth who were the part of protests mentioned the place of the solidarity. They connected with the neighborhood both as a place and a space of solidarity. According to them, the importance of the protests being in the neighborhood was the strong solidarity in the neighborhood.

> You feel safe. I just mentioned that they were throwing lemons from the buildings while we were on the street. They were throwing cloths. They were bringing tubs and washing machines so that we could set up barricades.[54] (author's translation_Interview E)

> The people threw the water tanks on the 4th floor; 'use them as you wish,' they said. The owner of the new construction said, 'use the bricks as you want, I will bring new ones tomorrow.' People in the upper neighborhood sent us food. In the middle of the night, we entered the houses we did not know and hid. 'Come boy, come girl, this house is yours, make yourself comfortable, do what you want,' they said.[55] (author's translation_Interview I)

This chapter has focused on one particular group of young people, namely the Armutlu youth. It has argued that is meant by political participation also includes political action and political identity. An exclusion is on the scene but this time it is for the insiders. This exclusion is about the youth whose presence is denied. In this way, we actually see a new border of the space. The people who ignored the Armutlu youth re-shape the space of the

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[54] Güvende hissediyorsun kendini. Az önce de bahsettim ya, biz sokaktayken binalardan limonlar atıyorlardı bize. Bezler atıyorlardı. Barikat kuralım diye küvetler, çamaşır makineleri getiriyorlardı.

[55] 4. kattaki su depolarını atıp istediğiniz gibi kullanın, dediler. Yeni yapılan inşaatın sahibi tuğlaları istediğiniz gibi kullanın, ben yarın yenilerini getiririm dedi. Üst mahalledeki insanlar bizlere yemek gönderdi. Gecenin bir yarısı tanımadığımız evlere girip saklandık. Gel oğlum, gel kızım bu ev senin, rahatına bak, istediğini yap dediler.

neighborhood against the Armutlu youth because according to this people the youth bring the neighborhood into disrepute and they didn't fit the definition of proper youth in their own minds.

6

Conclusion

Before I started writing this thesis, I had many questions about the neighborhood, the events that re-enacted the neighborhood social movements, and about the memory of these events. How the Gezi Park Protests stretched to Antakya, why the Syrian War was a turning point for the neighborhood, what the relationship between space and identity was, what the meaning of place was for both those living there and those living outside, against whom the space was re-constructed, under what conditions the boundaries of space were thickened and thinned, and how the past memories affected all of these. All these questions, and the answers given, constitute the general outline of this study.

In this study, we try to understand not just what is meant by 'place' but also what is meant by 'local,' since this locality produces the space and thus gives a significant role to place. Space itself becomes a kind of memory of place; in addition, identity, culture, social movements and youth are essential for the production of the space. My argument here is that the Armutlu neighborhood is a place. It is a common place with its roads, buildings, streets, shops and so on. But now, it is not just a place that is an empty area. Some corners remind us of the resistance, the walls of buildings tell us something

with their graffities, and the monuments that are for the youth who were killed by the state during the Gezi Park protests stand tall. So, the neighborhood becomes an entire place with its spatialized markers.

The first chapter explores the theoretical background of this study. In that manner, the concept of space is examined from the perspective of Lefebvre.

In the second chapter, I emphasize the historical background of Antioch from 1939 to the 1980s. Although the story told is based on the Syrian War and the Gezi Park Protests, all the actors of the story are those who remained after 1939, following the annexation of the Sanjak of Alexandretta by Turkey.[1] The 1980s, Syria and the Gezi Protests are the most vivid memories, but the 1939 referendum should not be underestimated. The story of Hatay's being Syrian territory before 1939, Mustafa Kemal's making the Hatay issue a personal issue and, as a result, being the last piece of land to join the Republic of Turkey all continue to operate, in a different way, with the same dynamics in the present. The effect of the whole story on what is experienced today is quite significant. People draw parallels between the process leading up to 1939 and the current situation regarding ethnoreligious affiliation.

