COEXISTENCE AND CONVIVIALITY IN
MULTI-FAITH, MULTI-ETHNIC BURGAZADASI,
THE PRINCES’ ISLANDS OF ISTANBUL

Neriman Deniz Duru

DPhil in Social Anthropology
University of Sussex
February 2013
I hereby declare that this thesis has not been and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:..................................................
Abstract:

This thesis aims to provide an understanding of the existing cultural plurality and diversity in Burgazadasi, within a post-Ottoman and homogenising context in Turkey. Most of the scholars working on conflict resolution and peace projects in the Balkans and the Middle East have attempted to analyse cultural plurality with the concept of “coexistence”. “Coexistence” as a concept presupposes the pre-existing categories of ethnicity, class and religion (i.e. coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians; Greek and Turkish Cypriots; Serbs, Croats and Bosnians). In this thesis, I demonstrate the inadequacy of the concept of “coexistence” and propose a “conviviality” approach to explore cultural pluralism. In the post-Ottoman, Turkish context in Burgaz, “coexistence” can be used when describing the homogenisation process, the construction and perception of categorisations of differences, the crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and ruptures to cultural pluralism; but it is deficient in describing the continuity of cultural pluralism and what is shared between the members of the community in Burgaz. By contrast, “conviviality” provides an understanding of the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, the changes in sociality patterns, shared ways of living, the diversity and differentiations within “different groups”, the islanders’ sense of belonging in Burgaz, their appreciation of diversity and acts of solidarity at the times of crisis. I argue that the homogenisation process in Turkey brought ruptures in cultural pluralism in Turkey, and changed the demographics in Burgaz; however the homogenisation process did not rupture the conviviality on the island and Burgazian identity which embraces all types of diversities of its inhabitants. At times of crisis, like in September 1955 riots, Burgaz islanders emphasised their shared Burgaz identity which overrode religious, class and ethnic differences.
Acknowledgements

I am very grateful to Burgaz islanders for their help and hospitality during my fieldwork, for including me in their lives and becoming a part of my life.

I cannot thank enough my supervisors, Jane Cowan and Jon Mitchell for their support, encouragements, patience and understanding. I do not remember how many times I have knocked on their office doors, confused and frustrated, and how many times they have read the drafts of my chapters and gave me meticulous comments. They have always been generous with their time and support. It has been my greatest pleasure to be their supervisee. I am grateful to have Sarah Green and Dimitris Dalakoglou as my examiners. Their meticulous comments and suggestions improved my thesis greatly.

I would not be able to undertake this PhD degree without the funding I received from ORSAS (Overseas Research Students Awards Scheme), the Anthropology Departmental Fellowship at the University of Sussex and FFWG (Funds for Women Graduates).

The University of Sussex has provided an intellectually stimulating environment which helped greatly for formulating my ideas and improving my work. I am very thankful to my friends Sam Hardy, Evi Chatzipanagiotidou, Andrea Szkil, Marko Stojic, Rachel Olson, Ali Hüseyinoğlu, Jenny Diggins, Katie McQuaid, Can Cemgil and Caroline Wojtylak for their company, friendship, and for reading and proofreading my chapters and for making my Sussex years enjoyable and unforgettable.

I would like to say special thanks to Tom Bentley, Ezel Tabur and Clemens Hoffmann. I am grateful to life for crossing our paths together. Tom, with his ‘relaxed and cool’ attitude towards life, helped me in releasing my anxiety, reminding me to ‘take it easy’ and enjoy life. I do not know what I would have done without Ezel, my friend, sister and neighbour. She has always been there to share my happiness and hard times. I am thankful to Clemens for his support, company and encouragement.

It makes me very emotional to write these last sentences. I wish my grandparents Neriman Duru, Recep Duru and Şehabettin Günberk were alive to see me finishing my doctoral degree. I am lucky to have my brothers, Can Duru and Efe Duru, my aunt Sevim Erel, and my uncle, Ümit Erel. It is invaluable to be loved by one’s family. I dedicate this thesis to my father, Ömer Mete Duru, my mother, Sibel Duru, and my grandmother, hayatımın perisi - the fairy of my life - Perihan Günberk for their unconditional love and support. It is the most precious gift of life to be their daughter.
Table of contents

Abstract 3

Acknowledgments 4

Table of contents 5

List of Figures 7

CHAPTER 1
Introduction
1.1 Rationale, Aims, Scope and Argument 8
1.2 The Theoretical Framework of the Thesis 15
a) Concepts of “Coexistence” and “Conviviality” 15
b) Engaging with the Debates on Multiculturalism and Cultural Pluralism 17
c) Contributions to Anthropology and to the Anthropology of Turkey 28
1.3 Contextualising the Archipelago: Why Burgazadasi? 34
1.4 Thesis Structure 37

CHAPTER 2
Methodology, Space and Conviviality
2.1 Introduction: Entering the Field 41
2.2 Burgazadasi: A Place of Contrasts 44
2.3 The Field and Methodology 52
a) Public Places: Restaurants, Cafes, Parks and Bays 56
b) Social Clubs: Inclusions and Exclusions 63
b.1 The SC: The Sports Club 63
b.2 My Entry to the SC 67
b.3 The BC: The Blue Club 70
b.4 My Entry to the BC 72
c) Methodology for Different Seasons 74
2.4 Conclusion 87

CHAPTER 3
Historical, Regional and Political Background:
From the Ottoman Empire to Modern Turkey
3.1 Introduction 89
3.2 Categorisation of Differences: From the Ottoman Times to Nation-States in the Balkans 90
a) Ottoman Times: Before Nation-States 91
b) The Rise of Nationalisms in the Balkans: the Formation of Nation-States 93
c) Building Modern Nations in the Balkans: the Situation of Minorities in Greece and Turkey 98
3.3 Building Modern Turkey 102
a) Domestic Policies of Turkish Governments 102
b) Tensions between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus and the 6-7 September 1955 Events 106
c) Cyprus Issues and the Expulsion of the Rums with Greek Citizenship 109
d) The Post-1980s 113
e) Issues at Stake: The AKP and Current Discourses of Differences 114
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map of the Princes’ Islands
Figure 2: beginning of the çarşı
Figure 3: Map of Burgaz
Figure 4: a restaurant by the sea
Figure 5: a café by the sea
Figure 6: Mixed dinner at Ay Nikola
Figure 7: Victory day celebration in the Sports Club on the 30th of August
Figure 8: Fanouria day at Ay Yanni Rum Orthodox Church
Figure 9: Spontaneous lunch with the grocers
Figure 10: Ahır, where the horse-carts and horses are kept
Figure 11: Embroidery class
Figure 12: Sunni Muslim women’s money day
Figure 13: Day of the Virgin Mary at the Metamorphosis Church
Figure 14: (Photo published in Şalom) a prayer at the kal
Figure 15: The Mosque of Burgaz from the outside
Figure 16: Women’s section on Kadir night at the mosque
Figure 17: Semah (whirling) at cemevi during Hızır cemi
Figure 18: Manti (Tortellini) day, outside the cemevi
Figure 19: Mozaik (mosaic)
Figure 20: Destroyed mosaic
Figure 21: Ebru (marbling)
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale, Aims, Scope and Argument

“Anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists should come here and see how people can live in friendship and harmony. It is an example to the whole world.”

Dr. Robert Schild, Burgazada\(^1\) islander

The statement above was uttered in the documentary entitled Nearby Yet Far Away - the Isle of Burgaz filmed by Nedim Hazar (2004). I heard it while watching the documentary at the open-air cinema of the Sports Club, during my pre-fieldwork trip to Burgazadası in the summer of 2008. In the documentary, Burgazadası is talked about and seen as the model of harmony and coexistence of a plural society. This island is home to Jews, Armenians, Rums (Greek Orthodox minority in Turkey), Suryanis, Sunni Muslims, Catholics, Alevi and Kurds who belong to a variety of different ethnic, class and religious backgrounds. Building on Mazower (2000) and Todorova (1997) who criticise the claim that the Balkans and Turkey are frequently pathologised as having been the region of ethnic violence and turmoil, this thesis aims to provide an understanding of the existing cultural plurality and diversity in Burgazadası, within a post-Ottoman and homogenising context in Turkey.

Most of the scholars working on conflict resolution and peace projects in the Balkans and the Middle East (e.g. Wallensteen 2007, Abu-Nimer 2001, Dayton and Kriesberg 2009, Phillips 1996, Anastasiou 2002, Gidron & Katz and Hasenfeld 2002) have attempted to analyse cultural plurality with the concept of “coexistence”. “Coexistence”

---

\(^1\) The official name of the island is Burgazadası, which means ‘the island of Burgaz’. Ada means island and the suffix –ısı means of. Most of the time, the islanders drop the word ada and the suffix and call it just “Burgaz” or drop the suffix and call it “Burgazada”. The other Princes Islanders also have the word ada in them (e.g. Heybeliada, Kınaliada) and they drop the word ada and simply say ‘Heybeli’ or ‘Kınalı’. Throughout the thesis, I use all three versions.
as a concept presupposes the pre-existing categories of ethnicity, class and religion (i.e. coexistence between Israelis and Palestinians; Greek and Turkish Cypriots; Serbs, Croats and Bosnians). In this thesis, I demonstrate the inadequacy of the concept of “coexistence” and propose a “conviviality” approach to explore cultural pluralism. In the post-Ottoman, Turkish context in Burgaz, “coexistence” can be used to describe the homogenisation process, the construction and perception of differences, the crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and ruptures in cultural pluralism; but it is deficient in describing the continuity of cultural pluralism and what is shared between the members of the community in Burgaz. By contrast, “conviviality” provides an understanding of the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, the changes in sociality patterns, the shared ways of living, the diversity and differentiations within “different groups” and the islanders’ sense of belonging in Burgaz, their appreciation of diversity and acts of solidarity at times of crisis. I argue that the homogenisation process in Turkey brought ruptures in cultural pluralism in Turkey and changed the demographics in Burgaz; however it could not disrupt the conviviality on the island and Burgazian identity which embraces every type of diversity among its inhabitants. At times of crisis, like in September 1955 riots, Burgaz islanders emphasised their shared Burgaz identity which overrode religious, class and ethnic differences.

Using Burgaz isle, one of the Princes’ Islands of Istanbul, as my case study, the central concern of my research is to explore the ways in which people from different backgrounds negotiate their personal and collective self-understandings and engage in practices of conviviality in communities characterised by differences in class, ethnicity and religion in Turkey. My research is grounded in an exploration of the historical and regional background of Turkey’s current political situation: that is the critical historical and political events that have over time affected minorities’ awareness of categories of ethnicity, class and religion. The thesis explores the homogenisation process during the nation building of the modern Turkish state. I define the term “homogenisation” as the process that Balkan states went through to build and maintain their modern nation-states during and after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Ethnic and religious differences
were identified to create homogenous national identities against internal and external others (Güven 2006). During the nation-building processes of these modern nations, ethnic and national identities were intended to unite the people of the nation (Güven 2006: 103). Multi-national empires started to deteriorate, while “ethnically homogenous” nations started to appear. International policies (e.g. the population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923), and domestic policies (e.g. restrictions of minorities’ language and economic rights) were used to ‘homogenise’ the nation. Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey had similar ways of state building, homogenising the nation and treating the minorities. The homogenisation process had a negative impact on minorities living in the modern nation-states. The “othering” was a complex and long process of economic, political and social actions. The homogenisation process included language restriction, population movements, violence, killing, restriction of economic rights and creating unsafe environments which led some minorities to leave their countries.

In order to explore how this homogenisation has been experienced by different groups in Burgaz, and at which moments which kinds of categorisations (ethnic, religious, political) became more salient, I grapple with historians’ accounts of coexistence and conviviality during the Ottoman Empire, the rise of nationalisms in the Balkans and the nation-building process of modern Turkey. I document the international and domestic policies and critical events in Turkey and the ways in which the categories of ethnicity, class and religion have been conceptualised and acted upon by Turkish governments, politicians and communities.

Whereas, much historiography focuses on the history of nations in isolation, like Anderson (2008a, 2008b) who only focuses on the history of Turkey, I situate the formation of the Turkish state within the building of modern nation states in the Balkans after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and compare it with the other modern Balkan states. As I am not a historian, I do not make claims about the validity of the facts and time periods. Nonetheless, I explore how historical accounts are represented and interpreted by various historians who have different perspectives.
Furthermore, I use oral history as a methodological tool to explore social memory. Anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists and linguists have used oral history “to better understand the narratives of memory” (Thompson 1998: ix). In the second half of the 20th century, oral history was used in order to give voice to the working class, cultural minorities, and refugees in order for them to tell their personal experiences which “history” does not take into account (Passerini 1998: 53). My main aim is to use oral history as an anthropological method in order to understand how people interpret and remember the past and the impact of the past in the present in Burgaz. Thus, in contrast to the authority of the historian or the ruling people, oral history gives a “fairer” and more “democratic” account of what happened (Thompson 1998: 24, 26). This is similar to the polyphonic representation of Bakhtin (Burke 1998: 48). The narrator tells the listener what happened as well as his or her interpretation of what happened (Thompson 1998: ix). Oral history mediates between generations and sheds light on what people have experienced and how they express it (Thompson 1998: 22). According to Thompson (1998: 24), the “social purpose of history demands an understanding of the past which relates directly or indirectly with the present.” So, through the use of oral history one can explore the ways in which the past is reconstructed through its relation to the present. However, my main aim is not to create a project of oral history, to try to find out what happened and challenge the ways in which history has been written. I use oral history as a method of collecting life stories of Burgaz islanders to investigate the ways in which the memories of the past, both bitter and sweet, are recalled and how the practices of memory affect identities and interactions among different ethnic, class and religious groups in Burgaz. Through examining social memory, I explore the extent to which people in Burgaz categorise themselves as belonging to a particular class, ethnicity and religion as well as their awareness and occasions of transgression of these categories of differences through a shared Burgazian identity.

The thesis raises wider issues central to the understanding of the political culture and socio-economic context of Turkey today, and the transnational concerns that animate political debate in the country. These include the negotiations of Turkey in the EU
concerning the rights of non-Muslim minorities and the question of recognition of Kurds as an ethnic minority and Alevi as a separate sect; the political issues in Cyprus; the PKK insurgency; debates on secularism versus religion, and the situation of Jewish minorities in Turkey after Israel’s attack on Gaza. I am interested in understanding the ways in which these critical events (Das 2005) and political debates within the national framework form and challenge people’s identity, and affect their interactions with each other on the island. I investigate the ways in which people react to the political debates and how they deal with the tension caused by these critical political issues.

Furthermore, the study explores cultural pluralism at a grassroots level, through the concept of “conviviality”. I analyse how Burgaz islanders coming from different backgrounds communicate and interact in everyday life through a focus on exchange, gender, space and the practices of conviviality and cosmopolitan sociability (Glick-Schiller et al 2011). I investigate the social interactions in everyday life, “the routine, the everyday life, and the unremarked” (Ring 2006: 29), notably people’s exchanges (Ring 2006, Strahern 1988, Appadurai 1986), hospitality (Sutton 2001, Shryock 2004, Dubisch 1986), sociability and the shared ways of living together in the neighbourhood (Cowan 1991, Bringa 1995, Sorabji 1994, Torab 1998, Torab 2007). I question the extent to which people find ethnic, class and religious categorisation salient. I seek to explore in which moments and contexts these categorisations make a difference positively and negatively in the ways in which people interact. Moreover, gender plays an important role in people’s sociality and reciprocity in Mediterranean and Balkan societies. In Turkey, Greece and Cyprus, there is social segregation of leisure (Kandiyoti 1977, Mansur 1972, Kíray 1981); gender roles and gender ideologies affect the ways in which women and men pass their time (Loizos & Papataxiarchis 1991), Herzfeld 1985, Dubisch 1986). When I analyse conviviality on the Princes’ Islands, I explore the degrees of friendship, the ways in which men hang out with men, what women do together, the depth of friendship across ethnicities and religious beliefs.
Recognising that analysis of the social use of space plays an important role in understanding social interactions in plural societies (Low 1996, Mills 2010, Akşit 2010 and Amin 2002), I investigate public places, restaurants, cafes, bays and neighbourhoods to explore the exclusions and inclusions of different ethnic, class and religious groups and to see which places offer a milieu for interaction regardless of ethnic, class and religious differences. Taking on board, Glick Schiller et al (2011: 404), who move the study of cosmopolitans beyond the analysis of “mobile people, transnational migrants and diasporic travellers”, and who argue that crossing boundaries, mobility, experiences of migration and travel are not necessary to produce cosmopolitan sociability, I explore the ways in which a local place like Burgaz embeds the islanders’ practices of conviviality. Furthermore, building on Werbner, who argues that all types of cosmopolitanisms should be analysed as “an aspirational look and mode of practice” (Werbner 2008:2), I also examine the ways in which the islanders represent, imagine and idealise the plurality on the island and a variety of discourses of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism that they refer to.

This thesis contributes to current debates about multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, coexistence and conviviality. I am critical of the fact that the discourses of multiculturalism engaged in by international organisations such as the UN and UNESCO, by politicians (e.g. Angela Merkel cited in Weaver 2010, Nicolas Sarkozy cited in CBN News 11/02/2011) and by political and multiculturalist theorists (e.g. Taylor 1992, Kymlicka 1995, Honneth 2003) neglect the actual practices of living together. The term “multiculturalism”, especially, has become a clichéd buzz word which does not reflect the content and the nature of social interactions and which does not take into account people’s daily lives and their perceptions and representations of how it is to live in a plural society. What have been rarely investigated in Turkish anthropology are the relations between different ethnic and religious groups. Burgaz has provided a good case study for the anthropology of pluralism, because on the one hand, the homogenisation process in Turkey triggered migrations from the island especially of the non-Muslims, while, on the other hand, the island received Alevi and Kurdish migrations from Eastern
and Southern Turkey due to political and socio-economic factors. The migrations to and from the island gave rise to complex interactions and new patterns of negotiations between individuals belonging to different groups.

I seek to contribute to the existing anthropological literature on political anthropology (Navaro-Yashin 2002, Özyürek 2006) and memory (Neyzi 2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2008, 2011; Mills 2010) in Turkey and I would like to bring an original contribution to the anthropology of pluralism. I suggest that an understanding of cultural pluralism should go beyond differences in ethnicity and religion and that one should explore differences in living styles, class differences and shared practices of living together; it is necessary to take into consideration the fusions, fissions, socio-economic differences, power relations and interactions between individuals belonging to different groups and differences within groups. In Turkey, only non-Muslims are recognised as minorities and they are divided into three groups: the Rum Orthodox, Armenian and Jewish communities. This categorisation is rooted in the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. The majority of the population in Turkey is considered “Muslims” regardless of their linguistic and ethnic differences (e.g. Kurdish, Albanian, Laz, and Zaza) and their various denominations of Islam (e.g. Alevi, Sunni, Şafi). Even though the majority is Muslim, in different regions in Turkey, there are diverse styles of living, practices of religion and traditions. In the case of Burgaz, people who settled on the island from different places of origin (e.g. Jews and Armenians from other Princes’ Islands; Sunni Muslims from the Black sea region; Zaza and Kurdish Alevis from Eastern Anatolia; Sunni and Şafi Kurds from south-eastern Turkey and the workers from Central Asia) brought with them their traditions and ways of living, changed themselves through interactions with the older inhabitants (mainly Rums, with some Sunni Muslims and Germans) and also changed the lifestyle of the island. The informants are depicted in their multiplicity and complexity of character and identities. This research is a story of diversities and narrates diverse ways of living in a plural society.
1.2 The Theoretical Framework of the Thesis

a) Concepts of “Coexistence” and “Conviviality”

In order to answer my research question “how can we provide an understanding of the existing cultural pluralism and diversity on Burgaz, in the Post-Ottoman homogenising context of Turkey”, I use two concepts: coexistence and conviviality. As I use the term, “coexistence” is present as a concept in the minds of the people and ascribes a collective identity of a group based on people’s ethnicity or religion. Coexistence puts boundaries between religious and ethnic groups, assumes that these groups are homogenous and emphasises their identity politics. When you search the web for images associated with the terms “coexistence” or “coexist”, you will often come across religious symbols in the letters of the word “coexistence” such as this image.

Islam, Judaism and Christianity are widely used as the relevant categories when symbolising coexistence. Also people from different races such as in Benetton’s advertisements appear as visual images in the Google search for coexistence. Coexistence thus implies racial, ethnic and religious classification.

A similar perception of coexistence which implies racial, ethnic and religious categorisation can be seen in the studies of coexistence and peace resolution projects, which gained momentum after conflicts (Wallensteen 2007, Abu-Nimer 2001, Dayton and Kriesberg 2009, Phillips 1996, Anastasiou 2002, Gidron & Katz and Hasenfeld 2002). The term coexistence is widely used in discourses of peace resolution projects, post-war or violence studies and “coexistence” is associated with “peace” and “harmony”. For example, Rupesinghe (1999) refers to conflicts, wars and genocides such as those in the Balkans and South-eastern Europe and tries to conceptualise how communities, societies and states could coexist peacefully. He argues that the prerequisite of coexistence is recognition and respect for the “other”. However, in my conceptualisation coexistence has more complex, divisive and sometimes negative connotations. Coexistence assumes the existence of identities based on pre-existing categories of ethnicity and/or religion.

2 http://www.tau.ac.il/education/coexistence/
However, there are moments when a particular identity gets consolidated. Thus, categorisations do change over time and in relation to specific political situations. “Coexistence” is nonetheless a useful concept because it refers to the rupture points, political tensions, homogenisation processes which increase the subjects’ ethnic and religious awareness.

While Rupesinghe sees the “other” as pre-existing and given, scholars like Said, Sutton and Theodossopoulos have explored the ways in which the “other” is constructed in order to construct one’s own identity. Said (1995) argues that in politics, international relations and in academia, the self is constructed through its relationship with an “other”. Theodossopoulos (2004, 2006), referring to his ethnography in Northwest Peloponnesian, explores the construction and the discourse of the “Turk” as the ethnic “Other” and Greeks’ stereotyping the Turks. For the Greeks, the Turks are barbaric. Kalymnians also construct their identity in relation and in opposition to “modern Europeans”, “backward Turks” and other Greek islands near Kalymnos such as Kos and Leros (Sutton 2000: 34-46). In their work, they explore identity construction in relation with “the other” and the “other” is always somebody who is fantasised about but not interacted with in daily life. In my work, I explore the ways in which people belonging to different ethnic and religious “groups” interact in daily life. I analyse the situations and contexts that crystallise a particular groups’ religious and/or ethnic identity as well the transgression of these categories and negotiations of these differences in daily life.

Through the analysis of conviviality, I explore the ways in which people interact with each other on a daily basis. I build on Overing and Passes (2000) who redefine the concept of conviviality. Their definition of conviviality does not refer to the meaning of the word in English, which is “having a good (...) time in the company of others: i.e. a jovial, festive, companionable state, occasion or atmosphere”. Their approach is close to the French word convivialité, which is “an extension of bonhomie and joviality, amicable social relations and interaction”, except that convivialité only includes harmonious social relations. Their use of the term conviviality is closer to the Spanish word convivencia,
which means “a joint/shared life”; it comes from the verb *convivir* “to live together, to share the same life” (Overing and Passes 2000: xiii). Conviviality in Amazonia does not only consist of peaceful and harmonious times but also includes dangers, socially threatening situations, and violence (Overing and Passes 2000: xiv).

I build on their concept of conviviality which is closer to the Spanish word *convivencia* and which embraces the harmonious times and tensions. Conviviality cannot be reduced to happy moments and a tension-free society. The positive and negative aspects such as joyful moments and moments of tension are rooted in the sharing of a communal life. For example, they would include gossiping behind another’s back, anger and jealousy in friendships as well as joking together. The tensions of conviviality are related to living together, such as the fights between flatmates, or between husband and wife over not washing up the dishes, or over not taking the rubbish out. The analysis of conviviality, which is exploring the ways in which people interact with each other in daily life, furthers the understanding of cultural pluralism. Conviviality includes shared ways of living, similarities as well as differences between individuals. Conviviality embraces all sorts of similarities and differences that affect the ways in which people form relationships with each other. These similarities and differences include lifestyles, hobbies, likes, dislikes, age, gender, class, place of origin, local identity, ethnicity, religion, political affiliation and language and so on. What I show in the thesis is that people do not form friendships because of belonging to the same ethnic and/or religious group but because of sharing similar ways of living. These similar ways of living also cause tension in people’s social relations.

b) Engaging with the Debates on Multiculturalism and Cultural Pluralism

In this thesis, I criticise the fact that debates about multiculturalism tend to neglect the practices of living together (conviviality) and also the society’s perception of living in a plural society. My theoretical framework is influenced greatly by Jane Cowan’s (2006) approach towards multiculturalism. Cowan points out that while political theorists grapple with the norms and procedures of state policies and regulations to suggest what
could be done to improve the management of plurality and diversity, the anthropologists are concerned with the empirical, with what is happening on the ground (Cowan 2006: 11). She suggests that “one has to distinguish between *multicultural* as a mere (although never self-evident) adjective, describing an objective condition of plurality, and *multiculturalism* as a political project” (ibid, original emphasis). In my thesis, I am primarily concerned with the “multicultural” as an adjective. In order to provide an understanding of cultural pluralism and diversity in Burgaz, I explore conviviality, the nature of relationships between individuals and the ways in which the islanders perceive and represent their diversity. By addressing political theorists’ (Joppke and Lukes 1999, Kymlicka 1995), supranational organisations’ and European politicians’ conceptualisation of multiculturalism, I problematise the ways in which multiculturalism is approached as a political project without giving enough attention and analysis to the ways in which people interact with each other in plural societies. I present ethnographic evidence that challenges the assumptions put forward by political theorists, politicians and supranational organisations that approach multiculturalism as a political project.

Multiculturalism, as a political project, has a coexistence approach towards cultural pluralism and conceptualises society as divided into “coexisting groups”. As postulated by mosaic multiculturalists, Joppke and Lukes, society is not only formed of individuals but also by social groups which have ‘their own culture and ways of living’ (Joppke and Lukes 1999: 5 cited in Cowan 2006: 11). A similar approach is taken by supranational organisations like the UN and UNESCO. According to Eriksen, UNESCO sees culture as *difference* (Eriksen 2001: 131) and cultures as islands, archipelagos or peninsulas, a mosaic put together (Eriksen 2001: 127). A mosaic approach to culture and society puts boundaries between “social groups”, essentialises “their culture” and assumes that “social groups” - whether ethnic and/or religious - are homogenous within themselves and are separated from each other (Brubaker 2002³). Such an attitude fails to see the content and degrees of interactions across communities and the intercultural and

---
³ Building on Frederick Barth (1969), Brubaker (2002: 169) does not take “social group” as given and homogenous and asks what individuals “do things with categories”.
intercommunal dialogues; fails to acknowledge the heterogeneity within these groups and neglects the dynamic and organic aspect of culture as a practice and way of living. I build on Benhabib who is critical of mosaic multiculturalism, who argues that “cultures are complex human practices of signification and representation” (Benhabib 2002: ix) and that “[c]ultures are formed through complex dialogues with other cultures” (ibid). So, in my thesis, I explore the heterogeneity, tensions, contestations and diversities within “groups” and explore the interactions between individuals belonging to different “groups”.

Furthermore, Cowan, Dembour and Wilson draw attention to the fact that human rights discourses see culture as a “thing” that people “have”; and those discourses encourage people to join, belong to “a cultural group” and to “enjoy” a culture (Cowan, Dembour & Wilson 2001: 8). The Minorities Treaties signed at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 and supervised by League of Nations in the 1920-30s affirmed that “racial, religious and linguistic minorities” should be recognised and protected by nation-states to continue their way of living without oppression (Cowan, Dembour & Wilson 2001: 9). Later on, international organisations such as the UN and the Council of Europe also argued that nations should encourage their minorities to promote, manifest and celebrate their cultural differences (ibid). Within the UN and UNESCO, culture is seen as something positive and coherent and it is assumed that people belonging to the same “cultural groups” should get along well. Such an approach neglects class difference, tensions and diversities within “cultural groups”. In my thesis, conviviality does not only include harmonious times but also tensions within society.

On the other hand, for the last decade, multiculturalism has been seen as a danger to the nation by the politicians in Europe, who articulated the idea that immigrants have formed and maintained their bounded communities on the basis of their ethnic and/or religious identities (Weaver 2010, Doward 2011, NewStatesman 05/02/2011, CBN News 11/02/2011). An increasing number of academics and politicians, from both the right and the left, attacked multiculturalism as essentialism, a threat to cohesion and transgression of the principles of liberal democracy (Grillo 2007: 985).
Especially, in countries like France, Germany and the UK, politicians have been giving speeches about the death of multiculturalism. Their main concern has been the fact that different ethnic and religious groups lived in ghettos.

“Speaking to a meeting of young members of her Christian Democratic Union party, Merkel said the idea of people from different cultural backgrounds living happily - side by side - did not work” (Weaver 2010). Maurice Cousins from the left-wing campaign group Nothing British said: "We take the view that multiculturalism hasn't been the best way to integrate people in society. It ghettoises people into minority and majority groups with no common identity. You can argue in favour of pluralism, but multiculturalism says there's no one overriding culture and that causes divisions and makes society less cohesive" (Doward 2011). Cameron said in his speech: “Under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and the mainstream. We have failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong. We have even tolerated these segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values” (NewStatesman 05/02/2011). Sarkozy affirmed that multiculturalism was a “failure” and that it enhanced extremism. He added “[w]e have been too concerned about the identity of the person who was arriving and not enough about the identity of the country that was receiving him” and said that “while it's important to respect cultural differences, France should be a place with a national community - not a place where different cultural communities just coexist” (CBN News 11/02/2011).

The politicians quoted above argue that multicultural policies including recognising minority groups, giving them certain rights (such as education in the maternal tongue of the migrants), encouraging them to celebrate their cultural differences, allowing them to keep ties with their country of origin and letting them live in separate groups divide society. According to them, living side by side strengthens the identity of the groups to such an extent that it promotes extremism and leads the nation to divide. In a way, these political leaders imply that while multicultural policies intended to bring
more equality to the society through guaranteeing the rights of the ethnic and religious minorities, these policies are actually threatening social integrity. According to Vertovec (2010: 86), some policy-makers and politicians argue that multicultural policies foster cultural differences to an extent that causes communal separateness which leads to potential extremism and even terrorism (such as the terrorists attacks on 7 July 2005 in the UK committed by British-born and raised citizens).

These politicians claim that an overarching national identity is needed in order to integrate these ethnic and/or religious groups into society and to create unity among the citizens. When I was formulating my research question, I was struck by the still existing diversity on Burgaz and interested to find out what made Burgaz a place of diversity and what connected and united the islanders together. Thus, using Burgaz as a case study, I have sought to explore the islanders’ acts of solidarity in times of crisis (such as the 1955 riots), their sense of belonging to the island and the ways in which they manage cultural pluralism via the prism of conviviality.

I respond to Grillo’s call (2007) for anthropologists to go beyond the normative analysis of multiculturalism, and to move away from the philosophical reflections at an abstract level or at an institutional level. Grillo highlights the importance of “understanding what actually happens ‘on the ground’, a crucial aspect of which is the subjective dimension, the ideas, models, projects, definitions, discourses etc. that actors bring to bear on a situation, sometimes very hesitantly, often seeking to work with (or clarify) concepts that are difficult, opaque, elusive and with multiple contested meanings. (Grillo 2007: 981 emphasis added)”. For this reason, in this thesis I explore the daily interactions within and across communities at the grassroots (conviviality). I aim to explore the ways in which the islanders perceive themselves and their diversity. In order to understand their perception, I analyse the terms (“multicultural”, “monocultural”, “cosmopolitan”, and “diverse”) and the metaphors the islanders use to conceptualise and represent the diversity in Burgaz. I investigate the different and contested discourses of multiculturalism and the ways in which islanders perceive and represent the plurality on the island.
When I investigate the dominant and alternative discourses of multiculturalism in Burgaz, I build on Baumann’s work (1996) on multi-ethnic communities in Southall, London, where he identifies what constitutes “the dominant discourse”. The dominant discourse in British politics equates ethnicity, community and culture to each other in a reductive way, yet the way people behave shows that people do not “have” or “own” culture but “make” culture (Baumann 1996: 6). The dominant discourse affirms that ethnic minorities are defined by their reified cultures and cause social problems for the nation. That kind of reification has the danger of essentialising cultures and equating culture with ethnos implies that cultural differences come from ethnic, biological differences (Baumann 1996: 12). However, descent and race are not biologically but, rather, socially constructed (Baumann 1996: 17). Baumann (1996) criticises this dominant discourse through showing the workings of alternative discourses he defines as demotic where culture is contested within communities, that there is no homogenous shared culture, that culture is contested (Baumann 1996: 2) and that communities are not bounded.

Baumann states that the dominant discourse that sees communities as separate and distinct entities is rooted in the colonial period. For example, British colonial rule treated the Sikhs as one homogenous group and in 1983; Sikhs were recognised as an ethnic minority in Britain (Baumann 1996: 73-74). I propose that there is also a dominant discourse when it comes to the discourse of multiculturalism in Turkey. While the dominant discourse is based on ethnicity in Britain, the dominant discourse in Turkey is based on religion. In Turkey, the dominant discourse of multiculturalism comes from the Ottoman millet system. The Modern Turkish state inherited the legal recognition and categorisation of “minorities” from the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. Under the Ottoman Empire, Ottoman subjects were divided into millets: Muslims, Orthodox, Armenians and Jews (Sugar 1977:273). The millet system was a legal-religious functional structure in the empire (Sugar 1977: 272) where the population was not divided according to the subjects’ ethnicity or nationality. The millet system aimed to maintain the central power of the Sultan, to administer the different religious groups and hence it
helped to keep the non-Muslims (zimmi) connected to the empire (Sugar 1977: 274). Even though Islam was seen as superior, every millet was autonomous in the way they practised their religion and legal issues. Thus, there was not a concept of majority versus minority (Sugar 1977: 274).

After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire and the “minoritisations” process (Cowan 2001), the concept of “majority” and “minority” came into the Turkish legal system. Since then, majority/minority categorisation has been based on the criterion of religion. The majority is considered as “Muslims” regardless of their linguistic and ethnic differences (e.g. Kurdish, Albanian, Laz, and Zaza) or their different denominations of Islam (e.g. Alevi, Sunni, Şafi). The fact that ethnically Turkish Sunni Muslims are the dominant group among the Muslims creates unbalanced power dynamics within the community of Muslims. The dominant discourse of multiculturalism in modern Turkey embraces the non-Muslims but not the non-Suni, non-Turkish Muslims. While Orthodox, Armenians and Jews are seen to contribute to the multiculturality of Turkey, Kurds, Laz, Alevis, Şafis and many more are not.

Couroucli (2010) also concurs with the dominant discourse of multiculturalism in Turkey. She argues that in contemporary Turkey, multiculturalism is the remnant of the coexistence that existed under the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. It is like the dust of an empire (ibid: 220-221). Couroucli concludes that today it would be wrong to treat the lifestyle on the Princes’ Islands as “cosmopolitan” (ibid). She distinguishes between “cosmopolitanism, a spirit related to the lifestyle of the minority elites of the Ottoman society, and the reality of religious plurality and tolerance in Ottoman society, which allowed shared practices at certain moments” (Couroucli 2010: 234). She indicates that these syncretic practices such as Ay Yorgi day do not now exist in the everyday life of the Princes’ Islands. She notes that most of the non-Muslims had already left Turkey and the Princes’ Islands. She sees these islands as ruins from the Ottoman Empire and as places of residence for the elite, educated upper-middle class people most of whom are non-

\footnote{Saint George’s Day takes place in Ay Yorgi Rum Orthodox Church in Büyükada, the Princes’ Island of Istanbul. The majority of the visitors on that particular day are Muslims from Istanbul.}
Muslims. She states that Istanbulliot's nostalgia for the coexistence of Ottoman times does not reflect today's reality.

In other words, Couroucli has a critical attitude towards the neo-Ottomanism of contemporary Turkey. Neo-Ottomanism was introduced by Özal in 1980s as a mentality and strategy of embracing Ottoman heritage that embeds in itself the cultural pluralism of different ethnic and religious groups (Çolak 2006: 587). Advocates placed Islamism and legal pluralism of different millets in the framework of Neo-Ottomanism (Çolak 2006: 588). Whereas the Kemalist modernisation project had rejected anything Ottoman and was based on a secular and unified Turkish identity, neo-Ottomanism reacted to the Kemalist hegemony and brought into the scene counter-memories such as those of Kurds and Islamists (Çolak 2006: 589). As a solution to the Turkish identity crisis, Özal appealed to the cultural pluralism within Islam, as practised in Ottoman times, where Islam included Albanians, Bosniaks, Turks, Kurds and Alevis from different ethno-religious backgrounds (Çolak 2006: 593). Later on, the Welfare Party appealed to Ottomanism and the religious plurality of the Ottoman millet system in order to reject Kemalist secularism’s repression of religious practice (Navaro-Yashin 2002: 140-141). This attitude has been adopted by the AKP, especially in the last few years and neo-Ottomanism has become more of an Islamist revivalism. Couroucli argues that this kind of Ottoman multiculturalism praised by the (Muslim) bourgeois class and the politicians in Turkey is like Herzfeld’s structural nostalgia: it refers back to the plurality of the Ottoman Empire to state that Turkey is still multicultural now in order to “promote minority and human rights” for Turkey’s entrance to the EU (ibid).

Even though, Couroucli criticises neo-Ottomanism, she still has a neo-Ottomanist approach to cultural pluralism. In her conceptualisation, Ottoman times were multicultural, because there were people from different religions: Orthodox, Jews, Armenians and Muslims. According to her view, when most of the non-Muslims left Turkey, then, Turkey was no longer multicultural. This is why she calls the Princes Islands “empire dust” (Couroucli 2010). I find Couroucli’s concept of plurality problematic and
reductive because it implies that in order for a society to be plural, there must be different religions; there must be Orthodox, Jews, Armenians and Muslims. It limits diversities to the *millet* system. Therefore, building on Baumann (1996), I explore the extent to which the dominant discourse of multiculturalism coming from the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire is articulated by the islanders and what alternative discourses on diversity and pluralism exist in Burgaz. I investigate which “groups” are included and left out of the dominant discourse of multiculturalism.

Furthermore, rather than explore the ways in which people live together in daily life on these islands Couroucli has merely considered a few events. Couroucli does not take into account the changes and the new diversity patterns on the Princes’ Islands. She only focuses on who left the Princes’ Islands, not who subsequently settled on the islands. I start from Driessen’s question: “And how does the cultural pluralism of the past relate to the multiculturalism of the present?” (Driessen 2005: 139). Thus, I explore the homogenisation process and the departure of the non-Muslims, as well as the ways in which the migrations from different parts of Turkey (Sunnis from the Black Sea region, Zaza and Kurdish Alevi from Eastern Anatolia and Sunni and Şafi Kurds from South-eastern Anatolia, Armenian and Jewish people from other Princes’ Islands) created new social forms and patterns of interactions in Burgaz.

Due to fact that only the non-Muslims – Rums, Armenians and Jews- are recognised as minorities in Turkey, the ethnic and religious communities within the Muslims ask for recognition from the Turkish government. Now, I turn my focus on the politics of recognition debates of political and multicultural theorists and explore the current politics of recognition debates in Turkey.

“Identities are partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demanding or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted, and reduced mode of being” (Taylor 1992: 25).

Taking on board George Herbert Mead’s symbolic interactionism, Taylor states that people create their identities in relation to others. This implies that for a person to fully develop his or her identity, the identity has to be recognised. Honneth and Taylor, who are in favour of the recognition of differences, argue that recognition supports self-realisation. Axel Honneth (2003) argues that maldistribution happens as a result of misrecognition, therefore once differences are recognised and appreciated it will eventually give way to just distribution. In other words, according to Honneth theories of recognition subsume problems of distribution. Moreover, Kymlicka assumes that there are clashes between minorities and majorities over language rights, regional autonomy, political representation, education curriculum, land claims and so on (Kymlicka 1995:1). From a liberal approach, he combines human rights and minority rights to manage these clashes and he gives the state the responsibility to manage diversity and pluralism through the recognition of the cultural rights of minorities (Kymlicka 1995:6).

Honneth (2003), Fraser (2003) and Young (1990) try to provide solutions to prevent the oppression of minority groups and to bring equality to everyone. They argue different points whether the issues of justice and equality could be solved by redistribution and/or by recognition of differences. The politics of recognition, arising from Hegelian subjectivism and phenomenology, rejects liberalism’s individualism and claims that difference-blind approaches are unjust towards women and minorities and cause oppression (Fraser 2003: 10). Young (1990) explores the politics of difference stating that the distinctiveness of social groups should not be denied. Laws that are blind to differences have assimilating outcomes and are oppressive towards particular groups such as blacks, gays, lesbians and disabled people. According to Young (1990: 166) the politics of difference strengthens group solidarity. While liberal ideals require equal and
identical treatment of each individual regardless of race, ethnicity, culture and gender, the politics of difference challenges the hegemony of the “white Anglo male world” over oppressed groups (Young 1990: 167). For Young (1990: 171) difference does not mean Otherness but “specificity, variation, heterogeneity”.

Concern for redistribution comes from Marxism and the liberalism of Rawls and Dworkin stating that there should be equal socio-economic distribution for each individual regardless of gender, race, ethnicity or culture (Fraser 2003: 10). The redistributionists think that a just economic distribution will automatically solve any problems of misrecognition (Fraser 2003: 34). Fraser (2003) argues that redistribution and recognition should not be seen as polarised and opposed to each other so that one has to choose between them. She argues that recognition of differences is not enough to provide equal distribution of rights and capital and issues of injustice such as those concerning race and gender cannot be solved only by economic redistribution or by the politics of recognition. According to her, both maldistribution and misrecognition are present in racism. Racism needs both redistributive adjustments and recognition, so she calls for a politics of redistribution to be privileged over a politics of recognition (Fraser 2003: 22-23). For instance, ethnic minorities and/or racial migrants suffer from unemployment and poverty. Eurocentric norms privilege “whiteness” and stigmatises racial migrants and/or ethnic minorities as inapt (ibid). As a solution, Fraser proposes a politics of class recognition that supports poor and working people’s struggles for economic justice (Fraser 2003: 24).

There are currently two groups which demand recognition in Turkey: Kurds want to be recognised as an ethnic minority; and Alevis want to be recognised too; however, they disagree amongst themselves whether they should be recognised a separate sect within Islam or as a group with distinct cultural and religious privileges. This thesis does not aim to provide an answer to what kind of policies (redistribution or recognition) would work in Turkey. Nor does it suggest answers to whether or how non-recognised groups such as Kurds and Alevis should be recognised as minority groups. However, the
thesis does explore and problematise the ways in which debates over the politics of recognition and the process of asking for recognition affect the identity construction of the non-recognised group and how they complicate interactions between different ethno-religious groups. In particular, the discourses of recognition have created the need for the Alevis to define themselves and what they demand from the government. Due to the heterogeneity among the Alevis, it is difficult for them to come up with a unified sense of community and agree on what they demand from the government. I explore the extent to which debates about the recognition of Alevis and Kurds affect the ways in which the islanders interact with each other.

c) Contributions to Anthropology and to the Anthropology of Turkey

One of the main aims of this thesis is to provide an understanding of cultural plurality through an exploration of everyday practices of living together in mixed societies, analysing relations between the discourses of multiculturalism present in Burgaz and the practices of conviviality on the island. Anthropologists and sociologists (Castles 1994, Gladney 1997, Kapila 2008, Pardo 2000, Parry 2000, Wieviorka 1998, Turner 1993, Prato 2009, Eller 1997) have done eminent research concerning multiculturalism on issues of recognition and representation. Vertovec suggests that we should move beyond the exploration of matters of representation and recognition and should analyse multicultural practices embedded in daily life (Vertovec 2007a: 966).

I explore the dialogues between individuals belonging to different “groups”. I find Appiah’s (2005) approach to pluralism that a dialogue is possible between communities that have different beliefs and traditions, inspiring. Appiah sees differences as rewarding, because they enrich people’s perceptions and prepares society to act wisely when society faces a new situation, dilemma or change. Furthermore, I build on Vertovec (2007a, 2007b), Demetriou (2004), Chock (1987) and Lehmann (2009), who query of the boundaries of ethnicity and religion. In Vertovec’s notion of super-diversity, the internal diversity of a particular ethnic group should be analysed through an exploration of its differences in age, country of origin, gender, economic and political reasons for migrating,
spatial distributions, class and status (Vertovec 2007a, Vertovec 2007b). Vertovec draws attention to the fact that interrelations between different groups have not been explored while the focus has been on the conceptualisations of ethnicity, and of boundaries between different ethnic groups (e.g. Frederick Barth 1969 cited in Vertovec 2007a: 963). However, Vertovec focuses on the global and transnational notions of migrations and draws attention to the new patterns of migration and thus new patterns of diversity (Vertovec 2007a, Vertovec 2007b). While I take into account the new patterns of diversity that are formed in Burgaz, I also explore the disappearance of old diversities.

