CONTESTED LANDSCAPES OF BELONGING

AT THE TURKISH-SYRIAN BORDER:

THE (RE)MAKING OF ANTAKYA AND DEFNE

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- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

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ABSTRACT

Contested Landscapes of Belonging at the Turkish-Syrian Border: The (Re)making of Antakya and Defne

Based on the new metropolitan municipality system (Law No. 6360) Hatay, a multicultural province located at the Turkish-Syrian border, has undergone major cartographic changes. During this process, Defne has been crafted out of Antakya city as an ethnically and religiously segregated district. In this ethnographic study, I analyze the sociopolitical implications of this process. I examine how and why the Alawite and Christian Arab communities that identify themselves as indigenous peoples of Antakya have found themselves in the newly mapped Defne. I demonstrate how and through what spatial and identity practices these indigenous communities and key political stakeholders compete over the cultural heritage of Hatay and Antakya. Doing so, I aim to reveal the power relations behind the new cartography for Hatay while witnessing and documenting Antakya's (re)make and Defne's metamorphosis into the built and imaginary landscapes of the nation at the Turkish-Syrian border. My research has shown that Defne, now with its non-Sunni population, stands as a sign of difference and segregation in Hatay's new ethno-sectarian landscape, in contrast to Antakya, which has been Sunnified due to recent official districting practices. Nonetheless, the very same place (Defne) has proven to be a new public sphere for Hatay's Arab Alawites to negotiate their local identity by appropriating its space for political and communal engagements.

ÖZET

Türkiye-Suriye Sınırında Aidiyetin Tartışmalı Payzajlari: Antakya ve Defne'nin (Yeniden) Yapılışı

Türkiye'de 2012 yılında yürürlüğe giren, yerel yönetimleri ve büyükşehir belediyelerini düzenleyen 6360 sayılı kanun, Hatay sınırları içerisinde oluşturulan Defne ilçesinde Arap Alevi ve Arap Hıristiyan nüfusunun günlük yaşamlarında yerel ve ulusal aidiyet söylemlerinin meşruiyetine ilişkin yeni kentsel sorunların ortaya çıkmasını tetiklemiştir. Defne, Antakya'dan birkaç ana merkezi mahalle ve köyden oluşan, etnik ve dini olarak ayrılmış yeni bir ilçe olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu etnografik vaka çalışması, kendilerini Antakya'nın yerli halkı olarak tanımlayan Alevi ve Hıristiyan Arap topluluklarından insanların Defne'ye nasıl ve neden yerleştirildiğini incelemek için Defne'nin ve Antakya'sı (yeniden) yapılışına odaklanmaktadır. Ayrıca bu yerli toplulukların, belediye idaresinden ve merkezi hükümetten asıl paydaşların Antakya'nın kültürel mirası üzerinde nasıl rekabet ettiklerini göstermeyi amaçlanmıştır. 2018-2020 yılları arasında katılımcı-gözlemci metoduyla, yarı yapılandırılmış derinlemesine görüşmeler, peyzaj analiz yöntemleri gibi farklı nitel yaklaşımları harmanlayan etnografik bir saha çalışması yürütülmüştür. Veri analizinin sonucu göstermektedir ki Defne, Antakya'nın aksine yeni bir sosyal-mekânsal kategori olarak ortaya çıkmıştır. Defne'nin ortaya çıkışı farklılık göstergesi, Hatay'ın etno-mehzepsel peyzajında Sünniler ve Sünni olmayanlar arasında bir ayrım olarak zuhur etmiştir. Bununla birlikte, Arap Alevilerinin Defne'yi siyasi ve toplumsal katılım için yeni bir sembolik kamusal alana dönüştürerek yerel kimliklerini müzakere ve yeniden talep ettikleri gösterilmiştir.

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I dedicate this thesis to my babaanne, Sevim.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 An encounter, a map, a contested landscape

Strolling through the neighborhoods during my first visit to Antakya in July 2018, I was accompanied first by de Certeau (2011)'s words on *walking in the city* and then by my local participants' cognitive maps[1]. I was pleased to get to know residents with different ethno- religious backgrounds and various political orientations. I met Arab Alawites, Arab Christians, Jews, Sunni Arabs, Shafi'i Sunni Kurds, and Sunni Turks. Some of them hosted me in their houses and guided me to their favorite sacred, leisure, and touristic sites.

At our first meetings, many of the participants reproduced the official narrative about Antakya, which portrays it as a city of peace (barış), sister/brotherhood (kardeşlik), and tolerance (hoşgörü). This narrative not only celebrates the inter-faith dialogue (Dağtaş, 2020) and the peaceful cohabitation of ethno-religious communities (Doğruel, 2009), but also brands the city's cultural landscape as the *Garden of Civilizations*[2] (Medeniyetler Bahçesi). I encountered various versions and reflections of this narrative while talking with the research participants and visiting the streets of old Antakya located in the historical city center amid Roman and Hellenic-Byzantine archaeological ruins, Ottoman mosques, hammams, bazaars, old Antioch households (Eski Antakya evleri), Alawite shrines, Christian churches, French buildings. However, the more I walked around the city,

[1] I use this cognitive map concept for any visual representation of my participants' mental model of the city of Antakya.

[2] This term is the main theme of EXPO Hatay 2021 promoted by Hatay Metropolitan Municipality.

the more I realized the romanticized and perhaps exoticized multicultural image of Antakya does not fairly reflect what is recently happening in the city. The city space was much more segregated along ethno-sectarian lines now, and I was eager to learn more about this major change in Hatay province.

This change became clearer after staying for a week in the Turkish Catholic Church (Türk Katolik Kilisesi) dormitory, located in the Zenginler neighborhood within the limits of Eski Antakya (Old Antakya). There I met Gabriel, a chatty 20-year-old Arab Orthodox Christian, who at the time had been staying in the church dormitory for about a year. Gabriel was preparing for the university entrance exam, and in his spare time, he was delighted to take me around the city. On one of our trips to Eski Antakya, he surprised me with a new tourist itinerary: "Today I will take you to Antakya Musevi Havrası (Antakya Synagogue)", he said (Gabriel, personal communication, July 28, 2018). I soon discovered that the synagogue was very close to our dormitory, right on Kurtuluş Street. When we arrived at the synagogue, we found that Gabriel's friend, the rabbi, was not there. Next to the synagogue, there was an art studio, and since Gabriel knew the owners, he suggested that we wait there until the Rabbi arrived.

The art studio was owned by a married couple and was known for its traditional *yakma sanatı* (pyrography painting on wood). While Gabriel chatted excitedly with the owners about our visit to the Antakya synagogue, I carefully observed each painting in the art studio, which portrayed the official touristic sites of Antakya in woodcuts. A mixture of Arabic, Turkish words, and laughter was reverberating in the art studio when I found myself on the second floor looking at a painting on the wall (see Figure 1).

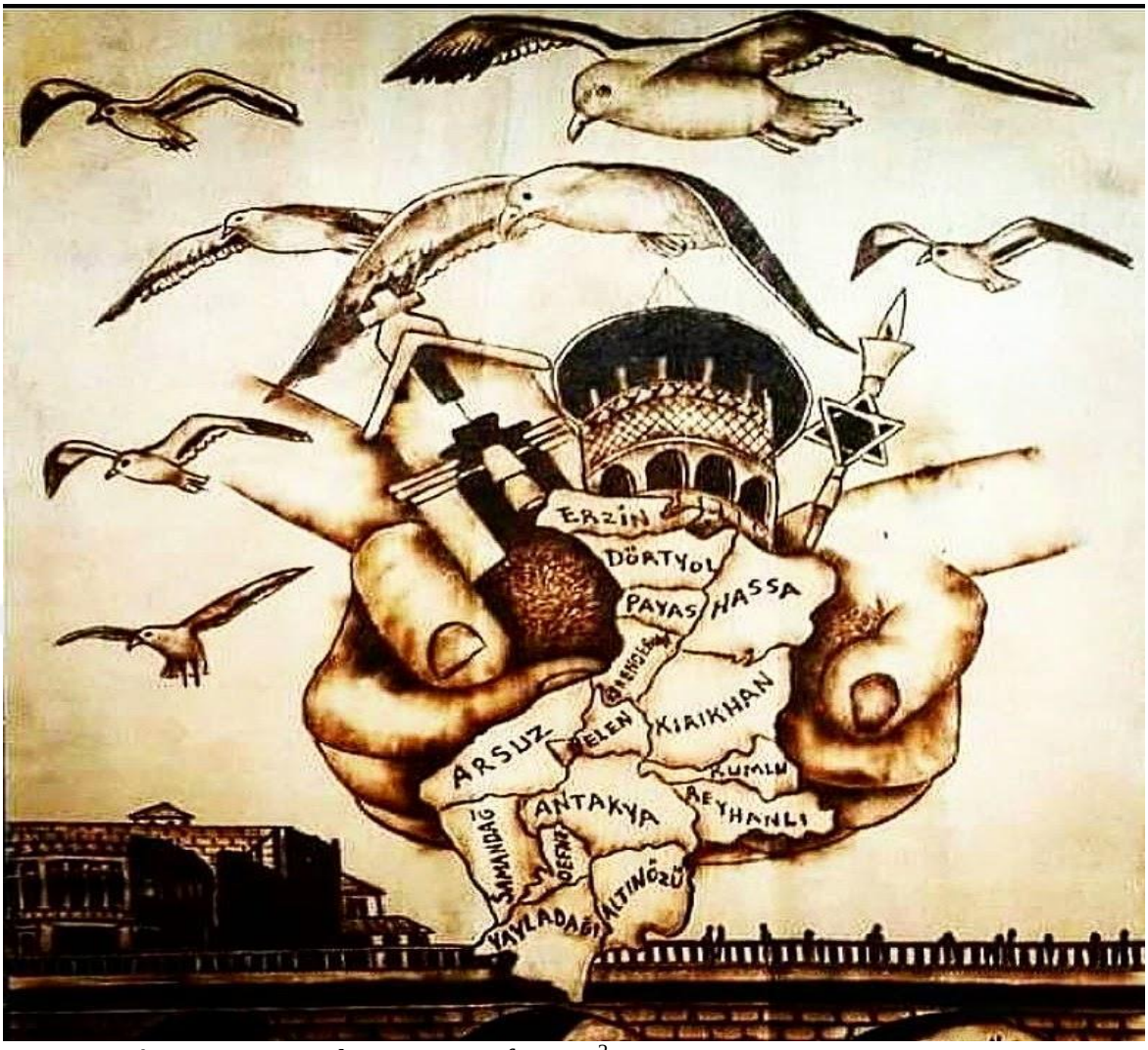


Figure 1. A pyrocartography painting of Hatay[3]

The painting was a pyrocartography of Hatay's recently revised provincial map being held by two hands in the Antakya sky. A church, a synagogue, and a mosque crowned the top of the map, seagulls were flying around, and, at the bottom of the painting, there was a bridge over Orontes River (Asi Nehri*)* with people passing by. On the left side of the bridge in the map, there was the shadow of some *Eski Antakya Evleri* (Old Antioch Houses) that make up the center of *Eski Antakya* (Old Antakya). The painting formed the panorama of the cultural heritage of the famous city of Antakya and the province of Hatay as if both were one.

[3] This painting has been scanned with the permission of the artist, whose name has been concealed to protect his privacy

However, to me, it was as if everything in the painting was strangely out of place. As I tried to make sense of the painting, a curious voice echoed in the room; it was the artist's voice, Ali, a middle-aged man with light brown eyes. Looking at his painting on the wall, he started to explain the history of Antakya to me: “Antakya is a sacred land, where people can hear the prayers of the *Ezan* (Muslim call for prayer), the *Çan* (bells of the Christian church), and the *Hazzan* (Jewish chazan of the synagogue) in the city center” (Ali, personal communication, July 28, 2018). Listening to him, I felt like Ali was reading those words from a tour guide.

My attention turned to Ali’s map of Hatay province. I remember asking him “where are you from?" (Nerelisin?) while looking at the map in his painting. He replied, "Antakyalıyım" (I am from Antakya). I asked if he could show on the map what part of Antakya he was from (Haritanın neresinde, gösterir misin?). There he pointed to a small district called Defne. As I was trying to experience the city in the footsteps of my local participants, I was so confused by Ali's answer that I had to rephrase my question: “from which neighborhood are you" (hangi mahalleden?), I asked. He said that he was from “Sümerler Mahallesi"[4], a neighborhood that I was told was one of Antakya’s central neighborhoods. “But is that neighborhood in Antakya?” (O mahalle Antakya’da mı?) I asked, pointing to Defne on the map. My questions about his map, at first glance, were trivial. In my head, I just asked where he was from (Nerelisin?). After all, was it in Defne or Antakya? Indexical questions like “where are you from?” or “where do you live?” and the answers to these questions were much more revealing than I would have imagined. It seemed that my

[4] Sümerler Mahallesi is known for being majorly inhabited by Arab Alawites and a minority of Arab Christians.

questions about his map had opened a wound, and the tone of tolerance, brotherhood, and peace in his account of Antakya switched to a tone of grievance:

> I am from Antakya; this is my homeland. I was born and raised here. My father and grandfather are from Antakya. In the last municipal elections, they invented Defne to mark us, since we are Arab Alawites. Now they pinpointed us on the map. Everyone knows who we are and where we live. (Ali, personal communication, July 28, 2018)[5]

Unable to digest Ali's words, our conversation was interrupted by Gabriel, who had come up to the second floor to call me to the synagogue. "Rabbi is here! You don't want to miss this opportunity," (Ooo Rabbi burda! Fırsat ayağına geldi, kaçırma!) he said. I thanked Ali for our brief conversation. After our quick visit to the synagogue, on our way back to the church dorms, I asked Gabriel if he knew Ali was an Arab Alawite. He smiled at me and said without hesitation, “We Christians and Alawites are ancient siblings, we have lived together for centuries" (Biz kadim kardeşiz, Hristiyanlarla Aleviler. Yüzyıllardır birlikte yaşıyoruz).

On the day I encountered the pyrographer Ali and his painting of the new provincial map of Hatay, I knew very little about Ali’s and Gabriel’s communities, the Alawite and Christian Arabs, who now lived in the ethnically and religiously segregated district of Defne. For these two indigenous/local communities[6], Antakya is not only a place where they have lived for generations but also a constitutive element of their cultural identity and heritage. Participants of this study shared with

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[5] Antakyalıyım ben; memleketim burası. Doğma büyüme buralıyım. Benim babam da dedem de Antakyalı. Son belediye seçimlerinde, Arap Aleviyiz diye, bizi işaretlemek için çıkardılar Defne’yi. Parmakla gösteriyorlar bizi artık haritada. Herkes kim olduğumuzu, nerede yaşadığımızı biliyor. (Kişisel iletişim)

[6] In this thesis, based on my ethnographic fieldwork research, I identify the local ethno-religious peoples living in the Hatay province, such as the Arabs from the main three religious communities, as natives because of their indigenous/autochthonous land claims to its territory. In this way, these communities appropriate the urban identity of being Antiochian from an autochthonous perspective. In my analysis, I take into account the emic understanding and autochthonous claims of local non-Sunni Arabs (Arab Christians and Arab Alawites)’ experiences of belonging in Antakya under the Republic of Turkey. Likewise, I interchangeably use the term local or indigenous for these communities.

Ali the sense of being "*pinpointed*" in (işaretlenme in Turkish, and akin to stigmatization) Hatay's new map, that is, the sense of becoming targets (hedef) under the rise of ethno-sectarianism in the Hatay province.

Ali's and other locals' understanding of the geographical area were in sharp contrast with how Hatay has been represented in official accounts. With official accounts, I refer firstly to the metropolitan city map that emerged from the AKP government's local administration reform and its gerrymandering strategies, and secondly to the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality currently preparing for EXPO 2021. In this thesis, I explore how Hatay with its highly diverse population is represented in these accounts, while also examining local people's reception of these accounts recently circulated in the public sphere.

In brief, in my ethnographic case study, I focused on the (re)making of Antakya and Defne to examine how and why people from the Alawite and Christian Arab communities, who identify themselves as indigenous peoples of Antakya, were placed in the new Defne district. In doing so, with this case study, I also intended to demonstrate how and through what spatial and identity practices these indigenous communities and key stakeholders from the municipal administration and central government compete over the cultural heritage of Hatay and Antakya. Therefore, I examined competing indigenous and official narratives about Antakya's cultural heritage, such as those reflected in Antakya's political and cultural landscapes, to understand whether there is a resurgence of ethnically sectarian urban issues or indigenous claims in the region.

In a way, the population living in Defne seems to share the same tragedy with Daphne. However, just as the Greek deity resisted Apollo's persecution by subverting

herself into a Laurus tree, the Defne district appears as a new symbolic, public, and oppositional space, where the indigenous communities negotiate their sense of belonging over Antakya through political engagement and communal practices. Thus, this thesis aims to reveal the power relations behind the new cartography for Hatay while witnessing and documenting Antakya's (re)make and Defne's metamorphosis into the built and imaginary landscapes of the nation at the Turkish-Syrian border.

1.2 Literature review

My thesis examines spatial and identity politics in Hatay province as a means of identity and nation-building employed in the production of discursive and material urban spaces, political, cultural, and ethno-sectarian landscapes and boundaries. Moreover, I focus on the societal responses of ethno-religious minorities living in the province of Antakya (Hatay) regarding the Turkish governmental spatial and identity politics. Furthermore, in my thesis, I study majorly the Arab Alawites living in the new districts of Defne, however, I also take into account the minority of Arab Christians living in the same district as well. More specifically, in this ethnographic case study, I approached the competing official and local ideologies of space behind the new map of Hatay and its reconfiguration from a transdisciplinary perspective and blended methodology that combines disciplines such as linguistic anthropology, cultural geography, and cultural studies.

My main focus for this brief literature review is to present studies that have approached issues related to national identity, territory formation, statecraft, and governance of ethno-religious differences in the Hatay province. A concise literature review[7] reveals that the identity-making processes and statecraft discourses in Hatay have been studied from two different perspectives. The first scope inquiries about the politics of ethnic and religious differences in Hatay, and the second one[8] focuses on the national and transnational history of Hatay as part of the modern constitution of

[7] Due to the effects of the COVID outbreak, there were hardships to reach broader literature. Hence, instead of a comparative literature review section, I limit this literature review to a concise one. For this reason, in this literature review, I focus on the most important studies related to my area of research in Turkey. Likewise, in the analysis chapters of this thesis, I follow a method that combines literature, data, and analysis.

[8] In this regard, the present historical literature on the interrelated diplomatic processes of state, space, and nation-building and politics of difference between multiple state and non-state actors in Turkey and Syria during the annexation of the Hatay province to Turkey has been studied from a critical perspective by scholars such as Altuğ (2020), Cagaptay (2006), Matkap (2009), Jörum (2014), Duman (2016).

the Republic of Turkey and the Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, and Levantine geography. The lack of ethnographic inquiry undertaken in Hatay establishes a gap in research on the region. However, there are some ethnographic studies done in Hatay that are fundamental for new studies. So, below, I briefly present some of those groundbreaking ethnographic studies that inspired and supported this study.

Most of the ethnographic studies conducted until now have tried to address the multi-ethnic religious groups of Hatay and their intergroup relationships from a social constructivist and interactionist perspective. In particular, Doğruel (2009)'s and Dağtaş (2014)'s and Can (2019)'s ethnographic investigations on the politics of religious and ethnic differences in Hatay are the groundwork for further studies in the field. For example, Doğruel (2009) has carried out her ethnographic fieldwork on the intergroup cohabitation of three different religious communities living in Hatay in 2001. In general, in this study entitled *İnsaniyetleri Benzer...Hatay'da Çoketnili Ortak Yaşam Kültürü* (2009), the writer focused on social cooperative interactional (accommodation, integration, acculturation) and identity-making processes between the Arab Christians, Arab Alawites, and other Sunni communities composed of Sunni Turks and Sunni Arabs.

Primarily interested in ethnic cohabitation among the ethno-religious population, Doğruel focuses on the historical, cultural, and social similarities among these communities (Doğruel 2009). She situates Hatay as a city that englobes all of Turkey's religious groups, showing that cohabitation is the result of these communities' similarities and shared experiences. Doğruel (2013) also argues that the cosmopolitan identity of Antioch is convenient to attach these communities under one highly heterogeneous province. On this account, Doğruel's analysis of the connection of the Republican Kemalist assimilative identity politics to the Ottoman

millet system and their combined impact on “the culture of living together” idea in the Hatay province is important for this thesis. Especially, while analyzing the new map of Hatay I regard the previous official map of the Hatay province as a relic of the millet Ottoman system, reconfigured by Republican ideologies of space.

On the other hand, Dağtaş (2014)’s study, entitled *Heterogeneous Encounters: Tolerance, Secularism and Religious Difference at Turkey's Border with Syria*, provides us with a more complex understanding of both the cooperational and oppositional (competition and conflict) processes of social interaction and a nuanced portray of the politics of religious differences in Hatay. Dağtaş takes these religious differences as the product of the intersection of multiple and heterogeneous discourses, practices, boundaries, and regimes of governance. Respectively, Dağtaş’s study focuses on the inter-faith dialogue (Dagtaş 2020) and daily life boundaries (boundary-making, crossing, etc.) between ethno-religious communities in Antakya. Her study provides an analysis of religious differences, secularism, and tolerance based on ethno-religious boundaries in everyday social interactions and commonly shared urban settings in Antakya. Her study specifically provides an analysis of the years in which the AKP (Justice and Development Party) defended a pluralist politics of tolerance based on neo-Ottomanism, in which ethnic and religious diversity was showcased in the party’s polity of national identity building (Dağtaş 2017, 2018, 2020). Dağtaş’s arguments about the tolerance discourse and inter-faith dialogue in Antakya are in tune with the analysis presented in this thesis, where I focus mainly on identity politics employed by AKP and CHP (Republican People's Party) political parties in their struggle for extending their jurisdiction in the region, and explore the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay

Metropolitan Municipality currently preparing for EXPO Hatay 2021's touristic discourse of urban renewal and cultural heritage.

Similar to Dağtaş, I am interested in how identity politics is employed in the production of discursive ethno-religious boundaries at different sites; however, Dağtaş's studies are based on common-shared sites, such as the center of Antakya and the Bazaar and how these boundaries are discursively made and crossed in different social contexts. My thesis instead focuses on the segregated spatial aspects of these ethno-religious boundaries within urban contexts. In other words, I am more interested in the discursive, symbolic, and physical aspects of these ethno-religious boundaries, with a particular focus on districts and neighborhoods where ethno-religious communities live. These neighborhoods and districts represent the material and conceptual sites that embody ethno-religious and political boundaries and landscapes in the Hatay province.

Over the last twenty odd years, there has been a crescent number of anthropological studies with different scopes of inquiry (i.e., urban, gender, ideology, etc.) yet similarly questioning the contested notions of identity-making practices/processes in the constitution of the Turkish Republic and its citizens' notions of national identity. Likewise, the question of ideological dualism brings with it the notion of ideological contestation in the making of contemporary Turkey. When this contestation is put into the analysis, it seems to gain its form in the dialects between two different statecraft notions in Turkey: Secularist and Islamists' conflicting narratives. Correspondingly, this contestation has been embodied within the political atmosphere of AKP's ruling and its opposing party CHP.

This being said, when looking at the present literature of Turkish anthropology, names such as Navaro-Yashin (2002) and White (2002, 2014) appear

as the leading anthropologists who have explored the social, political, economic and cultural effects of the contestation between secular and Islamic culture politics in Turkey. Among these studies, in my opinion, Navaro-Yashin's book *Faces of the State: Secularism and Public Life in Turkey* is, undoubtedly, a significant ethnographic account that not only grasps the beginning of the political contestation between the secularist and Islamist state ideologies but also renders a theoretical background for further work in the field. Jenny White herself, considers Yael Navaro-Yashin as one of the leading representatives of the new turn in anthropology. According to White (2003), Navaro-Yashin "examines the intersection of secularism, Islam and state, and the continual regeneration of state authority and legitimacy through rituals, symbols and commodification" (p.82). Hence, Navaro-Yashin's work is important also for this thesis project since it illustrates the way that the secularist narrative discursively constructed itself through statecraft, cultural politics, and social agency.