In Chapter 3, I examine the relationship between Arab Alawite identity and space. Local identity means being from the Armutlu neighborhood, and this situation is absolutely important to make sense of the space. Through this locality, we see Nusayri (Arab Alawite) identity and its space. The link between space and local identity is important, as space is where the local identity operates and makes sense and gains substance. Arab Alawis define themselves as *Minnina*s and construct their own Other in this space. These Others are depicted as culturally different. Being a *Minnina* is an ethnoreligious situation – not only identity and sect but also the territory is a complex situation

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[1] The Annexation of Hatay to Turkey.

for the people of Armutlu, since they have also trouble about this issue. Although they accepted the Republic of Turkey and being a part of it as of 1939, being included in Syrian territory before joining Turkey has caused confusion. In the neighborhood, people have a strong local identification. The people make a connection between Syria and Bashar al-Assad. According to their declaration, it is because of the connection of blood. So, cultural and ethnic reasons contribute to place identity. The meaning of being *Minnina* influences the attachment to a cross-border place, then this place becomes a local neighborhood. In this chapter, class is also important for the concept of space, because this neighborhood appears not only as a neighborhood where Arab Alawis live, but also as a neighborhood where low-income people live. People living in the neighborhood describe themselves as both "other" and poor.

The fourth chapter deals with place and its impact on the social movements. The importance of place making and its effects on the discourses and practices are discussed. In that manner, the structure of the neighborhood has a significant role in bringing the people together.

As I emphasize in Chapter 5 about the Armutlu Youth, in this thesis, I want to show that they, whose voices are always heard differently and who are seen as the "other" by locals and non-neighbors, are the subject of the story. In my work, it is very important to understand how the youth experience and shape the place they live in and how they name and describe social relations. It is the space that opened this path for me. If I had treated the Syrian issue and the Gezi Park Protests as purely political processes and described them within a modernist state discourse, I would have moved away from the origins of the local and ignored the production of space.

The youth were actively on the streets during the periods I was dealing with, and because the neighborhood has been associated with its youth, for good or bad, this meant I had to treat the chapter on the youth separately. The Armutlu youth are seen as a subgroup by the people who do not take them seriously. These young people are usually defined as excluded, marginalized

or alienated. Because of this, the fifth chapter focuses on one particular group of young people, namely, the Armutlu youth. It is argued that what is meant by political participation also includes political action and political identity.

Along with these social events, the young people in the neighborhood have embraced their political identities, which they had never expressed or were hesitant to express. Throughout the process, the neighborhood returned to its former glory, albeit for a short time. Young people, whose voices were not heard and who were labeled bad teenagers, enjoyed their heroism for a short time. When we look back at the neighborhood now, what is left of the social events experienced is the censored graffities. It is not possible anymore to come across leftist organizations that were active in the neighborhood during and before this process. The Ahmet Atakan library, which was established in the neighborhood right after the Gezi events, could not survive. Here, though this is a place outside the neighborhood, the only thing that survived after the Gezi events was ALIKEV, where I met with young people throughout my thesis. ALIKEV has become a public figure with the work it has done, and it has gone beyond the boundaries of the neighborhood and *Minnina*.

The Gezi Park Protests, which started in the neighborhood after the huge impact of the Syrian War, revived the catalyst existing in the neighborhood. In the protests that started in June 2013 and continued, albeit rarely, throughout September, two young people were killed by the police.

Abdullah Cömert: He was injured as a result of a gas canister fired by the police during the action that took place in the Armutlu neighborhood of Antakya on 3 June and died 4 June.

Figure 5.1   The Place where Abdullah Cömert was killed
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

Ahmet Atakan: He lost his life when the gas canister fired by the police hit his head during the action he attended as part of the Gezi Park Protests and to protest the events in Tuzluçayır on September 9th.

Figure 5.2   Ahmet Atakan's Funurel
SOURCE: *Erdinç Habip*

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