Burgaz provides a good case study for the anthropology of pluralism, because the homogenisation process in Turkey which caused migrations to and from the island, gave way to complex interactions and new patterns of negotiations between different groups. In Turkish anthropology the relations between different ethnic and religious groups have rarely been explored. Baumann draws attention to “the dialogical nature of identities, or rather, identifications” (Baumann 1999: 118). He states that “Multicultural society is not a patchwork of five or ten fixed cultural identities, but an elastic web of crosscutting and always mutually situational, identifications” (Baumann 1999: 119). There has been a small amount of work done on the relation between cultural pluralism and coexistence in Turkey such as Tucker’s (2003) ethnography on negotiation of identities in touristy areas, Meeker’s (2002) work on the different ethnicities living in the Black Sea region, Stokes’ (1998) study on the negotiation of identities between Arabs and Turks through arabesk music in Hatay and Mills’ (2010) ethnography on cultural memories of the cosmopolitan Istanbul district of Kuzguncuk. I seek to contribute to the anthropological literature that explores pluralism and the interactions between different groups in Turkey.

The anthropology of Turkey is relatively new within the history of anthropology and the discipline has been consolidating its place within the social sciences and humanities in Turkey. So far, village ethnographies (Stirling 1965 and 1993, Delaney 2001), feminist anthropology and issues of gender (Kandiyoti 1977, Kandiyoti 1991, Kandiyoti and Sakta...

The thesis builds on the latter literature on the effects of globalisation and the migrations from villages to cities in Turkey (Keyder 1999, Bartu 1999, Öncü 1999, Erder 1999, Özyeğin 2002, Kandiyoti and Saktanber 2002). I explore the effects of migrations from villages to cities due to economic and political reasons, how the community (in this case, Burgaz) has been affected by the arrival of the immigrant workers from Anatolia, (Kurdish and Zaza Alevi from Eastern Turkey in 1950s and Sunni and Şafi Kurds from south-eastern Turkey in 1980s-1990s) and the ways in which the villagers and the Istanbullite islanders negotiate their cultural and class differences while living together on the island.

In addition, there is a wide range of literature on the population exchange between Turkey and Greece (Hirschon 1998 and 2003, Oran 2003, Keyder 2003), on minorities (Rums by Akgönül 2004, Akgönül 2007 and Bahcheli 1990; Jews by Bali 1999, 2003 and 2004; Armenians by Gürün (2005) and Şimşir (2005)), and on different ethnic groups (e.g. Kurds and the Kurdish issue by Akyol 2006 and Bruinessen 1989; Alevi in Turkey by Shankland 2007, Öz 2008, Bayındır 2009). However, these studies take one minority’s or ethnic groups’ history and political issues in Turkey and analyse these groups in isolation. Some also analyse the histories of these minorities one by one (Tuncay and Zurcher 1994) or document the ethnic groups living on Turkey (Güvenç 2005b). Work in the latter category lists and explores which ethnicities are present in Turkey, where they live and what they do. However, it does not analyse the interactions among these groups. This thesis does not explore a particular ethnic or religious group but, rather, the ways in which people interact with each other in daily life through the analysis of conviviality.
Furthermore, this research aims to contribute to the anthropology of memory and political anthropology of Turkey which has recently emerged through the works of Navaro-Yashin (2002), Özyürek (2006) Kaplan (2006), Neyzi (2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2008, 2011) and Mills (2010). Even though there is a lot of anthropological work which focuses on the religious experiences and lives of pious Muslims (White (2002), Henkel (2007), Tapper & Tapper 1987) and work on secularism and Kemalism (Navaro-Yashin 2002, Özyürek 2006) the interactions among different ethnic and religious communities are not explored. These recent works deal with the debates surrounding Kemalism, negotiations between the secularists and the political Islamists. Özyürek (2006) explores the appearance of nostalgic Kemalism in the 1990s as a reaction to the rise of political Islamists and Kurdish separatism. The early years of the Republic and the single-party regime had been dominated by Kemalist ideology which promoted the building of a homogenous state regardless of religious, ethnic and class differences (Anderson 2008a, 2008b, Özkırmızı and Soros 2008, Özyürek 2006, Bali 2001 cited in Özyürek 2006: 14, Yıldız 2001 cited in Özyürek 2006: 14). As Özyürek explains, “In 1998, Kemalists preferred to use the voice of the founding state they imagined in order to silence oppositional voices, including those of Islamists and the Kurds” (Özyürek 2006: 174). While the Kemalists insisted on the secular state, political Islamists responded to this with a “structural nostalgia” in Michael Herzfeld’s terms, by creating alternative representations of an already glorified past to make a claim for themselves in the present (Özyürek 2006: 154). Political Islamists promoted neo-Ottomanism against the secularist agenda of the Kemalists highlighting that the practice of religion formed an important part of people’s lives in Ottoman times (Özyürek 2006: 154, 176). Özyürek argues that “nostalgia is far from being only an imagining of the past. Rather, it is a powerful way of relating to and transforming the present” (Özyürek 2006: 175). Building on Özyürek, I explore the tensions not only between the Kemalists and the political Islamists but also between different Muslim groups, including Sunnis, Alevi, Kurds and non-Muslims. I explore the ways in which the AKP government refers to and uses the past in order to strengthen their power in the political realm and the ways in which different groups (leftists,
Kemalists, liberals and various ethnic and religious communities) react. I also explore the impact of the transnational debates surrounding Turkey. For example, when I analyse the islanders’ representation of themselves as a plural community, I explore the terminologies they use (multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, mosaic, monoculturalism) and which political debates (the democratisation packages of the AKP regarding Kurds and Alevis, Turkey’s entry to the EU) affect people’s self-representation and their living together on the island.

Neyzi’s works (2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2008, 2011) explore the ways in which Turkish modernity affected the lives and identities of people from different cultural, religious and ethnic backgrounds. The Turkish modernity project aimed to create a national identity based on Turkishness, sidelining other religions, ethnicities and multicultural traditions within its borders. Through the use of oral history, Neyzi analyses the personal accounts of individuals from different ethnic and religious backgrounds and explores these people’s subjectivities and the construction of their hybrid identities. In each of her papers, she focuses on one individual’s life, such as an Arab Christian, an Alevi woman, a Turkish woman from Izmir and a Sabbatay woman (also referred to as dönme, a term used for Jewish people who are the followers of Sabbatay Sevi group in Salonica who converted to Islam) (Neyzi 2002: 137)).

Building on her works and using her approach, I analyse the personal narratives of islanders from different ethnic, class and religious backgrounds, and explore the ways in which these groups experienced the homogenisation of the country from the nation building stage until the present. I address which groups remember which events in which particular way, the different interpretations of the same events and the points where the memories of different groups intersect. Thus, I intertwine the social memory of different groups and the daily conviviality on the island.

Mills’ (2010) work focuses on the cultural memories of cosmopolitan Kuzguncuk, a district on the Asian coast of Istanbul that used to have a diverse community formed of Jews, Armenians and Greeks. Due to the homogenisation process, the domestic policies
concerning non-Muslims, Turkification, nationalism, urbanisation and the arrival of migrants from the Black sea region and Anatolia, the non-Muslim community has disappeared; they moved to other districts of Istanbul, to Israel or Greece. She explores the multiplicity of memories, which are fragmented, contested, silenced and articulated by non-Muslims and Muslims who have lived in Kuzguncuk (Mills 2010: 15). She looks at the narratives that are embedded in the landscape (Mills 2010: 17). She argues that Kuzguncuk was cosmopolitan and the non-Muslims lived in the neighbourhood together; however, the cosmopolitanism that Kuzguncuklu people talk about is the articulation of nostalgia for a cosmopolitan past. The narratives referring to the buildings, streets and the landscape are not about what is happening today in the neighbourhood but about what happened when the community had non-Muslim inhabitants (Mills 2010: 207-126). Similarly to Mill’s work, I also look at the diverse memories of individuals belonging to different class, ethnic and religious backgrounds, the transgression of categories of ethnic, class and religious differences, and identification and the sense of belonging to the local community (Mills 2010: 30). In her case, it is Kuzguncuklu identity and in my case, it is Burgazlı identity, being from Burgaz.

Mills interacted with the remaining non-Muslims, the early Black Sea migrants and the recent migrants from Anatolia (Mills 2010: 26) but not with the Kurdish migrants and activists and non-political conservative Muslims and political Islamists (Mills 2010: 27). Mills did not make explicit the reasons why she did not or could not interact with these groups. Did these groups not interact with the rest of the community? Or could she not get access to them? Or she did not want to get involved with them? Why were they left out from the discourse of cosmopolitanism and the practices of conviviality?

This thesis aims to explore not only the relationships between non-Muslims and some Muslims but all Muslims and it aims to deconstruct the category of “Muslims” and to explore the diversities within this category. The thesis also seeks to understand the ways in which people categorise themselves and others and reflect on living together in a plural society. Hence, I analyse what these categorisations are based upon (ethnicity,
place of origin, religion and so on), what kinds differences and diversities are acknowledged, and how people conceptualise and represent these diversities by exploring the shifting discourses of multiculturalism.

1.3 Contextualising the Archipelago: Why Burgazadasi?

Figure 1: Map of the Princes’ Islands (http://www.planetware.com/map/princes-islands-map-tr-pi.htm). This map shows the geographical location of Burgaz, the distance between Burgaz, other Princes’ Islands and Istanbul as well as the size of the islands.
The Princes’ Islands, a small archipelago of 9 isles, are in the Sea of Marmara, southeast of Istanbul (Tuğlacı 1992: 225). Büyükada, Heybeliada, Kınalıada, Burgazadası, Sedef Adası and Kaşkadası are inhabited while Tavşanadası, Yassıada and Sivriada are not. All together, the Princes’ Islands count as “one” district (ilçe) of Istanbul and their administration is run by Adalar Kaymakamlığı (the borough of the Princes’ Islands).

The means of transport to and from the islands is ferries that run between the islands and Istanbul. The islands are 15 minutes apart from each other, 30-40 minutes from the Asian side of Istanbul and 45-60 minutes from the European side. No cars are allowed on the islands. Thus, the islanders walk, cycle or take horse-carts. Summer time, between June and September when the schools are closed, is the period that the total population of the Princes’ Islands increases from 17,000 to 150,000 (TC. Adalar Kaymakamlığı 2003). There are more ferries and fast ferries start running. The summer inhabitants commute to their work by boat. In the meantime, in autumn and spring, when the weather is nice, the islands are also visited by the summer inhabitants and by day-trippers from Istanbul.

Burgaz is the third biggest of the Princes’ Islands-. It is quite small and people know each other. In comparison to Büyükada and Heybeliada which are much bigger than Burgaz, people are quite dispersed and scattered. Büyükada, the largest island (5.46 km²), is becoming very cosmopolitan and globalised (Cerrahoğlu 2008). It is very popular as everybody visits the island during the weekend and they cause big crowds. People say that “the island is losing its ‘islandness’ and it is becoming like a city”. “Islandness” is a term used by the islanders to reflect that they are away from the hectic life of the city, away from the traffic, the chaotic fast life; that they have a smaller community, that people know each other, that they are free and independent on their own island. On Heybeliada, the second largest island (2.4 km²), Muslims are the majority but there are still various minorities. Heybeliada inhabitants say that the Navy Military High school on Heybeliada has Turkified the island, because the army employed and settled “its own people” there (Türker 2008: 10). The majority in Kınalıada (1.3km²) are Armenians,
Suryanis and Sunni Muslims. Approximately 20 families live on Sedef Adası (0.157 km²) and some part of it is private property. Kaşikadası (0.006 km²) is owned by a family, so there are a couple of houses on the island.

Burgazadasi, is 4.8 away from the Asian side and 17 km away from the European side of Istanbul. It is 1.5 km², (perimeter: 5km). Its population increases from 1500 in winter to 15,000 in summer (T.C. Adalar Kaymakamlığı 2003). During summer, wealthy, upper-middle-class, intellectual, elites, business people, artists, writers, journalists, actors, architects and lawyers move to their summer house on the island or rent flats or houses. When the schools open and the weather gets worse, these people move back to their homes in Istanbul. Depending on the weather between October and March, people visit the islands at the weekends. For the summer people, the sea and swimming are very important. The working people on the island do not go to swim much as summer is the time to earn money. The weather is very important for the sellers and the summer people. The better the weather, the more day-trippers and summer inhabitants come to the island, the more the shops sell. The permanent habitants who run the shops, restaurants and the summer people who are the customers, clients and sometimes the employers such as hiring cleaners, gardeners, care takers depend economically on each other. Nonetheless, there are strong friendship between customers and shop owners which go beyond owner/customer and employee/employer relationships.

While the other islands especially Büyükada and Kınalıada are “invaded” by day-trippers, Burgaz has far fewer visitors. Büyükada has many hotels to stay and Kınalıada has many beaches. Burgaz is the least touristic island of the Princes’ Islands because there are only three places where tourists can stay; furthermore, the bays and beaches are quite hidden. One peculiarity about Burgaz is that its day-trippers are faithful. Women who do not work and retired people come to the island with their children and grandchildren almost every day and form ties of friendship with the summer and permanent inhabitants of Burgaz.
Burgazada was the only island that was not affected by the 1955 riots against the non-Muslims, while in Istanbul and on the other Princes’ Islands, the shops of minorities were attacked. In Chapter 4, I tell the story of how Burgazadali (people from Burgaz) protected their island against the attackers who came to Burgaz by boat during the night of the riots. This collective resistance shows the solidarity among Burgaz islanders. I decided to settle on Burgazada to explore patterns of conviviality, their sense of solidarity and the ways in which the islanders manage tensions and negotiate their differences.

1.4 Thesis Structure

The thesis is formed of 7 chapters. Chapter 1 contains the research question, main argument, aims, scope and contributions of research and theoretical framework of the thesis. Chapter 2 and 3 provide background information including the historical and political context of Burgaz, describe the setting and explain the fieldwork methodology. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 provide empirical evidence taken from the fieldwork and Chapter 7 states the conclusions of the thesis.

Chapter 2 describes the setting, the social division of space and the existing cultural pluralism in Burgaz through the analysis of conviviality. It describes the daily lives of the islanders in different parts of the island, and at different seasons and analyses the social exclusions and inclusions within space. The fieldwork methodology is also explained in this chapter due to the fact that the social division of space and the population fluctuation in summer and winter affected how I conducted my fieldwork. The analysis of space and conviviality together provides an understanding of cultural pluralism which goes beyond the pre-existing categories of ethnicity, class and religion, and demonstrates that an analysis of cultural pluralism should include shared ways of living and diverse range of differences (e.g. age, gender, tastes, hobbies, political affiliation). The analysis of conviviality in different social spaces suggest that the islanders form organic groups not because of belonging to an ethnic, class or religious group but because of sharing similar lifestyle and tastes.
In Chapter 3, I first aim to contextualise Burgaz within the history of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires and to describe the post-Ottoman homogenising context in Turkey. I situate the emergence of the Turkish state within the nation building processes of the modern Balkan states during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Nation-building was homogenising, because the Balkan states including Turkey used restrictive foreign and domestic policies (e.g. population exchange, economic and linguistic restrictions) against internal others- the minorities. “Coexistence” is useful to describe the homogenisation process, the construction and crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and ruptures in cultural pluralism. As Burgaz is not isolated from the mainland, the wider political context in Turkey changed the demographics in Burgaz. When the majority of the Rums left following the political tension between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus, Jews, Armenians, Sunni Muslims, Alevis and Kurds settled to Burgaz. These migrations to and from Burgaz created new patterns of sociality on the island.

Building on Halbwachs (1992), Passerini (1987) and Bahktin (1981), in Chapter 4, I explore the ways in which the current political situation in Turkey affects the ways in which the islanders reflect on their pasts. On the one hand, the analysis of memory enables me to understand the homogenisation process, through which foreign and domestic policies and political events made categories of ethnicity, class and religion more salient. On the other hand, memory sheds light on the ways in which people remember their shared ways of living, past conviviality, the construction of a shared local identity and people’s sense of belonging in a place. Through using memory as an analytical tool, I argue that even though the homogenisation process mobilised Muslims against non-Muslims during the riots in 1955, people in Burgaz did not turn against each other. To the contrary, the collective resistance against the riots increased solidarity among the islanders and solidified Burgaz identity. While the homogenisation process consolidated ethnic and religious differences and brought ruptures to cultural pluralism in Turkey, it could not hinder the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, because memories of conviviality and the sense of belonging in Burgaz were stronger than people’s ethnic and religious identities.
The central aim of Chapter 5 is to explore the social interactions between individuals belonging to different religious groups and to investigate the diversities within these groups, through the analysis of conviviality. In this chapter, I focus on “religion” and “religious groups”, because in Turkey, the categorisation of different communities is based on religion, which comes from the legacy of the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. My empirical examples suggest that even though the islanders would define themselves as belonging to a religious community, they were eclectic in their religious practices and borrowed some practices from other faiths; and their daily interactions reflected that individuals from different faiths interacted with each other for many economic, religious and social reasons. I argue that tensions between religious groups were not due to religious differences but were triggered by Turkish politics, and that class difference was a significant factor which affected people’s social interactions and negotiation of religious differences. I explore the debate among Alevis regarding seeking recognition and demonstrate the ways in which this process complicated their relations with Sunnis and created tension and disagreement among themselves.

In Chapter 6, I explore the ways in which Burgaz islanders perceive their diversity and conviviality in Burgaz by analysing their representation of Burgaz in the novels they wrote and the documentary they shot, and the conversations and interviews I had with them, as well as analysing an empirical example from the practices of conviviality in Burgaz. The islanders’ representation and perception of their diversity suggest that the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system is reproduced in order to criticise the homogenisation process that led the departure of their non-Muslim friends. Furthermore, the islanders articulated alternative discourses of plurality which goes beyond the millet system, and challenge mosaic multiculturalism by emphasising both the intimacy of social relations between individuals and Burgaz identity which embraces all sorts of diversities.

The last chapter is the conclusion. It provides the answer to the research question, summarises the main findings and restates the research’s contributions to
knowledge. In this thesis, I argue that the homogenisation process in Turkey brought ruptures in cultural pluralism in Turkey, and changed the demographics in Burgaz; however, it did not rupture the conviviality on the island and Burgazian identity which embraces all types of diversities of its inhabitants. At times of crisis, like the riots in September 1955, Burgaz islanders placed importance on their shared Burgaz identity which overrode religious, class and ethnic differences.
CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY, SPACE AND CONVIVIALITY

2.1 Introduction: Entering the Field

I came to Burgazadası on the 1st of July 2009. I took the boat from Bostancı on the Asian side, which lasted for 30 minutes. I was nervous yet excited about how I would manage to meet and have access to the islanders and challenge the boundaries of ethnicity, religion, class, age, gender and language. Being Turkish, speaking Turkish as a native, and having grown up in Istanbul until the age of 21 were advantages for me to do anthropology at “home”; however there were many ways in which I was considered as an “outsider” to the field.

I am not from Burgaz, which automatically made me a non-islander and an outsider. As the islanders have a strong sense of belonging in the island, I had to work hard to be appreciated by the islanders. By birth, I am a Turkish Sunni Muslim, however I grew up in a family with a secular background without knowing much about Sunni Muslim practices. Throughout my fieldwork, I needed to engage with the non-Muslims who have the minority status, the non-recognised Alevi and Kurds, and the practising and devout Sunni Muslims. In order to build relations with individuals belonging to various groups, I relied on different aspects of my upbringing and multiple identities as well as negotiating and challenging them.

For instance, the French middle school and the American high school I attended in Istanbul are schools where minorities choose to educate their children. So, the fact that these minorities and I went to the same schools created a sense of familiarity between us. I relied heavily on the languages I speak in order to get access and gain the trust of my informants. Even though everyone speaks Turkish, people also use their native languages within their family and community. Apart from Turkish, I spoke French and Spanish with my Jewish informants, who speak Ladino (a mixture of Portuguese and Spanish) or French at home; Rumca with the Rums (I took Modern Greek classes at
Boğaziçi University in Istanbul for a few months during my fieldwork); I started learning Zazaki to converse with my Zaza Alevi informants; and spoke French, Turkish or English with the Austrians, Italians and Germans depending on the language they preferred. During my fieldwork, I realised that being multi-lingual was also one of the forms of symbolic capital that the islanders have. While growing up and playing together, the islanders picked up each other’s languages, so, many of them speak Rumca, Italian, Armenian, French or Ladino.

“How would I be able to grasp fully the diverse ways of living in Burgaz?” was the question that made me feel anxious all the time, yet this anxiety kept me going and allowed me to bear the intensity of fieldwork. Time and space dictated my methodology, the ways in which I conducted fieldwork and the order in which I collected data. I therefore conducted my fieldwork according to the population fluctuations between summer and winter and the social use of space on the island.

This chapter has three aims. One of the aims is to describe the setting - the existing cultural pluralism and diversity in Burgaz - through exploring the current conviviality. By conviviality, I mean how it is to live collectively in Burgaz; the interactions in daily life, neighbourhood relations, social division of space, what causes tension and exclusions and what brings harmony and enjoyable moments. This descriptive chapter provides the setting for the following three empirical chapters. The second aim is to explain the fieldwork methodology which was affected by the social space and the seasonal changes. The third aim is to disclose my self-reflexivity through outlining how I had access to different groups and places and how I gathered evidence for the thesis.

In the second section of this chapter, I describe what kind of a place Burgaz is to give the reader a sense of what it means to live in Burgaz for the summer and for the permanent islanders, and the dynamics between them. It is important to explain the geographic and spatial aspects of Burgaz as this affects the conviviality on the island.

In the third section, I explain my methodology and the order in which I conducted fieldwork. As Candea points out, the anthropologist is anxious and obsessed to
know everything about the field site, wants to be everywhere and thus finds himself or herself exposed to many possibilities and choices (Candea 2007: 174). He or she feels frustrated about which choices to make and whether his or her decisions are conscious or arbitrary, and he or she is limited to what he or she sees and experiences (Candea 2007: 174). For instance, while I attended a Sunday mass at the Catholic Church, I might have missed very interesting conversations at one of the bays, or when I was having tea with an informant, I might not know that there was a henna night in one neighbourhood. As I engaged with many diverse groups and went to various places of social interaction, it is important as a researcher to make explicit the ways in which I planned and conducted my research and collected data.

While doing this, I describe the daily activities, social interactions and conviviality in summer and winter as well as the setting and the social division of space in Burgaz. Lefèbvre suggests that every society produces its own space through appropriating and modifying it (Lefèbvre 1991: 31, 35). So he uses the analysis of social space “as a tool for the analysis of society” (Lefèbvre 1991: 34) and states that as “space embodies social relationships” one can explore space to analyse the social relations that are embedded in space (ibid: 27). Building on Lefèbvre, I use space as a methodological tool to analyse the ways in which people use and divide space. Recognising that analysis of the social use of space plays an important role in understanding social interactions in plural societies (Low 1996, Mills 2010, Akşit 2010 and Amin 2002), I investigate public places, restaurants, cafes, bays and neighbourhoods to explore exclusions and inclusions of different ethnic, class and religious groups and to see which places offer a milieu for interaction regardless of ethnic, class and religious differences. Rather than dividing the society into pre-existing categories of ethnic, class or religious groups and following communities in the way that the Jewish people, Armenians, Suryanis or Muslims do, I explore conviviality and the ways in which social actors create, negotiate and share space to understand cultural pluralism. What kinds of places are exclusive to whom? What kinds of places are shared by mixed groups? The analysis of exclusions of space provides an understanding of what kinds of differences create boundaries and tensions between individuals and the analysis of
shared space sheds light on what kinds of shared practices take place in the community. The analysis of conviviality in different social spaces suggest that the islanders form organic groups not because of belonging to an ethnic, class or religious group but because of sharing similar lifestyle and tastes.

Furthermore, I explain the ways in which I got access to different places and communities and the ways in which I negotiated my identity. Throughout my research, I had to negotiate different bits of my identity in order to gain access to diverse communities. This constant negotiation with my informants – which I make more explicit when I analyse my ethnographic encounters in this chapter and go in more depth in further chapters - has been a great asset in understanding the negotiation of differences (e.g. linguistic, age, educational, class, ethnic, religious, place of origin, political views, gender and so on) and the complexity and multiplicity of identities of my informants.

2.2 Setting: Burgazadası - a Place of Contrasts

Burgaz, like the other Princes’ Islands, is away from the main land, which gives the islanders a sense of belonging, solidarity and shared identity particular to each island. Yet, the isles are near enough to commute to work to/from Istanbul. It is close to other isles (15 minutes by boat) which all together form a network of relations. For example, the children of the islands go to Heybeliada or Büyükada high schools. There are no ATMs, banks and supermarkets in Burgaz. Burgaz islanders go to Büyükada and Heybeliada to shop for cheaper prices and for their banking needs. This network is also a medium for forming and maintaining friendships across islands.

The geographical location of Burgaz, an island away yet near-by a cosmopolitan city, creates a sense of duality and contrasts between marginality and centrality, temporariness and permanence, winter and summer, escape and “stuckness”, freedom and prison for the islanders. Green (2005) brings a complex understanding to the concept of marginality. She draws attention to the fact that the where of the place affects the people of that place (Green 2005: 13). What made Pogoni (at the Greek-Albanian border in Epirus) an ambiguous place was not only the fact that the place was at neither the
border, nor a consequence of its topography but also the ways in which the relative location of this place created movements, separations, reunions of people which made the place and the people generic. The stories told by these people, whether it concerned their story of moving from one place to another, their contingent identities, or whether this place is at the border, reflected difference yet, similarity. She stated “In that sense, even the marginality of Pogoni was ambiguous: if the people and place were marginal, it was not the marginality of otherness, of difference, or of distinction; it was more the marginality of being nothing in particular” (Green 2005: 13). In that sense, Burgaz is also an ambiguous place. While the fact that Burgaz is an island away from the mainland creates a sense of marginality, the fact that it is connected to the mainland by a short boat trip makes this place less marginal and less isolated. People move back and forth between Istanbul, whether for day trips, for shopping or for spending a season or two in Burgaz or in Istanbul. This kind of a location, being close to Istanbul, a cosmopolitan city and being separated by it by water, created movements and migrations, which made Burgaz at different times in history, a place of exile, a resort and also a melting pot of diversity. During Byzantine times, the Princes’ Islands were inhabited by fishermen and Christian priests (Schild 1999). Later on, the islands were used as prisons for exiled people (Schild 1999, Deleon 2003: 183). Istanbul and the islands were conquered during Fatih Sultan Mehmet’s reign in 1453 (Deleon 2003: 185). By the 17th Century, the population of the islands was mostly Rum (Deleon 2003: 149). Starting from the westernisation period from the 19th Century onwards, French, British and Ottoman elites used the islands as resorts (Deleon 2003: 154-156). Today, it has permanent and summer inhabitants from different ethnic, class and religious backgrounds who migrated to the island from different parts of Turkey, Europe and Central Asia.

Building on Green (2005), what I am arguing is not that Burgaz is a distinct, particular and marginal place from which distinct stories are told, but that the particularity of the stories told by Burgaz islanders are similar to stories told in the mainland and thus the stories in Burgaz illustrates the wider context in Turkey. Skinner highlights that even though islands have been conceptualised as places of isolation, they
are the “hallmarks of globalisation” (Skinner 2002: 208) and from exploring the sociality on an island - how people manage their island life - one can understand the global in the local and/or the local in the global, the ways in which the island life reflects global transactions and is affected by wider politics and the ways in which it resists them (Skinner 2002: 209). While the location of the island and the diversity of the people living on the island might seem unusual or marginal, they reflect similarity in the ways in which they are affected by the political situation in the country and the neighbouring countries.

In this section, I explain the ways in which the relative location, the weather and the nature on the island affect the social life of the islanders. The weather, especially the wind, has the power to dictate the island life. Ferries do not work when there is strong lodos (wind blowing from the south), because the ferries cannot approach the harbours. Ferries also get cancelled when there is storm, extreme rain and snow. So, the islanders might get stuck on Burgaz, cannot go to their work in the city, and food, newspapers and goods cannot reach Burgaz. For example, on the 2010 New Year, the ferries did not work for 3 days due to lodos. The bread ran out and people baked their own breads in their houses. On the other hand, Burgazians might be stuck in the city or on another Princes’ Island. Hence they always have relatives and friends in Istanbul and on the other isles with whom to sleep over. Because of this difficulty, Burgazians are very understanding in hosting their guests who are not from Burgaz due to weather conditions as well as missed last ferries. Islanders are always bound by ferry timetables. The first and the last ferry are the markers of when you can leave the island and by when you should be back.

So for the permanent inhabitants, the disruption of ferries and being away from the mainland turn the island more into a place of stickness and prison. For example, health becomes an issue. There is a small health centre with one doctor and a nurse and two pharmacies. When women give birth, people have heart attacks or break their bones; they have to reach the main land. Rapid health boats cannot always reach on time. There have also been several fires on Burgaz and other Princes’ Islands. Some were due to the day-trippers who left glass bottles, cigarettes or barbeques. This is a reason that the
islanders dislike the day-trippers. The day-trippers do not see the island as their home and do not keep it clean. Some islanders think that it is a sabotage of people outside of the island, even from the council or the borough to create forest fires in order to build more houses. The last fire on Burgaz in October 2003 was traumatic as most of the forest was burnt and many animals died. People become very sad when they remember this event. They cannot walk in the bush anymore and the island looks bare from the ferries. Furthermore, the Princes’ Islands are very near the fault line. After the 1999 earthquake, the summer inhabitants who have both a summer house and a winter house in Istanbul had the option to leave the island. Some of them either sold their houses or stopped renting and the house prices fell down. However, the permanent inhabitants did not have such a luxury. Health and safety issues make the islanders cooperate at times of crises and situations when people’s lives might be in danger.

For the summer inhabitants this rupture in the transport is sometimes perceived as a romantic feeling of being stuck on an island and also as an escape from the hectic life of the city. They enjoy the ferry ride to/from the island, which they much prefer to being stuck in the car in Istanbul for a few hours to get to work. Furthermore, they can always go to the city and spend some days in their winter houses. They enjoy the fact that everyone knows each other on the island. So, they feel like going to their village to feel the cosiness of friendship. However, the permanent inhabitants cannot escape: they are stuck on the island, must bear all the gossip and see the same people over and over again.

Yet, for both the permanent and the summer inhabitants, Burgazadasi is a place of freedom. One of my informants who has been a summer inhabitant (aged 50) since birth and who has now been living on the island permanently for several years said that “the island starts when I put my foot on the ferry from Istanbul and the ferry takes me to the place of freedom”. The islanders say that the fact that many diverse groups of different ethnic and religious backgrounds live together on the island and that they all have a worship place for their own religion makes them feel free. They add that if you are
not tolerant and embracive towards differences, the island will not accept you. Living in a diverse place forms a part of Burgaz identity, which I explore in Chapters 4 and 6.

Burgaz is more like a small village. You walk on narrow village-type paths. Since no cars are allowed on the island, you are surrounded by sea, green, flowers, trees, berries and animals. Nature is salient for the islanders; it is what makes the island a unique place of living. The nature in Burgaz ties them to the island and when I ask the islanders what Burgaz mean to them, they start talking about the nature, the animals and the botany on Burgaz. The nature also forms an important part of the islanders’ memories which I explore in the next chapter. When you walk in the streets of Burgaz, you will see many street cats, dogs and sea gulls. Many inhabitants keep the rest of their meals for them. Some will cook extra pasta to give to cats and dogs. Some will buy cat food from shops regularly to feed the street cats. Some will adopt them and have a space in their garden. You will see people carrying gallons of water to put in big public basins on the street so that dogs, cats and seagulls can drink water during the hot summer days. Some keep a big basin full of water in their garden for animals to drink. You will see a few hedgehogs wandering around the trees. Lots of lizards will run in your garden and on the roads. The mosquitoes are the only creatures that islanders do not like. People watch the migrations of the storks, and from their movement, people understand the beginning and the end of summer. There is also a myth about the storks; it is believed that storks saluted the saints of Heybeliada. They go to Heybeliada, turn around, rise up and then continue their migratory path. I was also given the scientific explanation by the islanders: - At some spots on the earth the air allows the birds to rise up more easily and the islanders say that Heybeli is one of those spots. I was told that storks also have their leader and their rules as if they are humans.

The geographic location of the island, its size, the weather conditions, the seasonal population fluctuations, the dynamics between summer and permanent inhabitants, and the diversity of the islanders affect the daily life of the islanders to a great extent. First of all, as it is a small island, everyone knows each other. Whenever
someone moves to Burgaz, sooner or later the islanders learn of the presence of the new comer. While running to catch the boat, shopping at the grocer, going for a stroll, the islanders always see each other and greet each other. Living in a small place creates more milieux for social interaction. However, its small size also creates more tension and more settings for gossip, which is a common situation of small places, like in villages. People are always visible. In Burgaz, whenever you go out of your house, you become social, you see many people on the way. If you happen not to see someone and do not greet them back then that creates tension. Who you walk with and what you do are always seen by someone. This is similar to the feeling that Foucault describes from Jeremy Bentham as being watched over by the panoptican (Foucault 1977: 201). This panoptican gives a feeling to the prisoners of being seen all the time, even though there might not be anyone all the time surveying the prisoners (Foucault 1977: 201). Even though there is not a physical panoptican, a central tower of surveillance in Burgaz, because of the small size of the island, you are always seen or could be seen by anyone. This “panoptic gaze” as Spedding (1999: 13-14) calls it, exercised by the islanders makes them feel imprisoned and observed. I was told by one of my female informants that the young people aged between the ages of 18 and 30 leave the island because they feel they have no privacy. If they flirt with someone, walk alone with a person from the opposite sex, or kiss someone, it is either their parents, the parents’ friends, the grocer or the neighbours who would see this and tell everyone. People spend most of their time gossiping about each other. Gossip becomes rumours, spreads around, grows and comes back to you as a legend in which you are the hero but in which you actually never played.

Geographically, Burgaz is “less open” to outsiders than the other Princes’ Islands, because it has much fewer bays. The day-trippers and picnickers choose the other Princes’ Islands to visit and to hang out in the bays. During the night of the riots in 1955, the attackers could get onto the other islands more easily because of their bays. Burgaz having fewer bays and less open to outsiders worked as an advantage during the night of the riots for the Burgaz islanders. Thus, the geographical aspects of Burgaz create more cohesion between its habitants and a stronger sense of belonging in the island.
Furthermore, the seasonal change of population creates a complicated dynamic between the summer and the permanent inhabitants. The summer inhabitants live on the island less than half of the year. This, in a way, makes the island a temporary place. The freedom to exit lessens the tension for the summer inhabitants. On the other hand, the fact that the population increases to a great extent in summer and decreases in winter creates economic tensions between the permanent inhabitants who own the shops and the summer inhabitants who are the clients. The permanent inhabitants have much less work during winter (between November and April) and thus have less income during that period. In order to earn enough for the whole year and compensate for the times they do not earn enough, they put higher prices in summer. This creates tension between the summer inhabitants who complain about paying much more for the goods they buy and receiving less for the service they get. This imbalance creates a shift in class. After the Rums left, the prices of the houses and stores fell greatly. These properties were bought by the Alevi and Sunnis who became the permanent inhabitants. The permanent inhabitants have saved enough money to buy a house in Istanbul and keep their job on the island. Most importantly, there are reverse power relations between the majority and the minorities. The majority of the minorities in Turkey as well as in Burgaz are well educated and wealthy. So, Sunni Muslim, Armenian, German, Levantine, Rum and Jewish elites usually go to the same foreign schools in Istanbul, they work in similar sectors and hence, they can afford to pay to eat out, or to become members of the social clubs. Sharing the same class creates similarities in lifestyle. In Bourdieu’s (1990) terms, they have the social capital and they have similar habitus. Their similar lifestyle creates milieu for conviviality. Nonetheless, sharing the same class does not only bring joyful times when people eat, drink and laugh together. Belonging to an upper class also creates jealousy and competition, especially within an ethnic and religious group. In the following empirical chapters, I explore the ways in which class plays a significant role in people’s social interactions in daily life.

In many countries in Europe, such as in the UK, France and Germany, the minorities are mainly the new comers, immigrants who have settled in a new country for
different sorts of reasons (including economic reasons, to obtain better jobs, education, or to seek asylum and get citizenship) (Muns and Fassmann 2004, Lutz 2008, Burrell 2009, Soysal 1994, Vertovec 2010, Al-Shahi and Lawless 2005). However, in the case of Turkey and hence also Burgaz, the situation of the minorities is different. The minorities (dating back to the millet system in the Ottoman Empire) have always been living within the borders of Turkey before the country was founded. Thus, they are not the new comers but the people who have always lived there, as in the case of Burgaz.

Furthermore, the majority of the minorities belong to the upper-middle class. The older discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system works to the advantage of the minorities and their high class status secures the place of the minorities in the society they live in. On the other hand, the internal migration within Turkey, especially from Anatolia to Istanbul, places the immigrants from Anatolia in a more disadvantaged position. The new comers, mainly Muslims (Sunni, Alevi and Şafi), belong to a working class. The economic dependency of the non-Muslims on the working class Muslims complicates the relations between majority and the minorities. The majority needs to be employed by the minorities. Regardless of the class of the Muslim, the minorities see themselves higher than the Muslims. For instance, a Rum or an Armenian girl (and her parents and their community) would prefer that she marries someone from the same community who is less educated and has less money than an educated and a richer Turk. Once, a young man from Erzincan (Zaza Alevi) fell in love with a young woman from a minority. The girl’s family pressured the girl to end their relationship by sending the girl to the US where she got married.

This diverse and complex island was my fieldwork area where I stayed for 14 months from July 2009 until September 2010 in order to explore the existing cultural pluralism in Burgaz.
2.3 The Field and Methodology

During the first summer (July-September 2009), I introduced myself as a doctoral researcher in anthropology who teaches and studies at a British university and built networks with summer inhabitants, mainly upper-class elites. I chose to meet them first as they would be gone by November. My childhood friend, who lives on the island as a summer inhabitant, said “you will be judged by who you hang out with, so if you hang out with the working class permanent inhabitants, it might be difficult for you to get access to the elites”. This implied a class difference between the summer and permanent inhabitants that I should keep in mind and explore.

I had two divisions in my mind: summer inhabitants and permanent islanders. For this reason, in the first four months of my fieldwork (July - October 2009) I divided my time between the Teacher’s Hostel which is run by the Alevi, Sunni and Kurdish permanent islanders and a flat in a mansion rented by my parents’ friends. My parents’ friends are members of SC (Sports club) and friends with the elites on the island. The flat they rent is in a mixed neighbourhood, higher up the island. Living there allowed me to have connections with upper-class summer islanders. Staying at the Teachers’ Hostel, on the other hand helped me to build networks within the permanent inhabitants and also to be appreciated as a teacher at university. I was referred by the summer inhabitants to talk to the grocer, the baker, and the owners of the restaurants and shops who have been living on the island for 50 years or so who have seen the changes and who know better both the summer and the winter life of the island. Even though, in summer I prioritised “catching as many summer people as I can before they run away”, I would regularly meet and spend time with the permanent islanders as well.

Within the first four months of my fieldwork, I identified two types of social spaces in the ways in which they were inclusive or exclusive. The first type was the public places including restaurants, cafes, parks and bays which did not have an exclusive boundary. The second type was the two social clubs which were exclusive to its members. While exploring these two types, I paid attention to what kinds of exclusions and
inclusions occur in these spaces and what kinds of social interactions take place between individuals.

While doing fieldwork, I mainly spent time in spaces that were full of people in order to conduct participant observation, to meet people and to have casual daily chats. I started off with public places which had no physical boundaries of entry (unlike the social clubs where you have to become a member to enter, or people’s houses). The çarşı (shopping area), the restaurants and the tea places were the most populated places during the summer. There are two streets of restaurants/cafes on the island, one is on the left side and the other one is on the right side when you get out of the harbour. Behind the left street of restaurants is the çarşı. There are four small grocery shops, two patisseries, one post office, two grocers, gas and water suppliers, some small snack and sandwich places and two pharmacies.

I sat in different restaurants, patisseries and cafes at different times during the day and observed people while having tea, coffee, lunch or dinner. I was sometimes alone, but most of the time with my childhood friend, my parents’ friends or people who worked at the Teacher’s Hostel, who constantly introduced me to their friends on the island. I tried to figure out which groups (whether ethnic, religious, class, age, gender) eat where, who hangs out with whom and which places are mixed.
Figure 2: beginning of çarşı

**Figure 3:** I found this map in Tuğlacı’s (1992: 227) book about the Princes Islands. This map was drawn by İsmail Şener in order to “show the main streets and important places of Burgazada” (this is the translation at the bottom of the map). I have added the arrows and the names of the public places, social clubs, neighbourhood names and the religious places of worship where I conducted participant observation to give an idea to the reader about where these places are on Burgaz.
a) Public Places: Restaurants, Cafes, Parks and Bays

**Figure 4**: a restaurant by the sea

**Figure 5**: a café by the sea

I count restaurants and cafes as public places because of their open setting. In contrast to the closed restaurants or cafes, these have their tables on the streets, which create fluidity between the clients and the strollers. These restaurants and cafes face the
sea. They get very busy after dinner, usually 9pm onwards, when people start strolling on the restaurant street and also sit for some time to watch others strolling. These are places where you go to see people and to be seen. People wave at each other, bump into friends, go from one table to another, from one cafe to a restaurant or vice versa, gossip about who is wearing what, who was seen with whom, who has not been around for awhile, who does not talk with whom anymore, who dates with whom, who cheats on whom, broken friendships, new friendships formed, they laugh, and make each other jealous showing off new clothes.

To eat in a restaurant by the sea costs 50-100 TL (20-40 GBP), which is very expensive taking into account that the minimum monthly wage is 800 TL in Turkey. People who eat at the restaurants are usually the Rum, Armenians, Jewish and Sunni Muslim summer inhabitants or people who visit the island for a day. People dress well to eat out. Women have their hair up and wear make-up. Some of the restaurants have their “permanent clients” who eat breakfast, lunch and dinner there every day. Jewish, Rum and Armenian groups have dinner with their family or groups of friends. Nonetheless it is very common to see mixed groups enjoying their dinners. One of the restaurant owners told me that in Ramadan (the holy month during which the Muslims fast), she prepares a breaking the fast table for Sunni Muslims, and a drinking menu for the next table where a mixed group of Sunni Muslims, Jews, Armenians and Rums have dinner. This reflects the mutual tolerance between the fasting Muslims, and the non-practicing Muslims and non-Muslims, because in some cases, fasting Muslims would not want to go to a place where people consume alcohol, when it is Ramadan. Some restaurants might not even serve alcohol during Ramadan. However, in Burgaz, people let each other do as they wish in terms of practicing or not-practicing their religious duties.

The tea places are frequented almost every hour of the day. The class difference is less in the tea places compared to the restaurants. Clients go to cafes to have breakfast, tea, play cards, sit by the sea and enjoy looking at the boats coming in and out, and watch the sun set and the full moon. Kahve (coffee shop) is open to everyone in summer
throughout the day and night. Men and women play backgammon or cards until the early hours of the morning. There is much less gender segregation between the summer inhabitants and sociality is enjoyed in the company of both men and women in summer. However, there is more gender segregation among the permanent inhabitants. Similar to Kennedy (1986), Cowan (1991), Herzfeld (1985) and Papataxiarchis (1991), who describe the ways in which men and women socialise separately, in Burgaz, while the women hang out with each other in houses doing embroidery, or in cafes, men work or hang out with their friends during the day and watch football games in the evenings. Kahve is used exclusively by men in winter. In kahve, the shop owners usually have tea, play backgammon, cards and okey (a game played with numbered chips). When there are less jobs and clients on Burgaz in winter, the permanent male inhabitants socialise in kahve.

When you go straight from the harbour towards the çarşı, there are stands of cheap jewellery, clothes, second hand books and souvenir-type objects displayed and sold mainly during summer. The buyers are usually the day-trippers. This is a central place where the islanders stop by to have a look at the stands and they bump into each other while going to or coming back from restaurants and cafes. There are always people standing for 5 to 30 minutes having chats. Time is extended on the island because you will always see someone you know, stop to talk, join people’s tables or join people for a stroll. There are also some benches at the edges of the centre so that people can sit, drink beer or eat sunflower seeds.