However, Navaro-Yashin does not analyze the Islamic narrative and its mobilization as profound as Jenny White (2002, 2014). Jenny White in her work entitled *Islamist Mobilization in Turkey: A Study of Vernacular Politics*, and *Müslüman Milliyetçiliği ve Yeni Türkler*, successfully illustrates how the Islamist narrative has been increasingly mobilized within civil society through vernacular politics in order to overthrow the secularist narrative. Moreover, according to White (2014), Islamic-rooted nationalism represents a shift from Turkish nationalism narratives based on bloodlines, seeing that it imposes new hegemonic modes of affiliation, practices, and values based on "competing and overlapping cultures of Turkishness and other forms of national subjectivity" (18). In brief, White's study on competing forms of national identity is important for this study. Especially because,

with the decaying of pluralist identity politics in Turkey and the rising of a new national identity and citizenship based on Islamic-rooted nationalism, there has been an increase in political polarization between the urban communities in Hatay. In brief, my study also shows how new and old forms of identity politics affect the daily lives and notions of belonging of the Arab Alawite and Arab Christian communities living in the Hatay province. Based on that, anthropological perspectives of ethnographic studies undertaken in Turkey on the phenomenon of statecraft, ideological dualism, cultural politics, and contested identities, are relevant for my thesis literature and argumentation on the contestation between political state stakeholders in the Hatay province.

When regarding the contemporary social, spatial, and political transformations in the Hatay province, anthropologist Şule Can (2019)'s study entitled *Refugee Encounters at the Turkish-Syrian Border Antakya at the Crossroads* takes into account the spatialization of ethno-religious and political boundaries due to the Syrian war and the resettlement of Syrian refugees in Antakya. She focuses on societal responses between locals and the new refugee population, and their social, spatial, and political effects in the city. Can (2020) has studied the re-emergence of ethno-sectarian divides among Sunni and Alawites due to the outbreak of the Syrian war and the Turkish state's border politics from a transnational and political perspective.

Different from Doğruel and Dağtaş, Can focuses more on the segregation aspects of the province and the inter-group relations among Syrian refugees and the ethno-religious population living in the Hatay province. Her study is important for my analysis since, in this thesis, I am interested mainly in the segregation aspects of the new map of Hatay on the local communities living in the Defne district and the

symbolic divide among non-Sunnis and Sunnis in the new geography for the Hatay province. As Can explains in her study, the culture of living together has now been "spatialized". My ethnographic study differs from Can in that I approach the metropolitanization of the Hatay province from a perspective in which state stakeholders compete with each other for the province. Therefore, I look at the different state actors involved in the reconfiguration and production of the Hatay province. Nonetheless, I call upon the term of ethno-sectarian landscapes, based on Can's study on the spatialization of ethno-religious boundaries.

Last but not least, in this study, I also made use of some literature from anthropological linguistics, urban linguistics, and cultural geography for understanding how *axis of differentiation* (Gal & Irvine, 2019) and landscapes are crucial in the reconfiguration and production of the Hatay province. From linguistic anthropology, Gal and Irvine (2019) explain the concept of the axis of differentiation as oppositional and relational categories, that signify one of more semiotic, official, and hegemonic ideologies. Therefore, these categories are signs of difference. An example of a sign of difference is the socio-spatial categories of Antakya and Hatay. These are both oppositional and relational axis of differentiation, that contrast with one another in meaning-making processes in daily life interactions. That being said, in this study, I drew attention to new competing local and state narratives regarding the configuration of a new social-spatial category known as Defne/Daphne in contrast to Antakya/Antioch. As a result, I demonstrate how Defne as a new axis of differentiation functions both as a sign of difference and segregation among Sunni and non-Sunni communities living in the Hatay province.

Moreover, by blending cultural geography and urban linguistics, I use the concept of "landscape" to inquire about the semantics of Hatay's new political and

ethno-religious boundaries. For this, I take Ducan (2005)'s premise on the landscape that the city is a text to analyze how Hatay's official ideologies of space write and rewrite the urban landscapes of Antakya and Defne. Likewise, I use Ben-Rafael (2018)'s argument that linguistic landscapes (LL) represent the symbolic constructs of the public spaces of a city. This notion is important for understanding how Defne as a new public space has also become the ground for political engagement and communal practices for the Arab Alawite community.

To conclude, the lack of ethnographic inquiry undertaken in Hatay becomes a research gap on the region and the topics of research of the studies mentioned above. For that reason, Doğruel, Dağtaş, and Can's ethnographic studies are the groundwork for my literature review, and their analysis is the core to develop my arguments in this thesis. I follow their studies within the scope of a master thesis and aim to contribute to the present literature of ethnographic studies undertaken in the Hatay province by further investigating the emergence of ethno-religious boundaries, landscapes, and Sunni and non-Sunni divides in the region. Moreover, I also contribute to the literature on ethnographic studies undertaken in the field of the Anthropology of Turkey. Especially on ethnographic studies about Southern Turkey's multicultural and political geography.

CHAPTER 2

THE MAKING OF HATAY

Hatay, the southernmost province in Turkey, is located at the border with Syria to the South and East. The province is not only Turkey's Syrian borderland, but it also functions geostrategically as an enclave between Turkey, the Mediterranean Sea, and Syria (see figure 2). Hatay was only officially annexed to the Republic of Turkey's national territory after a referendum in 1939[9]. Before that, the Hatay province is known to have been the place of birth of the historic city of Antakya (Antiochia), one of the biggest cities in the world during antiquity and medieval ages funded in 300 B.C (Bahadır, 2014), and has been the cradle of at least fourteen early empires, administrations, and modern national states throughout history. Historically, these included the Assyrian, Armenian, and Hittite Kingdoms, the Kurdish tribes, the Greek (Seleucid) monarchs, the Roman and Persian Empires, the Arab, Byzantine, and Mamluk controls, the Ottoman Empire, the Syrian, the French, and the Turkish administrations (Özgen, 2002, as cited in Matkap, 2009, p.1) Correspondingly, the region has been renamed and indexed by different toponyms depending on which historical period and to whom it belonged. In present days, some of these toponyms are still in use and signify certain ideologies and territorial claims over the region's ownership, heritage, and identity. For instance, Turkey claims its territorial administration through the toponym of Hatay, while Syria reclaims it as the Liwa İskenderun (Sanjak of Alexandretta) (Matkap, 2009, p.1). As a matter of fact, the Hatay province used to be constituted by the cities of Antakya and Iskenderun within

[9] This study focuses on the districts of Antakya and Defne within Hatay's provincial boundaries under the Republic of Turkey.

the Ottoman Sanjak of Alexandretta of the former Aleppo Vilayet. However, after the first World War and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman Sanjak of Alexandretta was conquered by the French Mandate of Syria in 1923. Finally, in 1938, the Sanjak of Alexandretta became the autonomous Republic of Hatay until its annexation to the Republic of Turkey in 1939.

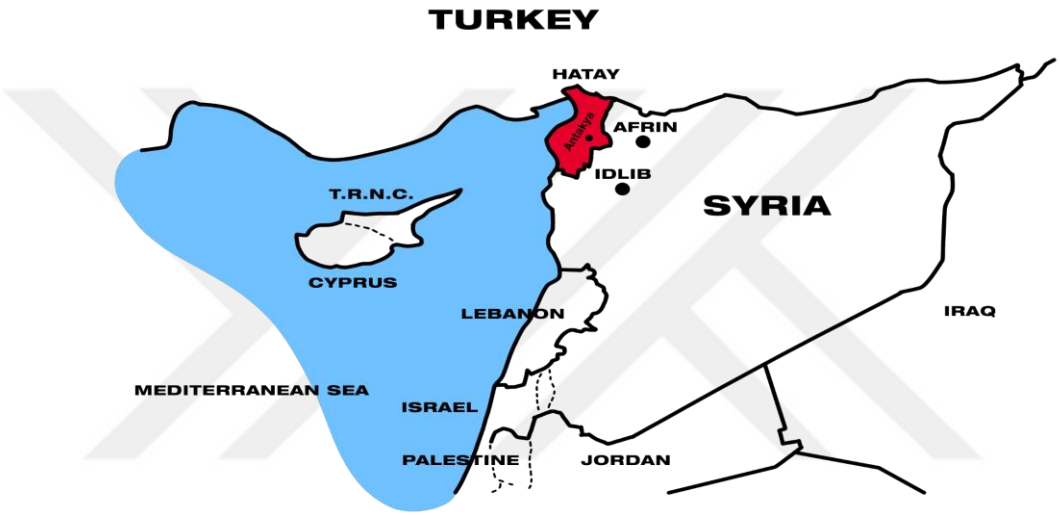


Figure 2. Map of the region where Hatay is located[10]

According to the Governorship of Hatay's demographic data, the current official population of Hatay is 1,628,894 citizens (T.C Hatay Valiliği, n.d.). Respectively, the province's ethno-religious landscape majority is formed by Sunni Turks, followed by Arab Alawites. Likewise, there is a considerable population of Sunni and Christian Orthodox Arabs living in the province along with a smaller population of Catholic Armenians, Sunni Circassians, Christian Assyrians, Sunni

[10] This map was drawn by the author. It is based on the official map of Hatay Province.

Afghans/Sunni Uzbeks, Shafi Kurds, and Jewish Arabs (Türk, 2005, p. 30). In addition to its already multi-religious and ethnic composition, with the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, the Hatay province hosts 433,012 Syrian refugees (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, n.d)[11] . Moreover, as shown in the new official provincial map (see figure 3), the region consists of fifteen districts. In the order of population density, these are Antakya, İskenderun, Defne, Dörtyol, Samandağ, Kırıkhan, Reyhanlı, Arsuz, Altınözü, Hassa, Payas, Erzin, Yayladağı, Belen, Kumlu. Unlike many other Turkish provinces that have their toponyms of central districts according to their provinces, Hatay Merkezi (Hatay central district) was renamed after the historical city of Antakya. For this reason, Antakya and Hatay Merkezi are indexed as synonyms, since the municipal administrative boundaries of Antakya and Hatay are within the same physical and political borders.

[11]The current official population of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in Turkey is 3.639.527 (Göç İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü, n.d). Like Hatay, the provinces on the Turkish-Syrian border of Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Mardin, and Kilis are also hosting large populations of Syrian refugees in Turkey.



Figure 3. The official map of the Hatay province[12]

Although this study focuses on the districts of Antakya and Defne within Hatay's provincial boundaries under the Republic of Turkey, to illustrate the contemporary conjuncture of Hatay's province, in this historical chapter, I aim to succinctly identify some placemaking practices and identity nation-building discourses employed by the Republic of Turkey in the Turkification process of the Sanjak of Alexandretta in the first decades of the 20th century. Consequently, I briefly examine the Turkish state's employment of spatial and identity politics in the production and Turkification of the Hatay province and its citizens during the early Republican era in Turkey.

For this, I disclose the intersection of placemaking practices and identity nation-building discourses, such as state tactics of geographic reproduction and inclusion. First, I travel back to events before 1939 to discuss, through a historical

[12] This map was drawn by the author. It is based on the official map of Hatay Province.

analysis of tactics of governance of space, the spatial policies and placemaking practices employed in the annexation of the Sanjak of Alexandretta. Second, I show how the Turkish Republican regime of governing diversity operated through identity nation-building discourses that discursively converted the province's ethno-religious population into proto-Turk descendants. Here, I also describe the process of producing not only a Turkish majority but also the notion of "Hatay Turks" as an urban identity for its citizens. Third, I illustrate how following the annexation of the Hatay province, the spatialization of ethno-religious boundaries is used, as a placemaking practice, in the reproduction of the Hatay province as a Turkish border space. Here, I portray how the Turkish state reorganized, managed, and established state power in the Hatay province by governing cultural, ethnic, and religious differences within ethno-religious boundaries. Fourth, I return to the present by opening a reflection on the celebrations of "The 81st Anniversary of the Unification of Hatay to the Motherland". By doing so, I intend to expose how the Turkish state continues to draw on historical memories and historicist forms of knowledge (Chakrabarty, 2009) about Hatay's annexation to fabricate a collective identity and experience in the process of making the nation-space meaningful (Paasi, 2020). Moreover, I also elucidate how the province continues to be an Arab borderland (Stokes, 1998) within the Turkish nation-space.

2.1 A Turkish border province in Syria

The employment of spatial politics and placemaking practices in the production and Turkification of Franco-Syrian Sanjak of Alexandretta (İskenderun-Antakya) by the Turkish state as a means of identity and nation-building had begun even before the contested referendum that led to the annexation of the autonomous Republic of

Hatay to the Turkish territory in 1939. According to Duman (2016), the process of Turkification of the province did not only begin with the diplomatic treaty of the Turkish State with France but also with Turkey's political influence in raising and resettling a local political body of Turkish nationalist supporters in the border province in Syria. Fisk (2007) argues that Turkey's spatial resettlement policy in the Franco-Syrian border increased the population of Turks in the province and subsequently affected the emergence of the autonomous Republic of Hatay in 1938.

Nonetheless, placemaking practices of Turkification, such as resettling and increasing the Sunni Turkish local population, were not enough to establish Turkish sovereignty over the Arab border province. Therefore, to win legal sovereignty during the "Alexandretta dispute" (Khadduri, 1945), the Turkish Republic had to negotiate over the international political boundaries of the Franco-Syrian province. Similar to the case of the "Mosul dispute", a way to support its legal claims over the territory was adopting a Turkish nationalist kin-state foreign policy based on Pan-Turkism[13] and irredentism (Büyüksaraç, 2017). That is why renaming as a placemaking practice (Jongerden, 2009; Öktem, 2008) was crucial for securing and imprinting a Turkish identity to the province during its annexation process.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey and a central figure in the annexation of the province, renamed the Franco-Syrian Sanjak of Alexandretta as "Hatay" in 1936.The toponym "Hatay" was an allegory to the Hittite Empire that once ruled in the region. The toponym attributed to the province a notion of Turkishness over Arabness. The reason was that the name identified the local ethnic-religious groups as the descendants of the Hittite Turks (Eti Türkleri), known

[13] Pan-Turkist Irredentist claims were based on Racial Kemalism. During the years 1929 and 1938, the Republic of Turkey's official ideology was Kemalist nationalism (Yıldız, 2019).

as Neo-Hittites or proto-Turks. Therefore, after renaming and claiming the disputed territory to be inherently Turkish, the Turkish Republic then had to discursively produce the Hatay province within the territorial imagination of the Turkish nation. Here, mapmaking appears as a nation-building placemaking practice that supported the Turkish Republican irredentist claims over the region. According to Duman (2018), maps accompanied by texts as political tools were published in national newspapers in 1936 for supporting Turkish propaganda in the region. Correspondingly, the newspapers' maps of the era represented the newly renamed Hatay province as the former homeland of the Hittite Empire; other maps illustrated Hatay within the national borders of the Turkish Republic. Hence, through mapmaking and the ideological use of maps and news, the Turkish Republic not only intended to build international awareness about its land claims but also within its national territory.

2.2 From Arabs to Hatay Turks[14]

Öktem (2008) and Jongerden (2009) argue that state tactics of geographic reproduction, such as the renaming, resettling, mapping, and reconstruction of settlements in Anatolia were employed during the material and discursive appropriation of non-Turkish spaces by annihilating "the other" from spatial representations. Moreover, when approaching the case of Kurdish settlements in Anatolia, Jongerden (2009) contends that this Republican process of making Turkish spaces happens through the discursive erasure and conversion of these “other” spaces and their inhabitants. Respectively, as part of Turkey's regime of governing diversity,

[14] In Turkish, citizens who are born in Hatay are officially named as “Hataylılar”. Here I borrow the term “Hatay Türk” from Agop Dilaçar to refer not only the process of producing a Turkish majority, but also an urban identity.

nationalist identity-building policies and discourses functioned as tactics of inclusion. For the case of the Sanjak of Alexandretta, The Republic of Turkey employed spatial and identity politics of Turkification, designed through practices of knowledge-power (Akıncı, Bilgen, Casellas, & Jongerden, 2020), that produced both a Turkish border space and a Turkish majority.

In this regard, anthropology, along with other disciplines such as history, geography, and linguistics functioned as nation-building devices in the discursive production of racial theories, such as the Turkish History Thesis and Sun Language Theory (Demirer, 2011; Aydın, 2001). These theories were fundamental for two reasons: First, they facilitated Turkey's claims over the Sanjak of Alexandretta by discursively erasing notions of Arabness/otherness of the region from spatial, historical, material, and cultural representations. Second, they produced a Turkish space and a Turkish majority by discursively converting and appropriating an "other" border space and its indigenous Arab population.

To that end, the conversion and Turkification of ethno-religious peoples, as tactics of inclusion, were necessary since the Sunni Turks living in Sanjak of Alexandretta composed only 40% of the total population (Barlas, 2014, p.22). Hence, solving the Arab identity of the province was an unquestionable issue for Turkey's Hatay policies. Cagaptay (2006) contends that the annexation of Hatay to Turkey was only possible with the employment of identity policies that recognized the Arab Alawites[15] as Turks. Similarly, Duman (2016) argues in this process the Turkish History Thesis, which recognized the Arab Alawites as Turkish descendants, was a crucial identity nation-building discourse for securing the final annexation of the

[15] The Arab Alawites are an ethnic-religious population of a Shiite sect, originally from the eastern Mediterranean region, who have been living in the Franco-Syrian province dating to the early Ottoman Empire era. In Turkish Arab Alawites are also known as Arab Alevis.

Hatay province to Turkey in 1939. The reason why both Cağaptay and Duman underpin the importance of the governance of Alevi difference[16], especially in the case of the Arab Alawites in the production of a Turkish border province, was that the Arab Alawites composed the second-largest population in the Sanjak of Alexandretta.

According to Tayfun Sökmen, who would later become the president of the Republic of Hatay, the Alevi issue (Alevi meselesi) was a problem for the Turkish Republic. In Sökmen (1978)'s memoirs of the incorporation process of the Hatay province to the Turkish Republic, he explains that French state actors in the Sanjak instigated ethno-sectarian tensions between Muslims, namely among Sunni Turks and Arab Alawites (p.45). Sökmen narrates in his memoirs that in a visit to Dolmabahçe to inform Atatürk about the "Alevi issue". According to him, the leader of the Turkish Republic did not tolerate the usage of parallelisms between Alevism and Sunnism. Sökmen explains that for Atatürk the solution of the "Alevi issue" was the theory that proved these people to be Eti Turk (pp.45-6).

In 1937, with the possible outcome of a second world war in Europe, the diplomatic relations between Turkey, France, and Britain improved. Consequently, an agreement between Turkey and the League of Nations was signed that guaranteed the independence of the Sanjak of Alexandretta (Khadduri, 1945, pp.408-9). According to Barlas (2014), the Sanjak Assembly officialized the name Hatay for the province on September 2, 1938, after diplomatic developments between France and Turkey, and Turkish became an official language in the Hatay province. On September 7, 1938, The Republic of Turkey finally successfully established the

[16] Tambar (2014) employs the notion of governance of Alevi difference in the making of the modern Turkish Republic. As shown above, The Turkish Republic developed idiosyncratic politics of difference for governing the Arab Alawites during the annexation of the Sanjak of Alexandretta to the Republic of Turkey.

autonomous Republic of Hatay (formerly known as the Hatay State) over the Sanjak of Alexandretta. To prove that the Turkish population was in the majority, official demographic reports from the Republic of Hatay in 1938 illustrated that since 1936 the percentage of Turkish residents had increased from 40% to 60% (Khadduri, 1945, pp .422-3).

On 29 June 1939, following a plebiscite for joining the Turkish Republic, Hatay became officially a Turkish Province. Nonetheless, according to Fisk (2005), "the Turks trucked tens of thousands of people into the sanjak for the referendum, and naturally, the people' voted to be part of Turkey" (p.335). Although Hatay became a Turkish border province in 1939, Turkification as part of the Republican regime of governance of demographic diversity continued as a tactic of inclusion. For example, Kemalist intellectuals acted as state agents during the conversion and Turkification of all ethnic-religious populations living in the Hatay province. One of the leading figures among these Kemalist intellectuals was the Turkish-Armenian linguist Agop Dilaçar, the first secretary-general of the Turkish Language Association.

Dilaçar used the Turkish History Theory and the Sun Language Theory (Güneş-Dil Teorisi) as rhetorical apparatus to convert the Arabs who lived in the Hatay province into proto-Turks. For example, in December 1939, after the annexation of Hatay, the linguist organized a conference at İskenderun people's house (halkevi) and gave a speech on the "Alpine Race, Turkish Ethnie, and Hatay's People" (Alpin Irk, Türk Etnisi ve Hatay Halkı) (Aydın, 2001). In this speech, Dilaçar described the process of the Turkish Republic in discursively producing the "Hatay Turks" (Hatay Türkleri). According to Aydın (2001), Dilaçar reformed the theories related to Racial Kemalism for Hatay's case. Dilaçar defended the principles

that "Every Turkish descendant are essentially a Turk" (her Türk aslı olan Türktür) and, therefore, is eligibly "Turkish “property” (türk malı), and must be "converted" (döndürmeli) into Turks again (Dilaçar, 1940, as cited in Aydın, 2001, pp 6-7).

Thus, in his speech at İskenderun people’s house, Dilaçar pointed to the missionary role of Turkish Racial Kemalism (Kemalism Türkçülüğü) in enlightening the “assimilated Proto Turks of their origins", and converting them back to the principles of Turkism. Nonetheless, the missionary process of converting these Arab groups into Turks was not as peaceful as Dilaçar described above. As a result of the enforced Turkification in place, several demographic changes happened during the first six months after the annexation of the Hatay province. According to scholars such as Picard (1983) and Guilguin (2000), the annexation produced the exodus of large numbers of Armenians, Arab Sunnis, Arab Christians, and Arab Alawites to Syria and Lebanon. Jörum (2014) explains that the Turkish Republic gave the right to these populations to choose “between staying and becoming Turkish citizens, or opt for citizenship within either French mandate Syria or Greater Lebanon" (pp. 92-93). According to the statistics provided by Khoury (1987), only in the first months following the annexation, at least 50,000 people left for Syria: about 22,000 Armenians, 10,000 Arab Alawites, 10,000 Arab Sunnis, and 5,000 Arab Christians (p.513).

2.3. Turkification in post-annexation

According to Duman (2016), the aftermath of Turkification in the Hatay province was more violent than in other regions in Anatolia due to its late annexation to the Republic of Turkey. Concerning the republican identity and spatial policies of Turkification employed in the post-annexation period, the ban on Arabic and the display of non-Sunni religious practices in everyday interactions in public spaces were examples of symbolic violence imposed by the Turkish Republic. Moreover, following the annexation of the Hatay province, a new process of reorganizing nation-space began as part of the Republican regime of governing space and diversity. Respectively, this process became marked by the reproduction of the Hatay province, as a Turkish border space, through the spatialization of ethno-sectarian landscapes. In this period, Turkey reorganized the Hatay province by designing a new map.

Therefore, within the first months following the annexation, district areas, such as Dörtyol, Hassa, and Erzin, were incorporated into the Hatay province (Jörum, 2014); Hassa was taken from Gaziantep, while Dörtyol and Ersin were relocated from Gaziantep. All of these districts were known for having been settlements of Turkic tribes in the past, and had a large population of Sunni-Turks. By annexing these Sunni-Turkish districts, the Turkish state increased the population of Sunni Turks in the Hatay province. These district-areas became landmarks of Turkishness in the Hatay province, as well as of Turkish-Sunni landscapes. Turkish-Sunni landscapes were synonyms of ethno-sectarian landscapes and functioned as buffer areas between non-Sunni or Non-Turkish areas.

Hence, through the spatialization of its political, geographic subdivisions, and ethno-sectarian landscapes, Turkey reproduced and extended the Hatay province

within its nation-space. According to Guilguin (2000), the administrative land of the Hatay province was extended from 4800 km2 to 5570km2 (p.29). Likewise, this spatialization process also aimed to fixate and locate Turkishness on the new map of the Hatay Province. This practice happened through the renaming of the discursive, symbolic, and material constructed space (i.e., settlements, cities, villages, official buildings, parks, signboards, flags, etc.) with Turkish toponyms, and also through resettling a new Sunni Turkish population in the region.

2.4. Hatay's 81st anniversary [17]

On the 23rd of June, 2020, Hatay province officially commemorated "the 81st anniversary of Hatay's Annexation to the motherland" (T.C Hatay Valiliği, 2020). The commemoration was publicly held at Hatay's Gastronomy Unesco House and opened with the speeches of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality's mayor Lütfü Savaş, from the Republican People's Party (CHP) and Rahmi Doğan, the Governor of Hatay[18]. Whereas the Mayor praised the annexation of Hatay to the "motherland" by emphasizing its geographic location as a border city that belongs to the legacy of the Republic of Turkey, the governor acclaimed Atatürk's visionary geostrategy in foreseeing the importance of the annexation of the region as a national struggle, especially when regarding the present geopolitical implications of the Syrian civil war for Turkey and its neighboring Middle Eastern countries.

In their speeches, both of them intersect with the Turkish state's official discourse in reproducing a historical narrative of the "myth of the unification" (Matkap, 2009), which, in this case, is that the Hatay province and its multi ethno-

[17] In Turkish "Hatay'ın düşman işgalinden kurtarılarak Ana Vatana katılışının 81. Yıl dönümü"
[18] The provincial governors are assigned by the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP).

religious citizens belong to the nation-state' collective identity and territorial imagination[19]. Nonetheless, for some indigenous ethno-religious minorities living in the Hatay province, the practice of remembering the annexation to the motherland (Anavatan) recasts into the present uncanny histories (Stewart, 2017) of religious persecution and traumatic memories of their partition from Syria. The traumatic memories from the partition are narrated by Neyzi (2002) through the oral history of an Arab Christian from Antakya as an "experience of being a minority in both place of origin and place of migration" and of "belonging fragmented in space" (p.295). According to Stokes (1998) this partition, signified by the "literal and imagined borders" between Turkey and Syria, not only represents a "rupture" that separates Turkey from "the Islamic Middle East", but also an alignment of the country's imagined geography with a nation-building civilizing model based on "modern and secular Europe" (p.268). Likewise, Can (2020) argues that this rupture "erases memory of ethnic, religious struggle on the Syrian side and re-constructs history as the "beginning" on the Turkish side" (p 4)

In the discursive practice of making state-space meaningful (Paasi, 2020) on the Turkish side of the border, the ideological use of historicist forms of knowledge (Chakrabarty, 2009) and memory manufacture the Hatay province every year within the motherland. According to Tambar (2014), who has approached the case of Alevis in Turkey, historicism as a discursive practice is part of the regime of governance and functions in producing "an image of homogeneous national people" (p.15). In

[19]Notwithstanding, questions regarding the sovereignty of Turkey's Southernmost borderland are volatile since the "Alexandretta dispute" (Khadduri, 1945) over the ownership of the province continues to be contested by the Republic of Syria. For instance, at the outbreak of the Syrian uprising in March 2011, the vast majority of official Syrian maps continued to include the area as Syrian territory (Jörum, 2014). Recently, the Turkish military interventions in the Syrian provinces of Afrin and İdlib have reawakened conflicts regarding Syrian-Turkish sovereignty in the region and Turkey's ownership to Hatay province.

this manner, while the Turkish nation-state reproduces a unitary sense of national belonging, collective identity, and historical experience through the commemoration of the annexation, it also excludes other indigenous forms of belonging and remembrance that appear as converging narratives and memories.

Nonetheless, these converging indigenous forms of belonging, and their collective memories about the partition, attempt to subvert the national emotions regarding the unification of the Hatay province with the motherland. Moreover, they also contradict the image of a homogeneous Turkish border province marked by Turkishness. According to Stokes (1998), the constant awareness of the border and otherness gives the region the attributes of heterotopia, or, in Foucauldian words, "other space". Moreover, Stokes contends that the place of Hatay for the Turkish Republic represents an Arab borderland in Turkey.

2.5. Concluding remarks

Politics of identity and space intersect in an attempt to legitimize the production of Hatay as a Turkish border space, and its "Hatay" population as a Turkish majority. Moreover, they erase the "other", in this case, the indigenous ethno-religious minorities, from the geographic representation and ownership of the province. By converting not only "other space" but also ethno-religious minorities and applying tactics of geographic reproduction and inclusion, the Turkish Republic succeeded in "making up" a Turkish border province in the French-Syrian Sanjak of Alexandretta. Based on this historical section, I propose that there is a relationality between the Turkish-state's regime of governing space and diversity (Dağtaş, 2014) Therefore, the Turkish state reorganized, managed, and established state power by governing cultural, ethnic, and religious differences in the Hatay province within ethno-

religious boundaries. Moreover, I contend that this process of reorganizing nation-space was only achievable by the reproduction and governance of the “Hatay province” as a Turkish border space.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

In this ethnographic case study, I focused on the (re)making of Antakya of Defne, to examine how and why people from the Alawite and Christian Arab communities, who identify themselves as indigenous peoples of Antakya, were placed in the new Defne district. In doing so, with this case study, I also intended to demonstrate how and through what spatial and identity practices these indigenous communities and key stakeholders from the municipal administration and central government competed over the cultural heritage of Hatay and Antakya.

Therefore, I examined competing indigenous and official narratives about Antakya's cultural heritage, such as those reflected in Antakya's political and cultural landscapes, to understand whether there is a resurgence of ethnically sectarian urban issues or indigenous claims in the region. Consequently, to inquire further on my research questions, I undertook an ethnographic case study that blended different qualitative approaches, such as ethnographic field research, participant-observational techniques, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and multimodal discourse, landscape analysis methods. The ethnographic fieldwork research was conducted in Antakya and Defne. Due to the difficulties of conducting ethnography near a conflict zone and my positioning as a "contested" subject, I chose to divide my field stays of nine months into four shorter visits of two to three months in Antakya and Defne during the years 2018 and 2020 as a research field tactic.

In this methodological chapter, I briefly illustrate why I chose Hatay as the physical and social setting for my ethnographic research. Besides, I also discuss my preliminary research questions, theoretical assumptions, and personal positioning.

Moreover, I also illustrate how I conceptualized the Hatay province as a contested socio-spatial category to be analyzed ethnographically. Then, I explain why I designed an ethnographic case study for my research framework. In the last sections of this methodological chapter, I focus on the design of my field study, sampling, and the methods of data collection and analysis of this study.

3.1 Contours of the field: Why Hatay?

I was in Hatay in July and August 2018 to carry out my pilot study, and yet this was not my first visit to the province. Exactly one year before the Syrian civil war started, I had come to the city of Antakya. The first reason for choosing Hatay province as the research field is that after my visit as a tourist, I felt identified with the region's multicultural landscape, heritage, and the ethnic and religiously heterogeneous local population. My identification with the region and the indigenous population was due to my positioning as someone originally from the Nordeste (Northeastern Brazil). I grew up as a minority in the northeastern diaspora of São Paulo, experiencing various forms of xenophobia, social exclusion, and racism due to the social stigma associated with Nordeste's geographic, racial, ethnic, syncretic, and cultural-hybrid identity in South-Southeast Brazil. In the Brazilian political context, the Nordeste appears as an invention (de Albuquerque Jr, 2014), a spatial cut, an imaginary and real place on the map of Brazil that threatens homogeneous and hegemonic ideologies of space regarding a nation-space and cultural identity based on the southeast and Southern collective imaginary. Although my position as a Northeastern researcher affected my field choice, there is a second methodological and theoretical reason why I chose the province as the physical and social setting for this study;

namely that I conceptualized and still claim the Hatay province should be studied ethnographically as a contested socio-spatial category.

Before coming to the Hatay province in July 2018, I wanted to find a contingent site, built historically and discursively under Turkish national time-space and political configurations that challenged the "settled contours of race, ethnos, and nation" (Hall, 2017, p.172). Second, I looked for a site that could be located and conceptualized as a hybrid, liminal, interrogatory, and interstitial space "within the margins of the nation-space and across boundaries between people and the nation" (Bhabha, 1994, p.175). Thus, I thought that Hatay as a contingent site and third space, historically and discursively built, provided the theoretical and methodological flexibility to dismantle certain ideologies of a homogeneous and hegemonic Turkish nation-space based on "one people, one ethnos, under one political roof"' (Hall, 2017, p. 148). The reason is that Hatay's historical and political constitution in contemporary Turkey, as a contested border province that was recrafted while being annexed to the imagined and physical geography of the Republic of Turkey in 1939, appears as the aftermath of contestation between many imperative powers (i.e., early empires and modern national states) that fought and claimed ownership over the region's heritage throughout history.

The imperial remnants (Cribb & Narangoa, 2004) of such a contest today take shape in the historical, archaeological, cultural, and human landscape of the province. Furthermore, since the province of Hatay is a border city (i.e., borderland, and a frontier) between Turkey and Syria, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East, its porous and blurred physical boundaries make its geographic identity also a contested target for both national and transnational claims. For instance, is it an Eastern (Doğulu) or is it a Western (Batılı) city of Turkey? Which national cultural

identity does it represent as a province and territory? Is it Turkish or Arabic? Is Hatay province an occupied Syrian land as the Syrian Arab Republic yet claims it to be?

Because of its historical, political and geographic idiosyncrasies as a contested province at Turkey's Syrian border[20], I conceptualized the Hatay province as located "within the margins of the nation-space" (Bhabha, 1994, p.175), where official ideologies and narratives of an imagined Turkish community, geography, and identity could be challenged, interpreted, and contested through multiple counter-narratives. Hence, before arriving in Hatay for my first fieldwork visit, I hypothesized that the province, similar to the case of Nordeste in Brazil, could challenge essentialist and hegemonic ideologies of space and identity about the collective imagination of a homogeneous nation-space and national/cultural identity. Furthermore, I thought that the province's heterogeneous ethnic-religious minorities were a determinant factor in deconstructing these notions.

Nonetheless, after my stay in 2018, I observed that with the decaying of pluralist identity politics in Turkey and the rising of a new national identity and citizenship based on Islamic-rooted nationalism (White, 2014), there has been an increase in political polarization between the urban communities in Hatay. Indeed, in my first pilot study visit, not only did I encounter a large population of Syrian refugees living in Antakya, but also witnessed the ongoing effects of the Syrian war

[20] Geographically speaking, the region's surface is 5,559 km2. its physical landscape is composed of about 46% of mountains, 33% of plains, and 20% of plateaus and slopes. The region is known for the Nur (Amanos) mountains. Together, the Kel Mountain, the Syrian Plateau, and the Nur Mountains form a coastal plain that lines the eastern and northeastern parts of İskenderun Bay and the Samandağı Plateau. To the east of the Amanos Mountains, there is a parallel graben area known as the Amik plateau. This plateau is also the center of agriculture production in the province. The current city of Antakya is located on the Amik plateau, which used to be partly covered by the Amik river. There are other plateaus in the districts of Iskenderun, Dörtyol, Payas, and Erzin. Moreover, the province is one of the main basins, where the transnational Asi River flows through the region. The Asi rises in Lebanon by crossing Syria until reaching Hatay; the river flows into the Mediterranean Sea in the Asi Delta, from Samandağ (T.C Hatay Valiliği, n.d.-b).

in the region[21]. When looking at the transnational conjuncture, political anthropologist Can (2020) argues that the province's culture of "living together" has suffered a rupture due to the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, the influx of Syrian refugees in the province, and the Turkish government's border politics. According to Can (2020), as a result of the Turkish-Syrian border-making process and the re-emergence of sectarian tensions in the province mostly between the Sunni and Alawite populations (p. 24), there has been a reproduction of ethno-religious ethno-religious boundaries in Antakya.

3.2 Designing an ethnographic case study

When I arrived back to Istanbul in September 2018, I started to redraw my research questions and theoretical assumptions according to my preliminary findings and notes from my first field study. Although the research questions in this study continue to inquire widely about the relationality between official ideologies of space and the production of a hegemonic and homogeneous nation-space and national identity, I also understood the need to scrutinize how indigenous minorities living in the Hatay province respond to the rise of ethno-sectarianism in Hatay from a broader perspective.

Therefore, the original wide-ranging research questions became more specific when this study became bound to place and time as its focus turned to the case of the (re)making of Antakya and Defne, and the competing indigenous and official narratives revolving around their making. As I narrate through the ethnographic vignette in the introduction, the indigenous narrative is signified by the Alawite and Christian Arabs, who claim Antakya as their "memleket" (homeland), which they

[21] For instance, the first Olive Oil (Zeytin Dalı) Operation that began in 2018

identify with, belong to, and represent through their cultural heritage. The second is represented by two official narratives, one is portrayed by the new provincial map of Hatay and the other by the Turkish nation state's collective imagination regarding Antakya's cultural heritage.

Therefore, after my encounter with Ali, this study's major questions became: 1) How and why people from the Arab Alawite and Christian communities, who identify themselves as indigenous peoples of Antakya, were placed in the new Defne district? 2) How new state districting practices under the ruling Turkish government define social boundaries and remake official ideologies of space in Hatay? 3) How and through what spatial and identity practices these indigenous communities and key stakeholders from the municipal administration and central government compete over Antakya's cultural heritage? 4) How the Turkish nation-state and key stakeholders from the municipal administration and central government legitimize and materialize their authority of Defne and Antakya?

To conclude, as the result of my first preliminary field visit, I understood that the Hatay province needed to be conceptualized as a contested socio-spatial category that can be ethnographically researched as it has been discussed in Chapter 3. Moreover, to engage with the conflicting narratives and official ideologies of space on Antakya and Defne's cultural and political landscapes, this study's theoretical scope became enriched by blending post-structuralist literature concerning topics such as landscapes and boundaries, ideological dualism, spatial and identity politics, and place/space and identity making practices. From my first preliminary field visit, I also understood that, to undertake an ethnographic field study in Hatay, I had to design an ethnographic-case study. Below, I describe the reason why I chose this methodological framework.

I considered that an ethnography based on the constructivist paradigm (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 32), which states that reality is socially constructed, would help me to deconstruct Hatay as a contested socio-spatial category and to pay "attention to the minutiae of experience, the cultural texture of social relations [and space], and to the remote structural forces and power vectors that bear on them" (Yin, 2016, p. 69). As is generally known, full-scale ethnographic studies require the ethnographer to be embedded in place and time for a long duration in the field. However, this study was designed to meet the requirements of a master's thesis. Hence, there were constraints that I had to consider before arriving at my fieldwork, such as the scope of my field study, time, field selection, number of participants, financial support, and the ongoing war at Turkey's Syrian border.

Therefore, I opted for a case study approach that allowed me to narrow the scope of study and make it viable for a master's project. According to Ó Rian (2009, p.290), ethnographies and case studies are "grounded in local and situated in specific contained social contexts", which make them both "intimately related" to each other. This intimate relationship with the scope of inquiring between ethnography and case studies provides the design for ethnographic mini-case studies (i.e., focused ethnographies). When discussing mini ethnographic case studies Fusch, P. I., Fusch, G. E., and Ness, L. R. (2017) suggest that they are blended design studies bounded in space and time in specific social contexts that use qualitative ethnographic and case study collection methods. Respectively, according to Schwandt and Gates (2018, p.344), ethnographic case studies regard "employing ethnographic methods and focused on building arguments about cultural, group, or community formation or examining other sociocultural phenomena" (Schwandt & Gates, 2018, p. 344). An ethnographic case-study framework design not only matched with my research

questions but also provided me the necessary flexibility for method triangulation (Patton, 1999; Denzin 1978).

3.3 Fieldwork and sampling

3.3.1 Fieldwork in a conflict zone

With the establishment of the Turkish government's new metropolitan municipality system in 2012, Law no.6360, the province of Hatay was redesigned as a metropolitan municipality (Resmi Gazete, 2012). Consequently, Hatay's urban planning was divided into fifteen districts whose metropolitan scale was extended into four new provincial district-city boundaries: Antakya, Defne, Arsuz[22], and Payas (Adıgüzel & Karakaya, 2017). As represented in Ali's pyrochartography painting of the new Hatay map, the city of Antakya was divided into two in the year 2012 because of the new districting practices of the Turkish government. One part had its district boundaries redesigned as the new Antakya district, and the second became the new district of Defne, known to be a mainly Arab Alawite and Christian region separated from the previous urban planning of Antakya (see Figure 3 in chapter 2). According to Defne Municipality, the population is 151,017 people, covering 37 districts (Defne Belediyesi, n.d.).

During my fieldwork, I focused on multiple sites: residential and central areas, state institutions (i.e., the municipalities' buildings), community religious and cultural sites (i.e., Alawite shrines, Christian churches, cultural centers), leisure places, and sites of political performance (i.e., political gatherings, cultural and

[22]A municipality with the Arab Alawite majority that has been carved out of İskenderun.

religious festivities, and municipal elections). By residential areas, I refer to the central and marginal urban residential neighborhoods that constitute both Defne and Antakya (see figure 4). Three criteria were established for selecting these residential areas: 1) urban neighborhoods of Defne that used to be part of the center of Antakya; 2) that were central and marginal residential neighborhoods that were also ethnoreligious segregated regions majorly inhabited by Arab Alawite and Arab Christians; and 3) sites where the Arab Alawite and Christian communities conducted communal practices.

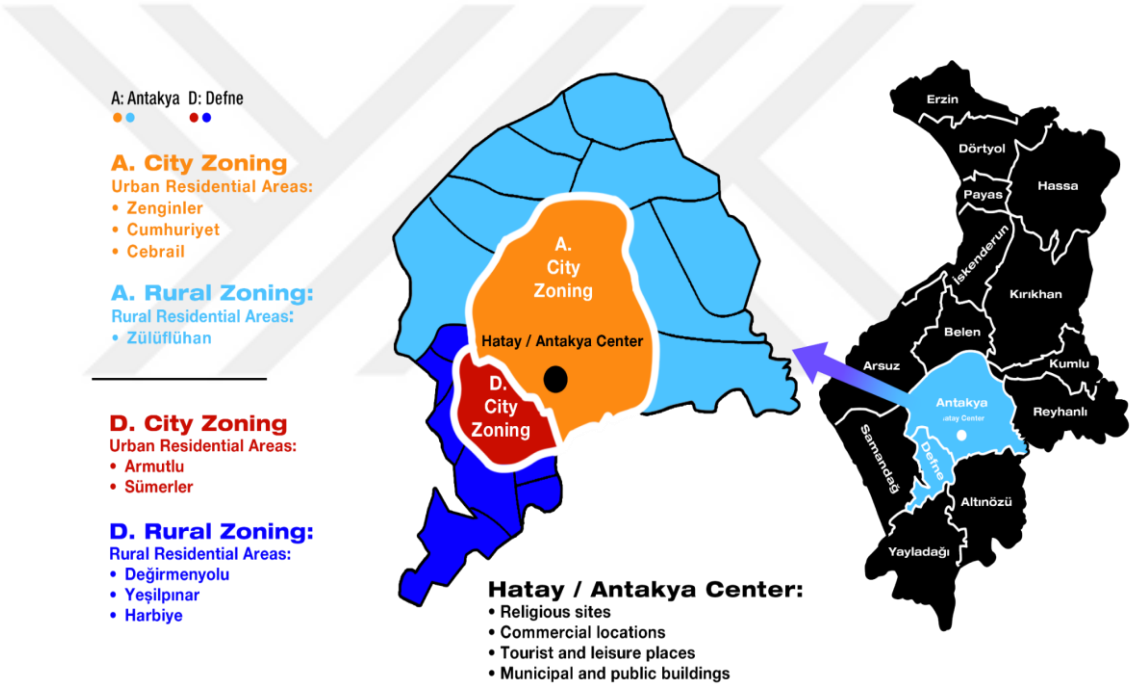


Figure 4. Field study location map[23]

With the help of my participants, I undertook field research in residential, central, and marginal neighborhoods of Antakya and Defne (see figure 4 above). Moreover, I was hosted by four large Arab Alawite families. Although I was hosted by the Catholic Church a few times, my interaction with the Arab Christian

[23] This map was drawn by the author.

community took place in churches, workplaces, and in religious activities, such as mass, holidays, and religious tours. During my fieldwork between 2018 and 2020 because of the Olive Oil Operation near the border city of Hatay, I experienced hardships for doing ethnography in wartime and war zones (Johler, Marchetti, & Scheer, 2010). Due to the continuation of the Syrian war crisis, and the Turkish government's Olive Operations in Afrin and Idlib, and Hatay's geographic proximity to these conflict zones, the discharge of affect, such as anxiety, fear, and suspicion, remained alive in the daily life of the citizens of the province. So, during my fieldwork, I was subjected to daily paranoia from locals and state representatives concerning my position as a contested subject, that is, a "foreign" local graduate student undertaking research under constant military surveillance.

I mention the word "contested" because my "subject position" was part of an ongoing negotiation with research participants and their political, religious, and communal affiliations in the field of research. This negotiation was crucial in many ways to maintain my security and to gain access to the different neighborhoods and locations belonging to the Christian and Alawite communities between Defne and Antakya. One point that facilitated my entry and negotiation in my fieldwork was that locals from different groups indexed me as a "Christian" because, although I have lived in Turkey for 11 years and speak Turkish fluently, I have a Christian name, which was very common in the province due to the presence of indigenous Arab Christian communities. Moreover, since Arab Alawites and Christians are known for sharing neighborhoods and for their communal relationships, my subject position as a "Christian" permitted me to enter sites belonging to these communities.

Due to the difficulties of doing ethnography near a conflict zone and my positioning as a "contested" subject, I chose to divide my field stays of nine months

into four shorter visits of two to three months in Antakya and Defne during the years 2018 and 2020 as a research field tactic. In addition to my stays, I also opted for multiple visits from shorter periods to gather observational data and participate in religious holidays, municipal elections, and other cultural activities.

3.3.2 Participants

The criteria for sampling the research participants for this study are based on the declared ethno-religious identity and the geographical location of study participants. Consequently, I sampled research participants and constructed a network with participants who lived in central and marginal residential neighborhoods majorly inhabited by Arab Alawites and Arab Christians in Defne and Antakya. I started to collect participants using a snowball sampling method since my first visit to Antakya in 2018. In my ethnographic fieldwork, the snowball sampling technique helped me reach out to key participants who gave me access to building a network within their communities. Besides local families, Arab Alawite cultural centers, the Christian churches in Antakya, and formal and informal platforms were central for building my participant network. It is relevant to point out that there are two reasons why few Arab Christians were interviewed in this study. The first reason is that the Arab Christian population living in Defne and Antakya is small. The second is that many of my Arab Christian participants were afraid to participate in this study because of the content of the survey. Alawite Arabs constitute almost the largest population living in Defne and are more politically active compared to Christian Arabs. Consequently, many of my Alawite Arab participants were willing to take part in this study. Table 1 includes the following representative reflective screens (Marshall &

Rossman, 1999): (1) age, (2) identity gender, (3) ethnic-religious identity, (4) spatial identity, (5) age, (6) geographic location.

Table 1. Key reflective screens and participant data

Name	Age	Gender	Ethnic-religious Identity	Spatial Identity	Occupation	Geographic Location
1.Fuat	23	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Student	Zülüfhan Mah.
2.Gabriel	20	Male	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Student	Zenginler Mah.
3.Uğur	55	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Construction worker	Harbiye Mah.
4.Meryem	30	Female	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Jeweler	Sümerler Mah.
5. Işıl	28	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Teacher	Armutlu Mah
6. Fatma	27	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Architect	Harbiye Mah.
7. Hikmet	38	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Geographer	Armutlu Mah.
8.Bedia	60	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Housewife	Sümerler Mah.
9.Özlem	23	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Student	Armutlu Mah.
10.Demet	23	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Student	Değirmenyolu Mah.
11.Naim	22	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Student	Sümerler Mah.
12.Ali	50	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Pyrographer	Sümerler Mah.

13.Ahmet	48	Male	Arab Sunni	Antiochian	Tourist guide	Cebrail Mah
14.Merve	24	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Student	Sümerler Mah.
15.Hasan	35	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Teacher	Armutlu Mah.
16.Murat	40	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Chef	Değirmenyolu Mah
17.Ege	32	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Civil Servant	Armutlu Mah.
18.Özcan	45	Male	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Tailor	Yeşilpınar Mah.
19.Ayşe	55	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Civil Servant	Armutlu Mah.
20.Simun	74	Male	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Jeweler	Sümerler Mah.
21.Luka	40	Male	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Jeweler	Sümerler Mah.
22.Pavlus	25	Male	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Student	Armutlu Mah.
23.Miguel	35	Male	Arab Christian	Antiochian	Engineer	Sümerler Mah.
24.Pelin	30	Female	Arab Alawite	Antiochian	Singer	Yeşilpınar Mah.