Just behind this central place, there is a popular patisserie. They offer lunch and dinner meals, hot and soft drinks but no alcohol. You can find people from all different ethnic and religious backgrounds sitting there both in winter and summer. People wear casual clothes. You would see people wearing sportive clothes, light beach dresses or hijab. They have a family environment which they would like to keep. It is a very cosy place to pass the cold days of winter by reading newspapers, having breakfast and hot drinks, and chatting to the permanent inhabitants and the summer inhabitants who visit
the island to breathe away from the hectic life of Istanbul. You would see more working class people in winter as there are less clients and more available seats.

*Hamdi’s* place is just next to the fast ferry harbour. It is open between April and October every year. *Hamdi* is Kurdish from southeast Turkey. Permanent inhabitants mainly Kurds and Alevis enjoy spending time there. Especially young permanent inhabitants like the communist Alevi activists from the TKP (Turkish Communist Party) gather there to discuss politics. *Hamdi* has cheaper prices for snacks and drinks. Their tea comes from Mardin, southeast of Turkey. You could differentiate the permanent inhabitants from the summer people from the length of time spent at *Hamdi’s* place. The permanent inhabitants sit there much longer than the summer people. The upper class people just drop by to have tea or coffee while waiting for their fast ferry. The fast ferry is a closed cruising boat much more expensive than the regular ferries and it is used by business people and people who would prioritise fast and comfortable journeys to Istanbul to the open-air slower boats which cruise slowly between the Princes’ Islands. The regular ferry journeys are for *keyif*, subtle pleasure of enjoying the beautiful panorama of Istanbul and the Princes’ Islands.

Next to Hamdi’s place, there are a small children’s park, the horse-carts stop, and house selling and renting agencies. Young parents go to this children’s park usually between late afternoon and late midnight, when it is less hot, so that their children can play and they can socialise with other people who pass by the centre. The wealthy upper class summer inhabitants who cannot be bothered to walk up to their houses for 10-30 minutes, take horse-carts from there.

These public places signalled to me that these social places were not divided into a particular ethnic or religious group; however, class difference played an important role in who socialises where and with whom. I kept in mind the significance of class difference in the ways in which class difference hinders or enhances social interactions. In the following empirical chapters, I explore the ways in which belonging to the same class
transgressed the boundaries of ethnicity and religion, yet brought competition and tension between individuals.

Besides these populated public places, restaurants and cafes, 70% of the summer inhabitants pass their time in the two social clubs. The common ground is that the members are rich and educated. The summer islanders who decide not to be a member either cannot afford to pay or do not like the idea of spending the whole summer in the same place and socialising with the same people all the time. For example, actors, journalists and writers usually prefer not to be a member of the clubs. Being or not being a member of a social club automatically puts physical boundaries between the members and non-members, which become social boundaries, because people who go to the club pass their time together and build friendships. This exclusivity enhances the class division, because the ones, who cannot afford to pay, cannot become members. The summer is the time for the permanent inhabitants to make money, so even though some of them can afford it, they do not have time to relax in social clubs. Some of my informants who cannot afford to pay the membership price said that these people built the clubs at the best places on the island and exclude other people from using that space. Their interpretation sounds Marxist and is similar to Gramsci’s hegemony of one class (Lefèbvre 1991: 10) in the ways in which the hegemony of the bourgeois becomes concretised through the use of space (Lefèbvre 1991: 10). This hegemony is also reflected in the social division of labour (Lefèbvre 1991: 32). The people who work in the social clubs as waiters, cleaners and security are among the permanent inhabitants. While the summer people are enjoying the sea and relaxing, the permanent inhabitants work.

The ones who are not members of the social clubs hang out in the bays. As de Certeau (1984: 98) points out, people find alternative ways and places when they come across boundaries such as the boundaries of the social clubs. The bays are great examples of conviviality. Swimming, tanning, chatting and walking are among the daily activities of the summer inhabitants in the bays. These shared ways of living transgress ethnic and religious boundaries. For instance, an ex-communist couple, a few famous actresses,
some upper-class ladies, an English lady who has been married for 40 years to the 13\textsuperscript{th} grandson of an Ottoman Vizier, an Armenian lady, a Georgian family and a Kemalist secular couple socialise in the bays, and converse with each other almost every day, tanning, sharing food, having tea and coffee, wine or \textit{raki}. I became close friends with the Armenian lady, aged 70, who is a painter. We met up for teas, dinners, watched sunsets from my house and went to exhibitions together. She did a great favour for me and translated a German text about the German inhabitants on the island. These people choose their friends not according to their ethnicity or religion but for various reasons such as liking to drink during sunset, enjoying lying and tanning themselves or swimming together. Some people who are sensitive to sunlight sit together under the shady areas, read novels and newspapers and form friendship groups. People bring fruit, food, wine and cheese, and snacks every day to share with each other. They extend these bay-friendships to having dinners (Figure 6), brunches and drinks, organising and taking part in social activities such as organising flamenco nights and going to exhibitions in Burgaz and other Princes’ Islands. Young islanders meet up at the bays from time to time to organise barbeques, and birthday celebration where they play guitar and \textit{saz} (a fretted traditional Turkish instrument) and sing together.
However, there is also tension between the islanders and the day-trippers who come from different parts of Istanbul to hang out in the bays. On Saturdays and Sundays, there are many day-trippers from Istanbul who are mainly lower class people. They come with their mats and food, and lie down to sunbathe and swim. Some of them are immigrants from Anatolian villages to Istanbul. Similar to the “yabancılar (strangers)” (Ilcan 1999: 244) the islanders also call them “dişaridan” meaning people from outside [the island]. They create a village picnic-like environment which is not appreciated by the islanders. They leave the bays messy and dirty. Some wear baggy trousers and swim with their clothes on. Wise uses the term “haptic habitus” to refer to the “sensuous and embodied modes of being” (Wise 2010: 917). The manners of these day-trippers, the food they eat, the loud arabesk or pop music they listen to, and their clothing clash with the “haptic habitus” of the islanders. In contrast to the “strangers (...) pleasing to the eye” (Ilcan 1999: 244), these day-trippers do not please the eye of the islanders. They are sometimes loud and start fights. The division between Burgaz islanders and “others” reflect the cultural intimacy (Herzfeld 2005) among Burgaz islanders and the islanders’ sense of belonging in Burgaz.

I wanted to explore the exclusions and inclusions of the social clubs. Sports Club was my priority in comparison to the Blue Club, because I could have easier access as my parents’ friends’ guest and also its members were very diverse: Rums, Armenians, some Jews, Suryanis, Bulgarians, Macedonians, Italians, Levantines, Muslims and Germans. Hence, I would be able to get access to different ethnic and religious communities, get to know about when religious rituals and festivals take place and build more networks. I first tried to get access to SC and then BC and analysed the similarities and differences of how the members socialise in each club.
b) **Social Clubs: Inclusions and Exclusions**

**b.1 The SC: The Sports Club**

This is one of the most mixed places on the island. SC has 2000-2500 members per season. The members, who belong to upper-middle class use the swimming pool, benefit from the facilities, swim in the sea, sunbathe and socialise.

The ideology of the organising committee and the power relations within the club are reflected in the rules of inclusion and exclusion. The fact that the membership is very expensive creates a membership exclusive to rich people. Permanent/life-long membership costs 15000 TL (6000 GBP). Once you become a permanent member, you only pay 500 TL (200GBP) per season for each member of your family. The parents, the spouse and the children count as family members; however siblings or cousins do not. If you want to become a member for one season only it costs 1750 TL (700 GBP) per person. Whenever the members have guests, the guest has to pay 30 TL (12GBP) during weekdays and Saturdays and 60 TL (24 GBP) on Sundays. Thus, if you are not a member or you do not know anyone who can let you in as a guest, you are not allowed to enter the club during the day time. Joining the club is also one way of building friendships, so some new summer inhabitants become a member to make friends. However, the exclusivity rule does not apply to children of Burgaz, and after 7pm, the club is open to the islanders.

The children of Burgaz can be a member without paying if they swim or play water polo for the SC team. If they play until the age of 18 then they become permanent members without paying. This shows the club’s appreciation for sports and for raising the island’s children together. SC was founded in 1963 as a reaction to BC which was a leisure place and which was built in 1934. The members of SC say that the importance of the club is the opportunity to do sport. Children become lifelong friends and also compete with each other. It is also a social place where people see each other. They become like relatives. People who are members of the club also make their children members of the club. The children grow up together and generations stay friends with each other.
The club is open to public after 7pm. While class creates exclusions, there is still flexibility for people to gain access to the club to have tea, eat or to just hang out in the evening. Everyone can watch movies (both foreign and Turkish films) that are screened for free at SC every Tuesday evening. However, there is a stricter exclusion for women who wear headscarves. As Navaro-Yashin (2002: 19) points out, the debates between secularists and Islamists revolve around the issue of women’s dress. The contestation between these two groups makes women the centre of attention of politics of gender (2002: 24, 26). Secularist women refer to Atatürk’s change of dress code in 1925, banning veil and headscarf and stress that Atatürk liberated women from the constraints of religion (Navaro-Yashin 2002: 21). As the organising committee and the majority of the SC members are secularists, women wearing headscarves were not allowed to the SC. I learnt about this exclusion when one of my embroidery class friends, a woman who was wearing a headscarf (in her 40s), came to listen to my PhD presentation in the club in August 2010, towards the end of my fieldwork. The security told me that normally she (or anyone who wears a headscarf) was not allowed there but they let her in as she was there to listen to my presentation.

The organising committee members of the SC are Kemalists, sometimes nationalists. They stress their Kemalist ideology, which includes following Atatürk’s reforms such as secularism, being attached to Turkish nation and Turkish Republic (Ahmad 2002: 81)\(^6\). SC organises concerts, music and dance nights, victory day party and dinner, and celebrations of the foundation of SC where members pay between 80-100 TL (32-40 GBP) to attend. All the children of the island compete in swimming races on the victory day, 30\(^{th}\) of August each year, the last day of “kicking the enemies out of the country” in 1922. The committee of SC is not in agreement with the liberals. They call the liberals “2\(^{nd}\) republicans” who support more freedom regarding wearing headscarf, the minorities, Kurds and Alevi. They give emotive talks on the victory day about the end of the Turkish independence war. As everywhere in Turkey, the national anthem is sung. All the children have Atatürk and Turkish flags in their hands (Figure 7).

\(^6\) Please refer to the next chapter for a more detailed explanation of Kemalism.
While, the club is proud of itself as being a plural environment where different ethnic and religious groups socialise, it does not tolerate being a devout practising Muslim. The secularist ideology of the organising community is thus hegemonic and women who wear headscarves are not allowed in any time of the day. This supports Gramsci’s concept of hegemony of the dominant class over other class or classes, which is dispersed in everything: economics, politics, everyday life, people’s – both subaltern and of the dominant class - common sense and consciousness (Crehan 2002). Wearing a headscarf is a focus of contention between the secular people and the religious ones. Secularists see wearing a headscarf as a public display of religion and an anti-secularist behaviour. Secularism is supported well by the members who are upper-class Sunni Muslims and non-Muslims. As Alevi are secular, they also “fit” very well as workers and waiters in the club.

The space within the SC is used differently by different groups. People hang out with the people who have similar lifestyle. They get clustered in groups of people who have similar age, political view, gender, ethnicity, language and tastes. For example, the

**Figure 7**: Victory day celebration in the Sports Club on the 30th of August
part which is covered and looks like a green cage is the part of the organisers and the committee of SC. The “green cage” is at the very end of the club and relatively isolated. Most of the “green cage” people are men. As powerful men, they choose this isolated part of the club. They read their newspapers and bring their laptop to do some office work and e-mailing using the free wireless in the club. They talk about politics, football or gossip about each other. Their wives are spread into two groups, the ones who prefer the shade and the ones who want to suntan and become as dark as they can. The women who prefer the shade pick the “green cage” or the tables underneath the huge parasol. They play Scrabble, talk about daily news, politics, and gossip or use their laptops to play Farmville on Facebook.

Older people choose to sit next to the cafe because it is less hot, it is under the shade, the chairs are more comfortable and they can order teas, refreshments and snacks more easily. The women who are fond of sunbathing sit under the sunshine away from the huge parasol. The people with children usually choose to sit by the children’s swimming pool at the entrance of the club. The young people prefer to lay down on big cushions or chaise-longues at the edge of the swimming pool which is distant from the children’s pool, the cafe and older people. This part is not under the shade, thus young people sunbathe there. People who speak the same languages and who are from the same ethnic and religious backgrounds also sit together. While passing through different tables, I heard Armenians, Germans and Greeks speaking in their own language to each other. However, many groups are ethnically and linguistically mixed, especially people, who grew up together on Burgaz, hang out together, speaking mainly Turkish but also switching between Greek, Italian, French, German and Armenian.

Outside of the club, people have various habits of socialising. One of my informants told me that once she wanted to invite her club friends to her house. One woman replied her that on the island people do not go to each other’s houses. Usually, the newer members of the club are “only club friends” and do not spend additional time with their club friends outside of the club. Nonetheless, the members, who have grown
up together, do socialise outside of the club. They play cards at kahve, they go out for dinner and meals and they meet up in winter.

**b.2 My Entry to the SC**

My parents’ friends are members of the SC. They asked the registry if I could be registered as one of their relatives and hence pay only 500 TL (200 GBP) per season. He said that as I was not their daughter, I could not be registered for 500TL. I could only be a seasonal member through paying 1750 TL (700 GBP), which was too much for me to pay. Then I decided to pay 30 TL (12 pounds) for each day that I entered the club as my parents’ friends’ guest.

Within the first couple of weeks of my fieldwork, the annual meeting of the council of the Princes’ Islands took place in one of the restaurants by the sea side. The islanders realised that I was new to the island so when people approached me, I introduced myself as a PhD student who had just started research in Burgaz. There, I met a woman who is a member of the SC. She liked the fact that I chose Burgaz as my PhD topic and introduced me to an ex-politician from the CHP (the Republican Party) who is also a member of SC. She told me that he would be helpful in giving me information about the island as well as putting me in contact with many islanders. This man, Ayhan, told me: “I am very impressed that as a young lady, you are doing your PhD in the UK. I will be more than happy if I can be of help. What can I do for you?” I told him: “Thank you very much for your kindness, I would like to interview the SC members and do participant observation in the club”. He said: “Spot on! The SC is a great place for you to meet people who have been in Burgaz for long. And SC is very mixed, so you should be able to get a lot of information from the club members. Now, come with me and I will take you to the SC”. We went to SC together and he introduced me to the head of the SC and another member of the committee. I told them about my research topic and that I would like to gain access in order to meet and interview the SC members. While the second member looked at me suspiciously, the head of the club was more appreciative of my work. They both said: “There are entry rules to the club. We will discuss together what we can do for
you”. I had to negotiate with my social and cultural capital saying that I speak five languages, I studied at the best high schools of Turkey, that I have a BA degree from the University of London, that I skipped a master’s degree, got a scholarship to do my PhD in anthropology in the UK and that I also taught 2nd year anthropology students at a British university. They were impressed by my education and accomplishments as a young woman. I especially chose to use words like “methodology” and “research” to show them what I was doing is important for social science and I told them: “Of course, I would not want to break the rules or change the way things are here at the SC, however in order to do anthropological research and to understand how people live, interviewing the members would be methodologically insufficient for my research. I need to participate and observe at the same time”. When I said I did not want to break rules, the second member said in a patronising way: “We would not let or allow you to break rules in any way”.

A few days later, I paid 30 TL and entered the club as my parents’ friends’ guest to do participant observation. My childhood friend from the French high school introduced me to one of the organising committee members who took me to the door of the club and told the security: “This is Deniz Duru, she is doing her PhD research about Burgaz. So whenever she comes, I give my permission, let her in”. He is a permanent member of the club and a very old islander so the security obeys what he says. Obviously I was elated with joy. This meant that I would not have to pay anything. I told him: “I am very grateful to you; this will facilitate my research to a great extent. Now I will inform the head of the club and the other member of the organising community because I had talked to them and they were going to let me know about their decision of whether or not to let me in and how”. I felt a bit of tension rising from him. He told me: “My name and my permission are enough! No need to inform the head of the club”. But I still felt insecure as if I was doing something behind the head of the club, so I insisted on informing the head of the club. I did not realise that this would have made this gentleman look as if he did not have power. Later on, when I talked to the head and the second member, they said in a tone which sounded as if they were doing me a big favour: “We decided to let you in
because we would like to support your research. We will also give your name to the
door”. I said that a member of the organising committee had just given my name to the
door. They said: “We do not need that person’s initiative to let you in”. This kind of
struggle over who has the power to grant permission to let someone in, is typical among
upper-middle class elites. Being from the same class, especially from upper-middle class
create competitions, ego fights and issues of power and superiority. Furthermore, there
are tensions amongst the SC members, they criticise each other and the other social club.

For instance, an architect in her mid-40s calls the island and the clubs a “cadi
kazanı (witches’ cauldron)”. She says that people are segregated in small groups gossiping
about each other, excluding others. She did not refer to any ethnic or religious groups
sticking together and excluding others. She meant “any friendship group”. She gave this
example: one day, in the SC, two children were carrying a surfboard and there is enough
space for the third child to get under the board to carry. The two children said “no, you
can’t carry it with us”. She added that it is the same situation among the grown-ups. The
witches’ cauldron metaphor and the surfboard anecdote are great examples that show
the tensions of conviviality. Sharing the same space and frequent daily interactions create
tension. People form groups not according to ethnic and religious categories but because
of having similar lifestyle. Similarly, people do not form close friendships with the people
who have different tastes.

She added: “Some would say hi to you one season and they would not look at
your face the next summer. Especially, women do nothing but gossip. They would gossip
behind you and smile at your face. They would look at what you wear and show signs of
jealousy and criticise your style, joke about the brand you choose”. Showing off is
common among the upper-class young summer inhabitants on the island, especially
amongst the young people who talk all the time about how much money they have or
they spent. Another female informant of mine (aged 27) said that one girl bought a Louis
Vuitton bag just to go to a friend’s birthday. The architect lady added that even though
the children of the club members are expected to be as clever and well educated as their
parents, they are apparently not. They talk about “empty” things, do not know about what is going on in the world, they go to private universities with their parents’ money and they are jobless after graduation. There are not enough intellectual activities on the island and furthermore, the youth want to have fun in the city at night clubs. This kind of a comment was also articulated by one of Green’s informants in Pogoni, at the border of Greece and Albania: “Young people today want discos, they want the cinema and all of those things” (Green 2005: 53). So, the nature of the island which the older generations appreciate does not mean much to the younger generation. This gives another reason for the young people to stay in Istanbul to go to concerts or theatres, or go to touristic places in southern Turkey to party and have fun. She said that the worst thing was that one could never see young people read books. They just lie down to get tanned. When I hung out with the people of my age at the SC, I found out that they were politically disengaged and not very interested in what was going on around them. Some of them were unemployed and were spending their time sailing, canoeing, swimming and getting tanned in summer.

Furthermore, the SC members call the BC “the Jewish club” and add that “they are a closed community”. Some of my SC informants said that whenever they were invited to BC to see some friends, they would be stared at and would feel very uncomfortable. I therefore wanted to get access to the BC to understand how these clubs were similar and different and how much the Jewish community was a “closed community”.

b.3 The BC: The Blue Club

Permanent membership is more expensive than in the SC and costs 20000TL (8000GBP). There are 2500-3000 members in the BC. The daily guest visitor price is less than SC. It is 25 TL each day and 15 TL for students on Wednesdays. Today, the majority of the BC members are Jewish. BC was built in 1934 by Sunni Muslim elites who settled on the island as summer inhabitants. They wanted to have a social place, and have their children grow up together. When Jewish people from Heybeli and Istanbul started to rent
or buy properties in Burgaz, they became members of this club, which was the only social club of the island at that time. The BC was a mixed club until 1964 when the SC club opened. The founders of the SC wanted to have a “sportier” club and some people from the BC became members of the SC. When more Jewish people moved to Burgaz, they kept joining the BC. The Jewish people had been enjoying the “sosyetik” which means *haute société*, posh and chic atmosphere of the BC so they remained in the BC club.

The BC and the SC have different patterns of conviviality. The BC members have a luxurious lifestyle. In the morning, the old people sit at the entrance of the club. It is quieter and shadier. Older people play cards on the second floor. There is also a billiard room. People play cards with money. After 2-3 pm, when it gets really hot and the music gets louder, the old people leave. The music played there is much louder than the BC. Young people in the BC come to the club to have fun, dance, drink and socialise. People dance on the chaise-longues and couples kiss each other. It is a bit like Bodrum, a touristic place in southern Turkey. The people act more freely here. You would not see couples kissing each other in the SC. In the BC, they play slow music in the morning e.g. golden oldies, French, Spanish, English songs, then they play more upbeat tracks and in the evening the music turns into disco/club music. It is said that young people go there to find a boy or a girlfriend. People check each other out and show off. Once, I met with my high school friend, who came to Burgaz to see her friends at the BC. Two of her friends (young men in their mid-twenties) wanted to have barbeque in the garden of their house in the evening and needed to get some meat. They could have just gone to the butchers on Burgaz. However, as an act of show off, they paid an extravagant price to hire a Jet Ski. They jumped on the Jet Ski in front of the BC so that the other young people see them get on it and they went to Bostancı, on the Asian side, to buy some meat.

Similar to SC, no one can enter the BC other than the members and the members’ guests. The BC organise more concerts, events, costume parties for children, charity events and discos. They also organise national victory day dinner and breaking the
fast dinner once for Muslims during Ramadan. So, the BC is not an exclusively Jewish Club.

**b.4 My Entry to the BC**

Engin Aktel, the journalist and the writer of novels about Burgaz phoned Ahmet (who controls access to the club) so that I could enter the club to do research. I went to the BC to meet with Ahmet. He told me that he would find me elder inhabitants of the island. He took me inside the club and introduced me to the elderly islanders. I was surprised by the fact that it was easy for me to get in like this. However, I had to wait for a couple of months to make contacts with the islanders like Engin Aktel, in order to get in. Having been obsessed about gaining access to the social club, I had forgotten that there were many more boundaries to negotiate with the club members in order to be welcomed to their social lives.

The old men were very friendly towards me. I spoke with them in French and English. These men liked me because of my education, since for Jewish people education is very important. They asked me: "Whose daughter are you?" and I replied "Mete Duru’s". They thought it was "duro" meaning strong/hard in Spanish. This was one way from the Jewish people to find out whether I had a Ladino surname which would imply that I was Jewish. As the Jewish members introduced me to each other, they assumed that I was Jewish. Although, I admitted that I was not from the island and I was not Jewish, they did not seem disappointed. One man told me: "One day, you should come to me to give me the best news that you fell in love with a man and that you are getting married". This implied that marriage and forming a family to continue the blood ties are extremely important for the Jewish minority in Turkey. On the other hand, this also made me feel as if I was not taken seriously as a young woman doing research and as if I should find a husband and start a family instead.

Another old man introduced me to his wife and daughter. His daughter was from Robert College (where I graduated from), she lives in the US and writes in *Șalom*, the journal of the Jewish minority in Turkey. His wife was very suspicious of me. The wife told
him to go swimming and she even grabbed his arm and dragged him away. Women were suspicious of me and fired me with questions about who I was, what my research was about, why I was doing it, and what its purpose was. In addition to the fact that I was not Jewish and not from the club, I was female which implied that I might be a threat to the Jewish community to attract men’s attention. At this point, being from the same gender did not help and even hindered my relations with women.

One man told me that the Jewish people came from Heybeli (another Princes’ island) to Burgaz. Heybeli Jews were less wealthy than the Jews in Burgaz. He also told me that the Jews were a bit scared and would be reluctant to talk to me and I should look for why they behaved like this and why some of them started to leave the country. I interpreted that these were due to past events such as the Wealth Tax, the riots against the minorities in 1955 and more so about the Gaza events and the current tension between Turkey and Israel. Furthermore, I also thought that the presence of the military and nationalist people in Heybeli must have made them so uncomfortable that they started to move to Burgaz where their number increased in such a way that this club turned into a “Jewish club”. Moreover, a few weeks later, I asked Ahmet to let me in to do observation. As my Jewish friends from Büyükada were coming to the club, they would be able to introduce me to the BC members. Ahmet let me in for free. I asked him if I could take some pictures. He said that this club is very rare and maybe the only one in the Middle East. He added that the Middle East was in turmoil which was why he would like to protect the members of the club. Then, I said I would only observe and try to meet people to talk to in order to get information for my thesis. All of these quick responses I got from my first couple of visits signalled to me that I needed to understand the discomfort of the Jewish people on the island. Hanging out in the BC would not be enough to create more relations with the Jewish community. I was standing out as a stranger. So I thought that one way of getting to know the Jewish community would be to do participant observation in mixed places. I hung out at the restaurants and cafes where I went with the islanders I knew, such as the people who work at the Teacher’s hostel and the members of the SC club. Eating in restaurants with the islanders made me welcomed
by the owners and the chefs. I was therefore invited to the tables of the clients and got to
know mixed groups including Jewish clients. In Chapter 5, I explore in more depth the
conviviality at the restaurants including the interactions between the Jewish people and
non-Jews.

In sum, the inclusions and exclusions of social space reflect compartmentalization of people into groups. The analysis of conviviality in different social spaces suggest that the islanders form groups on the basis of sharing similar preferences or lifestyle (age groups, gender, liking sunbathing or preferring the shade, liking to drink or not) which goes beyond categorisations of ethnicity or religion. Class difference plays an important role in how space is shared, however people belonging to the same class do not necessarily get along well and share the same space. As shown in the examples within the social clubs, competitions and negotiations of power create tension among people who have similar class backgrounds.

c) Methodology for Different Seasons

During the summer of 2009, until the end of October, I was dispersed in many places on the island, at cafes, restaurants, public places, social clubs and places of worship. I used these places to build and expand my network on the island. The islanders and I both used the snowballing method to introduce me to each other. On the one hand I relied on who they wanted me to meet. They guided me: “Deniz, you should meet X. Deniz, you should talk to Y. Deniz, let me introduce you to Z.” On the other hand, whenever I felt the need to meet someone or have access to a place, I also asked them to take me to that place or introduce me to whomever I wanted to talk to.

Now, I will briefly outline the chain of relationships I formed; explain who introduced me to whom and the ways in which I used space to expand my network in different seasons. Who introduced me to whom was important for me to see connections between individuals from different classes, religious or ethnic communities.
That summer was a perfect time to visit places of worship because coincidentally important dates of different faith groups happened at the same time. Furthermore, the Rum Orthodox churches (Ay Yanni, Garipi Monastery and church, Metamorphosis Church), Alevi cemevi (gathering house) and the synagogue are open in summer. While Burgaz’ population was primarily Rums, the three churches were open throughout the year. Today, they are closed in winter due to the decreased number of Rums in Burgaz (as well as Turkey). These religious places were very good places for me to build networks to expand my links and to get to know the daily life of the islanders.

Through my Rum friend, I had learnt that there were masses every Sunday from 9am until 12pm at the biggest Rum Orthodox church of Burgaz, Ay Yanni. Through her, I had already met many Rums, hence I felt more comfortable in visiting this church first. As I had already started learning Greek and I was trying to communicate with my broken Greek with the Rums, they had a very welcoming attitude towards me to join them in church and learn about their practices. The Rums were very open and welcoming to anyone who would want to come and attend masses. I attended the Sunday masses, the name day of the church, Fanouria (Figure 8), and the day of Virgin Mary. I observed that in Burgaz, these masses were also attended by friends of Rums such as Gregorian Orthodox Armenians, Orthodox Bulgarians, Sunnis, Alevis, Levantines, Italians and Rum Catholics, especially during special days, like Fanouria and mevlut (death anniversary ritual). While attending the church, I tried to make myself known to the Rum community in order to learn how the Rums left, and how the neighbourhood life and practices of conviviality have changed since many of them left. In Chapter 4, I explore which events made them feel uncomfortable and how they reflect on their past.
Figure 8: Fanouria day at Ay Yanni Rum Orthodox Church

Once I started forming relations with the Rums, Niko, a Rum teacher, introduced me to the imam. It was interesting for a Rum person to introduce me to the imam at the garden of Ay Yanni Church. So, I kept this in mind and in Chapter 5 of the thesis, I explore and analyse in depth the relationship between the imam, Niko and the Orthodox priest.

Through forming chains of relations, I also realised that the Jewish community collaborated with the Sunni Muslims to build the Sunni mosque. Engin Aktel, the journalist and writer, had put me in contact with the security of the Blue club. Engin is a secular Sunni Muslim and the security is a Zaza Alevi. This meant that the security trusted Engin to let me in the BC. Furthermore, the security introduced me to elder Jewish people within the BC to help my research. One of the oldest members of the BC told me how they had helped building the mosque. He said: “There was not any mosque on Burgaz until 1953. I told my Muslims friends from the BC, that they need a mosque in Burgaz. There are Catholic and Orthodox churches in Burgaz but where will the Muslims pray? So, we encouraged the Sunni Muslims. I went to the harbour and asked money from the islanders to contribute to the building of the mosque. My Muslim friend found a place to
build it, and the Muslim elites from Burgaz worked out to get the approval from the government. Finally, the mosque was built in 1954.” This story is significant because Jewish people and the Muslims collaborated in building the mosque. This kind of an attitude from the Jewish community also worked well in their favour. When the number of the Jewish inhabitants increased in Burgaz from the 1950s onwards, the Jewish community was also supported by the islanders in building a synagogue in Burgaz in 1968. This shows that different religious communities respect each other and encourage each other to meet their ends.

While I was doing participant observation at SC, I met Keldanis and Suryanis (Catholics) who told me that there were masses every Sunday between 9-10am at the Austrian Catholic Chapel, towards the peak of the island, and that I should come and visit the chapel. Encouraged by this welcoming attitude, I attended Sunday masses with the Catholics who were from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Suryanis, Keldanies, Germans, Rums, Armenians, Italians and Levantines were the regular attendees of the masses. Being Catholic was the overarching umbrella that brought different ethnic groups together. Greek, German, Turkish, English, Armenian and French were spoken at the garden after the mass while people had tea and coffee and shared the cakes and biscuits they made. This made me realise the diversities within the Catholics and I explore briefly the ways in which they manage this diversity in the Catholic chapel in the 5th chapter of my thesis.

Furthermore, Ramadan was in summer this year. Hence, I attended the mosque when the women were doing mukabele (reading collectively bits of the Koran in the mosque during the whole month of Ramadan). When there was a mevlut, the death anniversary of someone, the imam was invited to the house of the family whose relative had died, and recited the Koran followed by food and refreshments. While staying at the teacher’s hostel in summer, I was having coffee with my Zaza Alevi friend who was one of the managers of the teacher’s hostel. I saw her every day and she knew that I was attending the churches. She got curious and asked me: “Deniz, you have been to all the
churches, have you been to the mosque?” I said: “No, not yet. I mean I want to go to the mosque but I do not know yet anyone who attends the mosque. I would prefer to go with someone rather than going on my own. You know, I don’t know much about Islamic practices and the Muslims might judge me because of my ignorance, as I count as Sunni Muslim. It is easier for me to go to the churches, because as I am non-Christian and I am not supposed to know prayers or rituals so I feel more comfortable in churches”. She said: “Don’t worry; I can introduce you to Fatma abla (elder sister) who goes to mukabele in the mosque. She lives in my neighbourhood. I will tell her to pick you up from the teacher’s hostel, before she goes to the mosque”. It was again interesting that an Alevi introduced me to a Sunni woman and the Sunni woman trusted an Alevi person to meet with me and to take me to the mosque. The next day, I met with Fatma abla and we went to mukabele together. There she introduced me to the imam’s wife and her friends. I was invited to breaking the fast meals and mevluts, through which I built connections with the Sunni Muslim community and in Chapter 5, I explore different ways of practising Islam by devout Muslim women (some wear headscarf some do not) and secular Muslim women. Due to the segregation of gender in the practice of Islam, my observations were limited to women’s religious practices. Through the imam’s wife’s friendship network, I met permanent Sunni women inhabitants, their families and attended women’s money days.

Ayhan, the secular republican ex-MP from the CHP (the Republican Party), to whom I was introduced by a secular Sunni woman at the annual council of the Princes’ Islands, in turn introduced me to Nuri, the head of Alevi cemevi (Alevi gathering house and place of worship). Ayhan and Nuri have a good relationship. Nuri invites him to the events that take place in cemevi and the tea garden next to cemevi. Ayhan attends cemevi when he is invited. Nuri was very helpful in letting me know about when there was cem (Alevi gathering ritual), meals distributed when a Muslim (both Sunni and Alevi) died and when there were panels about Alevism and what Alevis demanded from the state (which I explore in more depth in Chapter 5). I also hung out frequently at the cemevi tea place which is near cemevi. This is a place where Alevis as well as Armenians, Sunnis and people from any faith come to socialise. I usually went there with my young, communist, Alevi
informants and my Armenian friend. The head of cemevi became one of my key informants as his father was one of the first Alevis who settled on Burgaz and he told me his memories of how they adapted to the island life coming from Erzincan from eastern Turkey, how the Rums left and how people’s neighbourhood relations changed since he was a child (explored in Chapter 4).

Through my ties with both the Sunni and Alevi community on Burgaz, and building on my observations in cemevi, the mosque and the interactions of Sunnis and Alevis in daily life, in the 5th chapter, I explore the ways in which Alevis and Sunnis interacted with each other in daily life, the importance and significance of cemevi for the Alevis, diverse ways of being Sunni and Alevi, where they have common grounds of interactions and in which contexts tension arises among Alevis, among Sunnis and between Alevis and Sunnis.

The synagogue was the last religious place for me to get access. Unlike the other religious places which are open to everyone, there is a security guard waiting at the door of the synagogue. After the bombing of the synagogues in Istanbul in 2003, Gaza events and the worsening relations between Turkey and Israel, the Jewish community was getting more uncomfortable. I will leave the suspense here about how I got to the synagogue and how my presence was taken there, because I will explain the ways in which the political context affected the relationship between the Jewish people and people from other faiths in more detail in Chapter 5.

Whenever I was introduced to someone or I introduced myself, I made sure to say that I was doing research for my PhD. For every photo I took, semi-structured interviews I made, and interviews I recorded, I told my informants that I would use the information for my PhD thesis. Throughout the thesis, I anonymised the names of my informants (except the names of journalists, novel writers and documentary makers) and of places (e.g. restaurants, cafes). At the end of each day, after having done around 16-18 hours of fieldwork, I wrote my daily ethnographic journal on my netbook, including my observations, casual chats, questions in my mind and notes I took on my tiny notebooks.
The islanders were interested in telling me about their knowledge of Burgaz; hence they expected me to take notes while we were talking. The first interviews I had were semi-structured. I had some themes in my mind while I was asking questions such as their island memories, when and why they came to the island, who moved out from Burgaz, what changed since their arrival and so on. I decided to let them guide the interview and tell me what was important for them. I, then, passed these interviews to my netbook every night. Until the end of my fieldwork, I made 28 semi-structured interviews that were 1-2 hours long with a wide range of informants from different age, gender, class, ethnic, religious, career, political, educational and linguistic backgrounds. I did not record these interviews but I took notes during them. Participant observation, following people and letting them take me around the island, casual chats and semi-structured interviews gave me a broader sense of how the island life was. However, by the beginning of November, I was exhausted by the strain of constantly being an outsider, negotiating boundaries of social clubs, trying to gain the approval, acceptance and appreciation of the elites, summer and permanent inhabitants and of following diverse lives. I always felt the need to observe and participate more and more, and the anxiety to try to be everywhere and not to miss out anything (Candea 2007: 174) burnt me out. My health system collapsed and I found myself with high cholesterol, insomnia and a broken metabolism, visiting doctors and having blood tests.

Finally, the winter came. Schools opened. Rain, wind and cold drove away the day-trippers and summer inhabitants. The non-Muslim worship places closed. The restaurants and cafes became less busy. A few corner shops, one patisserie and one grocer remained open during winter. Some restaurants started to be open only at the weekends. It was the time for the permanent inhabitants to rest for a long time. The kahve became a place exclusive to men. The shop owners and unemployed young men started to pass their free time in kahve. The social clubs closed. Hence, the permanent inhabitants had a lot of free time to hang out in each other’s houses. It was the perfect time for me to hang out with the shop owners, as they had a lot of time to talk to me. Hence, I spent time with the grocer (Figure 9), in the patisserie, with the owners of the
restaurants, with horse-cart drivers in *ahır* (Figure 10), chatted and also did interviews with them. I sometimes took notes while they were talking to me, and sometimes recorded them. In the 4th chapter of the thesis, I explored their memories, how and why they came to the island, which jobs they did and analysed the ways in which class difference affected their customer/client, summer/permanent relations and friendship relations. From winter onwards, I started to record some of my interviews after feeling that the informants got to know me better and felt comfortable. By the end of my fieldwork I had 16 recorded interviews (1-2 hours, some much longer) and my mother transcribed them for me, which was an amazing help when I analysed my interviews and wrote up my thesis.

![Figure 9: Spontaneous lunch with the grocers, with the author on the right](image)
The separation of men and women’s leisure enhances the patterns of sex segregation in Turkey (Kiray 1981: 268, Mansur 1972: xvi, Kandiyoti 1977: 61). Given these patterns of sex segregated leisure as well as being myself a young, unmarried Turkish woman, I had more access to women’s world. For instance, in October 2009, I signed up to a Turkish traditional embroidery class which the permanent female inhabitants attended twice a week between October and May. The classes were run by the Public Education sector of the Princes’ Islands, connected to the Ministry of Education. We were about ten women, a mixture of Kurds, Alevis and Sunnis. During embroidery classes, I got to know them better and got to meet their friends, families and neighbours. Building on Cowan’s work (1991) in the Macedonian town in Sohos, I paid attention to the sociality that women enjoy, their gossips, exchanging news and their memories of Burgaz. While embroidering (Figure 11), I listened to their talking about how the neighbourhood relations have changed since the Rums left. After the embroidery class, I hung out at the patisserie with my embroidery classmates, dropped by their houses to have tea, coffee, had lunch, baby sat, chatted and helped their children with their English.
Furthermore, my Sunni, Alevi and Kurdish female friends were very hospitable in having me to their houses. While their husbands were at work or socialising in kahve, women dropped by each other’s houses to read coffee cups, knit and embroider. In the evenings, they visited each other’s families, watched TV, soap operas, football matches and ate together. The permanent inhabitants who had modest lives made me feel more relaxed and cosy in their houses. In contrast to feeling self-conscious, as I had with the summer elite people, I felt more at home while I had tea and coffee with the permanent inhabitants.
I attended *para günü* (money day) that permanent Turkish Sunni Muslim women had (Figure 12). In Turkey and in Northern Cyprus, women hold *gün* which means day and during the *gün*, each guest brings an agreed amount of money, gold or silver (White 1994: 10, Katip-Cahidi 1996: 247). Women agree on how often they meet (monthly or bi-monthly), who hosts when, and at each rotation, the guest give that agreed amount to the host who offers food, tea or coffee. This Turkish Sunni Muslim group met in one woman’s house every two weeks and everyone gave 50 Liras (20 pounds) to the host and they took turns. These women read parts of the Koran once they gathered together. The sociality during these money days was different than the ways in which Jalaseh women in Iran exchange food, help each other and share duties as a practice of Islam as explored by Torab (1998, 2007). Unlike the Jalaseh women who bond with each other within a religious paradigm, increase their piety and put their piety into practice (Torab 1998, 2007), this Turkish Sunni Muslim group spent their time exchanging news in the neighbourhood, gossiped, consumed food and tea, embroidered or knitted, joked and read bits of the Koran to wish prosperity to the host woman. Most of them wore headscarves. Their ages ranged between 40-70. The younger ones did not wear headscarf.
and while some bits of the Koran was read, they went to the other room to check on their children. Some of these women worked as cleaners in the summer people’s houses; some made juice or pastry at home to be sold at the social clubs; some of them did not work so their husband provided the money and the woman spent it on what she needed. Their husbands favoured this exchange to receive a lump of money in order to buy household items. No one profited but, as they had to give 50 liras to a person every two weeks, they had to keep aside that money; hence it was one way of saving.

Some of these women said that this rotation was not “neighbourhood relations” because you gave prior notice and it was an organised ritualistic event. However, a good neighbour meant that you were close enough to drop by without prior notice and you were there to help whenever needed (for example giving a hand when someone had many visitors, dropping by to ask for lemons or pepper etc.). However, some women told how the rotation counted as neighbourhood relations because you chose whom to include and whose house to visit and whom to invite to your house. These women asked me to join their rotation which was a great sign of acceptance. However, as a researcher, I felt uncomfortable at being included in the money transaction and being committed to pay regularly. I explained to them that I would not be able to commit to the payment, which they understood as some of their friends could not financially commit either. So these friends joined the money day sometimes to socialise. As I did not enter the rotation, every time I went to the money day, I brought a dish or a dessert to the host, participated in the sociability, helped them setting the table, serving tea and taking care of their babies when they chatted to each other.

This rotational group of the Turkish Sunni Muslim women was a great opportunity for me to learn about Sunni Muslim religious practices, neighbourhood relations and the ways in which they perceive non-Muslims, secular Muslims and Alevis. As a non-practising Muslim and a secular person, I had to negotiate my identity when I engaged with these Sunni Muslims. I explained and analysed my negotiations with these women in the 5th chapter. Through hanging out both with these Sunni Muslim women
and through building a network with the Alevis, I wanted to explore the relationships between Sunnis and Alevis.

So, during the last summer of my fieldwork, I rented a very small single flat (like a hobbit house where only a person as tiny as I could fit) in Ay Nikola, where the majority is Alevis. My landlady was a religious Turkish Sunni Muslim. We were neighbours to many Zaza Alevi families and very close to Ay Nikola Tea Garden. When any of my neighbours would see me walking home, if they were eating or having coffee, they would always invite me to join. Depending on whether I had an empty or full stomach or how busy I was, I would either join them or tell them that I had to go home to get ready for an event or an interview. I also invited women to come to my house and women started to drop by. They would still give me prior notice as they knew that I was always busy visiting people and doing research.

When some anthropologists like Ring (2006), Sorabji (1994) and Bringa (1995) explored interactions between people belonging to different ethnic and religious groups, they focused more on the conviviality among women and the ways in which they socialised and exchanged food in each other’s houses. In Burgaz, for certain social activities such as women’s money day, embroidery class and men socialising in kahve in winter, leisure was gender segregated. However, in most other cases, men and women socialised together, through the sharing of food and drinks, in restaurants and cafes as well as in houses. In many occasions, I was invited to Sunni Muslim, Jewish, Armenian and Rum summer inhabitants’ houses when men and women had dinner or lunch together. Once, I was invited to a Sephardic Jewish dinner offered by a lovely couple. They had invited their Jewish and secular Sunni Muslim friends and cooked Sephardic cuisine on a non-religious day. Furthermore, in a building where Armenians, Protestants, secular Sunni Muslims and religious Sunni Muslims lived in separate flats, neighbours (men and women) gathered together in the garden to have a Ramadan meal altogether. Jewish families invited Jewish and non-Jewish friends for Shabbat dinner. These invitations and gathering among the summer inhabitants were most of the time given with prior notice.
However, permanent inhabitants, Sunni or Alevi, were not bothered if someone not invited showed up, they did not have an idea of “crashing”. You would just drop by and bring friends with you. For example, one woman once invited the embroidery class students to her house. I did not know her. The other woman assured “Of course you should go”. She was a Turkmen Alevi from the Black Sea region. She had invited another Zaza Alevi from Erzincan and a Kurdish Alevi from Sivas to the barbecue. I went there with another teacher from the embroidery class. She and her husband were very hospitable. They offered beer. Alevi like drinking; they even drink during Ramadan. I told them that I wanted to rent a house in Ay Nikola. The woman in Erzincan found me the house I moved into later and she became my neighbour. I dropped by many Alevi’s and Sunnis’ houses and they offered tea and breakfast dishes like cheese, tomatoes, olives and so on. Whatever they had in the house, they would always offer.

2.4 Conclusion

Building on Green (2005), I argued that Burgaz is not a distinct, particular and marginal place but an ambiguous place, its relative location, being close to Istanbul, a cosmopolitan city and being separated by it by water, created movements and migrations, which made Burgaz, at different times in history, a place of exile, a resort and also a melting pot of diversity. The geographic location, its size, the weather conditions, the seasonal population fluctuations, the dynamics between summer and permanent inhabitants affected the conviviality on the island. Similarly, time and space dictated my fieldwork methodology and I conducted my fieldwork according to the population fluctuations between summer and winter and the social use of space.

Influenced by Lefèbvre (1991), I analysed the social use of space as a tool to explore the conviviality on Burgaz. Through getting access to different networks and places, I concluded that the islanders did not form friendship groups because of ethnicity and religion but because of sharing a common lifestyle and tastes. While the religious bonds were more solidified in religious places, most of these places were open to people from different religions as well. Moreover, the hegemony of the bourgeois (which was, in
the case of Burgaz, the wealthy upper-middle summer inhabitants belonging to different ethnic and religious backgrounds) was concretised through the use of space (Lefèbvre 1991: 32); the organising committee of the social clubs set the rules of exclusion and inclusion and whom to grant membership or access to clubs. As de Certeau (1984: 98) pointed out, when the islanders came across spatial exclusion due to class difference and could not become a member of the social clubs, they found alternative places, such as the bays to hang out. Furthermore, the islanders chose to socialise in restaurants, cafes or bays not only because of financial reasons but also because of personal preferences (e.g. some people who could afford it nonetheless did not become members of the social clubs as preferred socialising in the bays). Being part of the same class created the same standards of living; however, there were tensions within the same class because of jealousy and competition. This was also true for gender relations. While women and men enjoyed sociality in separate groups, this also created inner tensions within the same gender. Population fluctuations in summer and winter created both a sense of temporariness for the summer inhabitants and a place of stuckness for the permanent ones. While the permanent islanders became richer, they still had to work in summer in contrast to the summer inhabitants who relaxed.

The island as a social place hosts diverse ways of living and this creates both harmonious moments and tensions. Having explored the social use and division of space and the existing cultural pluralism and diversity in Burgaz through the prism of conviviality, in the next chapter, I describe the change of demographics in Burgaz and explore the ways in which the wider political, historical and regional context affected the construction, categorisation and crystallisation of differences which triggered migrations of people belonging to different ethnic, class and religious backgrounds to and from the island.
CHAPTER 3

HISTORICAL, REGIONAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND:

FROM THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE TO MODERN TURKEY

3.1 Introduction

Burgaz is not isolated from the mainland. Hence, whatever happened in the history of Constantinople/Istanbul had an impact on the island. The wider political situation during the empires and modern Turkey brought changes to the demographics in Burgaz. The first aim of this chapter is to contextualise and set the historical, regional and political background of Burgaz. In this chapter, I document the transition from the Ottoman Empire to the building of the modern Turkish state, drawing attention to the emergence of national and ethnic identities and the categorisation of differences. I have identified the major historical and political events (e.g. the 1955 riots), and Turkish foreign and domestic policies (e.g. the Wealth Tax, the 1964 expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship) that the islanders talked about as factors that have affected their social life on Burgaz. This background information is useful to understand the historical and political events and time periods that are explored in later empirical chapters on memory, religion, and the islanders’ perception and representation of the diversity in Burgaz. In order to understand the debates that the islanders engage with when they talk about pluralism, ethnic and religious identities, and secularism versus the public display of religion, towards the end of the chapter, I explore the current political situation and the discourses of difference under AKP rule in Turkey.

The second aim of this chapter is to explain the second part of my research question concerning “the Post-Ottoman, homogenising context in Turkey”; I explore the homogenisation process from the modern Turkish state’s nation-building process until the present. I situate the emergence of the Turkish state within the nation building process of the modern Balkan states during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Before the rise of nationalisms in the Balkans towards the end of 19th Century, the
categorisation of difference was mainly based on religion and the main social division was between Muslims and non-Muslim millets. Influenced by nationalism and modernity, newly forming Balkan states emphasised ethnic and religious differences in order to construct their own national identity. The nation building processes were homogenising, because the Balkan nation states used restrictive foreign and domestic policies (e.g. population exchange, linguistic and economic restrictions) against internal others - minorities. The mobilisation of ethnic and national identities and the definition of the collective self in opposition to others brought instability and violence to the region and hindered cultural pluralism. In the post-Ottoman context in Turkey, “coexistence” explains the homogenisation process, the construction of differences, the crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and the ruptures in cultural pluralism such as the 1955 riots. As Burgaz is not isolated from the wider political context in Turkey, the homogenisation had an indirect effect on the island: it changed the island demographics. The minorities, who felt oppressed in Istanbul and whose friends and relatives started to leave, also decided to leave Burgaz. When the Rums were leaving Burgaz, the island was receiving Jewish, Armenian, Sunni Muslim, Alevi and Kurdish migrants. This change of demographics on the island brought new patterns of sociality between its old and new inhabitants.

3.2 Categorisation of Difference:

From the Ottoman Times to Nation-States in the Balkans

In this section of the chapter, I describe the ways in which the categorisations of differences were constructed, changed and reinscribed from the Ottoman times and during the nation-building of Modern Turkey. It is important to analyse this process, because it affected the ways in which the non-Muslim millets of the Ottoman Empire were turned into minorities in Turkey and the homogenisation process during the nation building process of Turkey affected the population movements to and from Burgaz, especially the non-Muslims of Burgaz.
As Cowan (2001: 156) points out “A minority is better understood as a product of particular ideological, social, political and economic processes, rather than a clear-cut component of a pre-existing multiplicity. In most cases, minorities are formulated at the moment of state formation”. Building on Cowan’s work, in the first subsection, I first describe the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire and in the second subsection, I explore the construction of nationalisms which created a “sense of coexistence of different ethnic and national groups” which brought instability to the Balkans. In the third subsection, I explore the ways in which the logic and the bureaucracy of the *millet* system was incorporated in the Treaty of Lausanne and persisted in the recognition of the non-Muslims as minorities of the Turkish Republic.

**a) Ottoman Times: Before Nation-States**

Perry Anderson (2008a) defines the coexistence of Jews and Christians under Ottoman Muslim rule as “premodern multicultural harmony”. According to Anderson, it was not “modern tolerance” because non-Muslims paid higher taxes than Muslims, could not have houses above certain heights and could not take Muslim wives or possess guns (Anderson 2008a). According to Mazower, who is a prominent example of a revisionist and non-nationalist scholar, the Ottoman Empire made coexistence possible at a time when such coexistence was not seen anywhere else in Europe, because under the Sultan’s rule people were not identified and separated as belonging to different ethnicities (Mazower 2000: 16-17).

Nonetheless, religion was a salient category. The population was separated into Muslims and non-Muslims (Mazower 2000: 52). According to Karpat, the *millet* system was a constitutional, social and administrative unit based on religious communities (Karpat 1982: 142). The *millet* system emerged in the mid-15th Century, after the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmet II (Karpat 1982: 145). Communities were divided by religion and their religious authorities such as kadis, bishops and rabbis were responsible for their own communities (Mazower 2000: 64). The clergy was powerful and in charge of the church organisation, the schools, and the legal and court system as well
as church and *vakf* properties (Karpat 1982: 145). Karpat argues that *millet* system emphasised religious unity and superseded the ethnic and linguistic differences (Karpat 1982: 143). According to Lewis: “In the Empire, there was a Muslim *millet*, but no Turkish or Arab or Kurdish *millets*; there were Greek and Armenian and Jewish *millets*, but as religious communities, not as ethnic nations” (Lewis 1961: 329). Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians, Albanians, Wallachians, Moldavians, Ruthenians, Croatians, Caramanians, Syrians, Melkites and Arabs were registered under the Greek *millet*; Armenians, Syrians, Chaldaeans, Copts, Georgians and Abyssinians were registered under the Armenian Millet (Ormanian 1955: 61 cited in Karpat 1982: 146). The Empire did not aim to convert people to Islam (Mazower 2000: 58, Anderson 2008a). However, this tolerance towards different religions was opportunistic and functional. As long as Christians paid their taxes, they were self-governing within their communities (Mazower 2000: 58). There was discrimination between Christians and Muslims. Christians were treated as second-class in comparison with Muslims. As Christians did not perform military service they paid more taxes. Thus, in order to profit from being Muslim, many Christians and non-believers in general converted to Islam (Mazower 2000: 57). In that period, 80% of the population in Ottoman Europe was Christian (Mazower 2000: 58). Furthermore, the Ottoman sultans married Serbian, Greek and non-Muslim princesses (Mazower 2005: 24) who changed their names and converted to Islam (Goodwin 2006).

The binary distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims existed; and religious difference was recognised. However, the practices of daily life did not reflect clear-cut religious categorisations. People respected the fact that their neighbours followed their own beliefs, and in times of crisis they asked for each other to pray to their own God and messiahs (Mazower 2000: 65). Christians, Jews and Muslims would use each other’s amulets when their own did not work (Mazower 2000: 86). For instance, a Muslim woman would try to get a hair from a Jewish person’s beard to reduce fever; Muslim children had Muslim prayers read over them in churches; Christian children were blessed by Muslims hodjas (Mazower 2005: 86). In some parts of Macedonia, people went to mosque on Friday and to church on Sunday and said that they were Muslims of the Virgin
Mary (Mazower 2000: 68). Non-Muslims sometimes used sharia law even though no Muslims were involved in the issue (Mazower 2000: 69) People became blood-brothers even though they belonged to different religions (Mazower 2000: 71-72). Intermarriage between Muslims and Christians was not uncommon (Mazower 2000: 70). In a Bulgarian memoir in 1870, it was remarked that Turks and Bulgarians got on well as neighbours in the villages, their children played together; in the neighbourhood, people spoke enough Bulgarian and Turkish to converse with each other; even though both had their own faith, customs and clothing, they accepted belief as it was without making a value judgement (Mazower 2000: 75-76). This shows that in daily life, people were aware of their religious, ethnic and linguistic differences; however these differences had not yet been mobilised to create a sense of coexistence - people did not have a strong ethnic identity. Although Ottoman Turkish was used as a court language, the Ottoman Empire did not restrict the use of language. People were multilingual. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu remarked that in Constantinople Turkish, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Slavonian, Wallachian, German, Dutch, French, English, Italian, Hungarian were spoken (Mazower 2000: 56-57).

However, it is important to note that Ottoman times were neither utopian, nor even merely violence-free. For example, the Ottomans used violence in order to conquer and keep control of the lands in the Balkans (Kontogiorgi 2006: 24). Non-Muslims were legally discriminated against. There was hostile behaviour by Muslims against non-Muslims in cities (Mazower 2000: 76). However, this violence was not due to ethnic differences because collective national and ethnic identity was not ascribed to social groups at that time; the sultan’s subjects were divided only by their faith (Kontogiorgi 2006: 25).

b) The Rise of Nationalisms in the Balkans: The Formation of Nation-States

Towards the end of the 19th Century, modernity, Enlightenment, industrialisation, capitalism and the emergence of nationalist ideologies influenced by European powers played a catalysing role in the emergence of violence in the Balkans.
Secularisation, the rise of science and the emergence of printing affected the ways in which people constructed their own identity in opposition to other(s). As a consequence of nationalist ideologies and the construction of collective identities based on nationality and ethnicity, Balkan states began struggling for independence and the Ottoman Empire started to lose territories.

The rise of nationalisms in the Balkans and the loss of the empire’s lands showed the need for internal reform in the Ottoman Empire (Anderson 2008a). In 1839, Tanzimat reforms legally guaranteed property rights, safety and honour for everyone regardless of religion or class (Ahmad 1993: 21). However, the reforms were superficial and Muslim supremacy continued. Non-Muslims paid poll tax unlike Muslims; only Muslims were allowed army and bureaucratic positions (Anderson 2008a: 6). Furthermore, the Empire was in great financial debt to foreign countries.

The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire would increase the power of Russia, Britain, and the USA in the Balkans (Mazower 2000: 101). Balkan states needed the help of Europe while building their nation-states during the collapse of the Ottoman Empire (Mazower 2000: 88). How these states would gain their independence and which territories they would possess formed “the Eastern Question”. The Great Powers wanted to take advantage, so they “helped” the Balkan states. The Great Powers mobilised national and ethnic identities in the Balkans in order to reach their aims. For instance, American Protestant missionaries translated and distributed the New Testament in Bulgarian and Bulgarian was used to create Bulgarian nationalism against the Greeks from whom Bulgarians were not previously able to differentiate themselves (Mazower 2000: 99). While Muslims killed Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians, they were also attacked and rebelled against by non-Muslims (Mazower 2000: 77, 100).

The Ottoman Empire started to lose its authority in Europe (Mazower 2000: 100). In 1878, defeated by Russia, it recognised the independence of Montenegro, Serbia, Romania and most of Bulgaria (Anderson 2008a: 7). While Greece got help from Britain; Bulgaria got help from the Russians. Britain did not like the idea that Russia was helping
Bulgaria and that Russia would get more land in the Balkans. Bulgaria sought help from Russia who promised Bulgaria the Macedonian land they had lost. Thus, the Balkan or the Eastern Question was not only about the Balkan states but other countries such as Britain, Russia and the United States who also had aims in the region (Mazower 2000: 101). Each of the emergent states believed that the Great Powers would help them in achieving their dreams: Romanians wanted Hungarian Transylvania, Serbs wanted Habsburg and Ottoman lands, Bulgarians claimed San Stefano, and Greeks dreamed about achieving the “Great Idea” of reviving the Byzantine Empire (Mazower 2000: 101-102).

The emergence of nationalism and the intervention of the Great Powers created a sense of coexistence - the construction of a national and ethnic identity in opposition to “others”- which brought instability in the Balkans. Nationalism was an important ideology that caused authorities to deport some categories of people and some people to migrate to new lands. In 1830, the Turks were transferred from Serbia’s country-side to its towns; and in 1860, all the Turks who lived in those towns were deported and their property was sold (Mazower 2000: 117). Furthermore, there was an economic crisis in the Ottoman Empire in the 1870s. The Empire was in debt to European powers and was not able to pay it back. Drought and floods exacerbated the crisis and caused famine in Anatolia. There was a fall in tax income and the government raised the taxes to deal with the situation. With the increase in taxes in Balkan provinces, Christian peasants rebelled in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria. For instance, Ottoman troops killed between 12000 and 15000 Bulgarians which created more animosity among the Christians towards the Ottoman Empire (Zurcher 1993: 76). Furthermore, in 1876-8, when the Russian army invaded, Muslims Tatars and Circassians escaped to Bulgaria and some Turks were massacred by the Russian army and Christian peasants. In Crete, the Muslim population dropped from 73,000 in 1881 to 27,850 in 1911. (Mazower 2000: 117).

During these nation-building processes, ethnic and cultural identities were intended to unite the nation’s subjects (Güven 2006: 103). Therefore, multi-national
empires started to disintegrate, while “ethnically homogenous” nations such as Montenegro, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Albania started to get independence with the help of the Great Powers. The Turks, through creating their own nationalism, aimed to build their own nation (Ahmad 1993: 4). The Young Turks aimed to reunite the Ottoman Empire and lessen the sultan’s power. They were divided in two groups. The Liberals, formed of upper class, educated, westernised individuals, appealed to a common Ottoman identity regardless of religious and ethnic differences (Ahmad 2002: 47, Mazower 2005: 275, Zurcher 1993: 133). The Unionists, members of the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP), were nationalists and wanted Turkish domination (Lewis 1961: 209). Having overthrown Abdülhamit II’s reign, the Young Turks came into power in 1908 (Lewis 1961: 205). With the rise of nationalisms, Christian subjects increasingly defined themselves as Greeks, Bulgarians or Armenians (Lewis 1961: 334) rather than Ottomans. So, as the empire was losing lands in the Balkans where the majority was Christian, the Young Turks shifted from Ottomanism to Islamism. However, being Muslim was still not enough to build a national identity because there were Muslims who were not Turks such as Albanian, Bosnian and Bulgarian Muslims (Mazower 2005: 281). The Young Turks were influenced by Yusuf Akçura, one of the leading figures of Turkism (Zurcher 1993: 133-134). Akçura argued that multinationalisms such as Ottomanism or Pan-Islamism was not enough to keep the Empire together and that only the unity of ethnic and religious identity under Turkism would guarantee the unification of the nation (Lewis 1961: 320-321). McCarty states that national identity among the Turks was weak before the First World War and that Turkish identity emerged as a reaction against Europe and the nationalisms of other ethnicities (e.g. Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians) (McCarty 1997: 209). Thus, relying on ethnic Turkishness as a nation-building ideology seemed more appealing and effective (Ahmad 1993: 39).

Between 1912 and 1922, massacres and acts of violence between Serbs, Turks, Albanians, Greeks and Bulgarians were common. “The Turks are fleeing before the Christians, the Bulgarians before the Greeks and the Turks, the Greeks and Turks before the Bulgarians and the Albanians before the Serbian” (the Carnegie commission (1914)
cited in Mazower 2000: 118). One half to two-thirds of the Armenian population perished in massacres or due to deprivation and disease during their forced deportation (Keyder 2003: 36). McCarty remarks that while Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia fought for their independence, many Turks were killed and exiled from the Balkans (McCarty 1997: 337-344).

During the First World War, the Young Turks joined the Central Powers and became an ally of Germany (Ahmad 1993: 40). The war brought on the end of Ottomans. The allies demanded the creation of an Armenian state in Anatolia. Britain also supported the establishment of a Kurdish state there. Armenians and Kurds did not gain their independence because they did not receive enough help from other countries (Ahmad 1993: 4). This also became a part of the “Eastern Question”. During the First World War, the Great Powers wanted to partition Anatolia and the Aegean shore, lessen the power of the Turks and assign Turkish territory to the United States or Britain under a mandate (Ahmad 1993: 462).

Mustafa Kemal (who took the surname Atatürk after having founded Turkey) and his friends (Unionists) were against the mandate and the hegemony of the Great Powers, and they wanted to keep the state as a whole without dividing it into ethnic states like for Kurds or Armenians and so on. Mustafa Kemal was respected for his military successes and as a leader. After the First World War, the Unionists prepared a resistance movement in Anatolia and Asia Minor against the occupation by the Great Powers (Zurcher 1993: 141). Mustafa Kemal called for a national struggle and fought the Turkish War of Independence against Greeks, British, Italians, Armenians, French who had invaded Anatolia and Eastern Thrace. The Turkish National Assembly created a parliament in 23 April 1920 and overthrew the authority of the Ottoman Emperor. This parliament also signed the Lausanne Pact on 23 July 1923. Atatürk signed the Pact as the Turkish government. The Republic was founded on 29 October 1923 (Ahmad 1993: 50-51). In the end, the First World War destroyed the Empire and led to Turkish independence free from the hegemony of the Great Powers (Ahmad 1993: 40).
However, in the end, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the intervention of the Great Powers did not bring a peaceful solution to the Eastern Question. Nationalism, irredentism and concerns about ethnic minorities continued. New ideologies such as communism and fascism also exacerbated the situation. According to Mazower, “the era of religion was over; that of ideology lay ahead: nationalism spanned them both” (Mazower 2000: 115).

c) Building Modern Nations in the Balkans:
The Situation of Minorities in Greece and Turkey

The period between the late 19th Century and the early 20th Century was characterised by the creation of modern nations (Hirschon 2003: 3) through constructing a unified national identity (Güven 2006: 103). In this section, I explore the creation of national identity in Greece and Turkey, which occurred in parallel with the homogenisation processes in each country. I focus on the construction of Greek and Turkish national identity, because the majority of Burgaz’ population was Rum and the homogenisation processes in Greece and Turkey and the international relations between the two nation-states had an impact on the Rum minority living in Burgaz. Ethnic and religious differences were identified to create homogenous national identities against internal and external others (Güven 2006).

For example, modern Greeks constructed their national identity through rediscovering their Hellenic and Byzantine history, values and philosophy and creating a sense of cultural superiority. Modern Greeks created an artificial link with Neo-Hellenic Enlightenment and against the Ottoman Empire who had been the “Other” (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008: 23, 55). In a similar way, Turkey appealed to Turkism which was the third fall back of the Young Turks after having tried Ottomanism and Pan-Islamism. Turkish

---

7 It must be noted that the founding members of the CUP, who started the Young Turk movement were actually not ethnically Turkish: Ibrahim Temo, an Albanian from Ohrid, Mehmed Resit, a Circassian from the Caucasus, Abdullah Cevdet & Ishak Sukuti were Kurdish from Arabkir and Diyarbakir (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008: 36). Turkism was used as a supranational identity (quoted from Hanoğlu 2002: 94-95 in Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008: 38).
identity was founded on the ideology of a secular, Western, modern and monolithic country regardless of ethnic, religious and class differences or any secessionist aims. Turkism tried to get rid of the pejorative connotation of the “Turk” as “backward” and a “barbarian” in order to create a sense of pride, but Turkism became extreme and formed a dominant ideology enforcing cultural hegemony over the minorities (Özkırımlı and Sofos 2008: 31, 69, 72).

Ideologies of nationalism and the construction of a new state reinforced the identification of different ethnicities. People who belonged to ethnic and/or religious backgrounds different from that of the modern state started to feel like outsiders. For example, the rise of Bulgarian and Greek nationalism made Jewish people identify more with the Ottoman Empire (Mazower 2005: 282), which had a more inclusive attitude towards the non-Muslim millets. When Greece conquered Salonica in 1912, Greece spent three weeks erasing the traces of 500 years of Ottoman life (Mazower 2005: 304). Greek tariffs replaced Ottoman ones. Street names were changed to Greek (Mazower 2005: 302). After 1912, a great number of Turks started to emigrate because they felt that it was impossible to live in Salonica as a Muslim/Turk anymore. Muslim Turks sold their properties very cheaply and left. Wherever Turks immigrated, they told stories of the difficult journeys and massacres they had experienced, thus creating hatred towards the Greeks and other minorities in the Ottoman territory. Moreover, with Britain’s support, Greece, under Venizelos’ government, occupied Izmir (Zurcher 1993: 141), the Rums of Izmir became an enemy for the Turks to fight against (Mazower 2005: 338, 340). Greek troops were defeated by Turkish armed resistance in Izmir in 1922 (Zurcher 1993: 141).

The population exchange between Turkey and Greece in 1923 was a homogenisation project which had significant consequences for the displaced people as well as for the remaining internal others – the minorities – in these two countries (Keyder 2003). During the Turkish national resistance movement, the main adversary for the Turks was not Britain or France but Greece (Zurcher 1993: 141). Supported by Britain, the Greeks invaded Asia Minor. The Entente wanted to impose harsh peace terms in August
1920 (The Treaty of Sevres) and Venizelos forced the Turkish resistance forces to accept these terms, which led a war followed by the defeat of the Greek forces in 1922 (Zurcher 1993: 141). As an outcome of the violence between Greeks and Turks during the Turkish independence war in 1921-1922 in Minor Asia (Zurcher 1993: 141, 159) both countries agreed on the compulsory exchange of populations to bring a cessation of hostility between these “unmixing people” (Hirschon 2003: 4). Ismet Paşa wanted to have a complete population exchange both because, the Great Powers were intervening in Turkish foreign policies in terms of dealing with the minority issues and because this would bring a more homogenous population (Oran 2003: 99). However, he wanted to exclude the Turkish minority of Western Thrace in Greece from the population exchange and instead to ask for a plebiscite in the region (Oran 2003: 100). Similarly, Venizelos wanted Greeks to remain in “Constantinople” as a reminder of the Megali Idea and to prevent the need for the Rum Patriarchate to be relocated from Istanbul to Greece (Oran 2003: 99). As a compromise between İnönü’s and Venizelos’ aims, the Rums of Bozcaada, Gökçeada and Istanbul (whose number exceeded 100,000) and the Muslims of Western Thrace (numbered about 124,000) in Greece were excluded from the compulsory exchange of populations (Akgönül 2004: 36, Bahcheli 1990: 11, Oran 2002: 98-99, Mazower 2000: 120, Hirschon 2003: 8).

The population exchange between Turkey and Greece and the rights of the remaining minorities formed a part of the Treaty of Lausanne. The Pact of Lausanne signed on 30 January 1923 agreed that religion would be the criterion of nationality, so that the Muslims of Greece would count as “Turks” and were sent to Turkey and that the Orthodox of Turkey would count as “Greeks” and be sent to Greece. For instance, in Crete and Macedonia all the Muslims were considered to be “Turks” regardless of their ethnicity or language (Güven 2006: 107). As Cowan (2008) argues despite the fluidity and the multiplicity of identities of the people, their identities were ethnically and nationally fixed at the moment of deportation. 400,000 Muslim-Turks left Greece and 900,000 Rums left Turkey (Zurcher 1993: 171). However, Greece received a total of 1.2 million refugees
after the Asia Minor Catastrophe after the defeat of the Greek army in Izmir in 1922 (Oran 2003: 100).

The immigrants of both countries had to leave everything behind (e.g. properties, friends, jobs) (Oran 2003: 101) and were not welcomed in their new country. Many of the new comers to Greece spoke Turkish and they were not considered “fully Greek” by the Greeks (Hirschon 1998); they were “Turkish seeds” (Mazower 2005: 360). The outcomes of the population exchange were worse than expected (Oran 2002: 101), because it demonstrated that the “other” had to be sent away (Hirschon 2003: 10) and it reinforced the sense of otherness for the remaining minorities in each nation (Güven 2006: 108).

In the Treaty of Lausanne, non-Muslims were given minority status in Turkey and Turkish government agreed to assure the protection of life and liberty of all its citizens including the minorities (Turlington 1924: 700). Therefore, Rums, Armenians and Jews legally counted as minorities of the Turkish government. This implied that the logic and the bureaucracy of the millet system of the Ottoman Empire was incorporated in the Treaty of Lausanne and persisted in recognition of non-Muslims as minorities in the Turkish Republic. The Rum, Armenian and Jewish millets of the Ottoman Empire were now the Rum, Armenian and Jewish minorities of the Turkish Republic.

As the Rums of Istanbul and the Turks in Western Thrace were excluded from the population exchange, the Rums of Burgaz (as an island in Istanbul) stayed on the island. During the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires and in the early years of the Turkish Republic, the majority of Burgazada islanders were members of the Rum Greek Orthodox minority in Turkey. Starting from the period of westernisation from the 19th Century onwards, French, British and Ottoman elites used the islands as resorts (Deleon 2003: 154-155). The Austrian Catholic Chapel and the adjacent residence for nuns and priests were built in 1905 on Burgaz (Tuğlacı 1992: 267-268). Germans who worked under the Ottoman Empire as gardeners and architects as well as Ashkenazi Jews who migrated from Northern and Eastern parts of Europe to Ottoman lands bought property on the island to
use as summer resorts. Towards the end of the Ottoman Empire and during the first years of the Turkish Republic, Sunni Muslim families moved to Burgaz to take jobs related to the government, such as working as a police officer; and Sunni Muslim elites bought properties in Burgaz to use as summer resorts. In the 1930s, Sunni Muslim captains from the Black Sea coast of Turkey, mainly from Ordu and Trabzon, settled in Burgaz for employment reasons. In the 1940s, the island started receiving small-scale migration from Anatolia. People from Erzincan came to Burgaz to work temporarily in the summers. Therefore, Burgaz which used to be a “Rum fisherman village” started to become a diverse place for the remaining Rums, the new non-Muslim and Muslim settlers.

During my fieldwork in Burgaz, my informants referred to political events, time periods, foreign and domestic policies and political regimes in Turkey that have affected their lives in Burgaz. In the next section, I explore the ways in which the political context in Turkey during the one-party regime (1923-1945), the Democratic Party rule (1945–1960) affected the situation of the minorities and changed the demographics in Burgaz. The situation of the minorities was not only affected by the rule of the Turkish governments but also by the international relations between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus.

3.3 Building Modern Turkey:

a) Domestic policies of Turkish governments

With Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as the first president and Ismet Inönü as the first prime minister, the Republican People’s Party (RPP, Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (CHP) in Turkish) came into power in 1923 (Zurcher 1993: 174). Both were former members of the CUP, Committee of Union and Progress among the Young Turks (Akdeniz and Göker 2011: 319). Inspired by Western European liberalism and following secular and national ideologies, the government was centralised and authoritarian (Zurcher 1993: 176). For instance, Muslim law was replaced by Swiss, French and Italian law; Arabic script changed to Latin alphabet; Islamic clothes like the fez (for men) and the veil (for women) were banned (Özyürek 2006: 14). These modernist and European reforms formed the foundations of Kemalism, an ideology named after Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, which had six
principles: nationalism, republicanism, statism, populism, revolutionarism and secularism (Özyürek 2006: 14). Furthermore, the CHP government implemented policies of “Turkification” which I describe as the process of unifying the Turkish nation by creating a Turkish bourgeois class with a stronger socio-economic power.

The Turkish government tried to Turkify the bureaucratic system by following a nationalist approach during industrialisation\(^8\) (Güven 2006: 109); between November, 1922 and March 1923, 110 Rum and 21 Armenian enterprises were closed (Güven 2006: 109); people were also encouraged to consume “Turkish products” (Güven 2006: 112); enterprises started to replace non-Muslim employees with Muslim ones\(^9\) (Kuyucu 2005:110, 370). Thus, Jews, Rums and other non-Muslims started to emigrate from 1934 onwards. 9000 Rums emigrated from Turkey in 1934.

Atatürk and Kemalists took on board Ziya Gökalp’s “one nation, one education” theory and in 1924 the education system was unified under one code of practice (Kaplan 2006: 41). The Latin alphabet started to be used; Persian and Arabic words were taken out of the language and new Turkish words were created from Turkic root words. There were campaigns such as “Speak Turkish!” Armenians, Jews, Rums and Arabs were not allowed to speak their language in public places such as restaurants and theatres in the 1930s (Güven 2006: 114, Bali 2000 cited in Kuyucu 2005: 370). Minority schools did not receive enough financial aid and the number of students lessened day by day (Güven 2006: 116, 117).

Furthermore, the secularism and the national ideologies based on Turkish identity received reactions and resistance from Kurds and Alevis. Discontented by the abolition of the caliphate and the repression of Kurdish language, Kurds rebelled in 1925 but were repressed by the government (Zurcher 1993: 178, Anderson 2008a, Ahmad

---

\(^8\) The National Turkish Commerce Union founded in 1923 and funded by the government, aimed for Turkish business men and bankers to secure their place in the industry (Güven 2006: 109).

\(^9\) In December 1934, the new commercial law entitled “Türk vatandaşlarına tahsis edilen Sanat ve Hizmetler Hakkında Kanun” implied that non-Muslims would be able to do menial work such as being a butcher, grocer or baker (Güven 2006: 111).
Furthermore, Alevis in Dersim region resisted the centralisation of government. During the Ottoman times, Dersim used to have an autonomous, feudal mode of self-governance (Öz: 2008: 131). The Dersim region is made of valleys surrounded by high mountains. Its inhabitants were mainly Zaza Alevis (Öz 2008: 183, 185). Due to its geography, it remained isolated and hence the inhabitants kept their traditional tribal ways of living (Öz 2008: 130). It was ruled by the sheiks and its economy relied on plunder (Öz 2008: 131). There were always conflicts between the region’s sheikhs (Öz: 2008: 176). During the foundation of the Turkish republic, Dersim’s inhabitants did not change the way they lived. The sheiks and the inhabitants were not registered as tax payers and did not pay taxes (Öz 2008: 135, 137). In 1935, the Turkish government wanted to take control of the region by building hospitals, roads, government buildings, bridges and schools and this was contradictory to the ways in which the sheikhs lived their lives, which challenged their authority in Dersim (Öz 2008: 176-177). In 1937 and 1938, there were conflicts between the sheikhs and government authorities (Öz 2008: 177). The sheikhs that were caught were executed (Öz 2008: 180). The conflicts reached their peak in 1937 and 1938, whereupon the army intervened, and destroyed the villages in Dersim (Öz 2008: 194-195, Anderson 2008a); 10,000 people died (Öz 2008: 195). The Dersim rebellion and the killings in Dersim came up quite often during my fieldwork and were referred to by politicians like Erdogan, which I explore in more depth in chapter 4.

During the Second World War, Turkey was suspicious towards not only the minorities but also the foreigners who worked in the country (Akgönül 2007: 108). ID checks were very frequent and the minorities were taken back to do military service even though they had just returned back from it (Akgönül 2007: 109). In 1939, the law that the minorities would be taken to do military service was passed (Akgönül 2007: 99, 406), whereas before that time, they had not been allowed to do military service, or to be in the army. In 1941, non-Muslims were taken in groups to do military service separately from Muslims (Akgönül 2007: 99, 406).
It should also be remembered that the 1930s and 1940s were periods of authoritarian rule in Europe (Zurcher 1993:193). Salazar in Portugal, Franco in Spain, Metaxas in Greece and Mussolini in Italy (Zurcher 1993: 193- 194) and Hitler in Germany were among these authoritarian leaders. Inspired by these authoritarian/fascist regimes, İnönü was more restrictive than Atatürk (Ahmad 2002: 88, Zurcher 1993: 193).

The CHP (Republican Party) government of İnönü passed the Varlık Vergisi (Wealth Tax) law in 1942 and explained that Varlık Vergisi aimed to redistribute the capital that was unequally and unfairly distributed during World War II (Ökte 1951: 15 cited in Güven 2006: 135, Kuyucu 2005: 370). As non-Muslims were well ahead in status, wealth and business; this tax aimed to weaken their position and increase Muslims’ wealth. Dönmes (non-Muslims, mostly Jews, who had converted to Islam) were supposed to pay double and non-Muslims had to pay 10 times more (Güven 2006: 139, 141). If they were late to pay Varlık Vergisi, the interest was high, and if they could not pay, they had to go to work camps (Güven 2006: 143, Kuyucu 2005: 371), which counted as military service where they built roads and government buildings in order to compensate for their unpaid tax. From 1943 onwards, non-Muslims started to sell their property and enterprises. Because of the economic restrictions in Turkey and following the building of Israeli state, a number of Jewish people left Turkey. In 1948-1949, 30000 Jews emigrated to Israel (Bali 2003:528 cited in Güven 2006: 146).

Registered in 1946 the Democratic Party started off as a reaction against the policies of the Republican Party (the CHP) (Zurcher 1993: 221). In contrast to the Kemalists who had military, commercial or bureaucratic backgrounds, the democrats had more modest backgrounds, some without a university education (Zurcher 1993: 231). The democrats appealed to the farmers and peasants who formed the majority of the population (Anderson 2008b, Zurcher 1993: 234); they built new mosques and allowed the opening of religious schools (Zurcher 1993: 224, Anderson 2008b). They encouraged free-markets and liberalised the economy (Zurcher 1993: 234).

The minorities of Burgaz also got affected by the treatment of İnönü and Menderes governments. Varlık Vergisi of the İnönü government made them lose a
significant amount of their economic capital. Nonetheless, the liberalisation of the economy and free-markets of the Democratic Party worked in favour of the minorities. For instance, the Jewish community of Istanbul became wealthier and started to rent or buy properties in Burgaz. Furthermore, during the 1940s and 1950s, there were internal migration from Eastern villages of Turkey to big cities, like Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir (Keyder 1999, Çelik 2005). The migrants from Eastern villages who came to Istanbul found jobs on the Princes Islands of Istanbul. Similarly in 1940s and 1950s, Burgaz started to receive migrants from Erzincan, a city in the Eastern part of Anatolia. Zaza Alevis from Erzincan worked in Burgaz in summers as menial workers. They helped the Rum fishermen, worked as gardeners for the summer inhabitants, waiters and helpers in restaurants, helped in maintaining and fixing the Rum Orthodox churches and drove horse-carts. For instance, many Alevis worked for the Garipi Monastery in Ay Nikola area in Burgaz. They painted the walls of the church and refurbished different parts of the church and the monastery. The priest at that time allowed the Alevis to construct accommodation places for themselves in Ay Nikola while they were working. Slowly, Alevis made small houses in Ay Nikola, then settled and brought their families. These houses grew bigger and bigger while more family members moved to Burgaz.

Consequently, the Democratic Party had a relatively more democratic attitude towards the minorities than the İnönü government. For instance, they ended Varlık Vergisi (Güven 2006: 150) and the restrictions on minority schools and education (Güven 2006: 156). However, the disputes over Cyprus brought an end to the DP’s tolerance towards minorities (Güven 2006: 162).

b) Tensions between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus and the 6-7 September 1955 riots

According to Güven (2006), in early 1950s Turkey, Greece and NATO maintained good relations. However, due to the Cyprus issues in the mid-1950s, their relations worsened and this had a great impact on the situations of minorities in Turkey and Greece (Güven 2006: 162-163). In 1955, Greek-Cypriot national activism began. Greek Cypriots and Greece had been supporting enosis, the movement that aimed free Cyprus
from British rule and to unite it with Greece (Güven 2006, Kuyucu 2005). Inter-communal violence took place between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. When the nationalist organisation EOKA started attacking British officials and Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus, Britain invited the Turkish and Greek governments to the London conference on 29th August 1955 to solve the problems (Güven 2006: 196). Before the London Conference, Menderes and the media spread the word about a potential massacre against the Turks in Cyprus, thus creating more tension in Turkey, provoking anxiety and hatred. Rums were assumed to be on the Greek side (Kuyucu 2005: 376).

On the 6th of September 1955, Istanbul Ekspres newspaper, published the news that Atatürk’s house and the Turkish embassy in Thessalonica had been bombed (Kuyucu 2005: 361). This triggered riots against non-Muslims in Istanbul, Izmir and Ankara. According to the Istanbul Consulate reports, the riots were initiated by organised groups of people (Istanbul Consulate reports 1955 cited in Güven 2006: 26, 28, Kuyucu 2005: 362). The rumours of riots started to spread before the 6th of September 1955. The non-Muslims were warned by their Muslim neighbours not to go in the town in Istanbul on the 6th of September (Güven 2006: 96). While the attacks were being carried out, the police men were quite passive because they were told not to stop the attacks unless people were in danger of dying (Yassıada court and Istanbul Consulate reports cited in Güven 2006: 33-35, Kuyucu 2005: 362). The bombings in Thessalonica, the organised groups in Istanbul and the discussion of Cyprus at the London Conference combined to mobilise Muslims to exert violence on non-Muslims in Istanbul. Muslims attacked the stores, houses, places of worship and schools of non-Muslims; and they stole or broke and destroyed anything they found (Güven 2006: 29). Between 11 and 15 people died (Güven 2006: 55). The riots were an attack on the socio-economic power of the non-Muslims,

---

10 For Britain not to be considered a colonising power, Turkey needed to take a more dominant status (Güven 2006: 196). The 1955 riots worked to Britain’s advantage because the fact that both Turkey and Greece were mistreating their minorities supported the argument that Cyprus should either remain under the control of Britain or become independent (Güven 2006: 196-199).
which was one way of consolidating the ethnic and religious identity of the non-Muslims and made them feel as “others within”.

Kuyucu concludes that who initiated and organised the riots is still unknown (Kuyucu 2005: 363). Menderes (Turkish prime minister at that time) claimed that the attacks were spontaneous (Güven 2006: 14). Later on, he contradicted himself and said that it was planned by the Communists (Güven 2006: 14). Scholars like Dosdoğru and Toprak and the *Tarih ve Toplum* institution accused the government of organising the riots (Kuyucu 2005: 363). During the Yassıada trial, Menderes and his government were alleged to be guilty of the riots\(^\text{11}\) and were prosecuted (Kuyucu 2005: 362). Güven states that the DP government, MIT (*Milli İstihbarat Servisi*, National Intelligence Organisation), the *Kıbrıs Türktür Cemiyeti* (Cyprus is Turkish Organisation) and the student union organisations were responsible for organising the riots (Güven 2005: xi). Kuyucu argues that rather than distinguishing between the state and the public and blaming the government for causing riots, this should be seen as a result of the economic, social and political context that motivated people at that particular time and as a consequence of the othering process of the minorities during the creation of the nation-state of Turkey (Kuyucu 2005: 363). Building on Kuyucu, throughout the paper, I explore the ways in which the social, economic and political context that made minorities (including the ones in Burgaz) uncomfortable and leave the country.

The 6-7 September events were mostly a “shock” for the minorities (Akgönül 2007). While these riots took place in different parts of Istanbul (including the Princes Islands), Ankara and Izmir, Burgaz was not affected. The islanders of Burgaz protected the island from the rioters by not letting them enter the island to cause destructions. Even though no destruction took place in Burgaz, the fact that some of the Burgaz islanders had houses and stores being attacked in Istanbul, and their friends’ and relatives’ properties were also destroyed indirectly created some sense of anxiety and discomfort.

\(^{11}\) Rather than dealing with the issues of the 6-7 September riots, the riots were just used to justify the 1960s coup in order to find Menderes’s government guilty (Güven 2006: 100-101). Finally, at the end of the trial, 3 members of the DP, including Menderes himself, were executed (Kuyucu 2005: 362).
In 1957, minorities still voted for the Democratic Party and the DP won the elections again (Akgönül 2007: 211). Akgönül relates the result of the election to the fact that the responsible people for the 6-7 September events were still not known, and thus the DP government had not yet been accused of being responsible for the riots until the Yassıada trials in 1960s (ibid). Furthermore, the minorities were still cautious towards the Republican Party because of the Wealth Tax (1942) and the Turkification policies of the İnönü government. The DP had non-Muslim MPs in the government until the 1957 election (ibid). Akgönül compares the population census in 1950 and 1960 and points out that the Orthodox population in 1950 was 86,625 and in 1960, 106,612 (Akgönül 2007: 221-223). Although the 6-7 September events did not trigger the emigration of the Rums from Turkey; it caused non-Muslims to mistrust Muslims.

The DP triggered its own failure. It borrowed too much money from international markets and had an external debt of $1.5 billion dollars by 1960 (Zurcher 1993: 239). Also, inflation went from 3% in 1950 to 20% in 1958 (Zurcher 1993: 239). In 27 May 1960, the army overthrew the DP government. They were accused of being responsible for the 6-7 September events (Akgönül 2007: 246, Bahcheli 1990: 173), and of corruption and violation of the constitution (Zurcher 1993: 260). Vice-President Adnan Menderes, Minister of Finance Hasan Polatkan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Fatin Rüştü Zorlu were executed (Ahmad 2002: 164). In 1961, İnönü and his CHP government were elected again (Akgönül 2007: 248).

c) Cyprus Issues and the Expulsion of the Rums with Greek Citizenship

The political tensions between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus affected to a great extent the situation of the Rum minority in Turkey as well as in Burgaz. When Cyprus got its independence in 1960, Makarios became the president and Fazıl Küçük, the vice-president. The constitution was based on a bi-communal government. In 1963, Greek Cypriot nationalists were oppressing the Turkish Cypriots (Akgönül 2007: 256). Makarios wanted to lessen the power of the Turkish Cypriots and increase the power of the Greek Cypriots by changing from a bi-communal system to majority rule. In order to stop the
oppression against the Turkish Cypriots, the Turkish government “warned” the Greek government by “punishing” the Rums in Istanbul (Akgönül 2007: 252-254, 263, 267). In daily language, the term Yunanlı was used for the Greeks of Greece, and Rum for the Greek-Orthodox minority of Turkey and Kıbrıslı Rum for the Greek Cypriots (Akgönül 2007: 252). The Rums of Turkey were divided into two categories: Rums with Turkish citizenship (Türk uyruklu Rumlar) and Rums with Greek citizenship (Yunan uyruklu Rumlar). When the Kıbrıslı Rumlar (Greek Cypriots) exerted violence against the Kıbrıslı Türkler (Turkish Cypriots), the Rums of Turkey including the Patriarchate tried to give the message to the Turkish government that the Rums of Turkey were different from Kıbrıslı Rumlar (Akgönül 2007: 258). For instance, in the media, the Patriarchate constantly reprimanded the atrocities of the Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots (Akgönül 2007: 258). However, the political tension between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus started to blur the distinction between the Rums of Turkey, and Yunanlılar and Kıbrıslı Rumlar (Akgönül 2007: 252). The Rums of Turkey with Greek citizenship were blamed for helping the Greek Cypriots economically (Akgönül 2007: 267) and also to be on the Greek side (Akgönül 2007: 252).

Therefore, in March 1964, the Inonu government decided to expel the Rums with Greek citizenship (Akgönül 2007: 257, 409). The Turkish government did not renew the Seyrisefain pact, which was signed between Turkey and Greece in 1930, and which gave residence and free movement to Greek citizens in Turkey (Akgönül 2007: 86-87). With this pact, the Rums who had migrated to Greece during the population exchange, and who had become Greek citizens were allowed to settle back and work in Turkey (Akgönül 2007: 87). Hence, work permits, freedom of movement and residence of Rums with Greek citizenship were cancelled. Inonu knew that the cancellation of the pact would have an impact on the Rums with Turkish citizenship as well, because for years, the Rums with Turkish citizenship and the Rums with Greek citizenship intermarried and formed close friendship and family bonds (Akar and Demir 1994: 14). Furthermore, this expulsion would make the Rums of Greek citizenship lose their jobs thus enabling the Turks to take
their places (Akgönül 2007: 261, 265). This would also “solve” the unemployment problems of the immigrants from the Anatolian villages to cities (Akgönül 2007: 265).