I classified and conceptualized these reflective screens above according to the research questions in this thesis and my ethnographic field experiences. One of the most important is the ethnic-religious identity category/reflective screen. With this

category, I propose that one must approach these indigenous communities without an identity bias based on essentialist notions on singular religious or ethnic affiliations/identity categories built socially and separately from one another. In daily life, as locals in the Hatay province, social interactions and self-classification on one's ethnic or religious identity/affiliation invoke plural notions of ethno-religious identities/affiliations socially and spatially embedded with one another. Therefore, instead of classifying participants by their ethnicities, such as Arabs, or by their religious identity, as Christians or Alawites, in this thesis, I chose socially constructed ethno-religious categories, such as Arab Alawite and Arab Christian. I also conceptualize this ethno-religious category as embedded and indexed with the participants' geographic or spatial affiliation, such as living or belonging in/to Defne or Antakya as the geographic location and spatial identity reflective screens.

3.4. Methods of data collection and analysis

I developed data collection and data analysis criteria considering the principles of Denzin (1978) on the triangulation of methods, theories, and data for studying social phenomena. In this case, triangulation as a methodological and analytical framework for data collection and data analysis ensured that this qualitative ethnographic case study (Patton, 1999), differing from full-scale ethnographies, could cover its limitations via multifaceted and richer forms of data, methods, and theoretical perspectives. Moreover, this methodological approach supported the aim of this mini-ethnographic case/focused ethnography to acquire a greater understanding of the case of the (re)making of Antakya and Defne, and its social, cultural, material, and political impact on the lives of the indigenous populations living in the Hatay province rather than aiming at transferability. Therefore, I triangulated ethnographic

and theoretical qualitative methods for data collection and analysis, such as multi-sited ethnographic field research, participant-observational techniques, semi-structured and in-depth interviews, multimodal discourse, and semiotic and landscape analysis methods. This triangulation helped me to compile data to answer the research questions of this study and to interpret the data collected during the analysis. The process of collecting and analyzing triangulated ethnographic data was categorized inductively into two main themes (Reeves, Kuper, & Hodges, 2008): (1) The official ideologies of space and competing narratives in the (re)making of Antakya and Defne, and (2) The political engagement and community practices in the negotiation of belonging. Below, I first briefly explain the methods of collecting ethnographic data, and then the methods of data analysis.

3.4.1. Methods of data collection

I started my data collection process by following Geertz's (1973) approach to the descriptive interpretation of complex cultural contexts based on the triangulation of ethnographic methods such as thick description, participant-observation techniques, interviewing, and field note-taking. Therefore, for the research themes mentioned above, I first traced the material and political work of the Turkish nation-state in the (re)making of Antakya and Defne through document data collection. I collected data such as newspaper news, maps, social media posts, photographs, and videos on the partition of Antakya and Defne, and cultural, touristic, religious, artistic, and political events such as the Hatay EXPO 2021, the Hatay Municipal Elections, and the Ras-El Seni (the Arab Alawite New Year's festivity). I also made participant observation (Paterson, Bottorff, & Hewat, 2003).

As a complete observer, I gathered data on landscapes in all multimodal media formats (i.e., historical, cultural, political, religious, architectural, touristic, linguistic types of landscapes). For this, I located, mapped, and photographed administrative, religious, historical, touristic, cultural, commercial buildings/monuments, signboards, political banners, graffiti, landmarks (i.e., bridges, streets, rivers, mountains, parks, statues, etc.). Second, as an in-person observer, I collected observational data by actively engaging with the Alawite and Christian Arab communities in religious, cultural, linguistic, political, and daily practices. For instance, during my fieldwork research, I attended the weekly and weekend masses at the Orthodox and Catholic Christian churches. I also participated in religious holidays and tours, such as the Christmas celebrations in 2018 and 2019.

Likewise, I joined the Arab Alawite festivities of Ras-il Seni of 2019 and 2020 in Defne and Antakya. In addition, as part of my observational research, I followed the 2019 Hatay municipal election, and accompanied my participants during election day. At some of these events, I used video technology to conduct and record detailed personal observations. For example, I filmed, and audio recorded more than 20 hours of the Ras-il Seni's public festivities to enrich my data analysis. As part of the fieldwork visits of ethnographic observation, I conducted informal and conversational interviews on the research themes.

Casual types of interviewing as an observational technique, such as minutes of daily conversations, meetings, and gatherings, provided me with the flexibility to gather documentary data. Another important ethnographic data collection technique during my field experiences was notetaking. In all my visits to Defne and Antakya, I constantly took notes during all occasions of my field research; a strategy for taking notes was using my cellphone or notebooks whenever I could. Through data

collection strategies such as taking notes, recording video and audio, and with the help of other documentary data, I was able to achieve thick descriptions.

During my fieldwork research between 2018 and 2020 in Defne and Antakya, I met and had informal conversations with countless people from the Alawite and Christian Arab communities. However, I could not conduct structured or in-depth interviews with many of them because they felt marginalized due to their ethno-religious backgrounds and feared exposing themselves in this study due to its sensitive political components. Nonetheless, some of my participants voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. Hence, to achieve a minimum level of representation for the research questions in this thesis, I conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) with voluntary participants (see table 1). I opted for a semi-structured in-depth interview strategy to gather data regarding the (re)making of Defne and Antakya and the official and indigenous competing narratives revolving around the two districts. Moreover, the semi-structured in-depth interviews enabled my participants to respond freely to my thematic questions by accessing and reconstructing their urban experiences and memories (Seidman, 2006) about the partition of the two districts. Last but not least, through the interviews, I could collect data to make sense of the social boundaries between Defne and Antakya.

For anonymity purposes, I used pseudonyms for each participant. I conducted my interviews with the participants at different locations according to their availability and choice of time. The interviews were conducted in Turkish, as most of my participants were fluent in Arabic and Turkish. I recorded the interviews and transcribed them after each meeting. In some cases, conversations and meetings lasted from thirty minutes to an hour. The duration of the interviews depended on

how the participants responded to the semi-structured in-depth format. For ethical reasons, I only conducted official interviews during my fieldwork after receiving permission to work with research subjects by Boğaziçi University Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences in 2019. Hence, before interviewing each participant, I informed them about the topic of my thesis and about using a recorder, and also asked them to sign the consent form required by the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences.

3.4.2. Methods of data analysis

The concept of "landscape" was a central theoretical construct and methodological tool for this thesis' research questions, themes, and data analysis. As the method for data analysis, I used the theoretical triangulation of multiple approaches to the study of landscapes to interpret my data. According to the multifaceted and multimodal media sources of data collected from my field research, I chose three approaches of analysis from cultural geography, urban linguistics, and semiotic anthropology for this study: (1) landscape analysis, (2) multimodal discourse analysis (MDA), and (3) semiotic analysis.

I blended these three approaches through the cultural geography framework on landscapes, which conceptualizes "the city as a text" (Duncan, 2005), where official ideologies of space write and rewrite the urban landscapes of Antakya and Defne. Moreover, I used MDA's social semiotic approach, which considers that meaning is textually multimodal (Jewitt, 2009), to analyze landscapes as multimodal works (i.e., semiotic resources) constructed by the combination of several modes of communication. According to MDA, multimodal semiotic resources are composed of modes, such as words, language, visual images, visual materialities, spatial design,

etc. These elements operate simultaneously by reinforcing, complementing, or contradicting each other when reproducing semiotic regimes.

This blended framework provided the flexibility to approach all types of landscapes (i.e., cultural, historical, political, linguistic, etc.) as complex multimodal works that dynamically combine two or more semiotic ideological systems and modes of communication to convey meaning, narratives, and discourses of power relations onto the nation-space. This theoretical and methodological framework for the analysis was also crucial to illustrate how the Turkish nation-state governs national space and ethnic-religious differences by manipulating multimodal landscapes. Furthermore, with MDA and linguistic landscape analysis (LL), I was also able to make sense of collected data to understand how indigenous communities use multimodal landscapes to negotiate and reclaim their sense of community and belonging. Last but not least, ethnographic qualitative methods, such as non-fiction ethnographic story-telling (Gullion, 2015), thick description, and the use of ethnographic vignettes, were enriching strategies for synthesizing and illustrating the data collected from my fieldwork.

CHAPTER 4

THE (RE)MAKING OF DEFNE AND ANTAKYA

Chapter 4 examines Law 6360 as part of AKP's districting practices that redefine political and ethno-religious boundaries dictating its official ideology of space with the new map of Hatay. To contextualize the research of this field study, I will first explain how local ethno-religious communities claim Antakya as a place of belonging. Secondly, to consider the political implications and urban transformations brought by the new metropolitan municipality system in the Hatay province, I present a brief overview of AKP's discourse on metropolitan development and reforms of the local government system. Subsequently in this chapter, I regard law.6360 as part of AKP's long-going metropolitan reforms. I contend that these reforms are part of the trajectory of the ruling party's ideological and political contestation over the nation-space. In the third part, I scrutinize the gerrymandering and ethno-sectarian aspects of AKP's new metropolitan boundaries through the accounts of my participants on both the new map of Hatay and the elections of 2014. I demonstrate how this contestation inscribes a new political and ethno-sectarian map and landscape for the Hatay province. In the fourth section, I illustrate that the categories Defne/ Daphne and Antakya/Antioch have been reconfigured as a new axis of differentiation between non-Sunnis and Sunnis. Consequently, I show how the new divide between non-Sunnis and Sunnis in the Hatay province represents a symbolic transgression for these communities. Furthermore, I illustrate how the sense of having been "pinpointed" (işaretlenme in Turkish, and akin to

stigmatization) on the map of Hatay is related to the rising of ethno-sectarian tensions in the province due to the AKP's ideological and political intervention.

4.1. Spatial-temporal boundaries: Antakya as a place of belonging

Although Ali revealed to me that he was an Arab Alawite and claimed Antakya to be the native land (memleket) of his ancestors, he no longer lives within Antakya's official district boundaries. According to the Justice and Development Party (AKP)'s new metropolitan municipality system, Law 6360, Ali is now a Defneli (Dephnean), from the new district of Defne (Daphne). As Ali told me, the Sumerler neighborhood, where Arab Christians and Arab Alawites lived together, was separated from Antakya during the 2014 local elections. Likewise, many of my participants, who lived in Sümerler from the Greek Orthodox Church (Rum Ortodoks Kilisesi) and Antioch Turkish Catholic Church (Antakya Türk Katolik Kilisesi)'s community, claimed to be indigenous peoples of Antakya. For example, some well-known families of Christian Arabs living in the Sümerler neighborhood claimed to have a 3,000-year-old Byzantine Hellenistic family tree. However, according to Ali's map, like in the case of the Arab Alawites, the Arab Christians were now excluded from Antakya.

On my first field visits, as a foreigner to the province of Hatay, I could not recognize the differences and contested meanings between vernacular notions of being "Antiochian/Antakyalı" or "Hataylı/Hatay Turk". These notions were confusing to me at first, as some participants identified themselves as Antiochians and others as Hatay Turks. In some cases, these notions overlapped, as some participants would use both of them interchangeably to identify themselves. Nonetheless, the more time I spent with people from the Arab Alawite and Christian

communities, the better I came to understand these differences. After my stay with Gabriel at the Antioch Turkish Catholic Church, I was hosted by an Arab Alawite family in Değirmenyolu, a neighborhood located now in Defne. In one of my conversations with Demet, one of the family's daughters, who is a 23-year-old university student, I asked her what it meant to be an Antiochian, and she stated:

> First thing that makes me feel Antiochian is my culture, which is my Arab Alawite heritage. Being from Antioch, for me, reminds me of a homeland where different civilizations coexist and where we live together in peace without experiencing despise or any conflict because of our differences. For me, Antakya means being a part of this unity and beauty. (personal communication)[24]

As Demet explains, for these communities, Antakya is a place they identify with, claim to belong to, and represent through their sense of community and cultural heritage[25]. Admittedly, at first, I thought that only Non-Sunni Arabs claimed ownership over the identity of Antakya. Nonetheless, after talking with Arab Sunnis from Altınözü and Yayladağı, I understood that they have a strong sense of Antiochianness, as a place-based identity that sometimes prevails over "being Turk" or "being Sunni". On my first visit to Antakya, I stayed with Ahmet and his family for a few days. Ahmet was a 48 years-old Arab Sunni tourist guide from Yayladağı, living in Cebrail, a neighborhood located in Antakya. When I asked Ahmet about the differences between Antakya and Hatay and how he identified himself, he told me that he identified himself as Antiochian, but also being from Yayladağı (Yayladağlı).

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[24] Beni Antakyalı hissettiren ilk şey kültürüm yani Arap-Alevi kökenlerim. Antakya'dan olmak bana farklı medeniyetlerin bir arada, huzurla, hor görülmeden, çatışmadan yaşadığı bir memleketi anımsatıyor. Bence Antakya bu birlik ve güzelliğin bir parçası olmak demek. (kişisel iletişim)

[25] Therefore, Antakya for these communities represents both a space that transgresses the spatial and temporal boundaries of the Turkish Republic and a place (district) within the nation-space where these communities live as imperial remnants.

Then he explained that, although he was Hataylı and Yayladağlı, he was primarily Antiochian since his ancestors lived there before the annexation of the province to Turkey.

As described above, Arabs from the three major religious sects (Alawites, Sunnis and Christians) living in the province call upon an indigenous/autochthonous and cosmopolitan form of belonging that can be associated with Antakya rather than Hatay. Identifying with being Antiochian (Antakyalı) is beyond the spatial and temporal boundaries of the Republic of Turkey. That is, these communities are imperial remnants (Cribb & Narangoa, 2004) of different imperative powers that governed the region, now known as Hatay, even before its controversial annexation to the Republic of Turkey in 1939. As a result, participants from these two communities usually identified themselves as Antiochians in contrast with the identity of being a "Hatay Turk". In fact, in my interviews and informal meetings, the term Hatay was used by participants when referring to a Sunni Muslim Turkish national imagined community. Particularly, Sunni Turks and Turkish nationalists used the social-spatial and identity categories "Hatay" or "Hatay Turks" to situate the province within the Republic of Turkey and identify themselves as Turks. Non-Sunni Arabs and Sunni-Arabs used the term of Hatay when situating themselves inside the official boundaries of the nation-space.

Nonetheless, as I describe above, in the vernacular conversations, they referred to Hatay as a province (i.e., administrative unit) rather than a place of belonging while identifying themselves as Antiochians. Arab Alawite and Arab Christian participants described Defne in terms of political, imaginary, and ethno-religious boundaries[26]and tended to foreground their Antakyalı identity, disregarding

[26] In the following sections, I will focus on the semantic implications of these boundaries.

the official metropolitan boundaries of the Hatay province. As the narratives of Demet, Ali, Ahmet, Gabriel, and others convey, I understood that these communities recognize each other's differences and live together in socio-spatial configurations in which each district and neighborhood represents a local identity.[27] As Dağtaş (2014) has shown, ethno-religious boundaries are discursively constructed and can be crossed over in different social-spatial contexts and during daily interactions. Likewise, the location of each community on the province's map provides the locals with contextualization cues for decoding the symbolic capital of each community. Nonetheless, on the whole, under the social-spatial category of Antakya, these local communities perceive their ethnic-religious differences as an asset, not an impediment to coexistence in the city. But what I did not understand was why the new district of Defne represented a kind of symbolic transgression for the Arab Alawites and Christian communities. What makes the new metropolitan borders reconfigured by AKP different from the maps produced in the early republican period? These are the key questions of my thesis that I aim to answer in the following sections of this chapter.

[27] In the Hatay province, some neighborhoods and districts are indexical markers (Gumperz, 1982) of urban forms of belonging and identifications. For example, being from Harbiye, Armutlu, and Cumhuriyet neighborhoods or Samandağı, Yayladağı or Iskenderun may index to other sub-notions of locality, identity and urban heritage according to different social contexts in daily life.

4.2 Law.6360

4.2.1 An overview of AKP’s discourse on metropolitan development and reforms

I returned to Antakya in December 2018 and stayed another three months to carry out my fieldwork after encountering Ali's painting (see introduction), which led me to my quest to unravel the mystery of the emerging district of Defne. In my first month in Antakya, I was hosted by an Alawite Arab family who lived in the Zülüfühan neighborhood. I stayed with them because the neighborhood was close to the local university, and I wanted to explore the political process underlying the partition of Defne and Antakya. Fuat, one of the family's children, who is a 23-year-old university student, took me to his university, where I met with MKU scholars from the anthropology and geography departments. Fortunately, the human geographers were very welcoming and provided me with enlightening information and feedback on my general inquiries. I soon learned that the partition of the two districts was related to the Law on the Metropolitan Municipalities no 6360, as part of AKP’s local administration reform, and, as such, Hatay was redesigned as a metropolitan municipality, composed of fifteen districts, including the four new municipalities of Antakya, Defne, Arsuz, and Payas (Adıgüzel & Karakaya, 2017) (see figure 5).

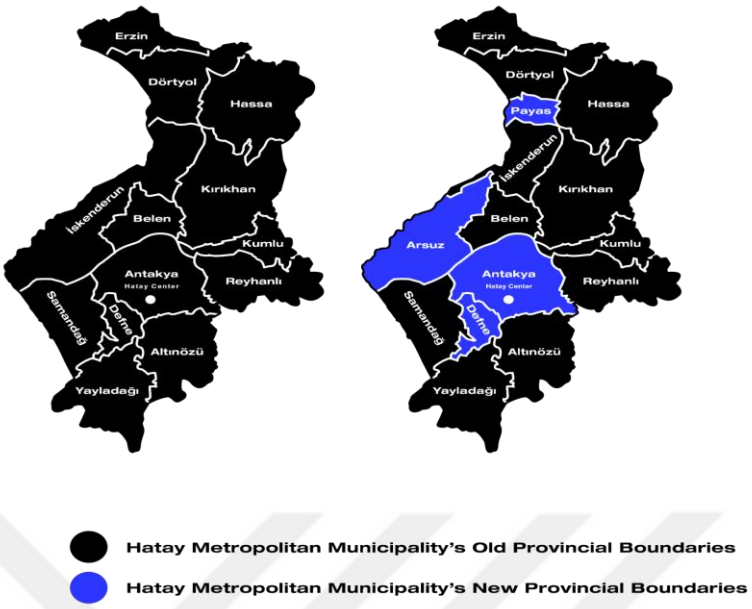


Figure 5. Hatay Metropolitan Municipality's provincial boundaries[28]

Arsuz and Payas were local administrative units and part of Iskenderun and Dörtyol districts. Based on the same law, Antakya (Hatay Center) was split into the Defne and Antakya municipalities. Although Payas and Arsuz did not exist as municipal units before, the only district that was newly fabricated and renamed was Defne. Coincidentally, Defne is made up mainly of Arab Alawites and a small minority of Arab Christians.

The practice of metropolitan municipality was first put into force by Law 3030 in 1984,[29] primarily through the transformation of Istanbul, Ankara, and İzmir into metropolitan municipalities. The same status was later granted to 16 other cities. Although legal regulations were put into practice to transform these cities into metropolitan municipalities in the past, none of them facilitated this process like the

[28] This map was drawn by me, and it is based on Law no. 6360.
[29] The metropolitan municipality system in Turkey is based on the Constitution of 1982.

new law 6360 of 2012 (Adıgüzel, 2012, p.154). According to Adıgüzel (2012), AKP's Law No. 6360 was developed for two purposes: “to build a more effective and efficient administrative structure,” and, “to increase participation in democratic life with the new local system created” (p.174). However, the real motivation of law No.6360 lies behind the party's populist policies and discourse on urban development. In accordance with AKP’s metropolitan municipality system, Law No. 6360 brought about a new reconfiguration and reorganization of the local government system across Turkey (Adıgüzel, 2012; Karakaya, 2012; Adıgüzel & Karakaya, 2017, Izci & Turan, 2013).

In 2013, fourteen provinces with populations larger than 750,000 were established as new metropolitan municipalities, bringing the total number of metropolitan municipalities in the country to thirty. As a result, the local government system was reorganized as more provinces received metropolitan status in 2013. Hence, the boundaries of the metropolitan municipalities were extended to those of the respective provinces and special provincial administrations villages were dissolved. As a result, the metropolitan municipality, as the only local government in these provinces in Turkey, has taken over local government services. In retrospect, when regarding the previous metropolitan municipality developments and reforms since the 1980s, none of them envisaged a total transformation and reform of the local government system like the one brought by AKP in 2012. Therefore, to better understand the transformations brought about by the law.6360 in Hatay Province, I contextualize it within AKP's discourse on metropolitan development and reforms of the local government system.

When considering AKP’s discourse on metropolitan development in Turkey, Bayraktar and Massicard (2012) point out that since 2004, the party has introduced

several reforms aimed at reorganizing “the central government and local/regional authorities,” a process framed by a discourse of “decentralization” (p.7). These reforms entailed “a significant change in territorial administration and management of local services in what had been, to this point, a centralised, unitary state, with practically no intermediate level between the central government and the citizens” (p.7). However, the rhetoric of “decentralization” was rather misleading. “While these reforms aimed at redefining the relations between local authorities and providing them more independence, the supervision of the metropolitan municipalities and provinces by the central government seems to continue to have a powerful influence (Bayraktar & Massicard, 2012, p.7).

The government also planned on reorganizing the distribution of resources and power in the local administrations and drawing more resources and investments from international donors. This way, the government would successfully re-appropriate “the demands and rhetoric of the global discourse on effectiveness, good governance, the optimal level of decision-making on and management of services for citizens, local democracy and subsidiarity*” (*Bayraktar & Massicard, 2012, p.73). Despite the political intervention of the AKP, the dynamics of the strategic electoral behavior of local populations still influenced the 2009 local elections in cities such as Mersin (Bayraktar 2011; Kamalak, 2013). The status and size of the local administrations (i.e., district municipality, metropolitan municipality, city, town, village, etc.) would determine how much national politics would affect local politics (Kamalak, 2013). Nonetheless, with the fragmentation of the political structure of the local government system, the efficiency and autonomy of local governance and the determination of candidates in local elections in Turkey became questionable (Kamalak, Kiriş, & Gül, 2013). In other words, the political influence behind AKP's

long-lasting reforms of the local government system became even sharper with Law No 6360 issued in 2012.

For instance, Adıgüzel (2012) predicted that the metropolitan reform law. 6360 brought forth would change the dynamics of the strategic voting behavior of the local population in the elections of 2014. More specifically, Adıgüzel and Karakaya (2017) pointed out that the law changed the definition of which electoral/peripheral areas constitute the metropolitan boundaries. The reason is that metropolitan and provincial municipal boundaries now overlap. As a result, the authors explain that until the 2014 local elections, metropolitan mayors were elected only by voters who lived in urban areas. However, with the new metropolitan borders, voters in rural areas, connected now to the metropolitan municipality, could vote in mayoral elections. From this perspective, AKP's new metropolitan municipality system is exercised through a gerrymandering practice of drawing boundaries of electoral districts to establish an unfair advantage by increasing its political power. That is, the ruling party split up clusters of electoral opposition among provincial districts so that its candidates would win as many seats as possible during local elections.

AKP's local administration reforms that paved the way for the metropolitanization of cities imply not only a political but also an ideological intervention on social space. As Ghulyan (2019) maintains, with the rise of AKP in 2002, "a transformation of social space began to occur, both as a discourse on space and as a practice of the production of the built environment" (p.30). The ruling party's employment of spatial and identity politics in Ankara, Ghulyan argues, can be read in terms of a spatialization[30] of Islamist, Populist, and neo-Ottoman discourses

[30] The author takes the notion of "spatialization" from Foucault (2009), who argues that power relations and discourses are regimented through their spatialization over social space.

in the Turkish capital. In his study, Ghulyan demonstrates how the AKP government transformed Ankara by reorganizing its sociospatial order and replacing Republican symbols, streets, and cities' toponyms from the urban space with its Islamist, neo-Ottoman, and Populist ones. As a result, Ankara's both built and social urban space has been transformed into a "medium of struggle", where political stakeholders such as AKP and CHP compete over its political and cultural representation (Ghulyan, 2019, p.129)[31]. I argue that we need to address the new metropolitan municipality system and public debates about it in relation to the ongoing political and ideological contestation over urban spaces. This contestation takes place between secularist and Islamist state ideologies, narratives, and national and local forms of citizenship. For instance, In the case of the Hatay province, both the political and ethno-religious boundaries and the notions of place-based and national identity, and belonging were redefined with the new metropolitan municipality system.