The 1965 population consensus affirmed not only that 11,000 Rums of Greek citizenship left but that they had taken their families with them; 30,000 Rums of Turkish citizenship left as well (Akgönül 2007: 284). After 1964, the Rums of Turkish citizenship started to get very uncomfortable and lost their trust in Muslims. Enosis activism from 1963 onwards (Akgönül 2007: 300), the murder of Cypriot Turks on Christmas day in 1963 (Oran 2003: 104) and the Greek Cypriot attacks on Turkish villages in Geçitkale and Boğaziçi in Cyprus on 15 November 1967 (Akgönül 2007: 301) created anxieties for the Rum minority in Turkey (Oran 2003: 104, Akgönül 2007: 301). In addition to the 1964 expulsion, these anxieties provided grounds for the Rums of Turkish citizenship to “voluntarily” leave Turkey. In 1964, Rums of Greek citizenship were sent in “chunks” and were given one day to leave the country (Akgönül 2007: 280-281). Even though the Rums with Turkish citizenship were not expelled, some felt uncomfortable and were anxious that one day they might also be forced to leave.

Furthermore, the instability of the Turkish government did not provide grounds for living with peace of mind. The fights between leftists and rightists in the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s, the intervention of the army in 1971 and 1980 (Akgönül 2007: 294) made all the citizens of Turkey uncomfortable. But, surely, the minorities and the left were more prone to be victimised.

In contrast to the 6-7 September 1955 riots, the worsening relations between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus in 1963 followed by the expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship in 1964, and the intervention of the Turkish army in Cyprus in 1974 did not mobilise crowds to take action against the Rums (Akgönül 2007: 317). However, the previous events had already scarred the Rums, whom kept leaving the country of their own accord.

This was also the case for the Rums of Burgaz. Even though, they had a relatively peaceful life on the island, they were affected by the political tension in the country following the worsening relations between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. The Rums with
Greek citizenship got expelled in 1964. The Rums with Turkish citizenship who were married with Rums with Greek citizenship left with their spouses. Furthermore, seeing their friends leaving Istanbul and the other Princes Islands made them feel unsecure in Turkey.

The Greco-Turkish crisis over Cyprus also had an effect on how the Turkish government would deal with the properties of the Rums in Turkey (Akgönül 2007: 318). Rums who wanted to sell their properties had to get permission from the Turkish government (Akgönül 2007: 318). The Rums with Greek citizenship were given a very short time, such as one day, to leave the country. Thus, they did not have the time to sell their properties; they just had to leave. If the taxes on these assets were left unpaid for more than 10 years, the assets became the property of the government (Akar and Demir 1994: 160).

The Turkish government also wanted to control the flow of the Rums’ capital and the properties (Akgönül 2007: 318). In 1935, the Law of Foundations declared all foundations, including those of minorities, to be under the authority of the General Directorate of the Foundations (GDF) (Soner 2010: 30). In 1936, GDF required all foundations to register their unmoveable properties (Akgönül 2007: 319). Some Rum foundation properties were given by the Sultan’s edict in the Ottoman times (Soner 2010: 30, Akgönül: 2007: 319) or were donated by Rums, so these properties were not registered. In 1972, when GDF requested the registration documents from the foundations of the minorities (Akgönül 2007: 319), the foundations and properties of the minorities that were not on the register became the property of the government (Akgönül 2007: 320).

Some of the Rums of Burgaz left their properties and left the island; which later became properties of the government; some of them sold their shops and properties at low prices to the Alevis who were their helpers and waiters for years. Therefore, the Alevis who had been saving money while working as employees under Rums bought their properties and shops. From 1980s onwards, the change of demographics on the island
became more visible. Many shops and restaurants were run by Alevis; the Ay Nikola
neighbourhood became an Alevi neighbourhood.

d) The Post-1980s

Turkish politics started to change significantly from 1980s onwards. First of all,
the 1980 coup brought a halt to the lives of Turkish citizens. The military council brought
restrictions to voluntary organisations, associations especially the leftist ones (Simsek
2004: 111-112). From 1980s onwards, feminism, human rights activism, Islamism,
environmentalism and Kurdish and Alevi activism were among the social movements in
the country. The PKK, Partiya Karkeran Kurdistan (the Kurdistan Worker’s Party) started a
guerrilla act against the government for a free state for the Kurds in 1984 (Zurcher 1993:
313). During successive clashes between the PKK and the Turkish army, many people lost
their lives or were displaced (Zurcher 1993: 313). Following the forced migration,
evacuation of villages by the military, the pressure of the PKK and the ongoing clashes
between the military and the PKK, many Kurds migrated from their villages in Southeast
to big cities such as Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir and Adana (Celik 2005: 139-140).

In addition to the political tensions, there was also economic scarcity in the
south-east. In the 1990s, Şafi and Sunni Muslim Kurds from the villages of Van and Muş in
south-eastern Turkey came to Burgaz to work during the summer season when more
menial jobs became available. They then sent some of the money they earned back home
– though a few of them also brought their families with them.

It was under Özal’s government that liberation started both economically and
politically. Like his contemporaries Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher, Özal promoted
neoliberalism, privatisation, free-markets and economic liberalism (Zurcher 1993: 301,
Anderson 2008b). He promoted Islamic revivalism and removed the ban on using Kurdish
in private (Anderson 2008b, Zurcher 1993: 305). In 1981, Özal removed the blockade that
concerned the properties of the Rums who were expelled in 1964 (Akgönül 2007: 411,
Bahcheli 1990: 184). In 1988, he passed the law that enabled Rums to reclaim back their
properties (Akgönül 2007: 411). He also removed the visa prohibition on these Rums (Akgönül 2007: 411). Even though, this liberation took place, still the Rums did not want to come back due to what they had been through during the previous decades in Turkey (Akgönül 2007: 327).

e) Issues at Stake: The AKP and Current Discourses of Differences

The current discourses of differences in Turkey revolve around three issues: the relationship between secularism and Islamism; the recognition of Kurds and Alevis and the current situation of non-Muslim minorities. During my fieldwork, my informants talked and reflected on the current political situation in Turkey under the AKP government and their attempts at democracy. The AKP came up with “democratisation packages” towards Kurds, Alevis and non-minorities, which I outline in this section. The AKP points out the faults of the previous Kemalist and secular regimes and appears to be correcting the mistakes of the previous governments. However, their attempts at democracy have been criticised that these packages have not been implemented (Efegil 2011, Soner 2010) that they have been ‘empty promises’ to gain votes in order to become an autocratic political power and to satisfy the international opinion (Head 2011, Çakır 2008) to “look democratic” rather than “being democratic”.

Throughout the history of Turkish politics, there has been a dialectic relationship and tension between secularism and Islamism. I interpret Kemalist revolutions and implementation of secularism as “intense and sudden” taking into consideration the role that religion played in the Ottoman Empire for 600 years. Atatürk and Kemalists promoted secularism, and western values; emphasised Turkishness, banned the headscarf; and changed the dress code, family and civil law (Anderson 2008a). This is why the sudden Westernisation and secularism were reacted against and bounced back during Menderes’ (Democratic Party), Demirel’s (Justice Party), Ö zal’s (Motherland Party), Erbakan’s (Welfare Party) Kutan’s (Virtue Party), and finally Erdoğan’s (Justice and Development Party) rule. These parties appealed to religion in order to gain votes of the people who felt that their religious needs were not taken into account.
Furthermore, neo-Kemalism and nostalgia for the “modern times of the first years of Republic” emerged in the 1990s as a reaction to the rise of political Islam (Özyürek 2006). The secularists were suspicious that the AKP would follow an Islamist agenda as the founders of the AKP were from the political Islamic movement (National View Movement) (NVM) (Soner 2010: 23). Furthermore, the emergence of the public display of religion, in the opening of imam-hatip schools and Koran courses, and in the increase in women wearing headscarves in the street made the secularists feel oppressed. Secularists became anxious when the AKP challenged the building blocks of Kemalism: a strong secular army to ensure secularism, a lack of public expression of religion, and an emphasis on a unified Turkish identity denying the existence of a Kurdish identity (Akdeniz and Göker 2011: 321). Erdoğan reduced military autonomy (Akdeniz and Göker 2011: 326), and opened a dialogue with the Kurds; and with the passing of the referendum in 12 September 2010, the power of the governing party in the legal constitution increased (Samanyolu Haber 16/03/2011). While these acts were seen as democratic initiatives by the EU and the liberals in Turkey; they were perceived as threats to the unity of the nation and to secularism by the secularists in Turkey. Furthermore, his attempts to criminalise adultery and to create alcohol-free-zones show Erdoğan’s political agenda in promoting and imposing Sunni Islam (BBC 13/06/2011).

I suggest that the AKP’s advances in relations with the Kurds are not only to bring democracy but also to recruit more voters into the party. Kurds have been suffering from the military operations of the state against the PKK as well as from the PKK’s oppression (Efegil 2011: 30). According to Efegil, for Kurdish people, to be able to practise freely their cultural traditions, speak Kurdish and be recognised by the Turkish state is more important than being independent (Efegil 2011: 30). The AKP tries to disarm the PKK and to enhance the region’s economy (Efegil 2011: 30-32) in order to lessen the power of the PKK and the PDP (a Kurdish nationalist political party named DEHAP, which later changed to HADEP) (Efegil 2011: 31).

Furthermore, the AKP government is also working on a rapprochement policy toward the Alevi (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 419). Alevi in Turkey are demanding
recognition as a distinct cultural and religious group without being categorised as a minority (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 419). Alevi have been loyal supporters of the secular republic (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 419). Despite having been suppressed under the Ottoman Empire due to Sunni dominance over the Alevi (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 424), Alevi were content not to be recognised as long as the republic did not allow any display of religion in public (Zurcher and Van der Linden 2004: 127 cited in Soner and Toktaş 2011: 421). Erdoğan visited a cemevi (Alevi gathering house and places of rituals), recruited Alevi for his party and attended Alevi breakfasts (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 429, Bayındır 2009: 17) as acts of unofficial recognition. Furthermore, the government organised workshops with Alevi- Bektaşi groups to discuss their needs (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 430). However, still the majority of the Alevi see the AKP as a Sunni dominated entity (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 428). In one of his recent speeches, Erdoğan stated that the AKP is trying to raise a devout religious youth, which reaffirms his political agenda (Cumhuriyet 01/02/2012). Such a statement creates question marks about the genuineness of the AKP’s tolerance of Alevi, secularists and non-practitioners of religion.

Furthermore, the AKP also worked to meet the demands of the non-Muslims. Based on the Lausanne Treaty, only Armenians, Greek Orthodox and Jewish people are recognised as minorities, while other non-Muslims including Assyrians, Chaldeans, Catholics and Protestants are not recognised (Soner 2010: 27). The EU requires Turkey to recognise social diversity, to improve the treatment of the recognised minorities, and to recognise both the non-recognised Muslim and non-Muslim ethnic, religious and denominational groups (Soner 2010: 28). In order to meet the criteria to become a member of the EU, the AKP worked on implementing democratic policies (Soner 2010: 25). In 2011, Erdoğan declared that the minorities’ foundations could claim back their confiscated properties (Abanoz 2011). Erdoğan has also been working on reopening the Greek Orthodox Seminary in Halki, in Heybeliada, one of the Princes’ Islands of Istanbul (Soner 2010). This positive attitude of the AKP towards the non-Muslims enabled them to gain votes from the non-Muslims, especially from Greeks and Armenians (Soner 2010: 28). However, the Jewish minority remained suspicious (Soner 2010: 28) due to tensions
between Israel and Turkey and Erdoğan’s anti-Zionist attitudes and rage in Davos in 2009. Furthermore, the secularists were also apprehensive about the reopening of the Seminary as an autonomous theological institution because this would also allow Muslims to open religious institutions and pursue religious activities without the control of the state (Soner 2010: 38).

In sum, AKP appears more democratic in listening and responding to the needs of Kurds, Alevi and non-Muslims. However, these groups are still unsure about how committed Erdoğan is to democracy as the AKP continues to follow a restrictive agenda towards the secularists, the Kurds and the Alevi.

Furthermore, the socio-economic and the political context of the last decade also affected the population in Burgaz. The financial crises in 2001 in the country due to the bankruptcy led to increased interest rate and inflation; the stock market fell and the Turkish lira devalued. This has made it difficult to keep a flat/house in Burgaz for the summer inhabitants in Burgaz. Among the wealthy summer inhabitants, some of the Jewish residents preferred to go to the south of Turkey for vacations or to spend time in Istanbul, rather than renting flats on the island. Furthermore, the worsening relationship between Israel and Turkey, as indicated by the bombings of synagogues in Istanbul in 2003 and the Mavi Marmara incident in 2009, have made the Jewish community feel ill at ease. Some of them have stopped renting houses or sold their properties in Burgaz. Even though the Jews of Burgaz still feel relatively safe in Burgaz, their discomfort continues.

On the other hand, from 2000 onwards, Armenians from Kinaliada, another of the Islands, moved to Burgaz. They did not like the increase of day-trippers and picnickers back in Kinaliada. From 2000 onwards, workers from Central Asia - Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan - started to come to the island for temporary work such as taking care of the horses and helping grocers to deliver goods to island customers. Currently, there are more than twenty different ethnic and religious groups living in Burgaz.
3.4 Conclusion

While writing this narrative, I first aimed to contextualise Burgaz within the history of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires and Turkey. I explored the ways in which the categorisation of differences were constructed, changed and reinscribed from the Ottoman times to the nation-building of Modern Turkey. Before the rise of nationalism in the late 19th Century, the categorisation of difference was mainly based on religion, under the millet system. In daily life, people were aware of their religious, ethnic and linguistic differences, however these differences had not yet been mobilised to create a sense of coexistence and to cluster people into “ethnic and national groups”. The Enlightenment, industrialisation, secularisation, the rise of science, the emergence of printing, and the intervention of the Great Powers in Balkan politics towards the end of the 19th Century - driven by their ideologies of nationalism - affected the ways in which people in the Balkans constructed their identity in opposition to others. The rise of nationalisms brought a rupture to cultural pluralism; the Balkan states struggled for independence which provoked instability and violence in the region and brought an end to the Ottoman Empire. Building on Cowan’s (2001) minoritisation process, I concluded that the logic and the bureaucracy of the millet system persisted in a new political form in the Republic of Turkey: the non-Muslims of Turkey (as well the ones in Burgaz) were turned into minorities of Modern Turkish state.

My second aim was to explain the post-Ottoman homogenising context in Turkey. I concluded that nation-building was homogenising, because the Balkan states including Turkey used restrictive foreign and domestic policies (e.g. population exchange, economic and linguistic restrictions) against internal others - minorities. During the nation building stage, Turkish authorities used Turkification policies and restrictive minority policies in order to homogenise the nation. In the post-Ottoman context in Turkey, “coexistence” explains the homogenisation process, the construction and crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and the ruptures to cultural pluralism. In the end,
minorities were the ones who suffered economically and psychologically, and were either forced to move or left Turkey and Burgaz of their own accord.

Furthermore, the tensions between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus made the Rum minorities in Turkey feel uncomfortable and made them leave the country. Today, the tensions between Israel and Turkey are still at stake and create discomfort within the Jewish community. Recently, the AKP has introduced “democratisation packages” towards the Kurds, the Alevis, and the minorities; however, the outcomes of these policies are still being debated. As Burgaz is not isolated from the mainland, the wider political context in Turkey changed the demographics in Burgaz. When the majority of the Rums were leaving, Jews, Armenians, Sunni Muslims, Alevis and Kurds settled. These migrations to and from Burgaz caused new patterns of sociality on the island. While the new comers brought their own roots and traditions, they themselves changed through their interactions with the established islanders and changed island life.

In the next chapter, I turn my attention to the memories of the islanders to explore the ways in which the homogenisation process was experienced by them, how the change in demographics affected their social life on the island and how the current political context affected the ways in which the islanders recall their past conviviality.
CHAPTER 4
MEMORIES OF CONVIVIALITY AND OF COEXISTENCE

4. 1 Introduction

The aim of the thesis is to provide an understanding for the still-existing cultural pluralism in Burgazadası within a Post-Ottoman, homogenising context in Turkey. In this chapter, I use memory as an analytical tool. On the one hand, the analysis of memory enables me to understand the homogenisation process, through which foreign and domestic policies and political events made categories of ethnicity, class and religion more salient and through which identities became more solidified and affected the islanders’ categorisations of differences and their perception of coexistence. On the other hand, memory sheds light on the ways in which people remember their shared ways of living, past conviviality, the construction of a shared local identity and people’s sense of belonging in a place. Memory also aids understanding of the change in diversity patterns, and how the change in demographics (migrations to and from Burgaz) affected social interactions in daily life. Through using memory as an analytical tool, I argue that even though the homogenisation process mobilised Muslims against non-Muslims during the 1955 riots, people in Burgaz did not turn against each other. Rather, the collective resistance against the riots increased solidarity among the islanders and solidified Burgaz identity. While the homogenisation process consolidated ethnic and religious differences and brought ruptures to the cultural pluralism in Turkey, it could not disrupt the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, because memories of conviviality and the sense of belonging in Burgaz were stronger than people’s ethnic and religious identities.

In this chapter, I analyse the memories of Burgaz islanders building on scholars who conceptualised memory. I build on Halbwachs’ (1992) insight that when something is remembered, it is actually being reconstructed in its relation to the present. During the last decade in Turkey, the public sphere has seen an emerging set of personal memoirs. Tanriverdi’s Hoşçakal Prinşipe: Bir Rüyaydı Unut Gitsin (2004) narrates anecdotal stories on Büyükada and Atina’lsı Büyükada (2007) is about the memories of departure of Büyükada who immigrated to Athens. Levi’s Istanbul bir masalı (2006) is a novel about nostalgia for the cultural pluralism of Istanbul.
novels\textsuperscript{13}, movies\textsuperscript{14}, soap operas\textsuperscript{15}, and documentaries\textsuperscript{16} (all very critical of past governments) about the Wealth Tax in 1942, the 6-7 September 1955 riots, and the military coups of 1960 and 1980. In Burgaz, two types of memories have emerged. One type is related to the homogenisation process (e.g. the Wealth Tax, the expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship in 1964), I call this first type the “memories of coexistence”, because these policies and critical events crystallised people’s religious and ethnic identities. The other type of memories is related to the shared ways of living in Burgaz, which I call the “memories of conviviality”.

In the first section, I examine why the public display of memories emerged and gained momentum over the last decade. I also ask: What kinds of memories have been activated in the current political context? In the second section, I weave Burgaz islanders’ stories together. I explore the extent to which the homogenisation process in Turkey affected the islanders’ daily lives. I pay attention to the events and moments that are recalled by individuals belonging to different ethnic, class and religious groups and explain which of these memories are memories of conviviality and which of coexistence. In the final section, I analyse the autobiographical memories of the islanders. Autobiographical and family memories (Georgiou 1993, Stoev 1993, Thompson 1993) reflect individuals’ experiences and subjective remembrance of the time periods, political context and the social issues of these periods. By analysing the autobiographical memories of the islanders, I explore the ways in which the islanders experienced these events and time periods and the ways in which the memories of conviviality and of coexistence affected their daily life.

\textsuperscript{13} Aktel’s Son Eylül: Elveda Antigoni (Last September: Farewell Antigoni 2008) is about minorities leaving the Princes’ Islands after 1955 riots. Aktel’s Kestane Karası (Storm on Burgazada 2005) is about life on Burgazada in the 1940s.

\textsuperscript{14} Salkım Hanımın Taneleri (Mrs Salkım’s necklace) is about the Wealth Tax in 1942. Güz Sancısı (Pains of Autumn 2009) is about the 6-7 September events. Zincirbozan is a movie about the coup in 1980.

\textsuperscript{15} For example, Hatrla Sevgili (Remember Darling 2006-2008) is about the coups in 1960 and 1980.

\textsuperscript{16} There are also documentaries on the 6-7 September events critical of the government: 6-7 Eylül Belgeseli (Can Dündar 2007) and Unutulmayan iki gün 6-7 Eylül (Rudvan Akar 2007).
4. 2 Section I:

Emergence of the Public Display of Memories in Turkey and in Burgaz

The public display and the expression of memories emerged in various forms in Turkey in the 1980s. The emergence of diversified identities and the rise of identity politics gained momentum after the 1980 coup through liberalisation of the economy, privatisation, an increase in import and export, global flows in and out of the country and the increase in consumerism (Neyzi 2001: 422). I interpret this as an outburst of voices that were suppressed during the 1980 coup. In the 1980s, NGOs, human- rights activists, homosexuals and feminists “came out of the closet” and used the media to express their views (Neyzi 2001: 422). In the 1990s, works on minority history were published about “taboo” topics such as the Wealth Tax, the 6-7 September riots, and the expulsion of the Rums in 1964 (Mills 2010: 19). Furthermore, the rise of Islamism and Kurdish nationalism in the 1980s and the Alevi revival in the 1990s helped to create a kind of political and cultural pluralism (Neyzi 2001: 422, Çolak 2006: 587).

My informant, Etyen Mahçupyan, gave various reasons for the emergence of the public display of memories over the last ten years in Turkey. Mahçupyan is a post-liberal intellectual, who writes in Təraf, a liberal and radical leftist newspaper. Mahçupyan taught politics and international relations at Ankara University for a few years. Later, he worked in the business sector. He wrote in liberal newspapers such as Radikal and Təraf. He is of Catholic Armenian origin and he was the editor of Agos, the minority journal of the Armenians. He was also the scriptwriter of the movies Salkım Hanımın Taneleri (1999) which was about the Wealth Tax and Güz Sancısı (Pains of Autumn) (2009) about the 6-7 September events. He has lived in Burgaz for eleven years as a summer inhabitant. He reflected:

Turkey is going through a post-modern Enlightenment stage through looking at what kinds of mistakes Turkey made rather than what was done to it. This is why the production of documentaries, novels and movies about the Wealth Tax and the 6-7 September events appeared in abundance after the
2000s. This also shows the release of anxieties and the increase in confidence about talking and reflecting about the past.

Mahçupyan also claims that the AKP government made a positive impact by opening up discussions about Turkey’s past. He said:

For about 80 years the voices of the Muslims were not represented under the secular Kemalist government. Today, Erdoğan talks about Dersim, the Wealth Tax, the 6-7 September events, minority rights, and the democratisation packages for the Alevi and Kurds, by criticising the previous modernist secular governments. The AKP implies that the problems that Turkey is dealing with today in terms of democracy are rooted in the Kemalist regimes, so the AKP has been trying to correct the faults of the older regimes.

This political context had two effects on the emergence and articulation of memories in Burgaz. The non-Muslims and the Sunni Muslims expressed their memories of conviviality, which strengthened their sense of unity and belonging in Burgaz. Non-Muslims and Alevi also expressed their memories of coexistence, which referred to the policies and critical events that crystallised their ethnic and religious identity. Alevi and Kurds in Burgaz articulated more connections with their roots, communal history and place of origin. The memories of coexistence of the Alevi in particular, which consist of the events in the history of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic where they felt oppressed as Alevi, played an important role in the formation of Alevi identity. Nonetheless, this identity formation and this consciousness of differences have not overthrown the significance of their memories of conviviality and their connectedness to Burgaz. Besides memories which are significant exclusively to Alevi, Alevi also share memories of conviviality, of living together in Burgaz. Being Burgazlı is a part of their identity; they feel that they belong in Burgaz.

Bearing in mind the moment of their narration at a time when formerly hidden memories are appearing in public, in this chapter, I analyse the narratives of memories of conviviality and of coexistence that are articulated as significant for Burgaz islanders.
4. 3 Section II:

a) The (Hi)story of Burgaz from the Eyes of Burgaz Islanders

Burgaz islanders typically begin the story of Burgaz with “Burgaz used to be a Rum fishermen’s village”. Regardless of when and where the islanders came to the island, their ethnicity or religion, the islanders associate Burgaz with Rum fishermen. The island was inhabited mainly by Rums for centuries. Later on, during the westernisation period in the 19th Century, it received a small group of migrants from Europe. The Austrian Catholic Chapel, the nunnery and the monastery were built in Burgaz in this period. Germans who worked under the Ottoman Empire as gardeners and architects got some property on the island and used them as summer resorts. One of my German informants (male aged 42) narrated to me that the grandfather of his grandfather migrated to Ottoman lands as a gardener and moved to Burgaz as a summer inhabitant around 150-200 years ago. Another informant (male aged 55) whose mother is an Italian Greek Orthodox and whose father is a French Armenian Catholic told me that his ancestors came to Burgaz around 180 years ago. One of his relatives was an architect of the Topkapi Palace, the Ottoman Sultan’s place of residence. Towards the end of collapse of the Ottoman Empire and during the first years of the Turkish Republic, Sunni Muslim families moved to Burgaz to take jobs related to the government, such as working as a police officer; and Sunni Muslim elites bought properties in Burgaz to use as summer resorts. In the 1940s, the island started receiving small-scale immigration from Anatolia. People from Erzincan came to Burgaz to work temporarily in the summers.

In this section, I weave together the stories of five key informants. Two of them are Sunni Muslims, Haydar and Ajda, whose parents were among the first Sunni Muslims to settle to Burgaz. Haydar’s father came to Burgaz in 1925 as a summer inhabitant. He was an MP from the CHP party, Atatürk’s Republican Party. I chose Haydar because his father had a role in the government and he was one of the oldest islanders. Ajda’s father, who was of Kurdish origin from Malatya, eastern Turkey, was a policeman when he was assigned to take care of Burgaz in the early days of the republic. Ajda was born in 1941
and grew up in Burgaz. Because of the governmental duty of Ajda’s father, her family settled on the island permanently both in summer and winter. Later, in the 1950s, her father was the leader of the Democratic Party in Burgaz until the coup in 1960. My Rum informant, Niko, has been living in Burgaz since the 1950s. His family had one house in Istanbul and one house in Burgaz, so he has experienced the homogenisation process both in Istanbul and Burgaz. My two Alevi informants, Nuri and Mustafa, were among the first Alevis, whose parents moved to Burgaz from Erzincan, in Eastern Turkey to do menial jobs in Burgaz.

I begin my story of Burgaz with my oldest informant, Haydar. I was introduced to Haydar (in his mid-80s), whose father was one the founders of the Blue Club, by the security officer. The officer gave him my mobile number and Haydar called me to arrange a time to meet. On the phone, I explained to him that I was doing PhD research about the memories of Burgaz islanders and that as he was one of the oldest inhabitants in Burgaz, I would be very grateful to listen to his memories. We agreed to meet at the Blue Club one morning towards the end of the summer of 2009. Haydar came with papers on which he bullet pointed his memories, places, names of friends and events. I was very surprised that he was so well prepared and very happy that he was eager to narrate his memories to me. I took my small notebook out and he exclaimed “What, how can you write all the memories of many years in such a tiny book! Go get a proper notebook!” So, I went to security and asked for lots of sheets of A4 and came back to note down his memories. He preferred me to take notes rather than to record the interview. So I wrote down what he said and the specific terms he used including his facial expressions while I was listening to him. He was very talkative and had a lot to tell me so I only interrupted when I needed to clarify something or take the discussion further. So he started telling me who lived on the island when he was a child and what he did in Burgaz during his youth.

Burgaz was an island of Rum fishermen. There were many many Rums when my father came to Burgaz. 80, maybe 90 % of the island population were Rums. My father was one of the first Turks. The first Turks came to Burgaz between 1915 and the 1920s. They were governmental officers, doctors or lawyers, and the majority of them used the island as a
sayfiye yerî [summer resort place]. The permanent inhabitants of Burgaz, such as restaurant and coffee shop owners, storekeepers, fishermen, bakers and grocers were all Rums. The government officials and civil servants, who were very few in number, were Turks. The summer inhabitants were rich elites. In the 1930s and 1940s, we had rich and elite Ashkenazi Jews and Germans in Burgaz. The Jews of Burgaz were upper class in comparison to the Sephardic Jews who were lower middle class and who lived in Heybeli, another Princes’ Island. The Jews of Heybeli and Istanbul used to come for a day trip to Burgaz as they could not afford to have houses in Burgaz. These Sephardic Jews became richer when Democratic Party was in power between 1945 and 1960. Thus, from the late 1940s onwards, the Jews from Heybeli moved to Burgaz and the ones in Istanbul either rented or bought property in Burgaz.

This island was the island of fish. Rums were very into fishing. Istavrit, umkumru, palamut, lüfer, torik, lapin, mercan, karagöz, orkinos, sinarit, kılıç balığı [names of fishes]... there were so many fish that the fishnets used to break. When there was excess fish, the fishermen used to throw the excess back to the sea. The fishermen used to compete with each other in order to catch the biggest fish, especially orkinos. The fish caught were always displayed and sold in the market. The fishmonger used to mark the name of the fisherman on the orkinos caught, thus you would know who caught it and see the pride in the eyes of the fisherman when he walked in the market. Now, there are fewer and fewer fish in the sea. People are not as careful as the fishermen of the old days. The new generation put dynamite in the fishes’ nests and fish when the fish were reproducing. Now the seagulls are hungry. I used to go fishing with my summer Rum friends. They had boats. We used to go to Sivriada and Yassiada [the inhabited islands]. These islands were a heaven of fish and mussels. We used to go there in the afternoon, fish and eat the fish there, get drunk and sleep and come back in the morning. Sivriada geceleri [the nights of Sivriada]...

These times were the times of bolluk [abundance, prosperity]. The rich Rums had big gardens. For example, Taso’s garden was full of fruit and vegetables. Quince, plum, lettuce, onion...Mimi had a flower garden. In Foti’s garden there were almond trees, gages... They used to sell their fruit, vegetables and flowers to the islanders. Have you been to the Austrian chapel, high up in Burgaz? [I said “yes”]. Good. The Austrian nuns used to sell the spare produce to the islanders. They had cows and chickens. The yogurt, cream, cheese and milk that came from them were the best I have eaten in my life.

Do you know Kalpazankaya? [I said “yes, I have been there”]. Do you know the “Hişt Hişt” story from Sait Faik?” [I said, “Yes I have read it”]. Sait got inspired to write the story on the way to Kalpazankaya. He lived in
Burgaz, he was much older than me but he was my friend and Burgaz is known as “Sait Faik’in adası” [Sait Faik’s island]. In the story, Sait is on the Kalpazankaya road, he hears hisṭ hisṭ [similar to the “psst” sound that one person whispers to another to get their attention] but he cannot tell where it comes from. A plum tree? A hedgehog? A person? A bird? The sea? Saik writes it so well. It does not matter where the sound comes from. It is the sound of what makes you feel alive. He says in the end that if you do not hear “hiṣṭ”, then it matters. In Burgaz, you constantly hear a hiṣṭ sound, whether it is a person, a tree, the sea, the nature, an animal; these things keep you alive.

The times of the Rums were the times of fun. I loved attending the church at Christmas and on important Rum Orthodox religious days. They offered pastry, biscuits, cookies, and meals at the church. There was not a mosque on the island until 1954. I did not care about the mosque. I did not care when it was built. I am not interested in religion, but I enjoyed attending the church because it was good fun to socialise with my Rum friends. There were five gazinos in Burgaz. In gazinos, Rum and foreign music played, sometimes live, sometimes from the gramophone. We danced day and night - tango, slow, swing... The Rums knew how to drink. There was always one person at the table who would control anyone who was getting too drunk. Now, people do not know how to drink. They get drunk and they start fights.

Adanın tipleri vardır [there were unique, almost crazy people]. You know, every place has its own unique people. Ali Rıza Kondos. Kondos means short in Rumca. Ali Rıza was a short drunkard. He had built a cave for himself in Burgaz. When we saw him, we used to yell “pırr” which would make him so angry; he would throw us stones and run after us. And then Şilep [Ocean liner] Hasan... He was so huge we used to call him Şilep. The islanders used to give names to these unique people. Now, people are boring. The island was more diverse in the old days, we had adanın tipleri and everyone had a particular character, fault, weakness, funniness, craziness that made Burgaz a place of fun. Now, everyone is the same. People watch TV, they go to work. They do not have fun in their lives. There are no adanın tipleri anymore.”

When Haydar was talking about the years between the 1920s and the 1950s, he jumped from people to places, from activities he did, to Sait Faik’s story, to adanın tipleri. These five themes that have emerged in his vignette also came up in the stories of the islanders I talked to, when I did semi-structured interviews taking notes; when I recorded
interviews; when I listened to people’s conversations in cafes, restaurants and the social clubs; when I listened to my elderly friends in the embroidery class. For instance, a male Sunni informant of mine (aged 75) had talked in depth about the times in *gazinos*. Two Sunni informants of mine, both female architects in their 50s, told me about *adanıntipleri* and Sait Faik’s stories about Burgaz. The Sunni grocer and the Sunni pharmacist (in their 70s) who have lived on the island for about 50 years, my Rum informant Niko (aged 67), a male German informant (in his mid-50s) and Ajda (70) who both grew up in Burgaz, all told me about the abundance of fish and the fruit, vegetables and flower gardens. Ajda also said:

I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed going to the church to hang out with my Rum friends, when I was a kid. I also loved the farm and the garden at the Austrian chapel. With my friends there we used to run around and play in that garden for hours, until my father got worried about where I was and went around Burgaz trying to find me. It was a hard thing to find me because I could have been on top of a tree, at the peak of Burgaz, at the Austrian chapel, in the sea... I was a very naughty girl [she laughed].

These memories are memories of conviviality. They take their sources from the shared life in Burgaz. Haydar began the story of Burgaz with the Rums, Turks, Ashkenazi Jews, Sephardic Jews and Germans and finished his story with *adanıntipleri*. This shows that ethnic and religious differences were acknowledged and that they added to the richness of Burgaz. Nonetheless, Haydar’s perception of diversity is not limited to ethnic and religious differences. People’s particularities, stories of craziness, angers and jokes made Burgaz diverse and interesting to him. *Adanıntipleri* were remembered by many islanders as peculiarities of Burgaz. Furthermore, the fact that he remembered what kind of fruit and vegetable grew in which garden, which dairy products came from where, and the names of particular fishes shows that the tastes of these foods are significant elements that tie him to the island. He has embodied Burgaz through dancing, fishing, drinking, attending church, socialising with his friends and having fun. Haydar’s concept of *bolluk* includes a diversity of people, animals, and natural beings. The “*Hişt Hişt*” story of Saik Faik Abasıyanık (1993) that Haydar referred to shows that Burgaz - with its people,
nature, animals, tastes, trees and its sea -whispers into islanders’ ears and keeps them alive.

Haydar used the past tense and when he used the present, it reflected the fact that whatever he remembered from those times did not exist today. So, I asked Haydar: “You talk as if all these things do not exist anymore. What happened? What has changed? You said there were many, many Rums? Where are they now?”

Haydar:

The Rums left. They went to Greece, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States. Varlık Vergisi [the Wealth Tax], the 6-7 September events in 1955, the 27 May 1960 coup, the Cyprus events scared them all. They said: “Every 25 years, something will come up, the government will do something, we better leave”. The government did many things wrong. My father had a Jewish friend who was required to pay such a high Varlık Vergisi that it was impossible to pay, thus he was sent to do military service in Aşkale. When my father’s Jewish friend came back from Aşkale, my father lent him some money which helped him reconstruct his business. Varlık Vergisi made the ekaliyet (an old term used for minorities) suffer economically. Furthermore, the Rums had many shops in Beyoğlu, they all got destroyed during the 6-7 September events. Here in Burgaz nothing happened. We protected the island and no one could enter. However, what was happening in Istanbul and in Turkey was scary enough for them to leave. And they left. They sold their properties at a low price to Erzincanlı (from Erzincan) Alevi who were working for them. Erzincanlıs had saved money while working so Erzincanlı brought these properties. Now the permanent inhabitants are Alevi and Kurds.

When I asked Haydar what had changed, he started telling his memories of coexistence. He referred to policies (the Wealth Tax in 1942), the riots on 6-7 September 1955, the coup in 1960 and events in Cyprus as what changed the life in Burgaz. When he was talking about the conviviality, his eyes sparkled, he was looking towards the sea (from where we were sitting at the Blue Club) as if he wanted these times to come back and if he looked hard enough, these times might appear from somewhere beyond the horizon. However, when he was talking about the Rums’ departure and the political tensions, he was looking down, and he had a sad and quieter tone, as if he did not want to remember the events that took the good old times away from him. He was accusing
the government of having done wrong. It was clear in his mind that these policies and events brought a rupture to people’s daily lives. Through them, the identity of the Rums and the minorities was crystallised and that created a sense of difference. According to Haydar’s interpretation, the Rums and the minorities felt that they, as groups, were attacked. In the next subsection and in the last part of the chapter (the autobiographical stories), I explore what kinds of oppression and discomfort the non-Muslims felt that made them leave Burgaz. Even though in Burgaz, the riots did not take place, the political tension between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus affected people’s lives. Rums left Burgaz and the Erzincanlı Alevis and Kurds became the majority of the permanent inhabitants.

b) Memories of Conviviality and Coexistence of the 6-7 September Riots:

“On our island, not even a glass was broken.”

The events of 6-7 September events were among the most significant events that Burgaz islanders recalled. The 1955 riots in Istanbul brought a change to the nature of Burgaz islanders’ memories. The islanders collectively resisted the riots and that act strengthened Burgaz identity. However, the riots also triggered the crystallisation of ethnic and religious identity of the non-Muslims elsewhere in Turkey. Some of the Burgaz islanders were in Istanbul when the attacks took place. The islanders’ memories of the riots were fragmented into memories of coexistence and memories of conviviality. On the one hand, in Burgaz, the riots were memories of conviviality for the non-Muslims, because the islanders engaged in an act of solidarity and collective resistance against the riots; on the other hand, the riots were memories of coexistence because in the national framework their ethnic and religious identities were attacked. In this section, I compare the memories of the riots recalled by the people who were interviewed in the documentaries 6-7 Eylül Belgeseli by Dündar (2007) and Unutulmayan iki gün 6-7 Eylül by Akar (2007), in Güven’s oral history research (2006) and in Mills (2010)’ ethnography, with the memories of Burgaz islanders in order to compare the wider Turkish collective memory of the riots with the local memory of Burgaz.
The 1955 riots were talked about by the Muslims and the non-Muslims in Turkey as the event that caused rupture in the previous harmony. With the emergence of the public display of memories, a lot of work has focused on the riots (Kuyucu 2005, Güven 2006, Unutulmayan iki gün 6-7 E Eylül (2007), 6-7 Eylül Belgeseli, Aktel 2008, Mills 2010). People who experienced the riots were interviewed for documentaries and research. The riots were remembered with bitterness by both Muslims and non-Muslims in different parts of Istanbul. Ara Güler (an Armenian informant) uses the terms “ayıp” (shame) and “insanlığın yüz karsası” (opprobrium for humanity) for what happened during the riots (6-7 Eylül Belgeseli 2007). Despina (a Rum informant) said “Türk kanı olan insan bunu yapamaz.” (a person who has Turkish blood cannot commit such an act) when she articulated her shock (Unutulmayan iki gün 6-7 Eylül 2007). A Muslim woman in Kuzguncuk calls the events “sins” (Mills 2010: 124). Mills uses “shame”, “trauma”, “a sense of betrayal”, “shock” and “mental fracture” to describe the feelings of people in Kuzguncuk (a district of Istanbul) towards the riots in their neighbourhood (Mills 2010: 109).

While in Istanbul the riots are remembered as an experience of coexistence provoking emotions of disappointment, fear, betrayal and pain by the non-Muslims and with the emotions of guilt and shame by the Muslims, in Burgaz, the resistance against the riots is remembered as an experience of conviviality, because Burgaz islanders collectively resisted the riots and protected their island from being invaded by the outsiders. The memory of the riots not taking place in Burgaz has a discursive character similar to Bakhtin’s conceptualisation that “verbal discourse is a social phenomenon” (Bakhtin 1981: 269). The ways in which the islanders stress about their collective resistance against the riots, talk about it, helps to construct a collective Burgazlı identity for the islanders. For instance, the shared memories of daily life and conviviality that were described in Haydar’s vignette had created such a strong Burgaz identity that, it overcame ethnic, class and religious identities in times of crisis. The discursive effect of these memories has created an ideology and sense of belonging to Burgaz.
Drawing on Güven’s (2006), Todorova’s (2004) and Kuyucu’s (2005) approaches, I analyse the riots not only in terms of what the government and organisations planned but also in terms of how people reacted to the riots. According to the life stories that Güven collected and the ones in the documentaries, people’s reactions were quite complex. While some Muslims participated in destruction and/or reported their non-Muslim neighbours to the attackers (Güven 2006: 38), some Muslims resisted the riots, for example by protecting non-Muslims in their houses or preventing people from destroying properties (Güven 2006: 36-37, Mills 2010: 121-122, Mihail (a Rum informant) cited in Akar 2007, Tayfun (Sunni Muslim informant) cited in 6-7 Eylül Belgeseli 2007). In Heybeliada, one non-Muslim woman said that a Muslim driver stood up at the end of the street and said that the attackers had to kill him first before they could attack the non-Muslims (Güven 2006: 37). One of Güven’s Rum informants said that the Muslim concierge protected the non-Muslim women of the building by lying to the attackers and telling them that there were no non-Muslims living in the apartment, but then, he joined the attackers to wreck other non-Muslim stores. Was it because he knew the non-Muslims personally that he protected them? Or was it because he was against the non-Muslims who were the “others” that he attacked the non-Muslims store?

From what the Muslims and non-Muslims said about the riots in these documentaries and in research, we know that in some parts of Istanbul and the Princes’ Islands, some Muslims protected their non-Muslim neighbours. So this resistance was an individual reaction to the riots. This protective and defiant stand was not uncommon, and often came up in documentaries and research. There, the non-Muslims also presented the 1955 riots as memories of conviviality when they were protected by their neighbours. However, their memory of conviviality remained at an individual level. At a collective level, the memory of the riots remained memories of coexistence, because the non-Muslims were attacked by masses of people. What is different and interesting in Burgaz is that this individual protection of one’s neighbour was a collective act, a collective resistance and it became a collective memory of conviviality in Burgaz.
All the people on Burgazada resisted the riots and did not let anybody get to the island and attack (Nearby yet Far Away - The Isle of Burgaz 2004). When I analysed Burgaz islanders’ resistance to the riots, I was influenced by Janet Hart’s (1996) approach. When Hart (1996) explored young women’s role in the anti-Nazi resistance in Greece between 1941 and 1944, she explored the ways in which women took part, such as cooking, taking care of the injured and wounded, fighting and defending. With a hermeneutical approach, Hart (1996: 45) analysed the ways in which people expressed their individual and group identities and gave meaning to their actions. When I conducted semi-structured interviews, and formal recorded interviews, and listened to people’s conversations, my Burgaz informants, regardless of their ethnicity or religion – Jewish, Sunni Muslim, Alevi, Rum, German – all told me the story of how the Burgaz islanders cooperated and waited at the bays in Burgaz to scare away the attackers who came from Istanbul. Muslims also hosted their non-Muslims neighbours in their house for the night of the riots (Nearby yet Far Away - The Isle of Burgaz 2004, Aktel 2008). Engin Aktel, a Burgaz islander and a journalist, wrote a memoire/novel about how the Burgaz islanders strategised to protect their island while the other Princes’ Islands and parts of Istanbul were being attacked (Aktel 2008).

Ajda, one of my key informants (a female Sunni Muslim in her early 70s) said:

Deniz, before the 1960s, meetings about the issues in Cyprus were held in different parts of Turkey. We used to follow them on the radio and read about them on Hürriyet [a widely read Turkish newspaper]. The turmoil had already begun before 6-7 September 1955. Hikmet Bil, a journalist in Istanbul Ekpress, wrote that a bomb exploded in Atatürk’s house in Thessaloniki. Once people read this in the newspaper, they attacked non-Muslims’ stores and houses in Istanbul. Rumours from Istanbul about the attacks reached the Princes’ Islands before and during the attacks in Istanbul. On the 6th of September, the islanders who went to Istanbul to work and came back told us that different parts of Istanbul were being attacked by masses of people. We got scared that the island might get attacked too. My father was the party leader of the Democratic Party in Burgaz at that time and he was very much appreciated and esteemed by the islanders. He said “Unless they kill me and step on my dead body, they will not be able to put their foot in Burgaz”. As Burgaz
islanders, we ganged up together to protect our island. My father and the policemen of Burgaz and several islanders waited at the harbour and at the bays where the attackers’ boats could enter the island. We did not let anyone invade Burgaz. We hosted our non-Muslim neighbours in our houses during the night of the events, in case the island got attacked. The 6-7 September events did not happen in Burgaz. Deniz, on our island, not even a glass broke.

Ajda asserts that masses of people had been manipulated by the use of the media and that the riots were an outcome of this manipulation. From Ajda’s language, it is significant that she distinguishes between “us” islanders and “them” people outside Burgaz. She also compares Burgaz with the other Princes’ Islands, and Istanbul and emphasises how they protected “their” island. This shows her strong connection with the collective Burgazian identity. I was told by my Burgaz informants (Jewish, Rum and Muslim) that the islanders, who protected the harbours and bays, fired in the air, and scared away the invaders, so no one could enter Burgaz. One Jew (a male aged 90) and one Sunni Muslim (a male aged 80) told me that a couple of Sunni Muslims in Burgaz also wanted to cause unrest and possibly attack but they were opposed and stopped by the majority in Burgaz. One of my Alevi informants claimed that nothing happened in Burgaz because the Muslims were in the minority and the Rums were in majority in Burgaz and because in Alevi philosophy, it is utterly unacceptable to hurt a human being. In many parts of Istanbul, in the neighbourhoods that were attacked, non-Muslims constituted the local majority and the Muslims constituted the local minority (Mills 2010, Unutulmayan iki gün 6-7 Eylül 2007, 6-7 Eylül Belgeseli 2007, Güven 2006). The fact of being a majority or minority in a neighbourhood did not determine whether attacks occurred or not. One factor was the organised rioting groups that initiated the destruction. Once they started, some Muslims joined their riots. In Burgaz, the collective action of the islanders not to let the rioters on the island was one factor that prevented the riots in happening. On the other hand, the few Muslims who wanted to cause some destruction were stopped by the islanders. Thus, internally and externally Burgaz was protected.

Some of my Rum informants were in Istanbul at the time of the riots. Some had their stores attacked; some had their relatives’ or friends’ houses attacked. For instance,
Niko one of my Rum informants from Burgaz, was 7 years old at the time of the riots. He recalls:

I was in the first grade of primary school. We were in our house in Kurtuluş, in Istanbul at that time. A well-built, strong Albanian neighbour protected our house by standing outside of the building with an axe. The church next to our house was burnt. My grandmother’s house was destroyed and only the walls were left. Nothing happened to her, as she managed to escape to her neighbour’s. A line should be drawn from 6-7 September 1955 onwards, because these 6-7 September events were the point when the Rums were shocked and felt a strong inquietude, because they were physically attacked.

Niko’s memories of the riots are also fragmented into memories of coexistence and conviviality. On the one hand, as a young boy, he remembers that his grandmother and his house were almost attacked. He remembers the Muslim Albanian and his grandmother’s neighbour protecting them. He recalls vividly the axe that the Muslim Albanian showed the attackers to protect Niko and Niko’s family and the walls that remained from his grandmother’s house. When I interviewed Niko about his memories of Burgaz, similar to Haydar, Niko recalled the fish, the fruit, vegetable and flower gardens. When Niko recalled the riots, he said “a line should be drawn from 6-7 September 1955 onwards”. Niko had mentioned the Wealth Tax as a bitter memory that affected the minorities but he emphasised much more the 1955 riots. The riots were significant, because he experienced them, and the riots were a collective attack that targeted his Rum identity. For this reason, he draws a line from the 1955 riots onwards.

Ajda said that the compensation from the government to the non-Muslims for the casualties of the riots was too small. Niko said that even though the compensation was small, still it had a calming and soothing effect on the minorities and added that Rums started to lose their trust and felt uncomfortable right after 6-7 September events, but they did not think of leaving. What Niko said was affirmed by Akgönül (2007) who considered the riots to be a shock to the non-Muslims. Akgönül compared the population censuses of 1950 and 1960, and pointed out that the Orthodox population in 1950 was 86,625 and in 1960, 106,612 (Akgönül 2007: 221-223). Hence, the 6-7 September events
did not trigger the emigration of the Rums from Turkey, but they marked the beginning of a period of discomfort for the Rums (Örs 2006b: 182). However, in the aftermath of the 1955 riots and following the political tensions between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus, the Rum islanders felt torn between their memories of conviviality that tied them to Burgaz, and their memories of coexistence that made them uncomfortable, because they were made to feel different. The 1964 expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship and Cyprus events crystallised more and more the Rum identity.

c)  Rums Are Leaving

The majority of my informants regardless of their ethnicity and religion, told me that 1964 was one of the most important dates they remember, because that year was the time when their Rum friends with Greek citizenship were expelled. The islanders reminisce that many Rums of Greek citizenship were married to Rums of Turkish citizenship. Hence, not only the Rums of Greek citizenship left but their families left as well. The 1964 expulsion was a memory of coexistence for Burgaz islanders, because the islanders’ Rum friends had to leave because of having Greek citizenship.

From Ajda and one of my Rum informants, Haris, I heard the story of the ones who were expelled from Turkey. Haris was not expelled from Turkey in 1964, because she had Turkish citizenship, but she emigrated to Greece from Burgaz with her Sunni Muslim husband because of financial difficulties. Her husband then converted to Greek Orthodoxy and got baptised in Greece. He died there. Haris has been staying in Burgaz every summer for the last several years. Ajda and she told me the deportation story of Christina, a Rum woman from Burgaz. Christina was a raki producer, whose raki Atatürk liked very much. Christina had Greek citizenship and when she heard that the Rums of Greek citizenship would be expelled from the country, she could not believe it. Christina said that no one could send her away because she was one of Atatürk’s favourite raki producers. Unfortunately, she was expelled in 1964 from Burgaz to Greece. Ajda and Haris told me that Christina committed suicide by hanging herself after she went to Greece. From Haris’ and Ajda’s narratives of Christina, I felt that Christina was clearly
attached to Burgaz and resisted leaving. In a way, she might have felt like a plant that was ripped out of the soil where she grew up and whose new place was not home to her, that she committed suicide.

The situation in Cyprus was getting tense, reports about Greek Cypriots oppressing the Turkish Cypriots were broadcast. This made the remaining Rums more anxious, because the riots occurred when the political debates between Turkey, Greece, and Britain over Cyprus were getting heated up. Furthermore, the Rums could not get over the 1955 riots and the expulsion of 1964, so many more “voluntarily” left Turkey in the 1970s. I wanted to explore how the remaining Burgaz islanders interpreted the departure of their Rum friends. One Rum informant (a male aged 65) recalled that when he came back from military service in 1971, the island was “empty”. For him, the existence of Rums made Burgaz a place with meaning and when many Rums left, Burgaz became empty for him. The Muslim islanders pointed out that Rums left secretly. For example, Ajda said:

Rums were scared to let their planned departure be known, that somehow, they might have been prevented from leaving. For instance, I spent the whole day in Kadıköy (a district on the Asian side of Istanbul) with one of my close Rum friends from Burgaz and he left Turkey the next day, without even telling me goodbye!

This shows that Ajda had expected her close friend to say goodbye at least, and that Ajda was surprised that the fear and anxiety her Rum friend felt was greater than their friendship. Nuri narrated:

I used to play marbles with my friends [probably in the mid-1960s] and realised that my friends were gone. I did not understand why they left, as I was a kid. I knew that some Rum never did military service, and later, I understood that these Rums were of Greek citizenship. Some of the ones who left were the ones who did not do military service.

The Muslim Burgaz islanders still cannot digest the fact that their Rum friends left and they argue that the Rums would have been better off if they had stayed in Burgaz. Like the story of Christina who left Burgaz and committed suicide, Burgaz
islanders articulated that the ones who left had horrible lives wherever they went after leaving Burgaz and they died unhappily there. For instance, Ajda said that “the Rums emigrated not only to Greece but to other parts of Europe and the US. I visited my Rum friends in Greece. Most of the Rum Princes’ Islanders, who were expelled to Greece in 1964, were given places in Paleo Faliro, a swamp area, a horrible suburb in the southern part of Athens. The Rums were looked down upon and were treated very badly by the Yunanlı (Greeks from Greece). Today if you go to Paleo Faliro, you will hear people speak Turkish in the street.” In this vignette, Ajda highlights that the Rums are different from the Yunanlis. This means that Rum’ and Yunanlis’ shared Greek ethnicity does not make them get along well. What brings people together is not their shared ethnicity but their conviviality and their shared ways of living in the place where they grow up together. Ajda still does not want to accept the Rums’ departures; she shows that by implying that the Rums would have been better off, if they had stayed in Burgaz. The fact that she says that the Rums still speak Turkish in Greece shows that in terms of language and culture, Rums belong in Burgaz, in Turkey.

Like Ajda, many Burgaz islanders went to visit their Rum friends in Greece and some of the Burgaz islanders who left the island, like Haris, visit Burgaz in the summer. This is significant because Burgaz islanders try to maintain their bonds of friendship. Haydar was one of those who frequently went to Greece. Haydar said:

I have been to Greece many times to visit my Rum friends from Burgaz. Once I went to Greece and wanted to visit Dimitri. Dimitri’s wife said that he was not at home, that he had gone to the island in Athens. I knew Dimitri was at home but he did not dare come out to see me. He was too ashamed to have betrayed us.

Haydar feels that it was a betrayal because in Burgaz, they shared a life together, had enjoyable moments, and they protected each other in times of crisis, like during the riots. Haydar interpreted that Dimitri and the Rums felt as if they (the Rums) had betrayed the Burgaz islanders by leaving their Burgaz friends. As Burgaz islanders never betrayed the Rums, the Rums should not have left Burgaz.
The homogenisation process including the Wealth Tax, the 1955 riots and the expulsion of the Rums in 1964 made the non-Muslims feel that their difference made them lesser Turks, in the eyes of the political power and the Turkish public. This othering process was expressed in the form of an attack on the economic power of the non-Muslims, which also had an impact on the social life of the non-Muslims. These anxieties of feeling like “others” made the non-Muslims, especially the Rums “voluntarily” leave Turkey. The departure of the Rums following the tension between Turkey, Greece and Cyprus displaced people out of Burgaz and changed the demographics of the island. However, this homogenisation process could not rupture people’s Burgazian identity. For the Rums of Burgaz who left and who stayed, their Burgaz identity is still very significant.

In 2010, Burgaz islanders opened a Facebook group and since then, they had been organising a Reunion event that took place on 24-29 August 2012. After the reunion, the islanders put photos on the Facebook page, wrote poems about their reunions, expressing feelings of joy and solidarity.

The group has 1657 members including the ones who left Burgaz. Every day on this Facebook group page, Burgaz islanders, whether they are still in Burgaz or somewhere else in the world, post old photos; share their memories of conviviality; share their news about weddings, graduations, stories of success, and obituaries and celebrate each other’s important religious days. This is very significant because the Burgaz islanders’ memories are not forgotten and left in the past. They affect people’s present life. These memories of conviviality are so strong that they make Burgaz islanders go to Greece to visit their Rum Burgaz friends and they make the Burgaz islanders, who left, come back.

d) Alevis’ Memories of Coexistence and Conviviality

The Rums who were expelled in 1964 had to leave in 24 hours. So, they did not have time to think about what to do with their properties. Some of them just left. As happened in various parts of Turkey, when the taxes on properties were not paid for more than 10 years, they became the property of the government (Akar and Demir 1994:
The Rums of Turkish citizenship that left the country of their own free will had more time than the Rums of Greek citizenship to deal with their properties. They sold their shops and properties for lower prices to their employees, who were mainly Alevis. The Sunni Muslims and the Rums who had been living on the island say that the Rums’ houses were taken by the Muslims, mainly by the Alevis and that they found ways to register the houses. The Sunni Muslim and Rum inhabitants of Burgaz interpreted the exchange of property as the “replacement” of the Rums by the Alevis. These Sunni Muslims and Rums were sad to see their friends leaving the island and to see the Alevis move into their houses and run their shops. On the other hand, some of my Sunni Muslim and Rum informants said that the Alevis had saved their money, so they were able to buy these houses as a result of their hard work. When I interviewed the shop owners, Alevis and Sunnis, they told me the year and from which Rum they bought their properties to point out that they actually bought these properties.

The differences in interpretation of 1940s and 1950s in Burgaz concurred with Passerini’s (1987, 1992) statement that masses of people do not remember the same way, the same things. While the years prior to the 1950s are remembered mainly as joyful and harmonious times for the non-Muslims and the Sunni Muslims, it was not the case for the male Alevi workers who came to Burgaz to do menial jobs. For the Alevis, the 1940s and 1950s were years of hardship, adaptation and suffering. This was, in a way, similar to the ways in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots in Cyprus had different memories about the same time period - the period starting with Turkey’s intervention to Cyprus in 1974 and onwards. The Greek Cypriots perceive 1974 as the start of the painful times while for the Turkish Cypriots, it was the end of suffering (Papadakis 2005). Turkish Cypriots said that they could not live in the south anymore from 1963 onwards due to the Greek Cypriot oppression and antagonism again the Turkish Cypriots and became refugees until Turkey intervened in 1974, when they felt relieved (Papadakis 2005).

A couple of Alevi families came to Burgaz from Erzincan after the devastating earthquake in Erzincan in 1939. More male Alevi migrants came from Erzincan in the
1940s, to work during the summer season and brought back what they earned to their families in Erzincan. Co-locality, coming from the same place of origin, played an important factor. Once some Erzincanlı (people from Erzincan) came to work in Burgaz, they called their friends from their villages to join them. People followed their co-locals because they helped each other. My Rum, Sunni and Alevi informants relate the immigration of the Alevis to economic factors. In the 1950s and 1960s, the migration from Anatolian villages to cities was increasing. That was also the period when Anatolians migrated to Germany to work (Geaves 2003: 53). Some Alevis from the eastern part of Turkey migrated to Germany for economic reasons as well as to Istanbul. Some came first to Büyükada, and then to Burgaz.

The Alevi men who migrated to Burgaz in 1940s as temporary workers did menial jobs like helping the Rum fishermen reel in nets when they came back from fishing. They worked as *hamal*, carrying the furniture of the summer inhabitants when those inhabitants moved to the island and when they moved back to Istanbul. The summer season was longer than today. The boats were not as regular as today and they used to call the arrival and the departure of the summer inhabitants *göç*, which means migration. The Alevi men also built and restored houses, and worked as waiters and helpers in grocery shops, restaurants and cafes. The building sector in Burgaz had been increasing and hence provided new job opportunities. They worked as doorkeepers and gardeners in Rums’ houses (especially in the Ay Nikola area, which is higher up, away from the town centre) where they were given a room or flat to stay in. The *zangoç* (verger) of the Rum Orthodox Ay Yorgi church in Burgaz explained to me the story of how Ay Nikola became an Alevi neighbourhood. He said: “Alevis came to work temporarily in summer. Most of them worked in Garipi monastery, in Ay Nikola, painting walls, and fixing things for the church. The priest who was in charge of the church at that time let the Alevis settle in the Ay Nikola area, near the Garipi church. Hence, they built small houses and made them bigger when they brought their family to the island.” Thus, Ay Nikola started to become a neighbourhood for the Alevis. These lands were given to Alevis by word-of-mouth, and never had a land register, neither the houses built by the
Alevis on these lands. Today, most of the houses of the Alevis in Ay Nikola do not have the land register and the government has sued them for the possession of these properties. Today, these houses risk being demolished. For some Alevis, the difficulties they had when they settled have not yet come to an end.

My male Alevi informants started their stories with the fact that they had many difficulties when they started working. Nuri (who is now the head of cemevi) and Mustafa (whose father was a shoemaker and who now does freelance casual jobs, like painting boats), whose fathers were among the first Alevis to come to work in Burgaz, said they were looked down upon because they did menial jobs. Mustafa said: “The Rums used to call us “kıro”. When we passed near them they said “To kıro einai.” and we started fighting with each other.” “to kıro einai” translates into, “he is kıro”. The structure of the sentence is in Rumca, but the word kıro, a Turkish word, is a derogatory term for someone un-educated and ill-mannered.

The tensions that arose between the Rums and the Alevis were triggered by class differences as well as lifestyle differences. Especially the summer inhabitants were upper-middle class and they did not appreciate the presence of the Anatolian culture on the island. What I mean by lifestyle is the difference between city life and village life. What people wear in Istanbul and Burgaz and in Erzincan and how people talk in these two different regions were markers of difference. The summer people in Burgaz wore bathing suits, modern European clothes such as shorts and t-shirts. When women went out in the afternoon, they wore perfume and elegant evening dresses. The Alevis grew up in villages in Erzincan. They wore modest and comfortable clothes to work in the fields and did not have elegant or fancy dresses. There were also differences in accents. These Alevis spoke Zazaki and Turkish in Erzincan. They have a harder accent, and the letters like k and g are emphasised and syllables are rolled in their throat. In Istanbul, these letters are softer and the syllables are rolled in the mouth. In Burgaz, people use many words from Rumca and Ladino in sentences as well.
These two Alevi informants recall that when they were kids, the rich Rum kids used to exclude them because they were *kıro*. Nuri said:

When we wore shorts, t-shirts and sun glasses, they (Rums) used to belittle us and make fun of us. I was very upset about this because it was as if we did not have the right to wear these clothes and accessories. The Rums behaved as if the sun and the summer belonged to them.

There was some tension between the “city kids” and the “village kids”. Nuri also said that there were tension between Rum employees and Alevi workers. The Rums who worked in the building sector, constructing walls and painting, employed Alevis as their assistants. Nuri referred to the times of his father’s generation. The Alevis of his father’s generation wanted to have more experience in the building sector. The Rums gave menial jobs to Alevis, such as carrying the cement, while they (Rums) performed the main duties of making the walls. When these Alevi male workers also wanted to learn to paint the walls, the Rums did not let them. The Alevi men interpreted this as “the Rums do not want us to learn more and be better, because we might take their jobs”. On the other hand, Nuri also said that the Rum women acted nicely, giving food and clothes to them and being hospitable towards Alevi kids. This also raises a significant gender issue, because while there was tension between the male Rum employers and the male Alevi employees, the female Rums behaved in a maternal way towards Alevi kids.

When I interviewed the first male Alevi settlers to Burgaz, they articulated ambiguous feelings towards the Rums who left. When I listened to their memories, they articulated that when they first moved to Burgaz, they had tension with the Rums. While they were adapting to island life, they did menial jobs and were employed by the Rums and the class difference was significant. When the Rums left, they left their shops and properties to their Alevi employees. These Alevi employees are grateful for that; however, they are also disappointed that while the older settlers of Burgaz (including Rums and Sunnis) talk about their memories in public (in cafes and restaurants), these older islander refer only to the difficulties the Rums had because of the political tension and mourn the Rums’ departure but they do not acknowledge the hardship that the Alevi
male workers went through. For instance, my informant Nuri objected the generalising statement that “Alevis replaced the Rums”. He pointed out that his father and the other Alevi male migrants worked hard to be able to buy the Rums’ shops and the properties. He, then, disclosed his feelings and said:

I feel sad when people say that the Rums were kicked out and replaced by Alevis. I also felt sad that they left. We used to live together on this island. Whenever I look at the church out of my room window, I see that the church is emptier. When I was a kid, I used to love going to the weddings in the church. It is also my church; this is why I feel sad to see it emptier. I feel sad that it is closed in winter, that Rums do not come to pray and light candles.

Nuri’s and Mustafa’s memories are also memories of conviviality. As I discussed in the first chapter and the third chapter, conviviality includes not only peaceful and harmonious times, but also competition and hard times. In the example of the fight between the Rum and Alevi children, the tension between the Rums and the Alevis was not an issue of coexistence. Mustafa and Nuri were not discriminated against because of an ethnic and/or religious identity; rather, the differences in lifestyle became exacerbated by class difference. For instance, the tension between Alevi employees and Rum employers was due to competition between classes and between men. Nonetheless, Nuri also remembers the hospitality of Rum women. Furthermore, when Nuri said “It is also my church”, “I also feel sad that the Rums left” and “We lived together on this island”, it showed that Nuri made Burgaz his home too. Nuri recalls both bitter and sweet memories of conviviality. He articulates the fact that it was hard for them to adapt to island life and that there was tension between the previous settlers and themselves, however he also emphasises that he was a part of this conviviality. He attended the church, he played marbles and fought with Rum kids and all of this made Burgaz his home.

Besides the bitter and sweet memories of conviviality, Alevis also have memories of coexistence. While Passerini (1987) emphasises the individual differences in remembering, Halbwachs (1992) draws attention to the selective memory of groups. Some events are more significant to one group while they are less significant to or
forgotten by another group. At this particular moment when Alevis were asking for recognition, more than individual memories, Alevis were also articulating collectively their selective remembrance of particular events in history. With the emergence of public expression of minority memories, facilitated by neo-Ottomanism initiated by Özal and followed by the AKP government, Alevis also expressed their memories of coexistence, which formed a part of their identity.

Currently, Erdoğan represents himself and his government as being “more democratic” towards non-Muslim minorities (expressed e.g. in the re-opening the closed Greek Orthodox monastery in Sümële, the Black sea region (Cihan Haber Ajansı 05/08/2010); and in changing the laws to return the properties of Greeks and Armenians that had been taken by the Turkish government (Hurriyet Daily News 28/08/2011 and 09/06/2011, Arsu 2011). The AKP has come up with “democratisation packages\textsuperscript{19}” including freedom of speech, and giving more cultural rights to Kurds in order to meet the Copenhagen criteria for Turkey’s accession to the EU (Bac 2005), and has initiated a dialogue with the Alevis to discuss what their demands are (Soner and Toktaş 2011, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2012). With such an attitude, Erdoğan has been trying to give more power to Islamists and to convey the message that the oppression of ethnic and religious identities was the fault of the Kemalist modernity project. Erdoğan is deliberately trying to get the support of Alevis, because Alevis support the CHP, founded by Atatürk. Atatürk is very important for Alevis, because he founded the country and brought secularism, which greatly lessened the domination of Sunnis over Alevis. Erdoğan hopes to collect votes from the Kurds and Alevis (Head 2011) by claiming that Kemalists had oppressive policies towards non-recognised Muslims and that he wants to change this. Especially when Erdoğan apologised for the killings in Dersim, the Alevis started to talk about the Dersim events (BBC News Europe 23/11/2011, Milliyet 23/11/2011). As the CHP was responsible for the killings in Dersim, that was one strategy that Erdoğan used to accuse the CHP.

\textsuperscript{19} Please refer to pages 115-118 of the thesis for information about the “democratic packages” and the criticism of them.
In Burgaz, this political context created an atmosphere where Alevis started to articulate their memories of coexistence by expressing the ways in which Alevis have been oppressed in and assimilated into the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic. For instance, just before Hızır cemi\textsuperscript{20} took place in Burgaz, I was having a chat with my Alevi informants who came to attend cem. They mentioned that the Ottoman Sultan Yavuz Sultan Selim won the Çaldıran war in 1514 against the Safavids and killed many Shias and Alevis. Alevis were protected by the Safavids. In order to keep control in Anatolia and to diminish Shah Ismail (the leader of the Safavids) Selim killed many Alevis in the region (Finkel 2005: 105). In almost every cem ritual, the Kerbela event is referred to\textsuperscript{21}. Furthermore, my informants stated that when they said that they were from Dersim/Tunceli while they were doing their military service, other soldiers looked at them as if they were criminals.

Neyzi (2004a) and Shankland (1999) refer to the massacres that took place during the Turkish republic such as the 1938 rebellion in Dersim (Neyzi 2004a) and the massacres in Çorum, Kahramanmarash and Sivas (Madımak) (Shankland 1999: 133) as significant events among the collective memories of the Alevis. The past was reconstructed with a new purpose in the present (Halbwachs 1992), which was to create a collective Alevi identity. “We are what we remember” (Fentress and Wickham 1992: 7) and “memory is the social construction of a social and cultural identity” (Bahloul 1996: 2) were relevant for the case of the Alevis. Furthermore, they also talk about the Çaldıran war in 1514 and the Kerbela event in 680. Although they did not experience these historical and political events first-hand, they still articulate these stories. Alevis were dispersed from Dersim to other parts of Turkey either right after the Dersim rebellion in 1938 or in the 1960s due to economic reasons. So, in their stories, their departure from Dersim and settlement elsewhere are remembered as difficult times.

The Madımak event was also one of the events that came up during my fieldwork. On 2 July 1993, the Pir Sultan Abdal Celebrations, organised by Pir Sultan Abdal

\textsuperscript{20} Alevi gathering on a special day, which is explored in Chapter 5.

\textsuperscript{21} Please refer to Chapter 5 for further information.
Alevi-Bektaşi organisation took place in Madımak, Sivas in eastern Anatolia. The Sunnis attacked the cultural centre where the celebrations were taking place. The hotel of the organisation’s participants (authors, poets, thinkers) was burned down. 33 participants and 2 hotel workers died in the hotel. Not all the participants were Alevis; there were also Sunni Muslim intellectuals and leftists like Aziz Nesin, who attended the event and stayed at the hotel. Just before the Madımak meeting, Aziz Nesin was attacked by Muslims for saying that he was an atheist. The fire in Madımak, has been interpreted as an attack on Alevis and secular people in Turkey (Tarih Haber Sitesi 03/01/2009, CNN Turk 02/07/2009, Sivas Cehennemi 2002).

On 5 July 2009, Burgaz Alevis conducted the first memorial of the Madımak event in Burgaz. An Alevi journalist was invited to talk about the event and a documentary was shown. It was held at Ay Nikola tea garden. This memorial was organised by young leftist Alevis, members of the Turkish Communist Party, in Burgaz and about 50 islanders - Alevis as well as some Sunni Muslims - attended. The main message of the memorial was that the people who were involved in organising this fire were not punished and that this event symbolised the attack on the leftists, thinkers and secular people, among whom there were Alevis. On 7 July 2012, Burgaz Alevis held another memorial which was attended by 150 people (Sol Portal 08/07/2012). This is an important event because it unites secular Sunni Muslims and Alevis around one cause: defending secularists and intellectuals.

Memory thus plays a very important role in Alevis’ lives. On the one hand, they refer to the events dating back centuries when Alevis and Shias experienced oppression from the Sunnis. These memories of coexistence have been transmitted to later generations and talked about in public, like the Madımak memorial at the cemevi tea garden. These memories of coexistence form a part of Alevis’ identity today. Nevertheless, the Alevis in Burgaz also recall their bitter and sweet memories of conviviality in Burgaz. Quarrelling, fighting and playing marbles with the earlier established settlers in Burgaz and feeling sad about their Rum friends’ departure also
signify their sense of belonging in Burgaz. When, at the end of the interview, I asked Nuri what Burgaz meant to him, he said “I was born in Burgaz and I have 60 years of friendship with my oldest friend. You cannot find these long friendships in Istanbul or somewhere else for example.” This demonstrates that he separates Burgaz from everywhere else. His years in Burgaz and his lifelong friends from there make the island a unique place for him. He added that “the islanders do not know how to walk on the streets of Istanbul. We do not know what traffic is, here on the island, we walk in the middle of the streets. Burgaz is a büyülü (mysterious) place; it has its own way of life. Burgaz means the sea, the seagulls and the pine trees for me. Whenever I go outside of Burgaz and I see seagulls and pine trees, it reminds me of Burgaz.” What Nuri said was similar to the memories of Haydar, Ajda and many other Burgaz islanders whom I met and talked with. These memories of conviviality in Burgaz strengthen the islanders’ attachment to Burgaz.

4. 4 Section III: Autobiographical Stories

a) The Story of Ajda and Manos:

Love and Intermarriage between a Rum Man and a Sunni Muslim Woman

Ajda was one of my key informants and we recorded her life story over seven hours. In the previous section, I analysed Ajda’s memories of Burgaz and in this part, I focus more on Ajda’s love story with her husband Manos, a Rum man. Her love for Manos was so strong that it was impossible for Ajda to tell her life story without telling Manos’ life story. Ajda had a peculiar position in the way she saw and interpreted the events that were happening around her. As her father was an MP from the Democratic Party, she grew up in a political environment. While she understood Democratic Party’s aims and ways of running the government, she was critical of the Democratic Party and supported the Republican Party. Furthermore, since she grew up with the Rums on Burgaz and fell in love with a Rum and married him after having dated secretly for 12 years, she sees events through the Rum’s eyes. Ajda’s husband, Manos was not a supporter of the DP but was fond of Menderes, the prime minister at that time and the head of the DP. Her love story is a story of intermarriage. Some love stories between lovers from different religions
could not go beyond the stage of flirting and/or dating. Especially from the 1950s onwards, with the restrictions concerning the minorities and the political tensions between Greece, Turkey and Cyprus, intermarriage between Muslims and non-Muslims was discouraged. However, this did not prevent love flourishing between people of different religions and ethnicities. There were several cases of intermarriage in Burgaz. In some marriages, when the man was Muslim, and the woman non-Muslim, the non-Muslim bride converted to Islam. However, on many occasions, that was not the case. One Rum woman married a Sunni Muslim man and he converted to Orthodoxy; another Rum woman and a Sunni Muslim man married and neither of them converted. Ajda and Manos married and neither of them converted. Ajda told me of a Sunni Muslim woman and a Rum man, who wanted to get married. Their families did not approve so they escaped to Greece. As the woman did not want to convert, they could not get married in the church in Greece. So they came back to Turkey to have civil wedding. The Rum husband did not convert to Islam either. In another case, an Alevi woman married an Armenian man and he converted to Islam. An English woman, an Italian woman and a Greek woman (from Greece), all married Sunni Muslim men but none of them converted. There were also several cases of intermarriages between Alevis and Sunnis. There was also dating and flirting, and there were affairs between Jews and Sunni Muslims or Rums. However, intermarriage was rare between Jews and non-Jews.

Ajda told me Manos’ life story from his birth until his death. Many of his experiences reflect the political situation’s on the lives of the Rums. Ajda’s selection of memories about Manos’ life was interesting. Her selection was almost like an argument she was trying to convey. On the one hand she emphasised that Manos was a proper citizen of the Turkish Republic, he loved his country and Atatürk; however the government behaved as if he was not, because he was Rum. So, Ajda highlighted the duties that Manos and his family carried out for Turkey as well as the memories of coexistence that made him feel as if he was an “other”.
Ajda said: “Manos’ father died in Gallipoli during the First World War because of typhoid, while Manos and his younger brother were a few years old.” This line shows that Manos’ father fought in Gallipoli when Turkey was trying to get its independence. She wanted to imply that Manos’ father was not on the side of the enemy, the Greeks but fought for Atatürk’s army. Manos was born sometime between 1912 and 1914 in Mudanya, outside Istanbul, in the south by the Marmara Sea. As Istanbulite Rums were exempt from the population exchange, in order to be excluded from the population exchange, Manos’ mother immigrated from Mudanya to Istanbul where her sisters were living. This is again significant, because it shows Manos’ parents’ resistance to the population exchange. Manos’ parents did not identify themselves as Greeks but as Rums. Manos and his family’s sense of belonging and identity were not ruptured by the ideologies “modern homogenous nation states”. They wanted to live not in the land that belonged to “Greeks” or “Turks” but in the land where people from different faiths lived and shared conviviality. Their sense of belonging and identity is similar to the Rumpolite cosmopolitan identity that was articulated in Ilay Örs’ (2006a and 2006b) works. While Örs emphasises a cosmopolitan city identity, that of Istanbul, Manos and his family had a sense of belonging beyond a city, but to a land. Manos’ family moved from Mudanya to Istanbul to stay in the “land”. Manos’ father fought in Gallipoli to protect “the land” from its enemies. “The land” I am referring to is not “Greece” or “Turkey” but an imaginary land in the minds of Manos and his family, where they felt they belonged.

---

22 Lack of knowledge of birth years during the early 1900s and the First World War are very common in Turkey. Ajda said that Manos was 29 years older than her, which would have made his birth year 1912; then she said that he died at the age of 69 in 1983, which would have made his birth year 1914.

The generation born in 1910-1920s (like my grandparents) had unknown birth dates. The approximate year of their birth can be found if they remember a story from a war (e.g. Balkan wars) or migration from one country to another (population exchange). For example, my father’s father (of Turkish origin, born in Bulgaria) remembered the fact that his mother hid him inside her overcoat while they were escaping on a donkey from one place to another during the Balkan wars in Bulgaria. He said that he was around two years old, when this happened, which gives the range of 1909-1910 for his birth year.
Ajda kept recalling moments where Rums were treated differently by the government. She emphasised that even though Manos and his family had mediocre lives in Istanbul, they did not want to leave and tried everything possible to be able to stay in Turkey. For instance Ajda narrated:

Manos’ mother did the laundry of the consuls and the diplomats in Beyoğlu, Istanbul. As they were very poor, Manos and his brother lived for several years in the Rum Orphanage in Büyükada. At a very young age, around 10 (in the mid-1920s), he started working as a helper in a barber shop in Beyoğlu and then became a barber himself. The location of his store was fantastic. His barbershop was frequented by politicians, journalists, consuls and writers. Once, Manos even cut Atatürk’s hair and Atatürk gave one piece of gold to him when Manos had his first daughter, from his previous marriage.

These lines showed that although Manos came from a poor background, he managed to become a successful barber. Ajda drew attention to the fact that her husband was appreciated by the elites and famous people, and formed intimate relationships with them. The fact that Manos constantly told Ajda how he was attached to this land, where he called his “homeland”, that his father fought on Atatürk’s side to protect this land, that he supported the CHP (Atatürk’s party), was critical of Democratic Party (the opposition party) and that Atatürk had given him a piece of gold for his daughter’s birth reflect that he appreciated Atatürk.

When she was telling Manos’ life story, she said “My husband was called three times to military service, against his will.” First, he did the regular military service that every man has to do. He was called to military service for the second time, during the Wealth Tax period, when the non-Muslim men went to work camps under the name of military service when they could not afford to pay the tax. The last time was during the Second World War Even though Turkey did not enter the war, the government called both Muslim and non-Muslim men to join the military. So many men, like my grandfather (a Sunni Muslim), did military service twice. Because of the Wealth Tax, many non-Muslims did the military service three times. Ajda emphasised that Manos went three times, to show that Manos did all the duties the government asked of him as a male citizen of the Turkish Republic.
The 1955 riots were also significant memories that Ajda wanted me to hear. Manos had narrated his experiences of the 6-7 September events to Ajda. Ajda said:

Manos had just opened his little cafe/sandwich place on 6 September 1955, in Beyoğlu, in Istanbul, where the majority of the store owners were non-Muslims. The till Manos had ordered from the US was destroyed. The shutters were ripped off like pieces of paper. Even though Manos was liked a lot in the neighbourhood, his store was still attacked. Manos always said: “Even though I would be exiled and deported by force by train or boat out of this land, I would still jump from the boat or the train in order to come back” Manos never thought of leaving his homeland.

Here again, we see Manos’ connection with his imaginary land. Ajda interprets this land, as Manos’ homeland, where he belonged.

She then continued to narrate how love flourished between her and Manos. In 1958, Manos moved to Burgaz as a tenant, in one of Ajda’s father’s flats. This is how Manos and Ajda met. They became neighbours in the same building. Manos was married to his second wife; they had one daughter and a son. However, their marriage came to an end with a divorce. Manos became good friends with Ajda’s father and they hung out and drank together. When Ajda went to Istanbul for day trips, Manos used to ask her “Where have you been Ajda, what have you done?” She used to call him “Manos Ağa bey, (brother)” as he was 29 years older than her. Once she asked her father “Dad, why don’t you ask me these sorts of questions that Manos Ağa bey asks me about what I do, where I go?” Her father replied “Well, Manos has lived in Istanbul and knows how Istanbul is bigger and less safe than Burgaz, and he worries about you.” Ajda did not understand that Manos was in love with her until he finally told her “my Ajoula, I have fallen in love with you!” She was twenty and he was almost fifty when they got together.

They dated each other secretly for twelve years. Her brothers were against this relationship because Manos was not a Muslim. The 6-7 September events, worsening relationships between Greece and Turkey because of Cyprus, the fact that the Rums and the Turks were losing their mutual trust towards each other and the age gap between Manos and Ajda were the reasons why her brothers and parents did not approve of their
relationship. As Burgaz is a small place, gossip and rumours spread quickly. This is why Manos and Ajda always had to meet in Istanbul. Once in Istanbul they bumped into a Burgaz islander who was having a love affair with someone he should not. When, the other couple cried out “you have not seen us”, Manos and Ajda replied “you have not seen us either!”

Ajda explained to me the psychological oppression that the Rums endured after the 6-7 September 1955 events and the 1964 expulsion. She recalls that people used to warn the minorities who spoke their native languages by saying “Citizen, speak Turkish!” Once, she and Manos were on the boat to Burgaz and Manos said in Turkish with his Rum accent “My wife, our islands look so beautiful!” One man commented “Fatih Sultan Mehmet conquered them 500 years ago!” That man recognised from Manos’ accent that he was Rum and wanted to emphasise that the islands and Istanbul were not Byzantine, did not belong to the Greeks and were Turkish. Such attitudes made Rums hesitant to speak Rumca and sing Rumca songs. On another occasion, Ajda was on the boat again and had a plastic bag with text in Greek letters. A man started to talk about how gloriously they had defeated the Greeks. On the basis of the Greek letters on the plastic bag, he assumed that Ajda was Rum so he wanted to offend her. What was striking was that her specific memories of coexistence took place on boats, but not in Burgaz. When she talked about Burgaz, she articulated vague memories of discomfort but did not mention any specific events. This signalled to me that she was protective of Burgaz and the Burgaz islanders.

Among those vague memories of coexistence, Ajda retains the fact that the word “gavur”, which means infidel and unbeliever was used for non-Muslims in Istanbul and sometimes also on the island. When I wanted to learn more about the contexts in which, the word gavur was used, she did not tell me about a specific event, or name people who used that word for the non-Muslims. Rather she said: “Gavur means infidel and unbeliever. I find it wrong to call non-Muslims “infidel and unbelievers” because they believe in God; they are not unbelievers”. She stated:
If I could restart the life on Burgaz, I would make one and only one cemetery on the island. Jews here, Christians there and Muslims over there. We lived like brothers and sisters in life, we can also be buried together. Does the earth give back the Christian, the Jew or the Muslim?

Through her wish, we see Ajda’s stress on the conviviality on Burgaz and her intense disapproval of those people who separate people according to their faiths.

She referred to the times of Abdülhamit II (who reigned between 1876 and 1909); she noted that although Abdülhamit II was considered a despotic and oppressive ruling figure, he built a synagogue, a mosque and a church in the Darülacize, a home for poor, homeless and handicapped people and homeless children regardless of their religion. Because of what her husband went through, she empathises with the oppression that the Rums suffered, why and how they left and the ways in which Turkey became a more homogenous place. When she compared Ottoman times with today, she said “it looks as if we went backwards.” On the other hand, she also said “I really wish that my husband were alive to see the freedom today”, which implied how much hardship and restrictions both Ajda and Manos went through to prove their love and get married. She compared that time with Ottoman times and today and pointed out that what she and Manos went through was a specific time in history.

After twelve years of dating, Manos and Ajda got married in 1978. She emphasised that her husband was very appreciative of her following Islam. Ajda fasts during Ramadan but she also enjoys drinking (except in the month of Ramadan). Manos used to prepare the dinner for her, before she broke the fast during Ramadan. He also used to fast with her on Kadir day (one of the most important holy nights in Islam). Furthermore, Ajda also cooked for Manos on Christmas, Easter and on important religious days. Both of them were against conversion and they encouraged each other to practise their faith.

Of their years together, she enjoyed the years of marriage most as they did not have to hide anymore and could finally live together. She said “It was great to wake up together, and even though I looked horrible in the morning, he used to tell me that I
looked very beautiful when I had just woken up”. Unfortunately, five years after they got married, Manos died of cancer. Ajda said that “I could not eat spaghetti for years after his death as I remembered how much Manos loved spaghetti. I visited his tomb every day for a month until the priest told me that I should leave him in peace, and that he was taken care of at the moment and that I should take care of myself.” This reflects that it was very hard for Ajda to accept his husband’s death, especially the first month and the following years. Even though she does not go to the tomb every day; the memories of her husband are vivid in her mind and when Ajda unfolded her story of Burgaz, she did it through her love for Manos.

b) Amojgar’s Story: From Muş to Burgaz

Aojgar was one of my key informants. I met him through his wife with whom I took embroidery classes in Burgaz. Amojgar is of Şafi Kurdish origin from Muş, in southeastern Turkey. His story is interesting because he was one of the first Kurdish people to come to work in Burgaz and he narrated me his escape story from his village and how he ended up in Burgaz. He started his story like this:

I came to Burgaz first in 1982-83 when I was around 10-12 years old. My family was going through financial difficulties and after my mum died, my dad remarried. I did not get along with my step-mother so I escaped from the village and came to Izmit first [a city in the Marmara region], which was a random choice. Furthermore, the conditions in my village were very poor. We did not have proper roads and we had electricity and water problems. While I was in Izmit, I visited my sister and aunt-in-law who lived in Istanbul. There, I found out that jobs were available building houses and horse-cart driving in Büyükada [the biggest Princes’ Island]. Kurds from other villages of Muş and Van were also doing these jobs in Büyükada. But the conditions were horrible. 7 workers had to sleep in one single bed while working in housebuilding. So I took the horse-cart driving job. As I was young, I was bullied a lot.

When I asked my other Kurdish informants who worked as cooks and waiters in Burgaz, they also talked about the poor conditions they had in their village that made them migrate to big cities to earn money. There was a common tone in the way they
talked to me. They mentioned being belittled, bullied and oppressed and how they experienced difficulties adapting to the new life and the working lifestyle in the cities.

What I came across on the island is that people who did menial jobs, regardless of their ethnic or religious origin or the time of their arrival, faced difficulties due to the differences in lifestyles and working conditions in the cities and the Princes’ Islands which were different from their villages. There was a big contrast in the way the upper-middle class lived their lives and the ways in which Zaza Alevis and Sunni and Safi Kurds lived back in their villages. Amojgar recalls that when he first came to Burgaz, the island was a place of fun. The Rum gazinos were open in Ay Nikola, people used to dance and enjoy themselves. Amojgar said that today, he feels sad not to see the Rum dances in Ay Nikola. This nostalgia for the past, and remembering the times of the Rums is also present in Amojgar’s memory. Amojgar’s recollection of the 1980s is different from the elder generation’s. While the elderly people of Burgaz who have lived since the 1940s and 1950s recall that the life on the island “died” in the 1980s, because the majority of the Rums left; Amojgar did not know the old times. Coming from Muş, he found the island like a luxurious garden in heaven.

Later, some jobs became available in the building of the drainage system in Burgaz. The existing drainage system was dumping the waste in the sea and the islanders wanted to find a solution. The Leopard charity of Burgaz, whose members were upper-class Jews and Sunni Muslims came up with a new drainage project, raised money from the islanders by organising social events at the social clubs both in the SC and the BC and managed the construction of the new system. Amojgar heard about that job in Burgaz and started working there in Burgaz both in the drainage job and also driving horse-carts. The other horse-cart drivers were Zaza Alevis from Erzincan. There was only one man from Muş who was working in Burgaz. On the other hand, Amojgar had a relative working in Kinalıada, another Princes’ Island. There were jobs in the building sector and in laying cables for the post office in Kinalıada. Amojgar emphasised that he did not particularly choose to come to Burgaz because of that co-local man. In the co-locality friendships, one
co-local who settles in a city calls for his friends or relatives from the village of his origin when jobs become available in the city. This man in Burgaz did not call Amojgar particularly for that. Through this network of jobs on the Princes’ Islands he found more jobs in Istanbul in the building sector in the 1990s. He also worked as a chef in restaurants. While he started making and saving money, he used to send some of it to his father and family, who had migrated to Balıkesir, another city in the Marmara region. He reconciled with his family and Amojgar moved back to his village and started living in the flat below his father’s. However, there was another family problem.

He had met his wife, who is of Kurdish origin from Ağrı in south-eastern Turkey, in 1992. She was living in Heybeliada at that time. They fell in love. However, when the paternal uncle came to visit Amojgar’s father, Amojgar learnt about the arranged marriage (beşik kertmesi) that he was already destined for. When the uncle’s daughter was born, Amojgar’s father and uncle - two brothers - decided on the marriage of their children. The uncle told Amojgar that it was now time for them to get married. Cross-cousin marriages in Eastern and South-Eastern Turkey are very common, and many Alevi in Burgaz had married their cousins. However, the ones who do not want to marry their cousins, especially when they fall in love with someone else, resist the tradition. Amojgar replied that he loved his cousin as a sister and this was why he could not marry her. This created a family crisis. So, Amojgar had to escape again and came back to Burgaz. He took up the horse-cart driving job again and married his love from Heybeli.

I wanted to learn more about how Amojgar saw the times in his home village. Among my Kurdish informants, both male and female, who worked at the teachers’ hostel, at restaurants and cafes, talked to me about the poor conditions in their village in South-Eastern Turkey and the hardship they went through when they moved to Istanbul and to Burgaz while they had to do menial jobs. My Kurdish informants were reluctant to talk to me about the PKK and the rebellions that have taken place in the region since 1984, most probably because I was a Turkish Muslim. My Kurdish informants might have given different narrative accounts to a Kurdish researcher. However, they merely said
that conditions were poor and the PKK oppressed them but they did not specify what kinds of conflicts took place there. Their reluctance to talk to me was in itself a very important ethnographic data which signalled silences and that showed that it was quite sensitive to discuss such matters with a Turkish person. These silences were also present in Amojgar’s narrative.