4.3 The new map of Hatay

In my meeting with Ali, I had entered his gallery with a preconceived notion of the new official map of Hatay, as if its spatial representation was an incontestable objective truth. Nonetheless, the contested qualities of the multiple narratives regarding the partition of Defne and Antakya led me to an ethnographic quest to discover the power dynamics that have led to the partition. As Mills (2010) explained in her ethnographic study on Kuzguncuk, "the landscapes' visual materiality makes the representation we see appear to be objective, and in this way, the politically laden

[31] According to Lefebvre (2000) space is political, not only because it is always marked by a particular ideology but also because it is a medium and the objective of social struggles and conflicts.

and socially conditioned process that actually produced the landscapes become obscured" (p.17).

I contend that an example of such ideological work of landscape is the new metropolitan municipality system because landscapes and maps are texts within power discourses (Barnes & Duncan, 2011). I regard maps as multimodal tools[32] employed during the reorganization of the political space and the regimentation of official[33] ideologies of space. Therefore, below I scrutinize the gerrymandering and ethno-sectarian aspects of AKP's new metropolitan boundaries through the accounts of my participants on both the new map of Hatay and the municipal elections of 2014.

4.3.1 Urban boundaries between Defne and Antakya

During my first three-month stay in Antakya, I was hosted by families who according to me lived in the center of Antakya, namely in the Armutlu, Sümerler, Cumhuriyet, Cebrail, and Zengiler neighborhoods (see the field study location map, Chapter 3). Notwithstanding, I later learned that Sümerler and Armutlu were now located in Defne. Although Zülüfühan is in the countryside of Antakya, I daily crossed through the rural zoning to the city zoning via the urban public transport

[32] Thus, as a multimodal tool and textual representation, Hatay's new metropolitan map combines two or more official ideological systems and modes of communication to convey forms of meaning, narratives, and discourses.

[33] I call upon the concept of ideologies of space from linguistic anthropology to identify certain official or institutional regimes and their representation in the format of multimodal media, such as landscapes and maps. For more, See Susan Gal (2010)'s study on the relation of official regimes and political spaces.

system. On many occasions, Fuat would take me to the center of Antakya to his relatives in the Turunçlu neighborhood, in Defne. Likewise, I visited the Greek Orthodox Church and the Turkish Catholic Church of Antioch in central Antakya weekly and attended Sunday masses and religious festivities with Gabriel and other participants. One day after a Sunday mass at the Turkish Catholic Church of Antioch, I asked Gabriel if he could take me to the border between Defne and Antakya, and he said that: "I'm not sure where the border is, as you saw in the center. It is like there's no difference at all. There's just a line separating Defne from Antakya" (personal communication)[34]. Merve, a 24-year-old student Arab Alawite from Sümerler, suggests that Defne and Antakya still inhabit each other as if they were one urban center:

> For me, the new border between Defne and Antakya makes no sense because we still live in the center of Antakya. The only way I know I am in Defne is because my neighborhood is now under the Defne Municipality (personal communication).[35]

Similar to Merve, Işıl, a 28-year-old teacher Arab Alawite from Armutlu, describes that Defne was a "phantasmatic entanglement of materialities" that once were part of Antakya (Navaro-Yashin, 2014).

> For me, it's like the government downsized us to a smaller district. However, Defne has no center. Even the new Defne Municipality Building was under construction until last year. That's why you can't get things done here. I handle all my business in Antakya. Maybe it will change in 10 years, I don't know (personal communication).[36]

---

[34] Merkezde senin de gördüğün gibi, sınırın nereden geçtiğine emin değilim. Sanki hiç bir fark yokmuş gibi. Defne'yi Antakya'dan ayıran bir çizgi var sadece. (kişisel iletişim)

[35] Defne'yle Antakya'yı ayıran sınır bana çok saçma geliyor. Çünkü biz hala Antakya'nın merkezinde yaşıyoruz. Defne'de yaşadığımı bana anlatan tek şey mahallemin Defne Belediyesi'ne bağlı olması. (kişisel iletişim)

[36] Bence hükümet bizi daha küçük bir bölgeye sığdırdı. Ama Defne'nin bir merkezi bile yok. Hatta Defne Belediye Başkanlığı binası geçen sene inşaattı daha. O yüzden işlerinizi burada

Indeed, the district had “make-believe qualities” (Navaro-Yashin, 2012) and seemed to be under constant construction. In retrospect, when I arrived in Defne, the construction of its municipality building and other official buildings had just begun. While evaluating the geomorphological and historical landscape of the province of Antakya, the geographer Karagel (2018) states that there were no geographic or historical criteria that make the partition between Defne and Antakya reasonable. Geographically speaking, the two districts were crossed by the Orontes river and surrounded by the same mountains. Moreover, according to historical accounts, the new district of Defne is located where the ancient Antiochian suburb of Daphne once existed. Significantly, Antakya’s urban heritage in modern days continues to be represented by central neighborhoods that now remain in Defne. Hence, it is no surprise, the new partition makes no sense to the locals as it has been showcased by the accounts above.

Similar to Gabriel, Merve, and Işıl, some of my participants could not pinpoint the new official border between the two districts, but it does not mean that a boundary did not exist. Consequently, during interviews for this study, all participants were able to identify whether the neighborhoods were a part of Defne or Antakya's new official boundaries. Hence, although the boundary between the two districts was confusing for locals to pinpoint, participants were aware of its existence. In one of my ethnographic searches to locate the official border between Defne and Antakya, I visited Hikmet, a 38-year-old Arab Alawite geographer from Armutlu. After hearing my questions about the whereabouts of the border between the two districts, he pointed to a bridge under the Asi (Orontes) river on an official

halledemiyorsunuz. Ben bütün işlerimi Antakya’da hallediyorum. Belki 10 seneye değişir, bilmiyorum. (kişisel iletişim)

physical copy of Hatay's new provincial map, as shown in the figure (see figure 6) below. According to the geographer, the Mehmet Yeloğlu bridge was the dividing line between the two districts, and therefore a physical border and landmark of the new law.6360. Hikmet advised me to visit the bridge and see it for myself.

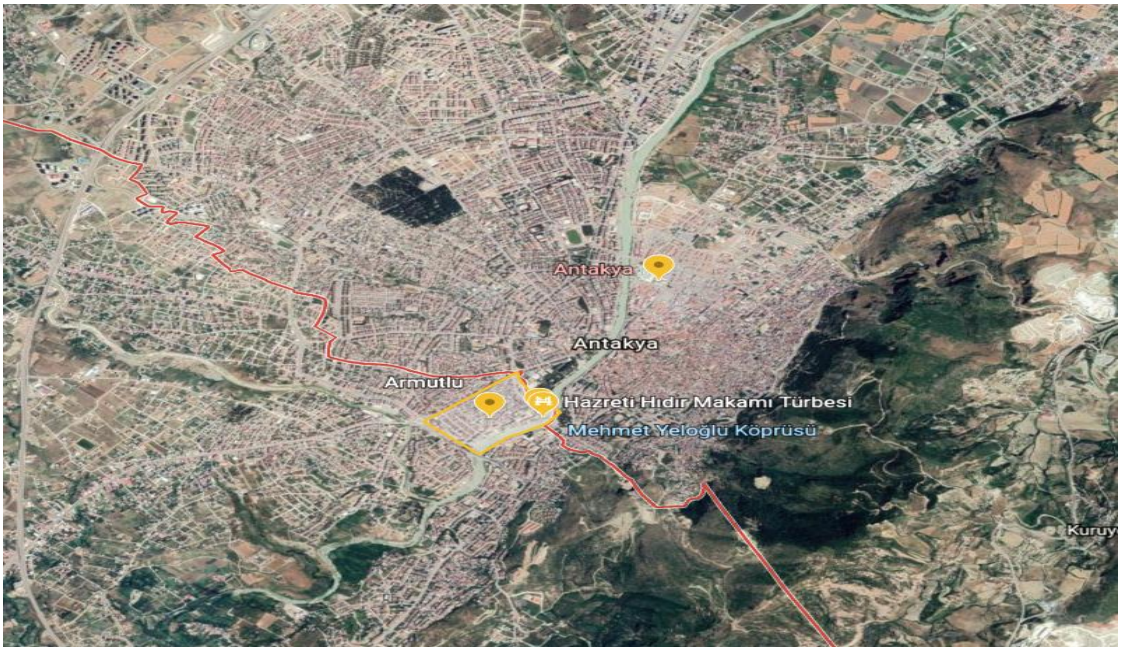


Figure 6 A map of the urban borders between Antakya and Defne.[37]

As is displayed in the map above, the red line demarcates the official boundaries between Defne and Antakya. The bridge overlaps the red line by separating the two districts. Meanwhile, the square represents the location of the Armutlu neighborhood, which was once part of the center of Antakya. Hasan, a 35-year-old Arab Alawite biology teacher from Armutlu, who identifies himself as an Antiochian (Antakyalı), explains how the new border between Defne and Antakya acquired material qualities with this bridge:

[37] I made this map on Google Earth. The red line was drawn as per the official boundaries displayed by Google Earth between Defne and Armutlu in the year 2020.

> As understood by the bridge's name, this new boundary was designed to be drawn. In 2009, the bridge was named after the AKP's former mayor of Antakya, Mehmet Yeloğlu. Three years after its construction, with the separation of Defne from Antakya in 2012, this bridge as a border became more material and visible for us. (personal communication)[38]

As Hikmet and Hasan's accounts show, the more the division between Defne and Antakya became sharper due to the development of the Defne Municipality, the more locals recognized the area of the bridge as a physical border between the two districts. Moreover, as Hasan explained, with its materiality, the bridge also disclosed ideological cues behind AKP's new metropolitan municipality system. The reason being that the bridge's name was symbolic as a landmark of the AKP's jurisdictional authority over the province's political landscape. For instance, when I visited the bridge, a shrine in the middle of the road directly across from the bridge caught my attention. The shrine was small, painted green, and had a Turkish flag with a portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as shown in the figure (see figure 7) below. The shrine caught my eye because it was Alawite and seemed to obstruct the new official border between the two districts.

[38] Köprünün adından da anlaşılıyor zaten, sınırı çizmek için yapıldı. AKP'nin eski Belediye Başkanı Mehmet Yeloğlu koydu ismini, 2009'da. İnşasından 3 sene sonra, 2012'de Defne Antakya'dan ayrılınca, köprü bizim için daha elle tutulur, görünür bir sınır oldu. (kişisel iletişim)



Figure 7. The Mehmet Yeloğlu bridge and Hazreti Hıdır Makamı Shrine[39].

Hikmet explained that the shrine's name was Hazreti Hıdır Makamı and that local Arab Alawites believed it was mystic. The shrine represents the heritage and existence of Arab Alawites living in this area. According to the popular myth, the Antakya Municipality under AKP tried to destroy the Shrine during the construction of the bridge in 2009, but no human force could touch it. Because of this, the Antakya Municipality left it in the middle of the street. One thing was true, not even the metropolitan municipality system could touch it either.

4.3.2. Gerrymandering and the remapping of the ethno-religious landscape

Given the geographic and historical contradictions, the coexistence of indigenous/local and official narratives competing over the criteria employed for the division between Antakya and Defne provided clues of AKP's ideological work behind the new map for the Hatay province. Concerning the ethno-religious

[39] Photograph taken by the José Rafael Medeiros Coelho, 2019

boundaries between Defne and Antakya, Can (2020) argues that "the reconfigured municipal borders sparked a controversy since they were presumably based on ethno-religious affiliations" (p.13). In particular, while discussing the possible criteria for the separation of Defne from Antakya, many of the participants questioned the ethno-religious boundaries behind the new metropolitan municipality map. For instance, Fatma, a 27-year-old Arap Alawite architect from Harbiye, pointed to an ethno-religious division employed as a criterion for reorganizing the local government system that divided the city of Antakya into two municipalities:

> After Hatay became a metropolitan municipality, the state drew a border between Antakya and the places with a greater concentration of Arabs. Especially where Arab Alawites lived. The state wanted to gather us (the Arab Alawites) somehow under one main label. Then it turned our previous administrative areas and villages into neighborhoods under the Defne municipality. Now, there are two new municipalities. These are Defne and Antakya. (personal communication)[40]

As a matter of fact, villages such as Değirmenyolu, Yeşilpınar, Gümüşgöze, Harbiye, Tavla, Balıklıdere, Aknehir, Sinanlı and Bahçeköy were suddenly made neighborhoods under the Defne municipality. Murat, a 40-year-old Arab Alawite chef from Değirmenyolu, illustrates that the neighborhoods that make up the new district of Defne are mostly Arab Alawite areas.

> These villages are areas surrounded by fields and olive trees and isolated from each other. They combined these isolated places and the region of Sümerler and Armutlu on the map, where Alawite Arabs and Arab Christians lived in the center of Ancient Antakya (Eski Antakya), and named this new district Defne. All of these places are mostly inhabited by Arab Alawites. (personal communication)[41]

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[40] Hatay, büyükşehir belediyesi statüsüne geçtikten sonra, devlet Antakya ile Arapların yoğun olarak yaşadığı yerler arasına bir sınır çizdi. Özellikle Arap-Alevilerin yaşadığı yerlerle. Devlet bizi (Arap Alevileri) bir şekilde ana bir etiket altında toplmaka istedi. Sonra bizim idari bölgelerimizi, köylerimizi Defne Belediyesi altında topladı. Şimdi iki tane yeni belediye var, Defne ve Antakya. (kişisel iletişim)

[41] Aslında bu köylerin aralarında tarlalar, zeytin ağaçlıklarıyla birbirlerinden ayrı, izole yerler. Bütün bu izole yerleri Sümerler ve Armutlu bölgeleri altında birleştirdiler harita üzerinde ki bu yerler Arap

Local readings of the process illustrate how the state, the ruling party in this case, meticulously targeted the areas where Arab Alawites are concentrated. As it is historically known, the Arab Alawites have been living in certain settlements in Antakya and other cities of the Hatay province (Duman, 2016). The same applies to the Arab Christians living in the region. Concerning the informant's narratives about the new geographical segregation, Can (2020) explains that "such a shift in local border-policy created more anxiety over state investment in the development of certain towns" (p.24). Especially, when we analyze the determination of the partition of both Arsuz from Iskenderun and Defne from Antakya, we soon realize that Defne and Arsuz are regions known for being populated by Arab Alawites and Arab Christian minorities. As Uğur, a 55-year-old construction worker, an Arab Alawite from Harbiye, informs below how AKP reorganized rural and urban settlements through the drawing of an ethno-sectarian boundary between non-Sunnis and Sunnis for the Hatay province:

> For example, we have been living with residents from Sofular forever. They are Arab Sunnis and sell their products in Harbiye. The government has placed their village in Altınözu. There is also another Arab Sunni neighborhood next to Sofular, called Yukarıokçular. The government went and annexed this neighborhood to the district of Yayladağı, 35 km away from Yukarıokçular, when it's only to 2 km to Harbiye. These neighborhoods should have been attached to Defne[42]. (personal communication)

My participants narrated the story of the Sofular and the Yukarıokçular villages (now neighborhoods) as evidence of the ideological work behind AKP's new map of Hatay. According to Uğur, even though these Arab Sunni neighborhoods had

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Alevilerin, Arap Hristiyanların yaşadığı kadim Antakya merkezi. Şimdi buralar Defne olarak isimlendirildi. Bu yerleşim yerlerinin sakînleri çoğunlukla Arap Alevi. (kişisel iletişim)

[42]Mesela, biz hep Sofulu bölgesi sakinleri ile birlikte yaşıyoruz. Onlar Sunni Arap, mallarını Harbiye'de satarlar. Hükümet onların köylerini Altınözü'ne dahil etti. Yukarıokçular denilen başka bir Sünni Arap mahalle var, Sofular'a yakın. Devlet gitti, bu mahalleyi Yayladağı'na bağladı. Yukarıokçular'a 35 km ama Harbiye'ye sadece 2 km. Bu mahalleler Defne'ye bağlanmalıydı.(kişisel iletişim)

been co-living with Arab Alawites in peace, the new map of Hatay attached them to other Arab Sunni districts farther from Harbiye. Thus, in our conversation, Uğur claimed that the AKP strategically aimed to segregate Alawites and Sunnis from one another. Moreover, Uğur considered that few Arab Alawite neighborhoods were still left in Antakya because the government was "unable to draw a line" and "incorporated them within Defne", otherwise "the new map would be even more absurd". For instance, Uğur told me that some peripheral Arab Alawite neighborhoods, such as Küçük Dalyan, Maşuklu, Güzelburç, Kavaslı, Ekinci, Serinyol, Büyükdalyan, remained in Antakya. Overall, Uğur's accounts underpin the fragmentation of ethno-religious communities that once cohabited rather peacefully in Antakya. As a result, Arab Alawites once a majority in Antakya became a minority.[43]

Nonetheless, in other conversations, my participants suggested that the criterion for the partition of Defne and Antakya was also political and mainly motivated due to the growing polarization between the opposition and AKP supporters in the Hatay province. As evidence of this, some of them classified the border between Defne and Antakya as a "political split" (siyasal ayrışma) or a "political boundary" (siyasal sınır). More specifically, my participants told me that the existence of strong Arab Alawite opposition in Antakya led AKP to reconfigure the province for electoral purposes. For instance, Ege, a 32-year-old Alawite Arab civil servant (memur) from Turunçlu, a neighborhood now located in Defne, explained that Defne is known to be an electoral area for the opposing party (CHP).

[43] For the local population living in Zülüfhan, the Arab Alawites were the majority, while the minority was made up of Sunni Turkish public officials, soldiers, police, and students from other regions and provinces.

Özcan, a 45-year-old Arab Alawite tailor from Yeşilpınar, indicates that the new border is based on both political and ethno-religious criteria:

> While the people living in Antakya mostly vote for the AKP, the people left in the Defne area vote for the CHP and other left-wing parties. The divide of Antakya and Defne in the newly created map of municipalities shows us that this division is not only ethnic and religious but also political. (personal communication)[44]

In this regard, Duman (2020) argues that Arab Alawites living in Hatay province have not supported the AKP since its establishment. Furthermore, he claims that the party's sectarian and pro-Sunni foreign policy during the Syrian War created more discontent among the Alawite population in Hatay. Accordingly, Üşenmez and Duman (2015) recognize the June 2013 Gezi Park protests in the Hatay province as evidence of conflict between the AKP and Arab Alawites in the region. Significantly, many of my participants had been active in the Gezi protests, which began at the Sevgi Park, in Armutlu (a neighborhood now located in Defne). Ayşe, a 55-year-old civil servant (Memur), an Arab Alawite from Armutlu, who identifies herself as an Antiochian (Antakyalı), reported that the Gezi's protests in Armutlu created an explosion, in her words “a real resistance (mücadele)”. Ayşe described that Armutlu became an “Arab zone” (Arap mıntıkası) where Arab Alawites from the province attended and supported the demonstrations.

As has been showcased by the accounts above, Arab Alawites living in the new district of Defne are known for their political positioning against the ruling party. They are more public than Arab Christians about their opposition in the urban space. Meanwhile, Arab Christians living in Defne and Antakya are more reserved about their political positioning. Nonetheless, this does not mean that they are not

[44] Antakya bölgesinde kalan insanlar çoğunlukla AKP’ye oy vermekle birlikte Defne bölgesinde kalan insanlar CHP ve diğer sol partilere oy veriyorlar. Yeni oluşturulan belediyeler haritasındaki Antakya ve Defne ayrımı bize gösteriyor ki bu ayrım sadece etnik ve dinsel bir ayrım değil aynı zamanda siyasi bir ayrımdır. (kişisel iletişim)

political. The many Arab Christians I met during my fieldwork living between Defne and Antakya were majority CHP supporters, while a minority supported left-wing parties. For instance, some young Arab Christians were active during the Gezi Park protests in Armutlu and were members of left-wing parties. Other Arab Christians knew the families who lost their children during the protests. They felt for them and shared the same pain. As I lived with the Arab Christian community, I learned that they have developed a sense of social solidarity among Arab Alawites, and feel represented by them in local politics as Miguel, a 35-year-old Arab Christian engineer from Sümerler, suggests below:

> We are a small community spread out in Antakya and now in Defne, and on many occasions, we benefit from our close ties with the Arab Alawite community. We can live together and feel safe with each other. Furthermore, our community is afraid to expose itself, as we are few. As the second-largest community in Hatay, they (Arab Alawites) represent us in opposition to the government (personal communication)[45].

Due to the ethno-religious and political polarization between the population living in Defne and Antakya, participants in my research often referred to the municipal elections of 2014 as proof of the political intentions behind the partition of Defne.[46] For example, Meryem, a 30-year-old jeweler Arab Christian from Sümerler, a neighborhood now located in Defne, who identifies herself as an Antakyalı (Antiochian), explains below how the citizens of Defne only became aware of the existence of a new district called Defne during the 2014 local elections:

> We all only understood that Defne was a new district during the electoral period. Until then, no one had noticed a big change, as we had expected, like

[45] Biz eskiden Antakya şimdi de Defne içerisinde yayılmış küçük bir topluluğuz.Bir çok durumda, biz topluluk olarak Arap Alevi topluluğuyla olan bağlarımızdan yaralanıyoruz. Bir arada ve güvenli hissediyoruz birbirimize karşı. Bunun ötesinde, bizim topluluğumuz kendisini ortaya koymaktan çekiniyor sayıca az olduğundan ötürü. Arap Aleviler Antakya'nın en büyük ikinci topluluğu olarak hükümete karşı bizi de temsil ediyorlar. (kişisel iletişim)

[46] In this section, I briefly narrate mostly the elections of 2014 and provide some accounts on the elections of 2019, however for in-depth voting behavior analysis on the gerrymandering aspects of the law 6360 on the elections of 2014 and 2019 for the Hatay province, see Duman (2020), Adıgüzel and Karakaya (2017).

> "oh, we've changed now". So, at that moment, no one noticed a difference. Only our address has changed, instead of Antakya, it has become Defne. We write Defne Hatay instead of Antakya Hatay. However, in the election the parties started to choose their candidates, and it was said that "that candidate of this party is from Defne and not from Antakya". So that's when we found out we were from Defne. Here, a new election will be made for here; a new mayor will be chosen for us. (personal communication)[47]

As a result of the new legislation brought by the new metropolitan system, locals redesignated in Defne like Meryem had to renew their identity cards and addresses to benefit from their new municipality's services and to be able to vote during the elections[48]. As Meryem explained, with the separation of Defne from Antakya, a new reorganization of party candidates in the region began. Remarkably, the choice for AKP's mayoral candidate raised controversies among the local population. In retrospect, Uğur points out a local narrative concerning AKP's mayoral candidate during the municipal elections of 2014:

> Sadullah Ergin, a lawyer here. First, he was a deputy, and then he became the minister of justice. When it was certain that this place would become a metropolitan city, the party nominated him as its mayoral candidate for the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality. They (the government and local party members) thought he would win, so they chose him as their candidate. That's why, they divided the district into two[49]. (personal communication)

As Uğur explained, Sadullah Ergin was from Antakya, and his nomination as the mayoral candidate for the local elections of 2014 let people think that he and other local party members were part of the project that divided Antakya and Defne. The 2014 municipal elections in Hatay were essential for the party to maintain its

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[47] Hepimiz Defne'nin yeni bir ilçe olduğunu seçim döneminde anladık. O zamana kadar kimse büyük bir değişiklik fark etmemişti. Biz böyle "ah şimdi değiştik" gibi bir şey deneyimlemedik. O zaman kimse bir fark görmedi. Sadece adreslerimiz değişti, Antakya yerine Defne oldu. Antakya Hatay, yazmak yerine Defne Hatay yazıyoruz. Seçim zamanı partiler adaylarını seçmeye başladıklarında "partinin adayı Defne'den Antakya'dan değil" dediler. Öyle olunda biz de Defne'den olduğumuzu anladık. Burada yeni bir seçim yapılacak, yeni bir yönetici seçilecek. (kişisel iletişim)

[48] During my fieldwork visits in 2018 many of my participants' identity cards still stated their birthplace and residency in Antakya.

[49] Sadullah Ergin, avukat burada. Önce milletvekili oldu sonra Adalet Bakanı. Buranın büyükşehir statüsüne geçeceği anlaşılınca, parti onu aday olarak gösterdi Hatay Büyükşehir Belediye Başkanlığı'na. Onlar (hükümet ve yerel parti üyeleri) kazanır diye düşündüler, ondan onu aday gösterdiler. Bu yüzden bölgeyi ikiye böldüler. (kişisel iletişim)

political power in the region and the electoral majority over the newly formed Hatay Metropolitan Municipality. However, what AKP did not expect was to be overthrown by its former AKP member, Lütfü Savaş. According to Uğur, Savaş had been the mayor of the Antakya municipality between 2009 and 2014. Yet in 2014 when the ruling party designated Sadullah Ergin to be its candidate for the mayoral elections, Lütfü Savaş resigned from the party and became a candidate of the major opposition party. Unexpectedly for AKP, its previous mayor Lütfü Savaş, as a CHP candidate, won the local mayoral elections of 2014 by obtaining 42% of the votes, while Sadullah Ergin lost with 40.5% (T.C. Yüksek Seçim Kurulu Başkanlığı, 2014).

With this electoral victory for CHP, the AKP lost its political authority over the newly founded Hatay Metropolitan Municipality. When looking at the distribution of Defne's votes during the mayoral elections, 82% of the population voted for the CHP's new mayor candidate and 18% voted for leftist parties. Duman (2020) maintains that the “packing strategy in Defne has reached such a level that, the district has become an area where the main opposing party and its candidates have received record level votes at elections” (p.2626). He suggests that the foundation of the Defne District is a case of “successful” gerrymandering practice employed by the ruling party through the new metropolitan development.

Although the CHP won the mayoral election in 2014, Adıgüzel and Karakaya (2017) point out that the new metropolitan municipal system in Hatay has negatively affected political stakeholders such as CHP and MHP in the region. When analyzing the implications of the law.6360 in the Hatay province during the local elections of 2014, the authors indicate while CHP won the presidency by a small margin of 5,000 votes, 11 of the 15 district mayors were won by AKP, three by the CHP, and one by the MHP (p.47). It is worth noting that out of the three districts that voted for the

CHP, two of them are the new districts of Defne and Arsuz, and the third is Samandağ. Also, Payas[50], one of the new districts that used to be part of Dörtyol, was won by the AKP. Meanwhile, Dörtyol was won by MHP, being the only district in which this party won.

As maintained by Duman (2020), "the packing strategy applied by creation of Defne district has been a success for the ruling party since its candidates were able to win Antakya mayoralty at 2014 and 2019 local elections" (p.2626). In his analysis of both the elections of 2014 and 2019, Duman has shown that before the law.6360, the ruling party had "low support levels out of Antakya and İskenderun". Therefore, with the new metropolitan reconfiguration brought by law.6360, the party could "face losing district mayoralty of Hatay's two largest districts" (p.2626). For the case of the reconfiguration of Antakya, Duman affirms that for winning over Antakya, AKP strategically placed central neighborhoods such as Akdeniz, Armutlu, Elektrik, and Sümerler in Defne.

As shown above, the 2014 elections are critical in understanding the implications of the law.6360 on the Hatay province's political and ethno-religious landscape. As AKP reorganized the political space through the new metropolitan municipality system, it also reconfigured the new map by inscribing ethno-sectarian boundaries between Sunnis and non-Sunnis. This ethno-sectarian divide becomes clear when we compare the results of the elections displayed above with the Non-Sunni urban settlements and districts known for their opposition against the ruling party. This has resulted in a new gerrymandered and ethno-sectarian map for the Hatay province (see figure 8).

[50] Payas used to be an electoral area for MHP within Dörtyol.

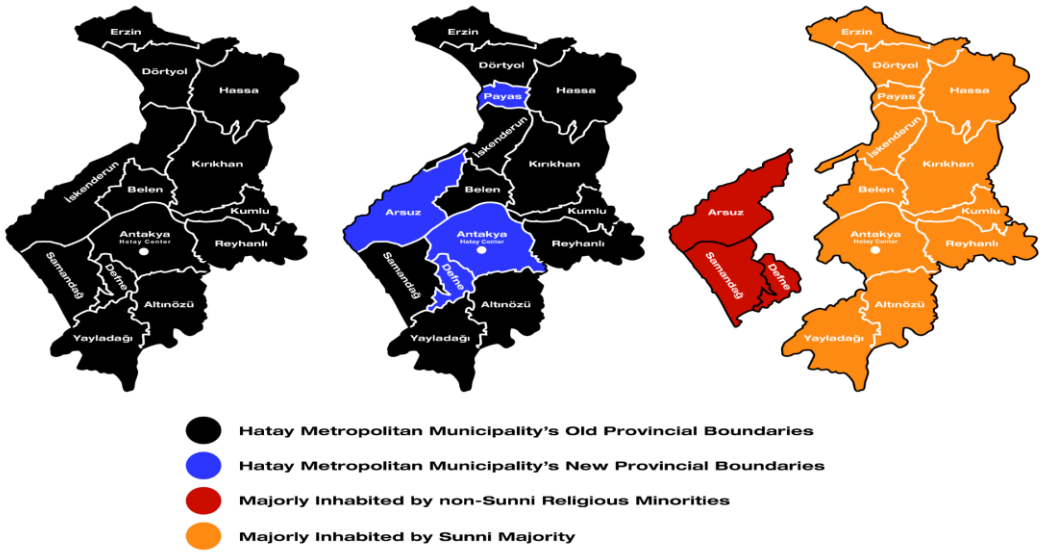


Figure 8. Hatay's new gerrymandered and ethno-sectarian map[51]

As represented above, the new map of Hatay as a product of AKP's new metropolitan system signifies what Uğur called a "divide" (ayrım) between the Sunni and non-Sunni populations living in the province. When looking at the map, Arsuz, Samandağ, and Defne emerge as a new non-Sunni Arab urban borderland within Hatay Province. This divide is crystallized in the example of the (re)making of Antakya and Defne[52]. Especially because Antakya, as a representational space (Lefebvre, 1991) of the ruling party, is subjected to a process of sunnification, where non-Sunni neighborhoods are renamed, excluded, and segregated from the city's administrative boundaries. The new official reconfiguration of Antakya, as a medium of the ruling party's ideology, is represented by my participants' cognitive maps, narratives, movements, and interpretations of the symbolic structure of the city

[51] This map was made by the author taking in account the new metropolitan map. Take note that this is a generalizing version of the highly heterogeneous ethnic-religious and political map of the Hatay province.

[52] In this case study, I only look at the case of the (re)making of Defne and Antakya. Nonetheless, with the metropolitan municipality changes, the same reorganization of the political and ethno-religious space applies to the case of the partition of Arsuz from Iskenderun.

(Greverus, 1994, as cited in Genz & Lucas-Drogan, 2017, p.3). I drew the concept map below to frame their experiences regarding the new urban boundaries between Antakya and Defne (see figure 9).

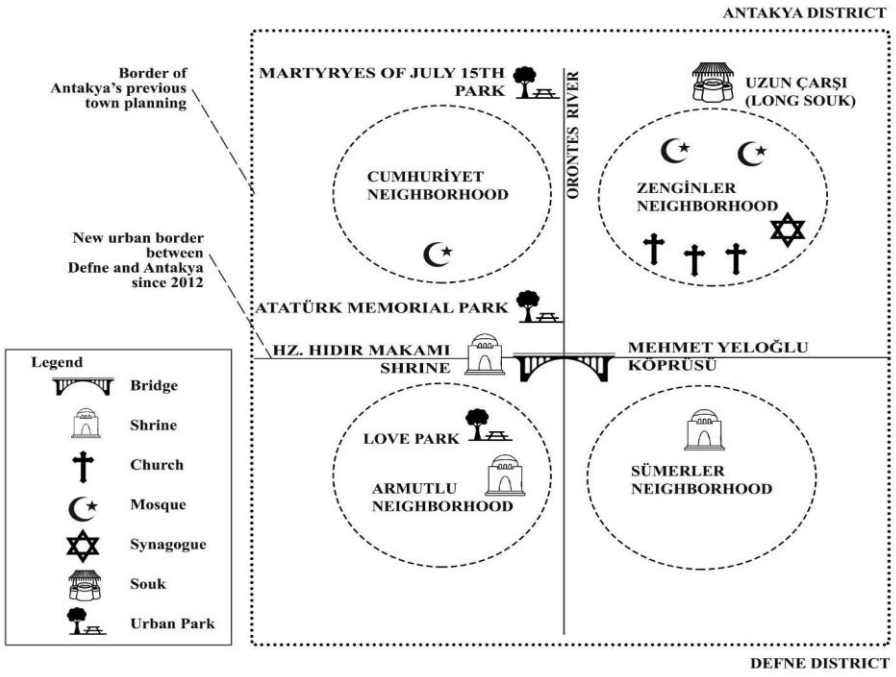


Figure 9. A concept map of the political and ethno-religious divide

Although the map above does not represent the physical boundaries of the city as they are, it still provides a conceived representation of the contested landscapes produced by the new frontiers between Defne and Antakya. For instance, in this map we see that although historical churches were left untouched in Antakya, the Arab Christian population lives majorly in Armutlu and Sumerler neighborhoods. Moreover, as Armutlu, the center for the Gezi Park movement in the Hatay province, is left behind, the political polarization and segregation between non-Sunnis and Sunnis are also exposed as they were left in Defne.

Moreover, we can see with the new map of Hatay, AKP's metropolitan municipality system has redrawn over pre-established ethno-religious boundaries and

maps produced in the early Republican period[53]. As outlined in chapter 2, early Republican mapping reorganized, managed, and established state power by governing cultural, ethnic, and religious differences in the Hatay province within ethno-religious boundaries. Mapping as a tactic of geographic reproduction was part of the Republican regime of governing space and diversity (Dağtaş, 2014). According to Doğruel (2013), the communities' settlements and ethno-religious boundaries are "comprised of the intermingling of components of the ottoman old "millet" system with elements of modernization process implemented during the Republican period" (p.273). Doğruel defends that the previous Republican system (mapping) and the regional identity of Antakya is a fundamental element in "protecting plurality and peaceful/cultural cohabitation" (p.290).

When discussing the conditions of maintaining the identity of Antakya as a space of peaceful coexistence, Can (2020) argues that "the reinforcement of symbolic boundaries, difference and opposition remains a feature of social and political spheres in Antakya, as long as nobody oversteps certain bounds" (p.13). Therefore, while Republican spatial and identity politics Turkified the Hatay province and assimilated its ethno-religious population within the Turkish nation, this regime did not divide pre-established settlements. On the contrary, when remapping Hatay province, the Turkish Republic made use of these settlements for reorganizing the ethno-religious landscape. For instance, as Uğur explained in his example of the Sofular, Arab Sunnis and Alawites had been living together in the same settlement during the Ottoman Empire, and administrative municipalities under the Republic of Turkey. In this sense, the previous Antakya municipality's administrative boundaries were reminiscent of the millet system and signified the

[53] In Chapter 2 of this thesis, I explain early Republican mapping.

ethno-religious heterogeneous spatial and symbolic order of the province. Whereas after the partition of Defne and Antakya, there is now a clear divide between the Sunnis and non-Sunnis living in the remade city of Antakya. Hence, as shown by the participants' place narratives in this study, AKP's new map for the Hatay province as a sectarian divide is a symbolic transgression against the representation of the "city as a space of peaceful coexistence" (Can, 2020)[54]. The reason being that the new map of Hatay overstepped pre-established boundaries, thus representing a discontinuity with the province's previous spatial, social, symbolic, and ethno-religious order.

As a consequence, the emerging political and ethno-sectarian landscape of Hatay appears as a medium where AKP spatializes and materializes its authority. The symbolic transgression brought by this new social and spatial order is obscured by the cultural landscape of Antakya, which at first look is a misrepresentation of the city as a heterogeneous space of coexistence. Nonetheless, as shown in this chapter, daily narratives on the provincial boundaries of the new metropolitan municipality system expose the hidden affective and spatial forms of ethnic-religious segregation and political polarization behind the new map of the Hatay province. Likewise, these place narratives also reveal how this new map was instrumental as a districting practice for the reorganization of space and regimentation (Gal, 2010) of AKP's political and ideological intervention.

[54]That is not to say that Republican identity politics were less sectarian and violent towards the ethno-religious minorities living in the Hatay province. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, during the annexation and post-annexation of Hatay (Duman, 2016), the Turkish Republic employed spatial and identity politics that aimed at the Turkification and erasing of the indigenous ethno-religious minorities from the geographic representation and ownership of the province.

4.4. New signs of difference: Pinpointing the "other"

The ethnographic vignette presented in the introduction (Chapter 1) provides a view of the contested landscape produced by Hatay's new official map. Moreover, it draws attention to new competing local and state narratives regarding the configuration of a new social-spatial category known as Defne/Daphne in contrast to Antakya/Antioch. In this sense, AKP's metropolitan municipality system aimed at reconfiguring not only ethno-religious boundaries but also old "axis of differentiation"[55](Gal & Irvine 2019), namely the meaning attached to the place form of belonging, known as "Antiochian". This is reflected in the new signs of difference attached to Defne and Antakya, as contrasting and relational social-spatial and identity categories, where non-Sunnis and Sunnis now live apart. Likewise, the discursive production of Defne/Daphne and the Defneliler/Daphneans is represented by Meryem's accounts on the new identity cards issued after the metropolitan municipality system was established. Although my informants' identity cards were changed, a majority of them identified as Antiochians instead of Daphneans. For instance, although her identity card says the contrary, Demet told me that she never uses and does not like to identify as a Defneli/Daphnean. She told me that she objected to the new identity card because it erased the name of her place of birth as Antakya.

As a result, Daphne also became a sign of political and sectarian segregation recognized outside Hatay's new geography. For instance, when I returned to Antakya for the municipal elections in March 2019, I was hosted by Uğur and his family. On

[55]Susan Gal and Irvine (2019) explain the concept of the axis of differentiation as oppositional and relational categories that signify one or more semiotic, official and hegemonic ideologies. Therefore, these categories are signs of difference. An example of a sign of difference is the socio-spatial categories of Antakya and Hatay. These are both oppositional and relational axis of differentiation that contrast with one another in meaning-making processes in daily life interactions.

election day, we went to vote in a school in Harbiye. Both Uğur and his family voted for CHP again. Although Uğur's son and his wife again voted for left parties for Defne municipality, they all hoped that CHP would win the mayoral elections of 2019. During my stay, both Uğur and his family shared with the pyrographer Ali the same sense of both having been "pinpointed" (işaretlenme in Turkish, and akin to stigmatization)[56] on the map in Hatay, but also having become overt targets under the AKP's new form of Muslim nationalism (White, 2014).

The sense of having been pinpointed is related to the emergence of a new non-Sunni ethno-sectarian landscape and signs of differentiation formed by Defne and Arzus along with the district of Samandağı within Hatay's new provincial boundaries. For the local population, the new non-Sunni Arab borderland within Hatay symbolizes the spatialization of the AKP's materialized authority over not only Hatay but also Turkey's new nationalist-Islamic political landscape. This sense is also represented by Ali's statement that Defne was "invented" to "mark" Arab Alawites, and to expose their location because of their political and ethno-religious orientation. As he says, "Now they pinpointed us on the map. Everyone knows who we are and where we live" (see Chapter 1, introduction).

Like Ali, other participants of this study shared narratives and feelings of having been stigmatized, marked, and identified by Hatay's new map. With reference to this collective imagination of the Arab Alawites, Can (2020) contends that Arab Alawites have been located both physically and conceptually in social space. For instance, when I asked Demet about the borderland of Samandağ, Arsuz and Defne,

[56] A sense of vulnerability to violence (Tambar, 2014) and akin to stigmatization, informs my coinage of being "pinpointed." What I contend is a sense that has been discharged through the new ethno-sectarian landscape and the conjuring of uncanny histories (Stewart, 2017) of "Alevi" and "Non-Muslim" persecution in their daily lives. As it is known, the word "işaretlenme" in Turkish has connotations with non-Sunni minorities (i.e., Alevis/Alawites and Christians), especially the practices of targeting and inscription of Alevi or non-Muslims' houses.

she explained to me that people outside Hatay have started to learn about Defne and identify its populations' ethno-religious and political orientation. She explained that once in Adana, someone asked her where she was from, and naturally for her the answer was "Antakya". Subsequently, when the person asked her where she was from (Neresinden), and she said from Harbiye, the same person corrected her and said she was from "Defne". She said that the person knew she was not “Sunni” and wanted to “expose” her identity as an “Arab Alawite”. Similarly, Özcan explains below about a personal experience he had with a taxi driver in Samsun.

> I went to Samsun. When I got into a taxi, the taxi driver asked where I was from. I said I was from Antakya. He asked me, "Are you from the center of Antakya or from Samandağ?". I stated I'm from Defne. After that, he asked me "Are you Arab Alawite, are you a social democrat (CHP)?”. I answered that I was Arab Alevi and a socialist. I was really shocked. I mean, Samsun is really far away. I felt like I was exposed[57]. (personal communication)

Özcan’s surprise at the taxi driver from Samsun is understandable, as Antakya’s ethno-religious and political diversity was more heterogeneous and less identifiable by locals outside the Hatay province. Nonetheless, with the emergence of Defne and the new map of Hatay since 2012, this seems to have changed. Defne is now known for its Arab Alawite population, who played an active role during the Gezi Park protests in Armutlu and as a record-level voting area for the CHP during the 2014 and 2019 municipal elections.

As shown above by my Arab Alawite participants’ narratives, Defne, as a new sign difference, is used as an indexing marker with the new map of Hatay. Although my Arab Christian participants did not express literally that they were “pinpointed on a map”, they also shared with my Arab Alawite participants the same

[57] Samsun’a gitmiştim. Taksiye bindiğimde taksici nereli olduğumu sordu. Antakyalıyım dedim. Bana Antakya merkezden misin yoksa Samandağlı mısın diye sordu. Defneliyim dedim. Ondan sonra bana Arap Alevi misin, sosyal demokrat mısın diye sordu. Ben de Arap Alevi, solcu,sosyalist olduğumu söyledim. Açıkçası şok oldum. Yani Samsun nere Antakya nere, uzak memleket! Açığa çıkmış gibi hissettim.(kişisel iletişim)

sense of having been marked and stigmatized (Goffman, 1963) by the new reconfiguration of the metropolitan municipality system and the AKP's inner and transnational border politics.

4.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter revealed how Law 6360 as part of AKP's districting practices redefined political and ethno-religious boundaries and dictated its official ideology of space with the new map of Hatay. Consequently, I explored the local people's reception of the new map of Hatay and the municipal elections in the public sphere. I showed how during my fieldwork study Arab Alawites shared the sense of having been "pinpointed" (işaretlenme in Turkish, and akin to stigmatization) on the map not only in Hatay but also having overtly become targets under the AKP's new form of Muslim nationalism (White, 2014). Therefore, I demonstrated that this sense, which is akin to stigmatization, is related to the emergence of a new non-Sunni ethno-sectarian landscape, formed by the new districts of Defne and Arzus along with the district of Samandağı within Hatay's new provincial boundaries. I also contend that the categories Defne/ Daphne and Antakya/Antioch have been reconfigured as a new axis of differentiation between non-Sunnis and Sunnis. Finally, I showed how the new "divide" among Sunnis and non-Sunnis represents a symbolic transgression to the locals since pre-established ethno-religious boundaries were reorganized under new ethno-sectarian configurations.

Due to the new metropolitan system and the municipal elections of March 2014 and 2019, public life in Hatay became the stage for the production of conflicting narratives of "Local Culture" and "Nativeness" (Navaro-Yashin, 2002). In this case, secular, Islamist, and local notions of nativity compete not only over

political authority but also for the meaning attached to local culture in the Hatay province. Chapter 5 scrutinizes how Hatay's cultural landscape has become the ground for ideological contestation between the AKP and the Republican People's Party (CHP) over the Hatay province. Lastly, this case study also demonstrates how and through what practices these indigenous communities and political stakeholders compete for defining and exhibiting Antakya's cultural heritage.

CHAPTER 5

CONTESTED LANDSCAPES OF BELONGING

Chapter 5 examines how the public discourse on Hatay is also dominated by CHP's portrayal of Antakya as a multicultural space, namely “Garden of Civilizations”. Chapter 5 approaches CHP’s official narrative within the larger context of the ongoing political and ideological contestation over the nation-space between AKP and CHP. This chapter also analyzes Arab Alawite local narratives of negotiation[58] and the emergence of Defne as a new symbolic public space for political engagement and communal practices.

In this chapter, I try to read the Hatay province as a "text" and take up its landscapes in terms of imagined and symbolic representations. I am interested in the discursive (re)production and transformation of the Hatay province, with its shifting municipal borders and emergent counter-representational spaces (such as the Defne district). Likewise, I use Ben-Rafael (2018)’s argument that linguistic landscapes (LL)[59] represent the symbolic constructs of the public spaces of a city. With this perspective, I consider the city as both physical[60] and conceived or imagined space (Donald, 1992)[61]. Therefore, Hatay’s political landscape is a site of contestation for

[58] As the Arab Christian community living in both Defne and Antakya is neither larger than Arab Alawites nor as political as them, in this study, I could not gather as much data on their political engagement and community practices in the new district of Defne. Moreover, as I explain in the methodology chapter of this thesis (see Chapter 3), different from Arab Alawites, the Arab Christians in the majority did not feel safe to be interviewed in this study due to the political scope of the research. For this reason, in this chapter, I focus primarily on the Alawite Arab community.

[59] By linguistic landscapes (LL), I mean signs that attach meaning to the symbolic representation of the public space. These can be graffiti, pictures, signboards, landmarks, etc.

[60] Although in this analysis I focus more on the discursive aspects of the new urban transformation, I also consider the physical production of the new district of Defne important for understanding the structuring processes of the province of Hatay.

[61] This perspective is informed by Lefebvre (1991)’s theorization “on the production of space”, in which ideology is fundamental in the production of the physical environment and the discursive transformation of space.

competing ideologies of cultural heritage; it has been written and overwritten by competing authors and readers[62], which in the Hatay case are political parties and local communities. This race for authorship implies rivalry and negotiation for determining the political and cultural identity of the city and its districts.

Below, I show how Hatay's cultural landscape has become the ground for ideological contestation between AKP and the Republican People's Party (CHP) over the Hatay province. I show how this ideological contestation is reflected in the conflict between official state ideologies (i.e., secularist and Islamist) and local narratives. In especial, I demonstrate how CHP's political authority rises in the province after the party's mayoral electoral victories of 2014 and 2019. I illustrate how CHP benefits from the political polarization and new ethno-sectarian configuration of the province to win political authority and counter-attack AKP's claim over the Hatay province.

Moreover, this chapter also reveals that the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, currently preparing for EXPO 2021, has rebranded the province as a Garden of Civilizations (Medeniyetler Bahçesi)[63]. Through ethnographic notes, I narrate how CHP re-gains its political authority in the province with a Republican discourse of ethnic and religious cohabitation. Nonetheless, I also show how CHP's multicultural discourse, similar to AKP's Islamist one continues state practices of assimilating, gentrifying, and erasing ethno-religious heritage from the geographic and cultural representation

[62] I use this term as an allusion to the concepts and approaches on authorship and readership by Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault. Respectively, Barthes and Foucault developed theoretical conceptions on the authority, authenticity, and originality of a text, its authors, and readers. Whereas Barthes (1988) subverts the author's authority to the text by pluralizing the production of meaning through multiple readers, Foucault (1988) sees practices of inscribing meaning to a text as collective authorship among actors.

[63]This term is the main theme of Expo 2021 Hatay promoted by Hatay Metropolitan Municipality.

of the province. Last, but not least, I also show how Defne emerges as a counter-representational and symbolic public space. I briefly indicate how the Arab Alawite community living in Defne negotiate forms of belonging and build a sense of community by engaging in local politics, community practices, and inscriptions of landscape.

5.1. A public contestation: 2019 municipal elections

As Ghulyan (2019) demonstrated, as AKP reorganized and transformed the social and built space of the Turkish capital, its intervention has also produced counter-representational spaces. In the case of the Hatay province, as Republican People's Party won the mayoral elections for the Hatay municipality system, it also regained co-authorship rights over the province. During my second to third visits to the fieldwork in 2019, the province of Hatay turned into a contestation arena between AKP and CHP. In 2019, CHP won the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality again under the mayoralty of Lütfü Savaş. My ethnographic experiences in the Hatay province after the emergence of Defne and during the elections of 2019 have shown that the contestation between AKP and CHP manifests itself through the ongoing conflict between contesting official ideologies, and forms of belongings.