The political present affected the ways in which Amojgar reflected on the past. Amojgar said: “The PKK would tell us not to send our children to schools; we were scared so hence we did not send children to school”. Amojgar reflected on the fact that “Turks and Kurds had good neighbourhood relations in my village. I, for example, went to the mosque of the Turks and not to the mosque of the Kurds”. Amojgar used the discourse of “coexistence”, situating Kurds versus Turks, when he was telling his memories. This shows that he had internalised the Turkish-Kurdish dichotomy that has been emphasised in the current political situation in Turkey. In recent years, clashes between the PKK and the police and the army (Ilke Haber Ajansı 01/07/2009), the reporting of deaths and the funerals of soldiers (Sabah 19/06/2010, CNN Turk 09/05/2010) and the “Kurdish Opening” of the AKP government have been widely discussed in the media, contrasting “the PKK” and “terrorists” with “soldiers” and “Kurds” with “Turks”. Erdoğan promised to implement his “democratisation package” for the Kurds, which included the use of Kurdish on TV and media, education in Kurdish at schools, and giving citizenship to Kurds who live outside of Turkey only if the PKK ceases fire (Time Turk 07/11/2009). When Amojgar was reconstructing his past in relation to the present, it must be noted that the fact that I was Turkish and that he was Kurdish had affected the ways in which he represented himself, as a Kurd, to a Turkish person. When Amojgar reflected on the past in his village, he stressed the collaboration of the Turks and Kurds and differentiated Kurds from the PKK. This shows that he was affected by the news and the current political situation, where there was constant differentiation between the PKK insurgency associated with the Kurds and the soldiers associated with the Turks. While talking to me, a Turkish researcher, Amojgar wanted to exculpate the Kurds from the allegation of collaborating with the PKK by trying to bridge the Turkish-Kurdish dichotomy by saying
that Kurds and Turks got along well in his village. If he were to talk to a researcher with a Kurdish background, he might have talked about what he thinks about what kinds of rights he would want for the Kurds. However, to me, he first wanted to pass the message that he is not to be associated with the PKK.

On the other hand, even though I was not an Alevis, my Alevi informants were more willing to share with me their views on Alevi recognition. The Alevis of Burgaz were publically also publically articulate about their views: they organised panels in Burgaz to discuss the kinds of problems they had and how to get recognised. However, throughout my fieldwork, the Kurds in Burgaz did not organise panels or discussed in public, what kinds of rights they want. For instance, Amojgar stressed how much he was assimilated into “Turkish culture”. He wanted to portray an image of a “good Kurd” by saying that he went to a “Turkish mosque”. To separate Sunnis from Şafis, he did not say “Sunni mosque” or “Şafi mosque”, which are terms of religious categorisation but ethnic terms such as “Turkish mosque” and “Kurdish mosque”. In Amojgar’s narrative, he expressed religious differences in terms of ethnic differences, which goes in parallel with the Kurds in Turkey who would like to be recognised as an ethnic minority.

Furthermore, in Amojgar’s narrative, the categories of Kurd and Turk are also delineated as two groups who speak different languages. Rather than stressing the linguistic differences, Amojgar and his wife highlighted that they did not teach Kurdish to their children. Amojgar’s wife also stated that her father did not want to talk to them in Kurdish in order for them to learn Turkish. Amojgar’s narrative demonstrated that he felt oppressed for being Kurdish, and while representing himself to an ethnically Turkish person, rather than pointing out the differences between Kurds and Turks, he wanted to erase religious and linguistic differences and argue that Kurds are like Turks. This shows that he was uncomfortable about hearing Kurds being portrayed as “different” in the news and in the public sphere. The PKK and the politics of recognition of the Kurds as an ethnic minority had an oppressive and assimilating impact in Amojgar. Amojgar preferred to portray himself to me as “a good assimilated Kurd” rather than as a Kurdish activist.
Ajojgar’s story also showed that people left their places of origin because of the tensions of conviviality they experienced within their families, their poor living conditions and traditions like arranged marriage that society expected individuals to conform to. Because of these tensions, Ajojgar decided to leave and build a life on his own. While he was doing this, he also went through hardship, got bullied for being young, and coming from a different setting; however, he married the one he loves, and today, he is happy to have made his decisions for himself. Ajojgar finished his story by saying that: “Among all the other islands, I chose to live in Burgaz because I like the intimacy on the island. Today, whenever I go to the pharmacy, grocer or walk on the island, people know me and I feel at home.”

4.5 Conclusion

Building on Halbwachs (1992), I explored the ways in which the memories of the past were constructed in relation to the present through an investigation of the ways in which the political context after the 1980s coup in Turkey triggered certain kinds of memories to be expressed in the public sphere. Different political, ethnic and religious identities that were suppressed by the 1980s coup were released by Özal’s liberalisation at the economic and political level. The emergence of memories and identities that started in that period reached its peak in the 2000s, when the critical events such as the 1955 riots and the restrictive policies concerning the non-Muslims (e.g. the Wealth Tax in 1942, the expulsion of the Greeks in 1964) were talked about in public. Documentaries, novels, memories, research and movies broke the silence of the past. The AKP also played a catalysing role in this emergence of memories by initiating “democratisation packages” concerning the non-recognised Muslims, Alevi and Kurds and the non-Muslim minorities.

In Burgaz, two types of memories emerged: memories of conviviality and of coexistence. Memories of coexistence referred to the moments which crystallised a group’s ethnic and/or religious identity. The past was reconstructed in the present (Halbwachs 1992). For instance, at the current moment when Alevi are asking recognition from the government, my Alevi informants from Burgaz, recalled events (like
Dersim killings in 1938) and prepared a Madimak memorial, to show in public the ways in which they were oppressed. When Burgaz islanders recalled memories of coexistence (e.g. the Wealth Tax in 1942, the expulsion of Rums with Greek citizenship in 1964), they had a nostalgic attitude towards the past: these events had taken their Rum friends away, the island was no longer the same without them. These memories of coexistence were related to the homogenisation process in Turkey.

Memories of conviviality referred to shared moments in Burgaz and they were both sweet and bitter. While the Rums and Sunni Muslim islanders recalled peaceful and enjoyable moments, my Alevi and Kurdish informants recalled the tough times during which they were disadvantaged, had to make a living and adapt to island life. Nonetheless, whether these memories of conviviality were sweet or bitter, they created a sense of belonging in Burgaz.

When I analysed the memories of conviviality and coexistence, class difference came out as significant. Passerini (1998, 1987) has a more neo-Marxist, Lukacsian and Gramscian emphasis by exploring class consciousness while investigating memories of fascism in Italy through the experiences of Turin’s working class. To the contrary to Passerini’s analysis of “an oppressed class”, it is difficult and complex to talk about the “oppressed class” under a totalitarian regime in Burgaz. The minorities on the Princes’ islands, mainly the summer inhabitants were and are still economically quite well off. Most of them are very well educated, wealthy enough to have two houses, one on the islands and one in Istanbul. On the other hand, workers do not form a homogenous group. For example, when the Alevi men workers came to the island in the 1950s, they were the ones who did the menial jobs. There was a class difference between the Alevi workers and the Rum shop owners and the wealthy summer inhabitants. However, through working and saving what they earned, they accumulated capital and shifted from being workers to being employers. When the Rums left and the prices of the houses went down, many Alevis bought property or a shop from their Rum employer in Burgaz; and now they own the restaurants. Furthermore, when my Kurdish informants came to
Burgaz in the 1980s onwards to do menial jobs, they also felt the class difference between them and the older settlers.

The fact that the riots did not take place due to the collective resistance of Burgaz islanders is remembered as an act of solidarity, which united them under the identity of belonging in Burgaz. Drawing on Güven’s (2006), Todorova’s (2004) and Kuyucu’s (2005) approaches, I analysed the riots not only in terms of what the government and organisations planned but also in terms of how people reacted to the riots. When I compared the memories of the riots articulated in documentaries and research cited above with the memories of the riots of Burgaz islanders, I found that the non-Muslims had both memories of coexistence (being attacked because of their ethnic and religious identity) and memories of conviviality (being protected by their neighbours, remembering the shared ways of living in the neighbourhood). What was striking in Burgaz was that the resistance against the riots as a collective act had a discursive character (Bakhtin 1981) and was articulated as a memory of conviviality, which made the islanders proud of being from Burgaz.

The homogenisation process brought ruptures to cultural pluralism in Turkey. The Wealth Tax in 1942, the 6-7 September events in 1955 and the expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship in 1964 crystallised the ethnic and religious identities of the non-Muslims in the context of an attack on their economic and social power. The attitude of successive Turkish governments made the non-Muslims feel as if they did not belong in the Turkish nation anymore and this feeling of being an “other” made the non-Muslims, especially the Rums, leave the country. The non-Muslims who gave more significance to memories of coexistence than their memories of conviviality felt more anxious about their ethnic and religious identity and left.

In Burgaz, the homogenisation process did not disrupt the cultural pluralism in Burgaz, because the riots were resisted with a collective act of solidarity and it did not take place in Burgaz. The homogenisation process triggered the departures of the Rums, especially in 1964 and following the issues over Cyprus; however it could not disrupt
Burgazian identity. While the riots crystallised ethnic and religious identities of the non-Muslims, in contrast, the collective resistance against the riots solidified more the collective Burgaz identity which was much more significant than people’s ethnic and religious identities. The memory of the collective resistance had a discursive character (Bakhtin 1981), which created a sense of belonging. This constructed collective Burgazian identity strengthened the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz. The Rums of Burgaz got torn between their memories of coexistence in Istanbul and Turkey and their memories of conviviality in Burgaz and their Burgazian identity. For the ones who stayed like Manos, his Burgaz identity and his love for Ajda were much more important for him than his Rum identity. Even though he had many memories of coexistence, he felt he belonged in Burgaz, in Istanbul and in Turkey where he was from and where he called his homeland. The wider debate over Turkey’s past in the last decade enabled Ajda’s story of Manos and their relationship to be presented publicly. Furthermore, the political agenda of the AKP towards the Alevis has also encouraged Alevis to express their memories of coexistence in public. Burgaz Alevis talk about the assimilation and the oppression they felt during Ottoman times and in the Turkish Republic. They also prepared a Madımak memorial in Burgaz. While Alevis were more comfortable about their memories of coexistence, the Kurds were more reluctant to discuss such matters. While talking to me, a researcher from Turkish ethnicity, Amojgar felt the need to stress the conviviality of the Kurds and Turks in his village in order to resist the coexistence discourse that separated the Kurds from Turks. Feeling uncomfortable about hearing the soldiers being killed by the PKK, Amojgar wanted to absolve the Kurds of responsibility for the PKK. The PKK insurgency made Amojgar represent himself to me, as less of an activist, fighting for the rights of the Kurds, more as an assimilated Kurd.
CHAPTER 5

“LET ME BORROW SOME OF YOUR RELIGION”

5.1 Introduction

The central aim of this chapter is to explore the social interactions between individuals belonging to different religious groups and to investigate the diversities within these groups, through the analysis of conviviality. I focus on “religion” and “religious groups” for two reasons. First, in the literature of multiculturalism and coexistence, issues relating to practices of religion and religious identity in plural societies have been widely explored (Zavos 2009, Baumann 1996, Werbner 2008, Hayden 2002). In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on 9 September 2001 in the US, scholars (Palumbo-Liu 2002, Trumpbour 2003, Bowman 2001, Abu-Lughod 2002) reengaged with Samuel Huntington’s (1993) “Clash of civilisations” debate and Bernard Lewis’ (1990) “Muslim Rage”. These scholars argued that religious differences per se are not what triggers antagonisms between people from different faiths. Such antagonisms (e.g. terrorism, war violence) are triggered by political tensions (Bowman 2010, Abu-Lughod 2002). So, in this chapter, rather than blaming religion as the cause of antagonisms, I explore the political contexts which aggravate social relations between “religious communities” and the ways in which class differences affect these social interactions. So, I explore particular situations where class difference plays a positive role in the ways in which religious differences are negotiated, even embraced and particular contexts where class difference exacerbates social interactions within a politically tense environment.

Secondly, In Turkey, the categorisation of different communities is based on religion, which comes from the legacy of the millet system of the Ottoman Empire. In this chapter, I do not analyse the identity of each religious community, or divide the chapter into these pre-existing categories that came from the millet system such as “the Rum community” or “the Muslim community”. As I argue throughout the thesis, the coexistence approach, which assumes the existence of differences between the so-called communities, is inadequate to explore the social interactions between individuals
belonging to different faiths and does not reflect the heterogeneity within groups. My ethnographic research showed that even though the islanders would define themselves as belonging to a religious community, their daily interactions reflected that the individuals from different faiths interact with each other on many occasions, whether religious, economic or social. The analysis of conviviality made me understand the diversity within religious groups, different degrees of practising religion, the nature of relationships and what is shared between individuals belonging to different faiths, as well as the ways in which people change through their social interactions. The subjects in this chapter do not only appear as “religious figures” but also demonstrate their religious multiplicity, their complexity of character and sometimes even their existence as melting pots of contrasts or inconsistencies.

This chapter is formed of three sections. In the first section, I analyse the relations between the imam and the Rum Orthodox priest and between the Muslim verger and the Orthodox people in charge of the church. I have deliberately chosen religious figures such as the imam and the priest to show that what brings these people together is the shared hobbies and social interests which are ingrained in conviviality. When I explore the interactions between the Muslim family and the Rum Orthodox, I aim to show that even though the interactions might be seen as those between the employees and the employers, friendship bonds show appreciation and gratitude between the social actors. Both ethnographic examples demonstrate that the individuals recognise and appreciate each other’s religious differences and that religious differences do not always cause tensions and antagonisms. Rather, people share much more in daily life with each other, they change through their social interactions, and their religious differences are not the driving forces that create boundaries between individuals belonging to different faiths.

In the second section, I explore the contexts which create tensions between religious communities. The current political relations between Israel and Turkey have created anxieties among the Jewish community. After the bombings of the synagogues in
Istanbul in 2003 (BBC Türkçe 16/11/2003), the synagogues started to be guarded by security guards and since then, synagogues are closed to non-Jews. In the chapter, I explore non-Jewish islanders’ reaction to the “closed” Jewish community and the ways in which the non-Jews and the Jews interact in daily life. I observed that even though the synagogue is closed to non-Jews and the Blue Club membership is mainly Jews, there are still interactions outside of the synagogue and the Blue Club. Furthermore, Jewish people challenged orthopraxy and borrowed Muslim practices. I argue that tension and exclusion between the Jews and non-Jews were triggered by the current political tension between Israel and Turkey, and were exacerbated by the class difference between the wealthy summer Jewish inhabitants and the permanent working class Muslims.

In the final section, I explore the ways in which the politics of recognition of the Alevi complicates social interactions on the island. In the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, non-Muslims were given minority status in Turkey (Turlington 1924: 700). Therefore, Rums, Armenians and Jews legally counted as minorities of the Turkish government. The Turkish legal system adopted the logic and the bureaucracy of the millet system of the Ottoman Empire also regarding the category of the Muslims who formed the majority. All Muslims regardless of their ethnicity and/or denominations of Islam count as one group under the dominance of Sunnis. For instance, Alevi were not recognised as a minority (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2012); they still count as part of the Muslim category and yet they would like to be recognised as a separate group. The debates on the recognition of the Alevi forces the Alevi to define what Alevism is. Hence, in order to be recognised as a separate group, Alevi emphasise the differences between the Alevi and the Sunnis. There are differences between the ways in which Alevi and Sunnis practise religion, however, there are also similarities between these two groups and people borrow practices from each other. Rather than suggesting a solution to whether the Alevi should be recognised or how they should be recognised, I show the ways in which this process of asking for recognition embedded in a discourse of coexistence creates tension among the Alevi and between the Sunnis and Alevi when one takes into account the diversities
among Alevis and among Sunnis and what these groups share in common with each other.

5.2 Social Interactions in Daily Life: Analysis of Conviviality

a) The Friendship between the Imam and the Rum Orthodox Priest

I met the imam at the garden of Ay Yanni Rum Orthodox church. He usually pops in to chat with the church committee members, has tea with them, and works out the bills of the mosque and the church in order to send them to the government. When the imam came around I was just going to start interviewing the Rum teacher, Niko, who is also in charge of the formalities regarding the church. Niko said “You cannot find an imam like him in Istanbul. For example, he is very open-minded. ‘Another type’ of imam would not be able to survive in Burgaz”. I told the imam, Hamdi Ağabey (elder brother) that I was doing research on Burgaz about daily life, different communities living together and their memories. Hamdi Ağabey then told me:

Write down this anecdote. Five years ago, Dimitra’s (the coffee mark reader, the Orthodox Macedonian) husband, Alexandros, had a heart attack on the boat which was going from Istanbul to Burgaz. He died at one of the harbours in Istanbul, where he was left. The public prosecutor was called to record that he was dead. The Rum Orthodox priest of Burgaz at that time, Pandelis, phoned me and told me to go to Istanbul with him to take the coffin and the corpse back to Burgaz. We rented a boat, went to the hospital to get the corpse. The policeman at the hospital asked us who we were. When we said that we were the imam and the priest of Burgaz, the police got very surprised because normally every religious head is responsible of their own people. How come the imam also comes to pick up the coffin of a Christian? Such a good act! The policeman said that he had not seen something like this in his 34 years of being a policeman. In order for us to pick up the corpse, some documents were needed to be signed off by a public prosecutor on night duty as it was already 1.30am. The public prosecutor was also very surprised that I, as an imam, was helping out in the process. He said that he would definitely sign the documents for us but we needed to find the municipality doctor. The municipality doctor asked a high price to come and sign. I bargained and pulled the price down. The doctor finally came in his Mercedes. It was 2.30 am already. By 4.00 am we finally got back to Burgaz. We put the corpse in the mortuary of the mosque. There is only one mortuary on the island and
it is at the mosque. Whoever dies, no matter which religion they belong to, they are stored in the mortuary of the mosque until the funeral. This is how we live in harmony on the island.

In Istanbul, a context different than Burgaz, Hamdi stresses that the policeman was surprised to see two religious heads helping each other. While in Istanbul it is surprising for an imam to company a priest to collect the corpse of a Christian, Hamdi emphasises that it is not surprising in Burgaz. He explains this by separating Istanbul from Burgaz and portrays Burgaz as a place of harmony. Furthermore, in the story, the imam appears on the side of Pandelis, his friend from Burgaz, to negotiate with the municipality doctor to pull down the price. The story of the imam is interesting because he, in fact, came to the island about 10 years ago from a city close to Istanbul that has a reputation of having religiously conservative Sunni Muslim inhabitants. I listened to the Friday sermons of imams in different places in Istanbul such as in Kadiköy and Taksim (diverse and secular quarters) and the ones given by Hamdi Ağabey. Hamdi Ağabey, regardless of the audience, who are just Sunni Muslims during Ramadan, but who are mixed (Alevi, Orthodox, Catholics and Jews) at funerals and mevlut\textsuperscript{23}, always refers to all the prophets who came before Muhammed, names them, brings his gratefulness to Atatürk (who implemented secularism in Turkey) for having founded Turkey and wishes the continuity of peace. In contrast, other imams warn the public of the possible sins they might be thinking of doing, telling them not to drink alcohol like gavurs (a derogatory term used for non-Muslims) for example.

Moreover, when I went to visit Hamdi’s wife, and his daughters, they told me about the friendship between the imam and Pandelis, the previous Rum Orthodox priest. First of all, they were both supporters of Fenerbahçe football team. His wife said that the imam was such a fan that he prayed and guided the evening prayer quickly, reducing it from one hour to 40-45 minutes so that he and the audience could rush to watch Fenerbahçe matches. Pandelis had Cine5 TV (paid channel) in his house. The Imam’s family used to go to Pandelis’ house to watch Fenerbahçe matches. The daughters liked

\textsuperscript{23} the prayer done with alliteration to birth of the Prophet Mohamed. Mevluts are usually after funerals, death anniversaries, or circumcision ceremonies.
visiting the priest and his family. Pandelis never offered alcohol to them, they always had teas together. This shows that they do not ignore each other’s religious differences, yet both recognise their religious differences and when they socialise together, they respect each other’s way of living their life according to their religion. Furthermore, the imam’s wife said “The imam is only imam in the mosque but a human being outside”. She then explained further what she meant by this is that the imam is a religious leader in the society, but this is not only who he is: being a Sunni Muslim and an imam is only one part of his life and in daily life, outside of the mosque, he is a human being like everyone else. This is significant because the fact that his religious identity does not take over his overall character, creates room for the imam to interact with people from different faiths and form intimate friendships. The imam’s wife also added that the Austrian Catholic priest had paid for Hamdi’s education to finish his high school degree as he had dropped out when he was young. The Christian priests have intimate and supportive relations with the imam.

As we can see from the friendship between the imam and the priest is that they are not just separated through their religious differences and what brings these two people together are their common interests and hobbies. The fact that the imam is supported by the Catholic priest and the Rum Orthodox people who are in charge of the Orthodox church demonstrates that there are not competitions between these religious heads. While the Orthodox and Catholic religious heads are in support of the imam, the imam is also appreciative of Christianity and makes it explicit when he delivers the sermons in the mosque. This example is in contrast with Hayden’s argument that if different religious groups tolerate each other, this tolerance must be antagonistic and that there must be competition between religious groups (Hayden 2002: 205). However, in this case, it is not a matter of tolerating each other, rather it is an embracement of each other’s religious differences and being respectful towards each other. They do not do so only through talking about living together in peace but they also perform it in their actions, through helping each other out. In the following ethnographic example, I expand
more by exploring the ways in which people’s actions show an embracing attitude towards religious differences.

b) **A Muslim Family Takes Care of the Rum Orthodox Church**

I met Zümrüt on a winter day in January 2010, at the embroidery class in a room that was given to us in Burgaz primary school. All the women in the embroidery class are permanent inhabitants, mainly Sunni Muslims and a Kurdish Şafi Muslim. While the other women were embroidering flowers and animal patterns on their fabric, Zümrüt wanted to embroider a big cross and she was looking for a cross pattern. I call the elder women teyze, which means aunty, and the younger ones in their late thirties or forties abla, which means elder sister. So I approached Zümrüt as Zümrüt Abla.

Deniz: Zümrüt Abla, I can find some cross patterns on the internet, print them and bring them to you. What kind of a pattern do you want?

Zümrüt: Deniz, can you bring me a big cross pattern, not a plain cross but a decorative and elegant one? Thank you so much.

Deniz: Yes sure, what are you planning to do with this cross pattern?

Zümrüt: I want to make a big cross for Niko Ağabey (elder brother). He is my boss and he is so nice. If I embroider a big cross on a big piece of fabric, he will be very happy and then we can put it in the church.

Deniz: I know Niko! He is in charge of Ay Yanni Church isn’t he? And how come he is your boss?

Zümrüt: I am the verger of the Metamorphosis church on the top of the island. Niko Ağabey (elder brother) is in charge of the bills and formalities of Ay Yanni and Metamorphosis churches. In spring and summer, my family and I, live on top of the island and we take care of the maintenance of the Metamorphosis church and in winter, we live at the centre of the island. You should come visit me on top of the island, it is so beautiful. Especially, in the spring, the poppies grow; the grass is green and smells fresh. It is like heaven on earth. I will show you the church as well.

I was struck by the fact that a Sunni Muslim family took care of the Rum Orthodox Church and that she called her boss ağabey which means elder brother. So I wanted to know how she moved to the island and became the verger of the church.
I knew that the churches were only open during the summer time and there would not be a mass on an Easter day in Burgaz. However, the weather was nice, not so hot and it was not raining, so I decided to climb to the top of the island to visit Zümrüt Abla on the Easter day, 3 April 2010. When I visited her, she brought me a book, some photocopies and her poetry notebook. She was interviewed a few times by Austrians, Turkish journalists and students as “the Muslim who takes care of the Rum Orthodox church”. When I was flicking through her poetry book, where she wrote about welcoming the spring on top of Burgaz, coincidentally, we heard some people entering the garden of the church. A French tourist couple came to visit the Metamorphosis church as the guests of a Turkish journalist/academic and his Greek wife (from Greece) who is an academic/journalist working on Greco-Turkish relations at a private Turkish university. The Turkish and Greek couple lives in Burgaz. I do not know how much this couple knew about Zümrüt and the church but the French couple and I were both interested in finding out how Zümrüt takes care of the church. I found myself in the middle of translating in Turkish and French the conversations between Zümrüt and the French couple.

The French woman (FW): How is it to take care of the church and to live on top of the island with only your family and no neighbours?

Zümrüt: I feel alone sometimes but the nature and looking over Istanbul and to the other islands make me grateful to have moved to Burgaz and enjoy this panorama.

FW: So where are you from? How come you started to work here?

Zümrüt: When I was young, with my friends, we used to clean the mosque in our village in Sivas, in Anatolia. I married my paternal uncle’s son and came to Istanbul as a bride in 1987. While working in Istanbul, my husband developed good relationships with the Rums. These Rums who lived in Istanbul also had houses in Burgaz. When they proposed us the job of taking care of the church, my husband and I accepted. I said: “both mosques and churches are the houses of God. Why wouldn’t we take care of the church?”

When the French woman heard that Zümrüt, as a Muslim, takes care of an Orthodox Christian church, she started to cry and she said: “While there are wars
between different religions, it is very touching to see a Muslim woman taking care of a Christian church, this is very moving and impressive”.

When I translated the French woman’s response to Zümrütt, Zümrütt did not react as if she was doing something spectacular or extraordinary as a Muslim who takes care of the church. For Zümrütt, this is not a favour but a natural act.

![Figure 13: Day of the Virgin Mary at the Metamorphosis Church](image)

**Figure 13**: Day of the Virgin Mary at the Metamorphosis Church

After the French couple left in awe with their Turkish and Greek hosts, by talking to Zümrütt and visiting her more regularly, I learnt more about the ways in which she did her job and how she changed since she had been doing the work. Through the interactions with the Rums and in order to do the job properly, Zümrütt and her son picked up a few Greek words which are used in the mass, like ψωμί (psomi - bread), κρασί (krasi - wine), νερό (nero - water). They know about what to do with the ritualistic items during the mass. You will always see her little son, aged 9 putting out the candles of the church, carrying the ritualistic items such as the incense, bread or wine and holding the big keys of the church. Zümrütt knows the important Rum Orthodox religious days and the meaning of rituals, she paints and cleans the church and shows it to visitors.
After having listened to the story from Zümrüt’s side, I also wanted to know how Niko, and the rest of the islanders interpret the fact that a Muslim takes care of the Orthodox Church. The sad part of the story was told to me by Niko. He said “Today Rums do not want to take the job of taking care of the church”. I was surprised and asked why. He explained that “first of all, there are not many Rums left to take care of the church and the ones who left are all educated, with good jobs and they do not want to do this job”. This sentence shows a significant class issue. Zümrüt works for Niko and Niko needs Zümrüt to do the job. This shows that there is mutual dependency between them. Zümrüt’s case of taking a job in Burgaz is similar to Nuri’s father and Amojgar in chapter 4. The labour migrants from eastern and southeastern Anatolia usually migrate to the big city, Istanbul and then they find links to other places. So for Zümrüt, she and her husband met their future bosses in Istanbul and then came to Burgaz to take the job.

Zümrüt and her husband accepted the job out of necessity. As they took care of the church, they were given free accommodation and salary. However, if they were religiously conservative and bigoted, they could have just refused to work under the authority of a Christian and they could have done any other job under a Muslim. Yet, they greatly respect Niko, their boss whom they refer to using a kinship term “elder brother”. Zümrüt could have just done the basic jobs of taking care of the church; however, she takes care of the church as if it is her own house, through cleaning the diamonds of the lantern one by one. She even wanted to embroider a big cross on a big piece of cloth that would be put on the alter table of the church, to give it as a present to her “boss” Niko Ağaşey. Hence, the relationship between Niko and Zümrüt is not only an employee-employer relationship. Niko’s wife told me that Zümrüt’s son’s circumcision ceremony, which is an Islamic practice, took place in the garden of Ay Yanni Orthodox Church. The Rum community is appreciative of how well Zümrüt and her family are taking care of the Orthodox Church. To thank the family, Rums did the circumcision ceremony in the garden of the church.
What Niko said ("there is not many Rum left to take care of the church") is significant to understand the overall embracing attitude of Muslims towards Rums. The islanders, especially the Sunni Muslim elites who have lived on the island for generations are very nostalgic of the good, happy days when many Rums used to live on the island, celebrating all together the religious festivals and days, going to the 5 gazinos all together, hearing Rum music, smelling raki (Turkish ouzo), singing and dancing day and night. I was told by my Sunni Muslim informants that Hristos, where Zümrüt lives alone with her family today, was a very active place where people used to go to have picnics, go to masses in the Metamorphosis church and celebrate the grape day, Easter and Christmas. Today, Easter and Christmas are not celebrated as there are not many permanent Rum inhabitants on the island in winter. One of my Rum informants had told me that they used to climb up to Hristos on the 5th of August in the afternoon with food, drinks, blankets, go to the grape mass, spend the night there and wake up to go to the morning mass. Today, there is no big celebration in Metamorphosis. For example, this year, we went there in the afternoon of the 5th of August, and came back down after the mass. Zümrüt as a person who moved to the island 10 years ago found herself in the middle of the embracing nostalgia between Muslims and Rums.

In this section, through analysing these examples, I suggest that in daily life and social interactions, religious differences do not always bring tension between individuals. The friendship between the imam and the Orthodox priest showed that, in daily life, individuals form intimate relations because of shared common interests, and their religious differences do not always create boundaries. Even though a Muslim family took the job of taking care of the church out of necessity and for economic reasons yet, the relationship between Zümrüt and Niko goes beyond employee and employer relationship. In Zümrüt and Niko’s interactions, class difference and mutual dependency played a positive role in the ways in which they showed an embracing attitude towards their religious differences. In the next section, through ethnographic examples, I show that what create tensions and antagonisms between religious groups are not religious differences but the political context that is aggravated by class difference.
5.3 Political Tension, Class and Conviviality

In this section, I aim to explore the impact of the political tension between Israel and Turkey in the face to face relations between the Jewish community and the non-Jews in Burgaz. After Israel created walls in the West Bank in 2000 and the continuous violence between Hamas and the Israeli state, some people in Istanbul associated the Jews in Turkey with the Jews in Israel, sometimes sadly enough, with the Israeli state. In Turkish press and in public, the violence between Palestinians and Israelis was taken as an issue between Muslims and Jews. On 3 March 2009, a female speaker in a daily TV women’s programme said that she was against Israel attacking Gaza; and a singer who was one of the guests in the programme even yelled “Damn Israel!” (Oknet 03/03/2009). When I entered the Blue Club in Burgaz for the first time, I was told that Jews might be reluctant to talk to me after what happened in Gaza. One of my Jewish informants in Burgaz pointed out that 100 Jewish families left Istanbul following the tensions between Israel and Turkey in the last 5 years.

As Burgaz is not isolated from the political context within Turkey, while security control was implemented in the synagogues in Istanbul after the synagogue bombings on 15 November 2003 (BBC Türkçe 16/11/2003), the same rule applied to the synagogue in Burgaz. The head rabbi of the Jewish community and some other rabbis also visit the synagogue in Burgaz during important Jewish religious days, so security checks were conducted at the door of the synagogue in Burgaz as well. While all the other religious places of worship in Burgaz (the mosque, Catholic chapel, the Rum Orthodox churches and Alevi cemevi) are open to everyone, and people from different faiths attend each other’s funerals, religious days and ceremonies at these worship places, the synagogue of Burgaz is only open to Jews and the non-Jews need permission from the head of the synagogue or to be invited by a Jew.

This religious exclusivity was not well received by non-Jewish Burgaz islanders, who on various occasions (e.g. cafes, restaurants, the SC) described the Jews to me in the following ways:
- Jews live like in a ghetto here. The Jewish club, the synagogue, the elderly Jewish summer resort and the Jewish children summer camp are 10 meters away from each other. Their houses too are just by these monuments.
- They are a closed community.
- They even have their own social club.
- The Jewish club is like Tel Aviv.
- Deniz, you made it into the synagogue? Really??
- My husband (Sunni Muslim Turk) has been invited to many Orthodox rituals and Alevi ones but as far as I know, he has never been to the synagogue.

These are the lines that my non-Jewish informants told me during the first few months of my fieldwork, which made me curious about why the non-Jewish islanders refer to the Jewish community as an exclusive group. This exclusivity of the synagogue was also articulated by one of my female informants (half-Jewish, half Sunni Muslim) who lives on Burgaz. When I talked to her in the first months of my field research, I had told her that I visited all the places of worship but not the synagogue, yet. She told me: “Send me a text if you can manage to get into kal!”. She used the word “kal” instead of using “synagogue”. She knew the word “kal” because her mother is Jewish and she told me that while the non-Jews call it “synagogue”, the Jewish people call it “kal”. This difference in terminology also reflects the exclusivity of the synagogue towards the non-Jews.

So, in order to understand why the non-Jews often articulated that the Jewish community was a closed community and mentioned frequently that they do not have access to the synagogue, I started from exploring the exclusivity of the kal. Was this a matter of coexistence, religious communities living side by side, separated by their religious differences, and not interacting with each other? Would I be able to get into the kal as a non-Jewish person? How would they react to my presence? Are the Jewish rituals esoteric? Is this closeness of the Jewish community ingrained in Jewish religious practices? How much can religious exclusivity explain the overall boundaries between the non-Jews and the Jewish community?

I managed to get into kal, because I knew Robert Schild, an Ashkenazi Jew, whom I had met during my pre-fieldwork trip to Burgaz, in the summer of 2008. He was one of
the makers of the Burgaz documentary. To make the documentary, he was the one who got the permission to film some rituals in the synagogue. He had been very helpful to me during my research in putting me in contact with the people I wanted to meet and talk to. He is friend with the head of the kal, Niso and Robert’s wife is friends with Niso’s wife, Zelda. Robert and his wife told Zelda to take me to the kal as I was doing a PhD research in Burgaz. On 19 September 2009, Saturday morning, when it was the Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, I met with Zelda at 11am in the morning in front of the kal and we entered the kal together.

In contrast to all these myths I heard about the Jews, about being exclusive to others, I had a very welcoming attitude from Zelda and the other Jewish people in the kal. When I asked them about the meaning of the rituals, they were eager to explain the meaning of the rituals. It was Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the Jewish year, and for a few days in a row they had consecutive prayers in the kal. I was told by Megi, a Jewish young lady, at the door of the kal, that everything they cook for the Jewish New Year was symbolic and had a meaning. For example, they eat the head of the fish so that they become the “head”, the leader. Her will to explain showed that the Jewish people were not closed and esoteric about their religious rituals, to the contrary, they were open to explain the symbols and the meaning of practices to non-Jewish people. Women and men sit separately in the kal. Zelda especially sat next to me and during the rituals in the kal, she kept whispering in my ear the meaning of the prayers and rituals so that I understood what was going on.

I understood more what was going on and what the rituals meant in the kal than during the Catholic masses and the Orthodox masses I went to in Burgaz. In the Rum Orthodox church, the prayers are in Archaic Greek which is not accessible to non-Greek speakers even to the Rum community who speak modern Rumca, which is the Greek language spoken by the Rum community. The masses at this Austrian Catholic church are in German, Turkish and Latin so that the Germans and Austrians can understand. For the people who do not speak German, such as Suryanis or Rums some prayers are in Turkish.
Furthermore, the visitors, according to their own will, stand up and read bits from the Bible for a few minutes in French and in German. This creates an interruption for people who do not speak the language. Some parts of the Bible are read in German and Latin and sometimes in Turkish and French, yet, these parts are not reflected upon or explained to the audience.

However, in the kal, Niso, the head of the kal, and the rabbi explain to the audience the meanings of the prayers in Turkish. Even though the prayers are in Hebrew and sometimes in Ladino, Niso and the rabbi use Turkish to communicate to the audience. The Jewish community does not speak Hebrew in daily life unless they learn it out of interest to explore the meanings of the rituals. Some Jewish people speak French in their house, some Ladino. However, everyone speaks Turkish. So the use of Turkish language is an inclusive act for the audience to understand the meaning of the prayers.

For example, when shofar, a wind ritualistic instrument, was played in the ritual of Rosh Hashanah, Niso explained to the public that, through shofar, they ask mercy for the sins they had done this year. The Rosh Hashanah prayers are for them to reflect back on themselves and ask for forgiveness from God. Later on towards the end of the ritual, Niso also engaged with the audience and commented on the presence of many women in the kal. He said:

I have been to the synagogue since the age of 6, I have never been a devout one though, and it is the first time there are more women than men in the synagogue. Even though women do not count for the prayers\textsuperscript{24}, they are very important. Women give birth, educate their children the religious duties, and raise them up as good Jews.

His comment is very important because even though he is the head of the kal, he emphasises that he is not a devout one and that he sees the kal also a place of social gathering and interaction. Furthermore, he is critical to the men-oriented practice of Judaism and shows the importance of women in raising children as the transmitters of

\textsuperscript{24} in order to have the Shabbat prayer there must be 10 men in the synagogue
Jewish religion and traditions. Upon that comment, Zelda explained to me a bit more about the role of women in Judaism. She said:

On the Shabbat evenings, it is the duty of the women to light the Shabbat candles. Shabbat starts when the first star appears in the sky on Friday evening until the appearance of the first star on Saturday evening. Shabbat day is very important in Judaism and God wants the Jews to rest on Shabbat and not to do anything. This duty of lighting the candles is given to us, women.

It was very kind of Zelda to sit next to me to explain the rituals. She did not only explain the rituals but also shared her views with me. For example she said that the guy (he is not from Burgaz) who played the *shofar* was *kasher* which means a very strict Jew who follows Jewish rituals and rules word by word and that he was chosen by the *hahambaşı*, the head rabbi. Zelda, pointing him out to me, said “This guy is like an AKP (current religious party in power) person, I mean like a *yobaz* (bigot, religious fanatical)”. Even Zelda, who is the wife of the head of the *kal*, who practises religion and comes to the *kal* regularly, considers being *kasher* as being too strict. The fact that she compares him with AKP means that she finds AKP as religiously too conservative and narrow-minded. This comparison of being *kasher* with the AKP implied that she acknowledges that in Judaism as well as in other religions, there are bigoted and narrow-minded people and that she disproves of religious conservatism.

On the other hand, she also said she was not very happy about the fact that younger generations did not come to the *kal*, that their son came a few times to the *kal* only to please his father, that the ones who attend the *kal* were usually middle-aged or above. She added that there was a declining interest of younger generation towards religion and that the young Jewish people were not as interested in religion and attending the *kal* as the older generation. Zelda felt in between: on the one hand, she does not approve of religious conservatism or fanaticism but on the other hand, she does not want to see a decline in interest on the young Jewish people towards religion. It is significant how both Zelda and Niso position themselves as not conservative but as good practicing Jewish people, so somewhere in the middle – not too fanatical and not too disinterested. In their middle ground, they see coming to the *kal* as a social and cultural continuation of
the Jewish community. As members of a minority community, the situation of the Jewish minority is similar to the case of Rums: for Rums and Jews attending regularly the kal and the church, is one way of trying to keep a sense continuity of the minority community.

![Photo](http://www.salom.com.tr/news/detail/12848-Selihot-en-el-Kal-de-Burgaz.aspx)

**Figure 14:** (Photo published in *Salom*) a prayer at the *kal*25

During the summer of 2009, the more I attended the prayers in the *kal*, the more I learnt about the prayers, important religious days and religious practices. During the prayers, I was reading the Torah in Turkish and then following the prayers in Hebrew. I started to follow some of the prayers, learnt the melodies, and memorised some of the parts in Ladino. When some women lost track, I showed them where we were. Some people thought I was Jewish. After the prayers, at the door of the *kal*, I spoke French and Ladino with the Jewish people, which made them appreciate my presence more. Once, one Jewish woman who knew I was not Jewish joked: “Deniz is more Jewish than us, she comes more often.” Niso said “Deniz, if you come here that often, one of these women will match you with their son, so watch out.” The wife of the rabbi asked me where I was

---


I felt uncomfortable to take pictures when I participated in the prayers at the *kal*, for this reason I inserted a photo that was already published online in *Salom*. 
from. I told her that I was a Sunni Muslim Turk by blood but we do not practise and that my grandparents were from the Balkans, Greece, Bulgaria and Albania and some from central Anatolia. She said: “you must have some Jewish background, maybe your family used to be dönmes [non-Muslims, usually Jews who converted to Islam]. You know there were a lot of dönmes and Jews in the old days in the Balkans.” Strangely enough, I heard the same comment from Alevis and the Rums. Alevi told me: “you cannot come from a Sunni family. You are like us, secular, open-minded. You know there were a lot of Bektaşi (Sufi Sunni Muslims who have similar philosophy and practices with Alevi) in the Balkans. Your family might have some Bektaşi roots”. One Rum woman told me: “I asked myself, who is this beautiful Rum girl attending the masses? I heard you speaking Rumca.” When I told her my background: “see, your family comes from Greece, you have the connection.” I realised that this was a way of trying to find commonalities, to think of having common ancestors and forming links with the person who is an “other”.

Throughout my experience in the kal, the way the Jewish people explained to me the rituals showed that they were not esoteric in their practices. The way they joked with me and the way they wanted to find commonalities with me reflected that they were inclusive to non-Jews. This suggested to me that it was not a matter of coexistence and communities separated by their religious differences and that I should look out more for practices of conviviality outside the religious places of worship. I was also struck by the number of Jewish people whom I saw attending the kal. While there are around 3000 Jewish people in Burgaz, there were approximately 15 - 80 people who attended the kal at various times throughout the summer. The small number of visitors reflects that not many Jewish people go to the kal for religious practices. It would have been too simplistic to state that the Jewish community is a closed community because the door of the synagogue is closed to non-Jews. This closed door only separates a small portion of the Jewish community from the non-Jews. Only analysing the practices in the kal and focusing on how the Jewish people practise religion in the kal were not enough for me to understand to what degree the Jewish community was closed within themselves, and how much and what kinds of interactions occur between individuals belonging to
different religious groups. So I turned my investigation to the analysis of conviviality. I did not only explore the rituals in the *kal*, but I paid attention to conversations about religion and religious practices that occurred between the Jews and the non-Jews in public places such as the restaurants. On the one hand, I wanted to understand how the Jewish people practise religion, whether they follow the doctrine word by word or some of it, as well as how they reflect on their ways of practising religion. On the other hand, I was interested in the ways in which people from different faiths talk to each other about religion and religious differences and how people negotiate their religious differences.

a) “I am Jewish but I fast like a Muslim”

One body of literature explores interactions between different religious communities by focusing on the exchange of food at religious festivals and days, and participation at funerals or birth celebrations (Lubanska 2007, Georgieva 1999, Bringa 1995, Ring 2006, Sorabji 1994). Both Lubanska (2007) and Georgieva (1999) explored the exchange of food during the religious days Ramadan, Easter and Christmas, food exchanges in the neighbourhood in non-religious contexts and interactions between Muslims and Christians in Bulgaria. Laura Ring (2006) explores the tension as well as the peaceful interactions between Sindhis, Muhajirs, Punjabis, Panthans and Baluchis women who live in the same apartment in Karachi, exchanging food and visiting each other.

However, what I would like to explore in this section is a different dimension of negotiating religious differences, which goes beyond food exchange and visiting religious places on religious days and funerals by diverse religious groups. On Burgaz, important religious days, religious rituals and practices are occasions where the practitioners discuss their religious beliefs and interpret the meaning of rituals within and outside the religious practice places. When I analysed the discussions between people from different faiths, I found out that the islanders were interpretive, critical and questioning about their religious practices. I found Hann and Goltz’s (2010) approach useful in my analysis. In their view, anthropologists who have worked on religion and religious practices were trapped in the dichotomy of “scriptural versus popular” and “doctrine versus practice”
They suggest that “Instead of opposing beliefs to practices and theological to practical religion case by case, analysts might instead begin to recognise more complex combinations of beliefs and practices, varying between different social groups, but also between individuals, and contextually variable for the individual (Hann and Goltz 2010: 16). I found out that the islanders’ practices of religion challenged orthopraxy (correct religious practices based on the doctrine). The practitioners made sense of the religious practices, sometimes they rejected parts of the doctrine; sometimes they referred to it and followed it. Building on Hann and Goltz’ approach of not opposing belief and practice and exploring conviviality, I analysed the ways in which individuals practise religion and the ways in which individuals from different faiths negotiate which each other their ways of practising religion. I found out that the islanders were eclectic in their practices in the ways in which they borrow practices from different faiths and that they negotiated their religious differences through comparing with each other their religious practices.