As discussed in the previous chapter, AKP's new metropolitan system in Hatay strategically favors the ruling party in municipal elections. However, for most of my participants, the victory for the mayoralty of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality by CHP's new candidate Lütfü Savaş, during the 2014 and 2019 municipal elections, meant a defeat for the ruling party. Some of my participants regard this loss as a reaction of the local population against the new sectarian divide between Sunnis and non-Sunnis living in Defne and Antakya. Respectively, Can (2020) maintains that the

fear of dividedness is reflected in the dynamics of strategic voting behavior for the population now living in Defne. Uğur emphasized that Lütfü Savaş won the mayoral elections of 2014 and 2019 because the ruling party "tried to divide people". In his words, "the people did not like this divide (ayrım). They do not accept AKP's mayor candidates. That's why he won (Lütfü Savaş)". When I asked Uğur why he voted for Lütfü Savaş, a previous AKP member, he told me that Arab Alawites only voted for Lütfü Savaş because of their respect for Atatürk and CHP.

Although Uğur and other participants voted for CHP, many of them appeared unsatisfied with the party and saw it as the only option to counter AKP in the region. For instance, Özcan explains below that the government's attempt to divide the population motivated her for voting to Lütfü Savaş.

> The government tried to divide us into Sunnis and Alawites, but we didn't allow that to happen. I don't like Lütfü Savaş, but I had no choice but to vote for him. The important thing was to win the municipal elections against the government. We showed them that they can't divide us. (personal communication)[64].

When considering the voting behavior of Arab Alawites and Arab Christians, it is important to remember that CHP's Republican assimilating identity politics and secular notions of peaceful cohabitation influenced these communities to support CHP in the previous times (see Chapter 2). Especially because these communities felt marginalized under AKP's national and Islamist official state ideology. Hence, besides leftist parties as alternatives, in mayoral elections such as the ones for defining Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, CHP was the only possible choice to win against AKP candidates.

[64]Hükümet bizi Sünniler ve Aleviler diye ayırmaya çalıştı ama biz izin vermedik. Esasında Lütfü Savaş'ı sevmem ama ona oy vermekten başka seçeneğim de yoktu. Mesele hükümete karşı belediyeyi kazanmaktı. Bizi bölemeyeceklerini gösterdik onlara. (kişisel iletişim)

When looking at the transnational conjuncture, Can (2017, 2019) argues that the province's culture of "living together" has suffered a rupture due to the outbreak of the Syrian Civil War in 2011, the influx of Syrian refugees in the province, and the Turkish government's border politics. According to Can (2020), as a result of the Turkish-Syrian border-making process and the re-emergence of sectarian tensions in the province mostly between the Sunni and Alawite populations, there has been a reproduction and spatialization of ethno-religious boundaries in Antakya (Hatay). Therefore, she discusses that "the culture of "living together" in Antakya has been transformed into a spatialized form of belonging" (Can, 2020, p.22). Moreover, Can defends, this transformation and polarization have also increased the visibility of the Arab Alawite identity in the province. An example of this is the emergence of Defne as a new sign of difference, and also an indexical marker for Arab Alawites and Arab Christians. As I showed in Chapter 4 by the participants' accounts, locals feel marked by these new signs of difference as they are now spatially and socially located in Hatay's new map.

Besides the theme of Defne and Antakya's partition, one of the most common tropes among participants from different communities was that Syrian refugees had been placed strategically in the province by the government and were a political maneuver to gain political authority, sunnify and divide the population in Hatay. These arguments gained power with the nationally spread suspicion over the electoral role played by the Syrian refugees. Nonetheless, in Hatay they also acquired an aspect of the sectarian divide. In particular, my Arab Alawite and Arab Christian participants feared the increasing presence of Sunni Syrian refugees in Antakya. In August 2018, Gabriel informed me that the Christian community suffered bomb threats by ISIS during the Syrian War, and, subsequently, shut their doors to non-

Christian visitors and locals. For instance, in one of my conversations with Simun, one of the elders from the Arab Christian community from Sümerler, who is a 74-year-old jeweler, I asked him why only Christians could enter the Greek Orthodox Church, and he stated:

> In the past, everybody could enter and pass through the church. Its doors were open to the local population. However, things have changed now. We had a priest from the Antioch Protestant Church kidnapped and killed by ISIS. We also had bomb threats, and now some jihadist Syrians are also living here. But you can go to the church. All you need to do to enter is say your name. It's for the safety of our community. (personal communication)[65]

As showcased by Simun, locals fear the raising of sectarian tensions in the province. In the case of the Arab Christians, the fear of being targets also forced the community to be more and more closed among each other. Thus, the more I inquired about the emotional atmosphere of discharged affect in daily conversations in Hatay, the more I understood how the political contingencies of the last years affected Arab Alawites and Arab Christians. Events such as the Syrian War, the Gezi Park protests, and Turkish national politics led the Arab Alawites and Arab Christians to feel under threat and to suspect and rethink the ruling party's political and ideological intervention in the region, especially, with the emergence of a new political and ethno-sectarian landscape, the Syrian refugees and the military operations in the neighboring provinces of Syria.

As I was walking around Armutlu's streets, learning about its Gezi Park protests' history and witnessing social emotions discharged by the Syrian Crisis in Antakya during my second visit to the field, the massive campaign sign boards spread on the streets of Antakya and Defne calling attention to the upcoming local

[65]Eskiden kiliseye herkes girip çıkabilirdi. Kapıları yerel halka açıktı. Ancak, artık işler değişti. Antakya Protestan Kilisesi'nden bir rahibimiz vardı; IŞİD kaçırdı ve öldürdü. Üstüne bombalama tehditleri de aldık, bir de bazı cihatçı Suriyeliler de gelip burada yaşamaya başladı. Ama yine de kiliseye gidebilirsiniz. İsminizi söylemeniz yeterli. Cemaatimizin güvenliği için aldığımız bir önlem.(kişisel iletişim)

elections of March 2019 struck me. The political campaigns had just begun, which was manifested in the streets of Antakya and Defne, not only on signboards but also as in the TV's local news, regional newspapers, social media (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter), and in the daily conversations of citizens from both districts. For example, the populist discourse on public service efficiency and governance from each of the party's municipalities to their citizens was propagandized daily on social media and in the news. In those days, AKP and CHP party candidates and municipalities in Hatay posted pictures of roads being renewed to show their investment in the city's infrastructure, or slogans disclaiming each other candidates' narratives. In the middle of this political tension, the two faces that were constantly portrayed on signboards were that of Lütfü Savaş and İbrahim Güzel (see Figures 10 and 11), the biggest candidates for the presidency of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality in the following local elections.



Figure 10. Streets of Antakya during the March 2019 elections I. Note: Taken by the author



Figure 11. Streets of Antakya during the March 2019 elections II. Note: Taken by the author

At that time Lütfü Savaş was already the president of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, and in his electoral re-candidacy, he tried to enforce his contributions and plans for the future of Hatay. For instance, during the electoral propaganda of 2019, many signboards displayed the news about EXPO 2021 Hatay, an international event the mayor designed for the province and used as part of its electoral projects. The EXPO 2021 Hatay, was a project that reflected CHP's official narrative on peaceful cohabitation and assimilating identity politics in the province. Especially, against the rise of AKP's sectarian identity politics and metropolitan policies. Lütfü also had a strong position against the AKP's Syrian refugee policies and the economic crisis in Hatay, and for giving the Syrians priority over its citizens. He used the topic to gain electoral power.

As aforementioned, negative emotions, such as dissatisfaction, fear, and suspicion, were already part of citizens' daily lives during my visit to Hatay for the municipal elections in March 2019, and such emotional tension was re-ignited into both parties' electoral campaigns. This highly politicized social environment also shaped the election campaigns. For instance, CHP's slogan for the Hatay mayoral elections was based on "Embrace Hatay" (Hatay'a Sarıl) and "We are coming for Antakya" (Antakya için Geliyoruz) for Antakya Municipality. AKP's slogan for both Hatay and Antakya mayoralty was "The work of motherland is from heart" (Memleketi işi gönül işi). While the AKP propagated its electoral campaign by taking Antakya and Hatay as a motherland project, its populist slogan was met with suspicion by my participants. Respectively, the CHP's political slogans were populist and framed the ruling party for abandoning the province and the citizens of the province. Nonetheless, they also attacked and threatened AKP by insinuating that they would also take over Antakya, which had been under the party since 2004.

To conclude, by contrasting AKP's official ideology with a republican "cohabitational assimilative" identity politics, the CHP party benefited from the polarization and of the new ethno-sectarian landscape of Hatay province to re-gain its political authority over the region. In the mayoral elections of 2019, the CHP party won the mayorship of Hatay Metropolitan Municipality for the second time over AKP with Lütfü Savaş as their mayoral candidate. This victory was once again supported by the party's main Arab Alawite electoral areas, such as the districts of Defne, Arsuz, and Samandağı, thus underpinning the important role of such populations for CHP's political and ideological contestation over rewriting the province's landscape.

5.2. The garden of civilizations

The political contestation between the CHP and the AKP over Hatay province is reflected in the way that Hatay's historical, social, economic, and cultural heritage began to be a space and place for ideological contestation (Bartu, 2001) between secularist and Islamist narratives. An example of such contestation is CHP's EXPO 2021 project for the Hatay province. In this section of the analysis, I show first how CHP has produced counter-representations by spatializing its official ideology of space and narrative over the Hatay province. Moreover, I show how CHP as a co-author reproduces AKP's project by gentrifying the province and stigmatizing Arab Alawites and Arab Christians.

CHP has also arisen as a co-author of AKP's political and ideological work. As Defne became a district under CHP's political authority for eight years, the Republican Party's political and ideological intervention transformed its built and social environment. Although the participants of this study have described that Defne

has no center, The Defne Municipality, along with the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality transformed the Uğur Mumcu Center (Meydanı), known for holding demonstrations during international workers' day, and for being a symbol of resistance, into a Republican center (see Figure 12). As Navaro-Yashin (2002) shows, the contestation between Islamist and Secular state ideologies is also the product of the manufacturer of cultural identities, and, as such, certain symbols like the figure of Atatürk are reified (p.111).

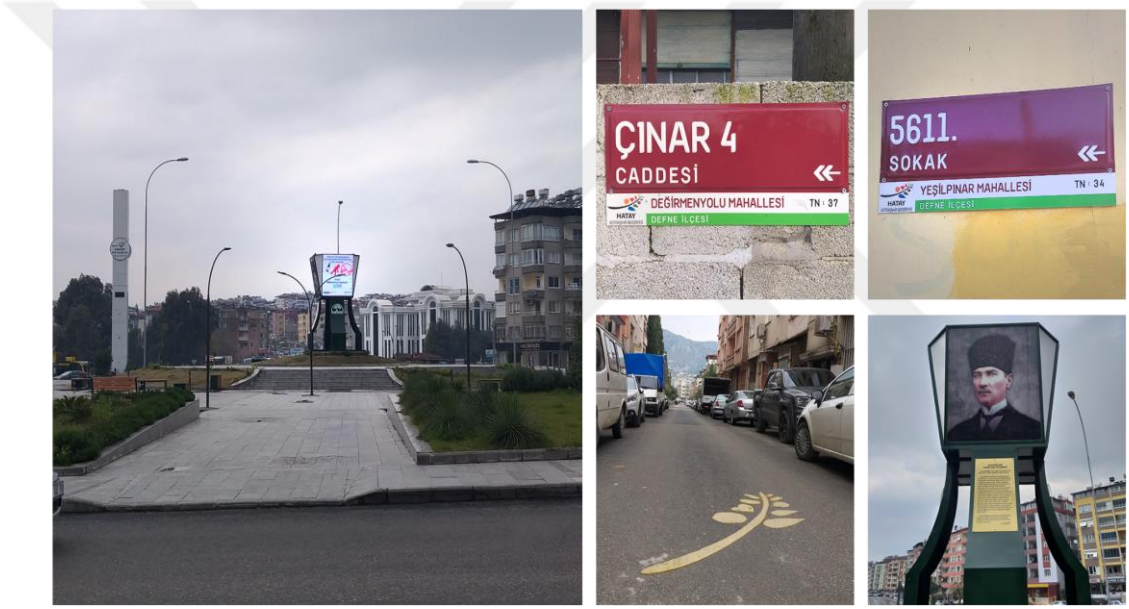


Figure 12. Streets labels, Defne symbol and Atatürk. Photos taken by the author.

As mentioned in the previous section, CHP made use of secular narratives regarding the “culture of living together” (Doğruel, 2009) to win over AKP in the last two municipal elections. Likewise, the EXPO Hatay 2021 provided a cornerstone argument for CHP Candidate Lütfü Savaş electoral campaign in 2019, and its preparations have been carried out under his mayoralty. The image of Hatay as a garden of civilizations constituted the recurring theme of the campaign, condensed into the EXPO project. In the promotional video of the EXPO, Hatay is appraised as

a city where different ethno-religious communities live together in harmony and peace, and Defne is portrayed with its famous “Harbiye Falls” (Hatay Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2016). Harbiye[66] is a modern residential neighborhood built upon the ancient city of Daphne. Respectively, in one of my conversations with Fatma, she thinks about the new name of the region:

> We were not surprised by the name Defne. The word Defne was never strange to me. We have laurel trees that grow naturally here at the water's edge. Do you know laurel soap? Laurel is very important by the way, think of it as the source of income here, we use laurel oil to make laurel soap. In fact, the word Defne is significant for us. Since laurel soap and trees are part of our culture. (personal communication)[67]

Fatma suggested that the name Defne was also known for the myth of Daphne and Apollo. She explained that in ancient Greek mythology, Daphne was a nymph deity, who upon Apollo's persecution, metamorphosed into a laurel tree. Thus, Defne, with its natural features and mytho-historical identity, has been appropriated in city-branding projects such as EXPO 2021 as a perfectly marketable heritage. Also, as evidenced in the promotional video, the touristic discourse of the Metropolitan Municipality that brands Hatay as “a city of tolerance and civilizations" often refers to its Islamic, Judaic, and Christian architectural elements as reproduced in Ali’s pyrography (figure 1). The EXPO 2021 aims at contributing to the economic, cultural and social development of the city, (EXPO 2021 HATAY, n.d.) to which touristic income is considered widely essential. Likewise, both the election campaign (2019) and the PR events related to the EXPO were marked by slogans pointing to the city’s rich cultural heritage (including but not limited to gastronomic heritage).

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[66] Harbiye, is one of the biggest residential areas in Defne, known for its unique Arabic Alawite identity, and Alawite religious sacred shrines.

[67] Defne isminin verilmesine şaşırmadık. Defne kelimesi bana hiç yabancı gelmedi. Burada, su kenarında doğal olarak yetişen defne ağaçlarımız var. Defne sabunu biliyor musun? Defne çok önemli bu arada, bunu geçim kaynağı olarak düşünün, defne sabunu yapmak için defne yağı kullanıyoruz. Aslında defne kelimesi bizim için önemli, defne sabunu ve ağaçlar kültürümüzün bir parçası olduğu için. (kişisel iletişim)

Although AKP made a municipality out of Defne, the one that brands it is CHP. The discourse behind EXPO 2021 is aligned with AKP's discourse on metropolitan development and reforms. The reason is that CHP's multicultural project also aims at reorganizing the distribution of resources and power and drawing more resources and investments from international donors. This project is quite similar to AKP's neoliberal multiculturalism policies towards Mardin. For example, according to Biner (2020) "neoliberal multiculturalism" has been highly instrumental in the branding of Mardin, another southeastern Turkish city that has been exposed to urban redevelopment projects[68] for a long time. With this, it can be said that Hatay is currently governed and being transformed based on the same "multicultural developmentalist paradigm" (Lewis, 2020). This also illustrates a shift for CHP, who adapted the multicultural turn from AKP's pluralist and neo-Ottomanist past.

Although, Hatay's EXPO 2021 promotional video celebrates cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity, the city's Sunni Islamic elements are surprisingly exhibited at the expense of the Arab Alawite heritage. For instance, it is locally known that the Harbiye Falls are near the Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim shrine, one of the most famous shrines of the Arab Alawite population in the province. According to anthropologist Kreinath (2014), the Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim is the most popular shared sacred site in Hatay for dream incubation and also a larger area where tombs of Arab Alawite sheiks from the local community rest. Kreinath, explains that devotees believe Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim was a doctor who lived and treated Muslims and Christians without distinction for free during the times of the Crusades. In fact, on my first visit to Harbiye in 2018 at the peak of summer, Arab Alawite university students Naim (22)

[68]For the case of Mardin, Biner (2020) contends that AKP's 'neoliberal multiculturalism" is a form of new development paradigm, where Mardin's multicultural heritage is branded.

and Özlem (23) from Armutlu had taken me to Harbiye Falls. The tradition is that people go to Harbiye Falls, and sit on its shores to cool their feet in the freezing water while enjoying their beverage. In contrast to the EXPO's tourist itinerary, which only shows the Harbiye Falls as its first and last stop, my participants' second stop after the Falls was the famous Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim shrine.

There Naim and Özlem showed me people lodging in the shrine for days in search of healing their maladies, how the local community was taking care of the shrine's maintenance without financial government help, and even offered together with our prayers and wishes to Şeyh Yusuf El Hekim. I learned from the young Alawite students that people came to the shrine not only for praying, partaking in rituals, and religious festivals but also for tourism purposes. Indeed, in my visits to Defne or to other regions where Alawites live, such as Samandağı and Arsuz, I would constantly hear people asking me if I had already visited the famous Şeyh Yusuf el Hekim Shrine. Nonetheless, the Şeyh Yusuf El Hekim Shrine, as a symbol of Arab Alawite heritage, has been taken out of EXPO's Garden of Civilizations. According to Dağtaş (2014), the Turkish state "commensurates" some groups' religious differences, aesthetic forms, and cultural practices by objectifying them via discursive regimes of tolerance and pluralism.

Whilst the Turkish state commensurates the forms of diversity that it seeks to tame, the pluralist discourse of tolerance excludes other forms of religious, ethnic, and cultural heritages that appear to conflict with an idealized national identity built on the notions of a unitary Sunni-Turkish identity (Dağtaş, 2014). The EXPO Hatay 2021's tourist itinerary developed by the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality showcases, Sunni Islam appears as the only accepted ethno-religious form of Islam at the expense of Arab Alawite's religious aesthetic forms, practices, and their sites in

Hatay. When I asked Murat about what he thought on CHP's EXPO 2021 HATAY, Defne, and the Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim he told me this:

> Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim, like other shrines in this region, is part of our Alawite Heritage. Furthermore, Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim is a shared holy place. People from all over Turkey come here to visit. This sanctuary represents the culture of coexistence in Antakya and should also be part of the Expo's list of tourist sites. They don't do this, they don't make the Arab Alevis living in Defne visible, but they brand and sell the "Defne Soap" we make. This is wrong! (personal communication)[69]

Similar to Murat, in a conversation with Işıl, she stated that she was not surprised with CHP's identity politics towards the Arab Alawites during the EXPO events:

> I am not surprised with this. The only thing CHP cares about in the Hatay province is that the Arab Alawites continue voting for them. In the end, CHP and AKP continue the state tradition against Arab Alawites in the Hatay province. We have been suffering from assimilation since Hatay's annexation. The state values you only if you are Sunni and Turkish. (personal communication)[70]

Therefore, what has been chosen as heritable within the touristic discourse of the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality's EXPO 2021 is a product of utilizing national identity-building policies that function in continuity regardless of their conflicting governmental cultural politics (i.e., secularist and Islamist). Moreover, although the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality's touristic discourse of tolerance promotes Antakya's urban renewal, its cultural and religious heritage, we see that sites of Christianity (e.g., the churches located in the historical neighborhood of Zenginler,

[69]Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim, bu bölgedeki diğer türbeler gibi Alevi tarihinin, mirasımızın bir parçasıd. Ayrıca Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim ortak bir kutsal mekan. Türkiye'nin her yerinden insanlar buraya ziyarete geliyor. Bu kutsal alan Antakya'da bir arada yaşama kültürünü temsil ediyor ki, bence Expo'nun turistik yerler listesinin bir parçası olmalı. Bunu yapmıyorlar, burada Defne'de yaşayan Arap Alevileri görünür kılmıyorlar ama bizim yaptığımız "Defne Sabunu" nu markalaştırıp satıyorlar. Bu yanlış! (kişisel iletişim)

[70]Böyle olmasına şaşırmıyorum. CHP'nin Hatay'da umursadığı tek şey Arap Alevilerinin onlara oy vermeye devam etmesi. En nihayetinde hem CHP hem de AKP Hatay'da Arap Alevilere karşı devlet geleneğini sürdürüyor. Hatay'ın ilhak edilmesinden bu yana asimilasyonun acısını çekiyoruz.. Devlet size ancak Sünni ve Türk iseniz değer verir. (kişisel iletişim)

see figure.2) belongs to Antakya's landscape as long as it is commodified and gentrified (Potuoğlu-Cook, 2006).

As I illustrated in Chapter 4, the Arab-Christian community now lives in Defne (see concept map, figure 9). Despite knowing this fact, CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality label the new Antakya as a city still inhabited by Arab Christians. Although the cultural landscape of Hatay obscures this fact, the churches' doors being closed signalize the stigmatization of this community. For instance, in one of my conversations with Luka, who is a 40-year-old jeweler from Sümerler, I asked him what he thought about CHP and EXPO, and he stated:

> I see pictures of churches at EXPO 2021 billboards in Antakya. However, it is as for the Metropolitan Municipality of Hatay that we do not exist. As if our churches were there to brand the city instead of being the sacred places of our community. (personal communication)[71]

Similar to Luka, Pavlus, who is a 25-year-old university student from Armutlu, explains below how the Hatay Metropolitan Municipality achieves the religion tolerance it brands for the EXPO:

> The metropolitan municipality of Hatay only achieves religious tolerance through surveillance. You know the police who come to every mass we do are not just there to protect us. They are there watching over us. We can no longer hold mass in peace. They keep looking at us suspiciously. (personal communication)[72]

As Pavlus explains, masses are held in Antakya by the surveillance of the local police. This started happening since the outbreak of the Syrian war and the bomb threats the community received. Nonetheless, as shown by Luka and Pavlus, the

[71]Antakya'daki EXPO 2021 reklam panolarında kiliselerin resimlerini görüyorum. Ama Hatay Büyükşehir Belediyesi için biz yokuz. Sanki kiliselerimiz cemaatimizin kutsal mekanları değil de sadece şehri markalaştırmak için oradalarmış gibi (kişisel iletişim)

[72]Hatay Büyükşehir Belediyesi dini hoşgörüyü ancak gözetim yoluyla sağlıyor. Biliyoruz yani, her ayinimize gelen polisler sadece bizi korumak için orada değiller. Orada bizi izliyorlar. Huzurla ayinimizi yapamıyoruz. Bize şüpheyle bakmaya devam ediyorlar. (kişisel iletişim)

Christian community feels marginalized under CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality's rule. As showcased by the participants of this study, both Arab Alawites and Arab Christians accounts, expose the contradictions behind CHP's official ideology and the daily experiences of these communities living in Defne.

5.3. Local narratives of negotiation

As a reaction toward both their stigmatization on the new map of Hatay and exclusion from the cultural heritage of the city, Arab Alawites have claimed more visibility in the Hatay province. Although they are not included in CHP's Garden of Civilizations, Hatay's second-largest ethno-religious majority started to reclaim its rights over the city (Lefebvre 2000). This is visible in the resurgence of Alawism (Can, 2020), as a social phenomenon, and of a new majorly Arab Alawite landscape, which is embodied in their contestation of official discourses and narratives; thus, Arab Alawites reclaim their cultural citizenship, sense of community, and human rights by appropriating Defne as a public sphere for political and communal engagements. They discharge cathartic communal emotions of contestation, resistance, and opposition towards cultural assimilation in three main ways: through graffiti and signboards in Arabic, by speaking Arabic and performing religious rituals in public space, and by acting as aware citizens in local politics. As a result, Defne has become a site where Arab Alawites reclaim their local identity.

As Can (2020) points the graffiti on the walls of Armutlu are representations of a new political landscape for the province of Hatay. Moreover, as a placemaking practice of contestation and inscription, graffiti transforms Defne's linguistic landscape into a symbolic public sphere (Ben-Rafael, 2018). An example is the Street Ahmet Atakan, renamed by the community living in Armutlu after Ahmet

Atakan died during the Gezi Protests in 2013 (see Figure 13). As shown by figure 13, the local population living in Armutlu appropriate the public sphere, such as its streets and walls, as a form of public contestation.



Figure 13. Linguistic landscapes: "Ahmet Atakan Street" and graffiti walls

The politicization of Arab Alawites led to Hatay Metropolitan Municipality under CHP to recognize the Arab Alawite identity in local politics. As Defne Municipality is formed majorly by Arab Alawites, since 2019 the new municipality has fostered cultural activities, provided Arabic language courses, and also celebrated Arab Alawite holidays in public space. An example of those is the *Ras-el Seni*. According to the participants of this study, the Ras-el Seni is the Arabic Alawites' new year festivities. Hence, instead of celebrating the new year on 31 December, they celebrate it every 14th of January. When regarding the Ras-el Seni as a local practice of contestation and the product of a vernacular identity politics, it

is becoming a communal, cultural, religious, ethnic, linguistic, and political practice for the Alawite districts (i.e., Samandağ, Defne, and Arsuz).

The Ras-el Seni was a private celebration among families sharing Alawite kinship tribal ties in private households. These families according to the tradition spent a whole week preparing for the 14th of January, where they gather in the morning to be greeted by their elders. They spend that day and week dining together and celebrating. Due to Republican assimilating identity politics, Arab Alawite families in urban areas lost this tradition, which was kept alive by families living in rural areas of the province. Some families from urban areas keep this tradition by visiting relatives living in their villages. Nonetheless, now the Ras-el Seni has started to be publicly celebrated communally among other families via religious, cultural, artistic, digital, and linguistic productions, such as theatrical plays, musical choirs, dancing performances, film screenings, Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube videos/posts and poetry recitals only in Arabic.

In my last visit to the Defne in December 2019 and January 2020, I was hosted by four Arab Alawite families who celebrated the Ras-el Seni both in their houses and in the public celebrations of Ras-el Seni in Defne. Two of these families living in the rural neighborhoods of Değirmenyolu and Yeşilpınar engaged actively in the commemorations as organizers and performers. According to Pelin, a 30-year-old Arab Alawite singer from Yeşilpınar, who identifies herself as an Antiochian (Antakyalı), although the Ras-el Seni has been celebrated only in private households due to the Republican assimilative identity politics, in the last eleven years, the cultural center known as Ehliddar (Ehliddar Kültür Merkezi)[73] has been trying to

[73]Ehliddar is a cultural center located in Antakya, known for its leftist political orientation and cultural activities.

organize public celebrations in Antakya. According to her, these celebrations were initially happening in small places as they were not sponsored by the state. However, only until recently, these commemorations began to be more visible in the public sphere. This visibility increased with the emergence of Defne as a municipality.

In my second visit to Antakya in January 2019, a couple of days before Ehliddar's public celebration, the members of the cultural center had been arrested without any legal reason by the police. Pelin was among these members. According to her, the local authorities did not want them to organize the cultural event. Nonetheless, as she explained to me, the local Arab Alawite population living in Defne saw it as a sectarian act by the government against their religion and culture, and they were released. According to Pelin the day she got released with other members from Ehliddar, they celebrated the Ras-el Seni with the local population as a victory against sectarian repression. Below Pelin explains the importance of Ras-el Seni for the population living in Defne:

> The celebration of Ras el Seni in Defne represents a very valuable place for the historical struggle of Arab Alawites to live their culture in this land from the past to the present day. The fact that the Ras-el Seni celebrations continue in Defne, where mainly Arab Alawites live, is an indication that these struggles are being taken up by the new generations of today. (Personal communication)[74]

Following Ehliddar's example, Defne Municipality also organized its first official Ras-el Seni celebration in 2019. For the first time in Hatay an Alawite celebration was celebrated on the streets by a public administration. Lütfü Savaş also celebrated in his social media the Ras-el Seni. Until 2019 no official CHP members in Hatay had ever celebrated it. Because normally only the Christian festivities were

[74] Defne'deki Ras-el Seni kutlamaları Arap Alevilerin kendi kültürlerini yaşatmak için verdiklerini mücadelede çok önemli. Taa geçmişten bugüne. Defne'de zaten çoğunluklar Arap Aleviler yaşıyor, o yüzden de Ras-el Seni kutlamalarının Defne'de devam ediyor olması bu mücadelenin genç kuşaklarca da sahiplenildiğini gösteriyor. (Kişisel iletişim)

celebrated. Nonetheless, AKP official representatives did not celebrate the Alawite holiday. I remember that Bedia, a 60 years old Arab Alawite housewife, who visited us in Değermenyolu for celebrating, told me that she grew up in Sümerler and until recently she had never celebrated Ras-el-Seni with her family. She said to me that "we only celebrate state holidays (Devlet Bayramları) in the center". What Bedia meant by state holidays was that her family only celebrated Sunni holidays. Ras-el Seni as an Alawite and non-Sunni celebration was not allowed in the public spheres of Hatay. As we know, before the making of Defne, Sümerler was a central neighborhood of Antakya, where the presence of the Turkish state was stronger. Thus, assimilation in urban areas was also stronger.

Another family that hosted me during my last visit to Sümerler no longer celebrated Ras-el Seni in their household; although my host family was from Harbiye, they told me that they only celebrated it with their families in their village. However, since 2019, this family began to join Ras-el Seni's public celebrations in Defne. Some of these celebrations were organized by the Defne Municipality, Ehliddar, and other independent groups in Armutlu. For example, Merve, a member of the aforementioned family, explains her experience at Defne Municipality's Ras-el Seni first official celebration held in the public sphere in 2019:

> I went with my mom and my brother. I felt closer to my identity while I was there. When I celebrate Ras-el Seni with my relatives, it's always like going to a relatives' meeting. When I was there, it was more like "yes, I belonged to this culture, yes, that (songs, food, rituals) exists in our culture". It's different, I've never seen anything like it. Because in our regular family gatherings, I know everybody, I see my uncle, my grandparents, and we chat. This was normal for me. However, when I went to Ras-el Seni, it was a nice feeling to celebrate together with people from all over Defne. (personal communication)[75]

[75] Ben annemle kardeşimle gittim. Oraya gidince insan böyle kendine kim olduğuna daha yakın hissediyor. Ras-el Seni'ye gitmek biraz da böyle hısım akraba ziyaretine gitmek gibi. Oradayken, işte diyorum bu benim kültürüm, yemeği, şarkısı, ritüeller, ben bu kültüre aitim. Farklı yani, böylesini

What seemed different to Merve was the emergence of an Arab Alawite sense of community in the public sphere. As she illustrates, people are coming from other neighborhoods from Defne to celebrate together. This shift from the private to the public sphere indicates the increase in Alawite visibility, representation, and identification in Defne. For example, Işıl explains below her reaction when she saw a famous actor speaking Arabic during the 2019 Ras-el Seni celebration:

> There is something I will never forget about that day. First, there were local artists, that is, people who left here and practiced theaters with Arab songs, but apart from that, there was an actor called Hamdi Alkan. He played in a children's TV series. I was watching him when he was little. All the children all over Turkey knew him, but I never thought he had that kind of identity (Arab Alawite). My father always said he was from here and that he probably forgot Arabic. However, Hamdi attended the celebration. He took the stage to greet the people. I expected he would talk in Turkish, but he greeted us in Arabic. I got very emotional. (Personal communication)[76]

Işıl's unforgettable memory of Hamdi Atakan's speaking in Arabic is directly related to a sense of feeling represented and identified with her community. Moreover, it was also a symbolic sign of resistance against Republican assimilating policies towards Arab Alawites living in the province. As Duman (2016) points out (see Chapter 2) in his study, after the post-annexation period of Hatay province, republican identity policies prohibited Arabic from being spoken in public spheres. During my visits to Defne and Antakya, only a few young participants and informants of this study knew Arabic. Some of the ones who could speak were from rural areas. Meanwhile, younger participants from urban areas did not learn it from

göremiyorsun.Çünkü her zamanki aile buluşmalarımızda oradaki insanları tanıyorum. İşte amcamı görüyorum, babaannemi görüyorum, sohbet ediyoruz. Benim için normal bu. Ras-el Seni'ye gittiğimde böyle Defne'nin her yerinden gelen insanlarla kutlamak iyi hissettiriyor.(Kişisel iletişim)

[76] O günle ilgili asla unutmayacağım bir şey var. Önce yerel sanatçılar çıktı, aslında buradan ayrılmışlar, bir yandan da Arap şarkılarıyla tiyatro yapıyorlar. Onların dışında Hamdi Alkan adında bir oyuncu vardı. Televizyonda bir çocuk dizisinde oynadı. Küçükken onu izliyordum. Türkiye'nin her yerindeki çocuklar onu tanırdı ama ben onun böyle bir kimliğe (Arap Alevi) sahip olduğunu hiç düşünmemiştim. Babam hep o da aslında buralı ama Arapçayı unutmuştur, derdi. Ancak kutlamaya Hamdi katıldı. Halkı selamlamak için sahneye çıktı. Türkçe konuşmasını bekliyordum ama bizi Arapça karşıladı. çok duygulandım. (Kişisel iletişim)

their families. In conversations with parents and grandparents in Defne, I learned that many of them regretted not having taught Arabic to their children. Pelin explains how she learned Arabic as a third-generation member of her family:

> As my mother is illiterate, she only speaks Arabic. My grandmother doesn't speak Turkish either. That's why Arabic is my first language. My friends don't know as much as I do. I am the third generation. The next generation will not speak Arabic. (Personal communication)[77]

I asked Pelin what the experience of Ras-el Seni's public celebration was like for her mother who does not speak Turkish, and she said:

> I think she (my mother) felt happy. She speaks a little Turkish. But during the Ras-el Seni celebrations, she spoke Arabic more comfortably there. Others could easily understand her, and she could express herself with them. That's why Ras-el Seni for her was a happy experience. Because for my mother, Arabic is her heritage language. (Personal communication)[78]

As Pelin illustrates above, Arabic as a heritage language is also a constitutive symbol of Arab Alawite identity for her community. Ras-el Seni's public celebrations under CHP Defne Municipality seem to represent an opening for negotiation between the Arab Alawite community and CHP local administrations, where new forms of Arab Alawite representation become part of vernacular politics. Notwithstanding, this does not mean that CHP's assimilating policies do not operate in this ongoing negotiation.

In January 2020, the Defne Municipality organized two Ras-el Seni events. This time, one of them was held by both Defne Municipality and Ehliddar together. Defne Municipality spread signboards throughout the city celebrating the event with Ibrahim Güzel (the town's mayor)'s photo (See Figure 14). The signboards carried a

[77] Annem eğitim almamış benim, sadece Arapça konuşuyor. Benim anneannem de Türkçe konuşmaz. O yüzden benim anadilim Arapça. Arkadaşlarım benim kadar bilmezler pek. Üçüncü kuşağım ben. Bir sonraki kuşak Arapça konuşmayacak. (Kişisel iletişim)

[78] Bence annem mutlu olmuştu. Annem çok az Türkçe konuşuyor. Ras-el Seni kutlamalarında her yerde rahat rahat Arapça konuştu. Herkes onu anlıyor o da kendini anlatabiliyor. Tam da bu yüzden Ras-el Seni çok güzel bir deneyim. Çünkü Arapça onun mirası, dili. (Kişisel iletişim)

message that celebrated the holiday and also aimed to continue this heritage for generations to come. They also meant the rise of Arab Alawite representation in local politics as an official political agenda for the new district



Figure 14. Ras-el Seni celebrations in Defne. Photos taken by the author.

I attended both events. Pelin was organizing, with her family and other members, the Ras-el Seni event of Ehliddar. Özcan, a member of one of the families I was hosted by, was also organizing the Ras-el Seni celebrations of Ehliddar and Defne Municipality. Özcan took me to Defne Municipality's first Ras-el Seni celebration. The first celebration was organized by a local social media influencer and the Municipality of Defne and had CHP Hatay party members and local visitors. According to Özcan, although the event was to celebrate the Arab Alawite heritage, the musical performances were more in Turkish than in Arabic. Because of this, he told me that the celebration had characteristics of republican assimilation. In fact, while this celebration showcased Arab Alawite performances in Arabic and built a

sense of community among the local population, the event had more cooperative features with the official republican ideology.

For example, on the right side of Figure 14, at the event, there were signboards on the walls with Atatürk and Ibrahim Güzel's photographs, and the town's logo. The signboards also represented the new political landscape of Defne as a contested space, where Republican official ideologies negotiate with Arab Alawite locals and new forms of vernacular politics for jurisdictional authority. An example of such negotiation among CHP, leftist groups, and the local population was the second celebration for Ras-el Seni, co-organized by Ehliddar and Defne Municipality. Özcan explains the importance of Defne and Ehliddar's collaboration below as a result of the struggle of local people in Defne to live their culture on the public sphere:

> This transformation stands in a very important place for the Arab Alawite people. This is the result of the struggles of these people who want to keep their own culture alive and try to pass it on to new generations. This connection between Defne and Ehliddar has been an important tool and link in the point of bringing Arab Alawites' culture to the public sphere. (Personal communication)[79]

Above Özcan conceptualizes the appropriation of Defne as a transformation of its symbolic public sphere by the locals. By bringing Arab Alawites' culture to the public sphere, Ehliddar's mission is to revive Alawism and teach the third generations Arabic and their heritage. Although Defne Municipality is under CHP, its vernacular politics also signify the demand of the local population living in this new district for more cultural representation, civil rights, and visibility.

[79] Bu dönüşüm Arap Alevi halkı açısından oldukça önemli bir yerde duruyor. Bu kendi kültürünü yaşatmak isteyen ve yeni nesillere aktarmaya calisan bu halkın mücadelelerin bir sonucudur. Defne ve Ehliddar arasında ki bu bağlantıda Arap Alevilerin kendi kültürünü kamusal alana taşıma noktasında önemli bir araç ve bir bağlantı olmuştur. (kişisel iletişim)

This demand is expressed by Ras-el Seni's second celebration. This celebration was more ethnic and included local types of food, songs, and theater performances in Arabic. The hall where the celebration was held had signboards signifying the struggle of this population against cultural assimilation. For instance, the Ras-el Seni celebration's slogan was "Lıbyinsa Iseno, Byınsa Teriho u Byinsa Aslo" ("Those who do not know their past or their language do not know their identity") (see figure 15). Hasan, who was also part of the organization, explains the slogan above as:

> Arabic is the mother tongue of Arab Alawites and it is one of their fundamental rights to express themselves in their mother tongue. Celebrating their holidays in their mother tongue and being able to transfer their culture and history to the next generation in their mother tongue is important as it is for all peoples. (personal communication)[80]

As Hasan explains the slogan also signifies the resentment that the Arab Alawite population feels at having been assimilated and losing their cultural and linguistic identity over decades of CHP's assimilation identity policy. Furthermore, it also represents their grievances against AKP's ethno-sectarian politics and stigmatization. The signboards, the songs, and theater performances in Arabic of Ehliddar's Ras-el Seni celebrations represent the rising of Alawite visibility and new forms of vernacular politics for the Arab Alawite population living in Defne.

[80] Arapça Arap Alevilerin Anadilidir ve kendilerini kendi anadili ile ifade etmesi onun en temel haklarından bir tanesidir. Bayramlarını kendi anadillerinde kutlamak, kültürünü kendi anadili ile bir sonraki nesile tarihini aktarabilmesi, bütün halklarda olduğu gibi önemlidir. (kişisel iletişim)



Figure 15. Ras-el Seni celebrations in Defne. Photos taken by the author.

Other Arab Alawite municipalities such as Arsuz and Samandağ with their populations have started to celebrate the Ras-el Seni as part of their new community-based cultural events in public spaces. Not only the Ras-el Seni is becoming a shared practice between the districts mentioned above but is also being performed in other cities in Turkey that are populated by the Arab Alawite diasporas, such as Adana, Mersin, and Istanbul. This celebration spreads as part of the Arab Alawite diasporic landscape in engaging Arab Alawite families living in Hatay to contact their relatives from Syria and other Arab countries via mediating technologies[81]. Therefore, I contend the "Ras El Seni" and other Arab Alawite cultural, political, linguistic and ritual productions/practices as part of their cultural contestation process and creation

[81] Ras El Seni celebrations of 2021 were held online with guest members from Argentina, Lebanon and Syria.

of a transnational[82] and local imaginative sense of community. As shown above, although CHP has a past of assimilating these communities, there is also negotiation going on with their politicization. This negotiation is also a type of resistance towards state authority and also a way of reclaiming their rights over the city.

5.4. Concluding remarks:

In this chapter, it has been shown how Hatay's cultural landscape has become the ground for ideological contestation between AKP and the Republican People's Party (CHP) over the Hatay province. I showed how this ideological contestation is reflected in the conflict between official ideologies and local narratives. In especial, I demonstrate how CHP's political authority rises in the province after the party's mayoral electoral victories of 2014 and 2019. I illustrated how CHP, benefits from the political polarization and new ethno-sectarian configuration of the province to win political authority and counter-attack AKP's claim over the Hatay province. For this, I demonstrated how CHP, as a co-author, rewrites over the new metropolitan municipal map by discursively and physically reproducing counter-representational spaces, such as the new district of Defne as a Republican and secular urban space. Moreover, this study has revealed that the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, currently preparing for EXPO 2021, has rebranded the province as a Garden of Civilizations. Nonetheless, I showed that although CHP re-gains its political authority in the

[82]Arab Alawites from the Hatay province construct and make meaning of an elusive sense of community and identity apart from the Alevi community living in other parts of Turkey in terms of fragmented notions of belonging based on regional, ethnic, religious, linguistic, affective, and political affiliations.

province with a Republican discourse of ethnic and religious cohabitation, it also continues republican practices of assimilating, gentrifying, and erasing ethno-religious heritage from the geographic and cultural representation of the province. Notwithstanding the official discourse, ethno-religious locals, such as Arab Alawites, resist both AKP and CHP's assimilating and exclusionary state practices by countering and negotiating the definition and representation of Antakya's cultural heritage. As an example, I showed how Arab Alawites reclaim and negotiate their political, ethnic, and religious belongings by appropriating Defne as a municipal administration and local representational counter-space. An example of this is the ethno-religious community practices, such as Ras-el Seni, and the inscription of linguistic landscapes on the public sphere.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the (re)making of Antakya and Defne as an ethnographic case study. In doing so, I approached the competing official ideologies of space behind the new map of Hatay and its reconfiguration from a transdisciplinary perspective that combined linguistic anthropology, cultural geography, and cultural studies. Respectively, landscape as a unifying conceptual tool for my study provided me with the flexibility to analyze the province of Hatay as a contested landscape where political state stakeholders and non-Sunni indigenous communities compete for ownership over Antakya's cultural heritage and its representation.

In Chapter 1, I briefly introduced this case study through an ethnographic vignette to show how Arab Alawite and Arab Christians' understanding of the geographical area and the province's cultural representation were in sharp contrast with official accounts. With official accounts, I referred firstly to the metropolitan city map that emerged from the AKP government's local administration reform and its gerrymandering strategies, and secondly to the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality currently preparing for EXPO 2021. The literature review presented major studies undertaken in the Hatay province that were fundamental for my research. Likewise, I demonstrated the relevance of this ethnographic study and pointed out the need for more research in the province concerning ideologies of space, representation, and ethno-religious segregation.

In Chapter 2, Hatay's history was analyzed to observe how Republican politics of identity and space intersect by legitimating the production of Hatay, as a Turkish border space, and its "Hatay" population as a Turkish majority. I also showed how these politics erased the "other", in this case, the indigenous ethno-religious minorities, from the geographic representation and ownership of the province. In Chapter 3, I first explained why I chose Hatay as the physical and social setting for my ethnographic research. In this chapter, I discussed my theoretical assumptions and personal positioning. Moreover, I conceptualized the Hatay province as a contested socio-spatial category to be analyzed ethnographically. In the third part, I explained why I designed an ethnographic case study for my research framework. In the last sections of the methodology chapter, I focused on the fieldwork and sampling and the methods of data collection and analysis of this study.

In Chapter 4, my study revealed how Law 6360 as part of AKP's districting practices redefined political and ethno-religious boundaries and dictated its official ideology of space with the new map of Hatay. In contrast to the official discourse, I explored the local people's reception of the new map of Hatay and the municipal elections in the public sphere. I showed how during my fieldwork study Arab Alawites shared the sense of having been "pinpointed*"* on the map not only in Hatay but also of having become overtly targets to under AKP's new form of Muslim nationalism (White, 2014). Therefore, I demonstrated that this sense which *is* akin to stigmatization is related to the emergence of a new non-Sunni ethno-sectarian landscape, formed by the new districts of Defne and Arzus along with the district of Samandağı within Hatay's new provincial boundaries. I also contend that the categories Defne/Daphne and Antakya/Antioch, have been reconfigured as a new axis of differentiation, between non-Sunnis and Sunnis. Last but not least, I showed

how the new “divide” among Sunnis and non-Sunnis represents a symbolic transgression to the locals since pre-established ethno-religious boundaries were reorganized under ethno-sectarian configurations.

Finally, in Chapter 5, it has been shown how Hatay’s cultural landscape has become the ground for ideological contestation between AKP and the Republican People’s Party (CHP) over the Hatay province. I showed how this ideological contestation is reflected in the conflict between official ideologies and local narratives. In especially, I demonstrate how CHP’s political authority rises in the province after the party’s mayoral electoral victories of 2014 and 2019. I illustrated how CHP, benefits from the political polarization and new ethno-sectarian configuration of the province to win political authority and to counter-attack AKP’s claim over the Hatay province. For this, I demonstrated how CHP, as a co-author, rewrites over the new metropolitan municipal map by discursively and physically reproducing counter-representational spaces, such as the new district of Defne as a Republican and secular urban space. Moreover, this study has revealed that the rising discourse of neoliberal multiculturalism reproduced by the CHP Hatay Metropolitan Municipality, currently preparing for EXPO 2021, has rebranded the province as a Garden of Civilizations. Nonetheless, I showed that although CHP re-gains its political authority in the province with a Republican discourse of ethnic and religious cohabitation, it also continues republican practices of assimilating, gentrifying, and erasing ethno-religious heritage from the geographic and cultural representation of the province.

Notwithstanding the official discourse, ethno-religious locals, such as Arab Alawites, resist both AKP and CHP’s assimilating and exclusionary state practices by countering and negotiating the definition and representation of Antakya’s cultural

heritage. As an example, I showed how Arab Alawites reclaim and negotiate their political, ethnic, and religious belongings by appropriating Defne as a municipal administration and local representational counter-space. An example of this is the ethno-religious community practices, such as Ras-el Seni, and the inscription of linguistic landscapes on the public sphere.

In conclusion, this ethnographic case study has shown that Hatay's political and cultural landscape is a site of contestation where official ideologies of space and cultural heritage compete for its representation; it has been written and overwritten by competing authors and readers, which in the Hatay case are political parties and local communities. This race for authorship implies rivalry for determining the political and cultural identity of the city and its districts. In brief, it has also shown that although political state stakeholders such as AKP and CHP compete for authorship over the province through Islamist and secularist official ideologies of space, both parties undoubtedly continue the Turkish state's tradition of governing the Hatay province as a Turkified border space. Nonetheless, as shown in this thesis, ethno-religious communities such as Arab Alawites as readers and authors keep negotiating with these political stakeholders by reclaiming the province's representation, heritage, and identity by engaging in local politics and community building practices in Defne's public sphere. As the Arab Christian community living in both Defne and Antakya is neither larger than Arab Alawites nor as political as them, in this study I could not gather as much data on their political engagement and community practices in the new district of Defne. However, as I learned with Arab Christians during my fieldwork study, it is through their daily religious and cultural practices between Defne and Antakya, that they resist and transcend state boundaries and reclaim their indigenous identity as Antiochians. Respectively, I plan to expand

this master thesis research topic within a doctoral dissertation and continue my research on both the communities of Arab Alawites and Arab Christians living in Samandağ, Defne and Arsuz. Last but not least, within the scope of this thesis, I contribute to the literature on the Hatay province by further investigating the emergence of ethno-religious boundaries, landscapes, signs of differentiation, and Sunni and non-Sunni divides in the region.

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