I came across these conversations about religious practices at Zeytin restaurant, during the Yom Kippur evening, one of the two most important holy days in Judaism. Yom Kippur is the atonement day, which takes place 10 days after Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and during which the Jewish people fast for about 25 hours. Yom Kippur is the day when people reconcile and also ask forgiveness from God. In the *kal* of Burgaz, the shofar was played. The prayers were about “God is the forgiving one, we have sinned and we are asking for forgiveness”. Niso explained that first they pray in *pluriel* (plural – “we”) which means that they pray all together and reconcile with each other, then they pray in *singulier* (singular – “I”) to ask for forgiveness from the God for the self.

According to the Torah, on Yom Kippur, one should not put water in the mouth while fasting, take a shower or wear perfume. However, on Yom Kippur day in Burgaz, many women came to the synagogue wearing makeup and perfume. Some who did not fast because of working or health problems also attended the prayers in the *kal* during the day.
At Zeytin restaurant, in the evening of Yom Kippur, one Jewish woman told me that they did not want to go to the synagogue (they used the term synagogue, not *kal* while talking in a mixed group) on Kippur because it smelled. Two other Jewish women said that they brushed their teeth while fasting because otherwise their mouth would smell. These are some examples which challenge orthopraxy, where the practitioners do not follow the doctrine word by word; they reject some bits of the doctrine and adjust it to their own way of practising. On that Yom Kippur day, I came across more instances in which Jews and Muslims compared Muslim and Jewish doctrines emphasising the similarities between these two faiths and explained the ways in which they borrowed practices from each other.

Before I analyse my ethnographic examples, it is important to explain the context of conviviality in Zeytin restaurant, what kind of a restaurant it is and the relationships between the clients and the owner. Zeytin restaurant is by the sea side, on the restaurant street near the harbour. Its clients are religiously mixed. Similar to the other restaurants in Burgaz, Zeytin is an expensive restaurant to eat in. The meals cost between 50-100 liras while the minimum monthly wage in Turkey is 800 liras. The clients are wealthy summer inhabitants. The owner, Orhan, is a Sunni Muslim man, whose father was originally from the Black Sea coast of Turkey. Orhan used to be a captain, like his father, however, he decided to open a restaurant with his wife (a Sunni Muslim, whose parents migrated to Turkey from Greece before the population exchange) because the restaurant business in Burgaz brings more money. The conviviality at the restaurant and the lifestyle of the clients are important to describe. The summer inhabitants are rich and this affects their lifestyles and the ways in which they socialise. Belonging to the same class creates shared ways of living within which religious differences are negotiated and overcome. They eat regularly at restaurants with their friends, they would not have to cook at home or wash the dishes. They just come to the restaurant, order whatever they would like to eat, socialise, drink, laugh and go home to sleep. Thanks to these summer clients, Orhan makes a lot of money. Now he has one house in Istanbul and one house on the island. He sends his son to a private university in Istanbul. This shift in class for Orhan and the
frequency of the clients eating in the restaurant created an ambiguous client/owner relationship. On the one hand, Orhan and the clients are friends, because they see each other almost every day. Orhan and his wife eat together with some of their regular clients. On the other hand, Orhan is still supposed to serve and collect the bills. The Muslim, Jewish, Rum and Armenian clients who eat regularly at the restaurant share a similar lifestyle. They can afford to “live” in a restaurant, they organise expensive fancy dress parties to which they invite friends regardless of their religion. Most of the non-Muslim minorities in Turkey, - Rums, Armenians and Jews - belong to the upper-middle class and are affluent.

Ethel, Orli and Ari (Sephardic Jews), Osman (non-practising Sunni Muslim academic) and Hrant (Armenian) usually eat together every night at Zeytin restaurant. Fortune (Ashkenazi, half Polish Jew) and Viki (Sephardic Jew) also eat there with their friends and family a few nights a week. There is also a Sunni drinking group who eats there. The customers have “core” friendship groups. People have formed these friendship groups because they get along well. So these groups are not divided into different ethnic or religious affiliations; they are mixed. Even though one might be within a “core group”, one can still shift from one group to another, join their dinner table for example, or play backgammon. The tables of the restaurant are very close to each other, and there are lots of inter-table talks. One jumps into a conversation that is going on at another table, interrupts, comments and shouts. People have backgammon tournaments. People swear. People spend the whole evening and night there. It is not just a place for dining. These regular customers even eat breakfast, lunch and dinner there every single day in summer. This similar living style and frequent face-to-face interaction in this small restaurant and lack of vast space between tables create space and intimacy between people to talk reason and discuss together about religious practices and any other daily topics.

After I attended the Yom Kippur prayer in the kal, I went to Zeytin restaurant. I was invited to join the table where Jews, Armenians and Sunni Muslims were eating. Ethel, a Jewish lady, had already broken the fast before the Kippur prayer as she became
very ill and vomited. There was a heated discussion between two friends, Ethel and Fortune, and Orhan just jumped into their conversation.

Fortune: I am really upset at you because every year, it is the same story! You fast and you get very sick in the end. We told you not to fast and you fasted again this year! Why do you do this to yourself?

Orhan: Ethel was here in the restaurant all day, while she was fasting. I told her to go home and rest but she said she will stay here and keep fasting. Even though she vomited, she still kept fasting! Fasting ceases when you vomit! And I told her that after she vomited, she should eat. She resisted. Finally Osman (Sunni Muslim client) convinced her to eat something until she got better.

Ethel: This rule that fasting cancels when you vomit is for the Muslims not for the Jews. I should not have broken the fast.

Fortune: No! Orhan is right, fasting cancels when you vomit, and it is the same in all religions.

Orli did not fast because of her health problems. Ethel had to break the fast early as she vomited and Fortune broke her fast after the Kippur prayer as stated in the Torah. Jews, Muslims and Armenians who were at the table were surprised that Fortune went to the synagogue and that she fasted on Yom Kippur. Fortune is considered as this unique, vivid and crazy woman. She does not care about what people say. She is very educated and rich. She loves playing cards and backgammon and does not mind swearing when she plays. On that Kippur night, she told us the story of how she decided to fast on Kippur days.

Fortune: Once, I was eating, drinking tea and coffee and smoking while the other Jews were fasting. The other Jews disapproved of my behaviour. During that year, everything went bad in my life. People reminded me that as I did not fast on Yom Kippur, kept eating while everyone was fasting; I had a horrible year. From that day onwards, I fast on the Kippur day, but I fast in a Muslim way.

While she was supposed to start fasting when the first star (8pm-ish) appeared in the sky and fast until the first star (8.30pm-ish) appeared the next evening (about 25
hours), she said “I had all the support from Muhammed, I kept eating pasta, boiled eggs, bread anything that made me feel full until 2.00 am like the Muslims and like them, I slept until early afternoon and broke fasting after the Kippur prayer like the Jews”.

This particular example shows that individuals do not follow a particular doctrine, but they change and adjust their practices, they compare religious practices with other faiths and borrow practices from other faiths. This example also shows that religious differences do not create separations between people belonging to different faiths. Jews, Armenians, Sunni Muslims and Rums share much more with each other in terms of lifestyle, than they are separated by their religious differences. Belonging to the same class and conviviality create a milieu within which the individuals compare their religious practices, similarities and differences and borrow practices from each other.

When anthropologists (Hayden 2002, Bowman 1993, Bowman 2010, Bowman 2011, Couroucli 2010, Stewart and Shaw 1994) explored syncretic religious practices, they focused on religious rituals in mixed shrines – religious places of worship. I did not only explore the ways in which people practise religion at places of worship, but I also investigated the ways in which people, while they hang out in public places like restaurants, negotiate with each other their religious differences and practices, and borrow practices from each other. In Burgaz, the individuals themselves are syncretic and eclectic in the ways in which they practise religion.

This realisation made me take a step further in trying to find out why the non-Jews articulated that the Jewish community was closed within themselves. This exclusivity was not religious because my ethnographic data showed that even though the door of the synagogue was closed to non-Jews, non-Jews were still welcomed to the synagogue and were explained the meaning of Jewish religious rituals. Furthermore, Jews, Armenians, Muslims and Rums have close interactions with each other in daily life. They hang out at restaurants regularly; they talk about religion and religious similarities and differences.
Later on during my fieldwork, I realised that the closeness of the Jewish community as articulated by the non-Jews was more of an issue of class difference than religious difference and religious exclusivity. Coming from a wealthy background, having a similar lifestyle created more commonalities between Muslims, Jews, Rums, and Armenians, as I observed at Zeytin restaurant. Religious differences were not significant. However, the relationship between the wealthy Jewish summer inhabitants and the permanent working class inhabitants were not the same. In winter, when I formed closer relations with the permanent working class inhabitants, I realised that the working class on the island was not happy with the way they are treated by the Jewish inhabitants. I heard from the corner shop owner (a Zaza Alevi) that the Jews in the Blue Club treated the workers in a disrespectful way in contrast to the mixed Sports Club members who treated their workers in a friendly way. Another time, another two corner shop owners (Sunni Muslims) were gossiping about the Jews and said that even though the Jewish customer saw that other people were waiting to be served, the Jewish one jumped in front of the queue and said that s/he needs to be treated more quickly as s/he was in rush. Another restaurant chef said: “Jews always negotiate and bargain about prices before they eat and if you want to earn money on the island, you have to know how to treat the Jews”.

As I gathered information, did participant observation and conversed with my informants from summer 2009, until the end of my fieldwork, I understood why the Jewish community was seen as a closed community by the non-Jewish islanders. The bombings of the synagogue in 2003 and the fact that the synagogue in Burgaz closed its doors to non-Jews, were interpreted almost as an offensive act by the non-Jews in Burgaz. The doors of all the other worship places were open to everyone regardless of religious affiliations. This religious exclusivity was against the conviviality in Burgaz. Furthermore, the political tension and the worsening relations between Israel and Turkey including Tayyip Erdoğan’s “one minute” aggression against the Israeli president Shimon Peres in Davos in 2009 (Bennhold 2009) and the Mavi Marmara incident on 31 May 2010 (Booth 2010), when an Israeli navy flotilla attacked Mavi Marmara boat which was
bringing aid to the Gaza district and killed 9 Turkish activists, made the Jewish people in Turkey feel anxious and reluctant to talk (as I experienced when I entered the Blue Club). It was easier for the people who belong to the same class, living affluent lives, who share similar styles of living to interact, and talk to each other about Jewish and Muslim ways of practising religion. Their conviviality on the island, hanging out at restaurants overcame their religious differences. However, the permanent Muslim inhabitants and the wealthy Jewish summer inhabitants had limited interactions, which were mainly economic transactions. This class difference, in addition to the political tension between Israel and Turkey created a divisive effect between the wealthy Jewish summer inhabitants and the permanent working class Muslims. This is why I have heard these phrases “Jews live like in a ghetto here” and “The Jewish club is like Tel Aviv” from the non-Jews.

5.4 Problematising the Politics of Recognition

In Turkey, non-Muslims – Rums, Armenians and Jews - are recognised as minorities. However, the Muslims, regardless of their ethnic, religious and or linguistic differences count as one group under the domination of Sunni Muslims. Alevis who count within the Muslim majority are asking to be recognised. In recent years, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the current Prime Minister of Turkey and his party (the AKP) have been keen on “democratising” the country and developed “democracy packages” for the Kurds, Alevis and non-Muslim minorities concerning their rights and freedom (CNN Turk 04/10/2009, TimeTurk 07/11/2009, Çakır 2008). Alevis organised meetings in different parts of Istanbul to communicate their demands with the government. The meeting on 8 November 2009 was attended by one million people (Hürriyet 8/11/2009). Scholars, like Soner and Toktaş, state that Alevis would like to be recognised as a different sect of Islam without being categorised as a minority (Soner and Toktaş 2011: 419). However, the ways in which Alevis see and practise Alevism in diverse ways create disagreements among the Alevis about what kind of recognition they want. Not all the Alevis would like to be recognised as a “different sect of Islam”, argued by Soner and Toktaş (2011). In this section, I explore the relationships between Sunni Muslims and the non-recognised
Alevis. The fact that Alevis would like to be recognised as a separate group complicates relationships among Alevis and between Sunnis and Alevis. Taking on board the complexity and heterogeneity of religious practices of Sunnis and Alevis and their shared practices, rather than suggesting a solution to whether and how Alevis should be recognised, I explore the ways in which the debates on the politics of recognition create a discourse of coexistence where the non-recognised group feel the need to define their religious affiliations and categorise their practices and themselves. This creates controversy and tension within the non-recognised group as well as within the community.

In the first subsection of the chapter, I explore the differences in practising religion in the Sunni mosque and the cemevi which is the gathering house and place of worship for the Alevis. In the second subsection, I explore the complexity of social relations and tensions between Alevis and Sunnis. I am critical of the binaries “Sunnis versus Alevis” and “secular Sunni Muslims versus devout Sunni Muslims”. So, I explore the situations in which Alevis and Sunnis have common interests. I investigate the ways in which the heterogeneity among these groups, and the similarities and differences between these two groups complicate their relationships. In the third subsection, I focus on the ways in which the diversity among the Alevis creates disagreements among Alevis on what Alevism is and what kind of recognition they want from the government. Building on the complexity of relationships between Alevis and Sunnis, and the diversity of practices and political views among the Alevis, I argue that the politics of recognition creates a discourse of “coexistence” and a politics of difference, which cause a rupture to the existing conviviality in Burgaz, to the ways in which people practise religion and interact with each other in daily life.

a) Rituals in the Mosque and in Cemevi

There are significant differences between Sunni and Alevi ways of practising religion. Sunni Muslims follow the five pillars of Islam: believe in the one God, fast during
Ramadan, pray five times a day, pilgrimage to Mecca and pay alms. Alevis do not go to the mosque; they do not pray five times a day; they do cem rituals in cemevi; they do not fast during Ramadan (the 9th month of the Islamic calendar), but fast for 10 days during Muharrem (first month of the Islamic calendar).

Figure 15: The Mosque of Burgaz from the outside

Figure 16: Women’s section on Kadir night at the mosque
I decided to fast on *Kadir* night\(^{26}\), the holiest night for the Muslims. Muslims repent for their sins. If you wish something on *Kadir* night, it is believed to come true. If a person is very virtuous, people say “s/he must have been born on a *Kadir* night”. In the mosque, men and women pray in separate rooms. During the *mukabele*\(^{27}\) on the *Kadir* day, there were more than 30 women aged between 40 and 70, and a few young women. They wore simple clothes, no colour coordination, baggy trousers or long skirts which make it easy to pray. These women looked strangely at Beren, a secular, middle class woman, who came with full makeup and a phosphorescent, fashionable and green scarf. One old woman approached her and tucked in Beren’s hair inside the scarf. Devout Sunni Muslim women are keen on wearing modest cloths and wearing tightly their headscarves. Fatma, the imam’s wife, redid my scarf and I told her that I never tied my scarf correctly. After she remade my scarf, she said “*alışılmadık götte don durmazmış*” (“if your ass is not used to panties, you will feel uncomfortable wearing them”). We laughed. I didn’t expect her to say such a thing in the mosque. With that saying, the imam’s wife made it explicit that she acknowledged I was not practising in a joking but also warning manner. The Sunni Muslim women were strict about what to wear and how to tie their headscarves in the mosque.

During the *Kadir* night prayer, the imam recited parts of the Koran. Except a few Alevi women, all the women were Sunni Muslims. The pray in the mosque was longer compared to other prayers. Some women, who had knee and weight problems, prayed sitting on a chair. At the end of the prayer, chocolate bars and canned soft drinks were distributed to the attendees.

After having attended the mosque for *mukabele* prayers and the *Kadir* night, I also wanted to see a *cem* (Alevi gathering to worship and perform rituals) in *cemevi* (Alevi gathering house where they worship and perform rituals) to understand what kinds of practices were similar and different in these places of worship. I asked Nuri, the head of the *cemevi*, to let me know when there was *cem* in *cemevi*. Nuri was very happy to see

---

\(^{26}\) The night when the Quran started to be revealed to Muhammed.

\(^{27}\) women read pieces from the Koran each day around noon at the mosque during the month of Ramadan.
me interested in participating in the *cem*. Nuri wants the *cemvis* to be legitimised as places of worship and like the mosque, churches and synagogues he wants the bills of the *cemevi* to be paid by the government. As *cemevis* are not legitimised as a place of worship, they are registered as foundations. The name of the *cemevi in Burgaz* is *İstanbul Adalar Cumhuriyetçi Eğitim ve Kültür Vakfı* (The Foundation of Republican Education and Culture of the Islands of Istanbul). It is the only one on the Princes’ Islands. As a part of the politics of recognition, Nuri wanted to invite Cem TV channel to broadcast the *Hızır cemi* that took place in Burgaz in the beginning of February. However the TV people could not make it. Nuri wanted non-Alevis to come and observe their ritual and that is why he told me to invite my friends. He publicised the event and invited everyone especially the mayor of Princes’ Islands from the CHP party (Republican Party). The mayor of the Princes’ Islands from the CHP was there too. The mayor always comes to any cultural and religious event taking place on the island just to keep close with the public and also give the message to the Alevis that the CHP supports them. After the *cem*, Nuri also put the photos of *cem* on Facebook, under the Burgaz *cemevi* page.

Just before the *Hızır cem* ritual, Alevi women brought *lokma* (a pasty cooked by women, which symbolises anything shared between the people who enter the *cem*) and fruit to distribute them at the end of the *cem* (which means gathering and is used for the ritual that takes place in *cemevi*). They lit candles at the entrance. Contrary to the mosque, during *cem*, women and men sat together and performed the *semah* ritual (whirling). At the mosque, men and women cannot be in the same room. In the *cemevi*, most of the women were wearing scarves, which were not tightly wrapped. A few women even did not wear a scarf. This was interesting because in the mosque all the women wore a scarf and women corrected each other’s scarves.

In the mosque, the imam is the only leading figure and everyone else prays the same way. However during *cem*, people are given different symbolic roles to perform. When, I did participant observation during *Hızır cemi*, the people who sat next to me during *cem* explained people’s symbolic roles. For example, *kapıcı* (the doorman)
welcomed people at the entrance. Two young girls were given the role of being süpürgecis. Süpürgeci means the one who mops and cleans but this cleaning symbolises the spiritual cleaning of the self. Gözcü (observer/watchman) was responsible of the organisation and sitting arrangement of the room. Furthermore, in Sunni Islam, photos, especially of the religious figures are prohibited and dance and music are not allowed in rituals. However, displaying the posters of important religious figures like the prophet Ali and the Sufi leader Hacı Bektaş Veli as well as the founder of the Turkish Republic, Atatürk on the walls of cemevi is very important for the Alevis (Figure 18). Semah (whirling) and saz (the fretted instrument) are at the core of the rituals. Dede is the most important religious figure for the Alevis. Dede must have direct blood links to the prophet Ali. He transmits Alevi philosophy, religious and historical knowledge and morality through reciting poems and telling stories by playing saz. As there is no Dede in Burgaz, the Dede came from another district of Istanbul to the island, to lead the Hızırcemi.

One of my informants told me that the competency of the Dede is judged by his wisdom, proficiency in poetry, music, his knowledge of oral Alevi traditions and his rhetoricism. The way he tells stories about religious figures such as prophets and Sufi leaders, about how to be virtuous, good human beings is very important. During the Hızır cemi where I participated, Dede sang a song about Hızır while playing saz. He then told the story of Hızır:

God said that there would be a storm and flood and that Nuh [a prophet] should prepare a boat and get a couple from each animal species and people of different races. People were too corrupted, that’s why God punished them. The storm and the flood started to destroy everything. Hızır arrived and stopped the storm and the flood. The purpose of this Hızır cemi is that whenever we have a problem, Hızır will save us. We cannot see Hızır with our own eyes; we can only see Hızır with the eyes of an open heart. We, lay people, cannot see him, but in difficult times we feel Hızır and we say this person came our way like Hızır to solve our problem [Hızır gibi yetişti].
Figure 17: (Photo taken by the cemevi) Semah (whirling) at cemevi during Hızır cemi

As seen in this vignette, the Dede transmitted the story of Hızır, the saint, through playing saz. Furthermore, Ali’s sons, Huseyin and Hasan’s murder in Kerbela is still mourned over and articulated in cem, which makes the cem very emotional. The Kerbela war is one of the significant events over which Alevis and Shias mourn during their cem. After the separation between Ali and Muaviye, the sons of both claimed to be the Caliphate. In the Kerbela war, Muaviye’s son Yezid and his army killed Huseyin and Huseyin’s followers. For instance, in this cem, when Dede was talking about Huseyin and Hasan’s murder, the public started to say “Damn!” (lanet olsun). They started to get very emotional, men and women started to cry. I realised this when I heard people gently sobbing and saw napkins appearing in women’s hands. Men were crying openly as well. This was very surprising. When the public was singing Alevi songs, they were tapping their knees in a painful and mournful way. Dede said loudly and provocatively: “We are Alevi and nothing else. Alevis should worry more about being a good Alevi than worrying about the politics of being an Alevi. This emotional bond we have, and our mourning is what it means to be Alevi. We should do cem every Thursday”. I was very moved by the
ambiance and the sense of collectivity during *cem*. *Cem* was a collective expression of emotions of pain, and embodiment of mourning and remembering.

From the descriptions and analysis of the rituals at the *cemevi* and the mosque, it is evident that Alevis and Sunnis have significant differences in practising religion. Yet, the heterogeneity within Sunnis and Alevis, in terms of diversity of practices, perspective on religion, on religious philosophy, political affiliation and the differences and similarities between these two Muslim groups complicate their social relations. For instance, in urban cities in Turkey, Alevis embraced Kemalism and secularism in order to resist the domination of the Sunni Islamists (Navaro-Yashin 2002: 223) (See Figure 18, where Atatürk’s photo is displayed on the wall of the cemevi dining room). From 1990s onwards, middle-class secularists (most of them being Sunnis) became interested in visiting Alevi places of worship (*cemevi*) to learn more about Alevi traditions and cultures (ibid: 146). For these secularists, “Alevis constituted the society of Atatürkism” (Ibid: 1456). Furthermore, the diverse ways of practicing Alevism and the variety of leftists organisations that Alevis are affiliated with made it difficult for the Alevi organisations to unite “Alevisms under one roof” (ibid: 145). So in the next section, I explore the ways in which the diversity amongst Alevis and Sunnis and the context in which there is tension between these two groups and the common grounds they share.

**b) Relationship Status between Alevis and Sunnis: “It’s complicated”**

One must be critical of the binaries of “Alevi vs. Sunni” and “secular Sunni Muslim vs. devout Sunni Muslim”. On Burgaz, most of the Sunni Muslims who do practise Islam, such as fasting during the whole month in Ramadan and praying five times a day; also drink alcohol except for the month of Ramadan. Many practising Sunni Muslim women do not wear a headscarf, swim in their bathing suits while they fast and vote for the secular Republican Party (CHP). Some Muslims do not practise at all, like me. Alevis and these not very devout Sunni Muslims are not strict in following Islamic practices. They both drink alcohol during Ramadan, in contrast to the devout Sunni Muslims. I have heard from many Sunni Muslims, both the ones who practise and those who do not practise,
that they find Alevi philosophy closer to theirs than that of the strict devout Sunni Muslims’. They state that Alevis are open-minded, Kemalist, secular and not “bigoted” like religious devout Sunnis.

Tension rises between Sunni Muslims and Alevi Muslims and between Sunni Muslims and non-practising Muslims when Sunnis argue that Sunni Islam is “the correct way”. For instance, there was tension between me, a non-practicing Sunni Muslim, and imam’s wife. On many occasions, the imam’s wife encouraged me to pray and to fast, but I always resisted, telling her: “Nigar ablə (elder sister), I prioritise my studies over anything, so I do not have the time and the effort to pray or fast”. She showed comprehension and appreciation towards my education-centeredness by saying “Deniz, I understand you. I really like and appreciate the fact that you are hardworking. And I always show you as a good example of a hard working girl to my lazy daughters. However, when you die, God will not ask you whether you did your PhD or not. He would ask you whether you prayed, fasted and whether you have been a good Muslim. What will you tell Him?” I replied “I would tell God that I have worked a lot, researched a lot, learnt a lot and taught a lot and I did my best”. It is important to point out here that I, as a non-practising Muslim, and Nigar as a devout Sunni Muslim, we had these tensions and disagreements about what our priorities in life were. But we negotiated that explicitly, which shows that we had formed an intimate relationship through conviviality. She became one of my good friends with whom I had a great time, went to neighbours together, joked and laughed a lot. We shared a similar sense of humour. We both like embroidering and knitting. I liked the way she was blunt and direct and that she told me exactly what she thought. The friendship we formed challenged the boundaries between devout Muslims and secular, non-practising Muslims.

The fact that, imam’s wife, as a Sunni Muslim woman wanted to “encourage” in a kind of dominant way, what religious duties I should be following is one of the few occasions I came across during my fieldwork, when a Sunni Muslim told another Sunni Muslim to be a better Muslim. On another occasion, I also heard Sunnis criticising the
ways in which Alevis practised Islam. Once, I went to the money day of a Sunni Muslim women group. Most of those women practise regularly and go to the mosque during Ramadan. They read bits of the Koran during these money days and also talk about religion. On that particular day, Nagihan, a practising Sunni Muslim asked Nigar abla, the imam’s wife, who is also in this money rotation “When is it a good time for me to meet Hamdi [imam] for tecvit lessons [how to read the Koran accurately, with precise pronunciation and intonation]? Nigar replied “Wednesday morning should be fine for him.” Nagihan turned to other women and added “It is important to know tecvit”. Ayşe jumped in: “of course it is important, and you know Alevis for example, they do not pray fatihə²⁸ correctly”. In that instant, Nigar told an anecdote about how Alevis and Sunnis practise differently. She explained:

My husband was offered a better salary and a Mercedes car if he accepted a job as an imam for the Alevis. He rejected the offer because there would be differences in the practice of religion, such as the dead body is washed differently in Sunni Islam and in Alevis. My husband rejected the job offer, despite its high salary, because he would want to do it “his” way [the Sunni way] and Alevis would want him to do it “their” ways. Furthermore, there would be no guarantee of permanence and job security; they could just fire him whenever they wanted. However, as Hamdi works as the imam of the island, his salary is secured by the government. When he retires, he will get pension and until then he will practise and lead prayers in the Sunni Muslim way.

These conversations highlight that Sunnis claim that the way they practise is the correct way. Alevis see this as oppression, Sunni domination and assimilation. I wanted to understand what the head of the cemevi, Nuri, was thinking about the situation of the Alevis and cemevis. I interviewed him two times and we also had casual chats at the garden of cemevi. Nuri articulated that Alevis faced assimilation due to the fact that the Directory of Religious Affairs does not recognise Alevism as a different sect of Islam. He added that in school religion classes, Alevism and the history of Alevism were not taught and the obligatory religion lessons were saturated with and dominated by Sunni Islam.

---
²⁸ one of the most common and important prayers in Islam.
Nuri wants the *cemevis* to be legitimised. To make his point across, he emphasised the importance of *cemevi* for the Alevis in Burgaz through saying that “If *cemevi* had not been built and functioning today, we [Alevis] would have disappeared.” Normally, there should be *cem* every Thursday evening. However, as there is not a *Dede* on the island and it is difficult to invite *Dede* from Istanbul every week, *cem* takes place very irregularly. During the year when I was doing fieldwork, there was only one *cem* performed in Burgaz. So in Burgaz, it was not the *cem* in *cemevi* but the sociality at the *cem* tea place, next to the *cemevi*, that kept the Alevis together. Many Alevis hang out, have tea, play cards, and play saz at this tea place. They organise panels about Anatolian Alevism and discuss their democratic requests. Social events like “*manti* (tortellini)” day also take place in the tea place (Figure 18).

![Figure 18: Manti day, outside the cemevi. The photos of Ali (on the left) and Atatürk (on the right) are displayed on the wall](image)

The building of *cemevi* in 1996 in Burgaz complicated the relationships between Alevis and Sunnis. On the one hand, some Sunni Muslims reflected that building the *cemevi* divided the Muslim community into two groups. For example, one Sunni Muslim
woman said “Alevis used words like ‘we’ do it like this, ‘you’ do it like that more after the cemevi was built on the island”. She, however, added and emphasised that she never had any quarrels with Alevis and they were very good neighbours. Some other Sunni Muslims said that everyone should be able to practise their religion freely and that it was very good to have cemevi in Burgaz so that Alevis can practise their rituals in their place of worship. The tensions between Sunnis and Alevis show competition and antagonism as Hayden (2002) argues; however the diversity within Sunnis and Alevis and the overlapping perspectives between non-practising Sunnis and Alevis also make them support each other against the domination of devout Sunni Muslims.

For instance, the regular attendees of the mosque are a minority within the Sunni Muslim community. There are around 3000 Muslims in summer in Burgaz. During the Kadir night, around 250 Sunni women and men attend the mosque. The Friday prayers are attended by around 100 Sunnis who are mainly men and most of them are the sellers in the Friday bazaar, who do not live in Burgaz. In Burgaz, the majority of the Sunni Muslims fall into the category of secular Muslims among which there are all degrees of practising from not practising at all to practising regularly. Furthermore, many restaurants are owned and run by Alevis, who serve Rum mezles and alcohol. Sunni Muslims, Alevis and non-Muslim all hang out together at these restaurants and consume alcohol. This is why Burgaz islanders say that “Ramadan passes Burgaz in tangent” as many Muslims do not fast and continue to drink alcohol during Ramadan. Besides client/owner relationships, these Alevis and Sunni Muslims form and maintain their friendships through hanging out together in cafes and restaurants, through running their restaurants and shops next to each other, or working together as waiters. They play backgammon, watch football matches or go to the bazaar together. Their political views, secularism and keeping away from Sunni religious domination bring together Alevis and Sunnis. This is one of the reasons why many Alevis, like Nuri, are happy to live in Burgaz. Nuri said: “the good relations between Alevis and Sunnis should be an example to all the Alevis and Sunnis in Turkey”.
Tensions among the Alevis: What Kind(s) of Recognition Do Alevis Want?

Similarities and differences between Sunnis and Alevis and the heterogeneous ways of practising religion complicate the issue of “what” should be recognised and “how” for the Alevis. In order to be recognised, Alevis feel the need to define who they are and what Alevism is through pointing out the differences between Islam and Alevism. Bayındır (2009) conducted interviews with Alevis, who are architects, lawyers, teachers and members of Alevi foundations, who have researched and published books on Kurds and Zazas, the history and roots of Alevism, Alevi beliefs, and rituals and rights. Many of them are leftist activists and live in Germany and France after having escaped from the prosecutions during the 1980 coup. Similarly, Alevis in Burgaz organised panels about Anatolian Alevism, the roots and history of Alevism, and their demands from the Turkish government. The fact that Alevis do not agree on one definition of Alevism and on what their demands are from the government (which is stated by Irfan Dayıoğlu (Bayındır 2009: 166) and which I have seen in Burgaz) create disagreements among Alevis.

c.1 Abolition of the Directory of Religious Affairs

In Burgaz, some of the Alevis (such as the leftist and/or non-practitioner Alevis in Burgaz) would like the abolition of the Directory of Religious Affairs stating that in a secular state the practices of religion should be private. This group is not tolerant towards Alevis who follow some Sunni Muslim practices. For example, there is no mevlut (death anniversary followed by Koran recitation) in Alevism; however, in Burgaz, some Alevis do mevlut to which they invite Sunni Muslims. Some Alevis also go to the mosque. These non-religious, left-wing and non-practising Alevis interpret the attitude of Alevis who borrow some practices from Sunni Muslims as assimilation under Sunnis.

For example, once, after the prayer in the mosque during Kadir night, which I explained earlier in this section, my atheist and communist Alevi friends, who work for the Turkish Communist Party phoned me. With them, we consume alcohol, have barbecues and discuss communism. On that Kadir night, they were going to give me the communist weekly newspaper. I told them that I was at the mosque. They did not like
This. I met them at cemevi tea garden. We played cards together. I told them that I could not stay because I was invited to have tea with some Alevi women some of whom were at the mosque. An Alevi girl, Zeynep, was also in that women’s group. They asked me: “was Zeynep also in the mosque?” When I replied “yes” they were very surprised and said “this is an example of an Alevi being assimilated in Sunni ways of practising religion!” When Zeynep came to pick me up, they asked: “was the mosque packed?” in order to annoy her. Zeynep had told me that she did not approve of their attitude because they wanted to impose their own atheist and communist views on others. She also said that if there was something in cemevi for the Kadir night, she would have gone to the cemevi but as nothing was organised, she went to the mosque.

While in the previous section of the chapter, the Jews and the Muslims show an embracing attitude of borrowing practices from each other, in this case, some Alevis do not appreciate borrowing practices from Sunnis. The Alevis who borrow practices from Sunnis see these practices as addition; however, the ones who do not borrow see it as “assimilation”, which implies that the dominant group subjugates “other groups”. Even though Alevis show agency in “borrowing” practice - as they are borrowing from a dominant group who does not recognise them - this act of “borrowing” is seen as “assimilation” by the Alevis who refuse to share practices. As a non-recognised group, they feel under the domination of Sunni Muslims, and one way of resisting this domination is to reject Sunni Muslim practices.

The Alevis who share some practices with Sunni Muslims feel a bit more comfortable with the ones who would like to be recognised as a separate sect because that group embraces syncretic practices as part of being Alevi. In the next subsection, I explore the arguments put forward by Alevis who would like to be recognised as a separate sect.

**c.2 Recognition of Alevism as a Separate Sect**

Some, such as the head of cemevi in Burgaz and Alevi researchers and activists working on Alevism such as Bayrak, Balkız, Çinar, Öker, Dayioğlu and Yıldırım (Bayındır
would like the Directory of Religious Affairs to recognise Alevis as a separate group and the cemevis to be recognised as places of worship. The head of the cemevi in Burgaz, Nuri, also argued that Alevism dated back to thousand years BCE and that Alevism is the synthesis of all the religions of Anatolia and Mesopotamia including Zoroastrianism, manism, shamanism, paganism and Christianity. Nuri said that even though, Ali\textsuperscript{29} is the one of the most important religious figures in Alevism, Alevis are not only the followers of Ali, like the Shi’a Muslims, which was also pointed out Shankland’s (1999: 139) work. The trilogy Allah, Muhammed and Ali is important. During the cem ritual, Alevis light three candles for them. Nuri told me that the trilogy (God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit) and light are also present in Christianity. This trilogy comparison does not intend to match Ali with Jesus and so on. Nuri just wanted to show the presence of trilogies in both Alevism and Christianity. Identifying this kind of similarity between Christianity and Alevism was also present among Alevis where Shankland did his research (Shankland 1999: 146). Whenever, Nuri talked about Alevism, he always pointed out the similarities between Alevism, Christianity, shamanism, manism and paganism and the differences between Sunni Islam. In Burgaz, the ones who would like to be recognised as a separate sect stress that Alevism existed well before Islam and hence should be appreciated and recognised. However, within this group, there are still disagreements. Some Alevis in Burgaz see Alevism within Islam, so they demand that the government recognises Alevism as a sect of Islam. If they emphasise that it is a part of Islam, it would be easier for Alevism to have a place in the Directory of Religious Affairs and be recognised as a sect of Islam. However, some argue that Alevism has nothing to do with Islam, emphasising that Alevism existed before Islam as a synthesis of all the religions of Anatolia; such persons emphasise the differences between Sunni Islam and Alevism. Emphasising the differences between Sunni Islam and Alevism is a stronger politics of difference claim; making such claim underplays, however, the fact that Alevis and Sunnis share some practices with each other.

\textsuperscript{29} After Muhammed’s death, Ali was the 4\textsuperscript{th} Caliphate. Ali was Muhammed’s cousin and his son-in-law. There was a division between who should be the Caliphate, Ali or Muaviye. This tension separated the Muslim world into two. Ali got killed in a mosque as a result of this conflict.
Furthermore, this politics of difference worsens the social interactions between Sunnis and Alevis. Alevis and Sunnis are not only religious beings and many of them share common lifestyle, political views and philosophy of life. Most of the Alevis in Burgaz emphasise that they are not religious. Even though the cem ritual should take place every Thursday night, there was only one cem performed this year on the island. These Alevis in Burgaz, whether they want the abolition of the Directory of Religious Affairs or the recognition of Alevis as a separate group, want to escape from Sunni domination and do not want Sunni practices to be imposed on them or simply do not want to practise religion at all. The politics of recognition make the Alevis stress a unified religious identity, which actually does not exist as such.

In Burgaz, some of the Alevis who are not religious see Alevism more as a culture, tradition (including Alevi literature, rituals and music) and a way of conducting one’s daily life which was also observed by David Shankland (Shankland 1999: 135). They interpret Alevism as a holistic concept arguing that Alevism is a combination of faith, practices, ethics, philosophy of life and culture. In response to the fact that many Alevis emphasise the cultural side of Alevism, the government has proposed that the issues of Alevis should be dealt with by the Ministry of Culture. This would imply that cemevi will not be recognised as a place of worship and the religious needs of the Alevis would not be taken into account.

As there are differences in practices in Sunni Islam and Alevism (different periods of fasting, different ways of performing rituals, contrasting views on alcohol consumption) it is understandable that Alevis ask for recognition and want cemevi to be legalised. However, Alevis in Burgaz also form a heterogeneous group (atheist communist Alevis, practising Alevis, non-practising Alevis, Alevis practising both Sunni and Alevi rituals and so on) and do not share same views on what Alevism is. These conflicting perceptions create issues for the government in its decision of whether to grant Alevis recognition and legitimise cemevis under the Directory of Religious Affairs or under the Ministry of

---

30 The internal diversity of Alevis were also mentioned by Navaro-Yashin (2002: 145-146).
Culture. So, the government takes an easy way out and tells the Alevi to first unite and come to an agreement before any decision on recognition is taken.

Taking into account the heterogeneity, diversity and syncretism of practising religion among the Alevi in Burgaz, the politics of recognition forces the Alevi to make a choice, creates a discourse of coexistence which require the Alevi to define themselves, which in the end create tensions within the non-recognised group as well as within the community. In people’s daily life in Burgaz, some of my Alevi informants borrow practices from each other, many Sunnis and Alevi lead similar ways of living, such as not fasting during Ramadan, consuming alcohol, voting for the CHP. The politics of recognition ruptures this conviviality in an artificial and divisive way. The Alevi who borrow practices from each other are seen to be assimilated under Sunnis. Alevism is a synthesis of many faiths and people have embodied this syncretism in their practices. Now they have to make a choice about which bits of these syncretic practices they should eliminate in order to show that they are different than Sunnis and receive recognition.

Furthermore, the politics of recognition does not end here. Kurds also would like to be recognised as an ethnic minority. During my fieldwork, I did not come across a collective Kurdish activism and the difficulties that my Kurdish informants expressed to me were about the adaptation to the life in Istanbul and hardship while doing menial work which I explored in the previous chapter. Alevi were more active in organising panels and discussing issues of recognition than the Kurds. Even though, ethnic recognition is not the central issue in this chapter, I would like to draw attention to the fact that being ethnically Kurdish did not unite the Alevi Kurds with the Sunni and Şafi Kurds. There was a disconnection between the Zaza, Turkish and Kurdish Alevi who came from eastern Anatolia (Erzincan, Dersim/Tunceli, Sivas) and the Sunni and Safi Kurds from south-eastern Turkey (Muş, Van, Ağrı). These two groups hang out separately and refer to each other as “they” or “other”. Coming from the same region and being Alevi trumped the common Kurdish ethnicity. The Kurdish Alevi hang out with the Zaza, Kurdish and Turkmen Alevi, while the Sunni and Safi Kurds hang out with each other. Furthermore,
the former group came to the island earlier (in the 1950s) and the latter group came to the island in the 1980s and 1990s. A Kurdish Alevi and a Sunni or Şafi Kurds have much less in common with each other. This also complicates the unity of the Kurds in Turkey, and hence, of the politics of recognition of Kurds as an ethnic minority.

5.5 Conclusion:

In this chapter, I explored the political contexts which aggravate social relations between “religious communities” and the ways in which class difference affected their social interactions. I argued that tensions between different religious groups did not come out as a result of religious differences but these tensions were triggered by the political contexts. In some situations, class difference played a positive role in the ways in which religious differences are negotiated, even embraced (the relationship between Zümrüt and Niko) and in how some particular contexts, class difference had a divisive affect within a politically tense environment (the interactions between the wealthy Jewish summer inhabitants and the permanent working class Muslims).

What I have found from my fieldwork research is that on Burgaz, people negotiated their religious differences through talking about religion, finding similarities, noting similar religious practices and duties and by creating common grounds for discussion. People are also eclectic in their practices and they borrow some practices from other religions. Even though people from different faiths identify themselves as belonging to a particular religion, such as Alevi, Sunni, Orthodox Christian, or Jewish, they demonstrate diverse ways and degrees of practising religion from complete devotion to not practising at all. As shown in the ethnographic examples throughout the chapter, individuals live their life and socialise in an organic way. Individuals do not always socialise within “their religious” groups. Like the imam and the Orthodox priest, the imam’s wife and me, and the Muslims, Armenians, Rums and Jews who hang out together at restaurants, people form and maintain their friendships.

What creates the tension is the political situation in Turkey. The bombings of the synagogues in Istanbul in 2003 were an attack on the religious identity of the Jewish
community. This made the Jewish community close the doors of the synagogues to non-Jews. Furthermore, the worsening relations between Israel and Turkey created a feeling of anxiety among the Jewish community. The Jewish community became more closed within themselves. It was easier for people who belonged to the same class, shared a similar lifestyle to challenge the boundaries of religious communities through conviviality, even within this tense political context, as seen in the example of the restaurant. However, class difference between the wealthy Jewish summer inhabitants and the permanent working class Muslims, in addition to the political tension between Israel and Turkey made it more difficult for individuals to challenge these boundaries between communities.

The political context within Turkey also affects the social interactions between different religious groups. For instance, the current political situation affects the attitude of the practitioners regarding their places of worship. The Jewish community is anxious about the political tension between Israel and Turkey; this is why they have a more protective attitude towards their worship place. The Jewish community is a recognised community and they want to maintain their existence within this politically tense environment. One way of being protected is to keep the rituals exclusive to Jewish people. The Orthodox and the Catholic community are in a much more comfortable position. First of all, they are recognised and they are not in a threatening situation like the Jewish community. The situation of the Orthodox community is particular, because Rums had already suffered a lot and left Turkey due to Cyprus issues. This small Rum community is trying to keep their sense of community through attending church regularly. The Muslims of Burgaz, having grieved for their Rums friends’ departure, also encourage the revival of Rum Orthodox festivals in churches. In contrast to all of these communities, the Alevi, in order to be recognised, they show to the public how they are different from the Sunni Muslims. So, they invite everyone to their cemevi and want to broadcast their rituals.
The political context also affects people’s attitudes towards each other’s religious practices. In daily life, people borrow practices from different faiths. As the Jewish community is a recognised group, when they share practices with Muslims, like in the case of Fortune, this is seen as appreciation. However, when Alevi, as non-recognised people, share practices with Sunnis, this is seen as assimilation under Sunnis. For Alevi, organising mevluts, and/or attending the mosque is a part of conviviality; however as Alevi are trying to be recognised, they put more emphasis on their differences. Taking into account the differences between Sunni ways of practising religion in the mosque and Alevi ways of practising in cemevi, it is understandable that Alevi want to be recognised. As Young (1990) points out, laws which are blind to differences have assimilating and oppressive effects towards the non-recognised groups. This is also shown and felt by the Alevi in Burgaz who are trying to resist Sunni domination in various ways (e.g. organising panels, emphasising their non-religiosity, embracing secularism). However, this process of asking for recognition is difficult for both the Alevi and Sunnis, who are not exclusively religious beings. Alevi and Sunnis, like everyone else, have multiplicity of character, interests and multiple identities. The politics of difference and recognition, therefore, ruptures people’s conviviality, because it undermines what Alevi and Sunnis share, and it forces the Alevi to separate their eclectic practices and lay stress on religious differences between Alevism and Sunni Islam in order to receive recognition. Young (1990: 166) suggests that the politics of difference strengthens group solidarity. The politics of difference in Burgaz created solidarity among the Alevi inhabitants to an extent (they were more active in public discussions about Alevism organising panels and memorials); however the debates on politics of recognition also created disagreements and fissures among the Alevi. The Alevi who share practices with the Sunni Muslims (e.g. going to the mosque, organising mevlut) are oppressed by the ones who reject Sunni practices. This complex and ambiguous situation of the Alevi (including their heterogeneity, eclectic and syncretic practices) echoes in Cowan’s (2001:171) problematisation of minority rights discourse concerning the “Macedonian minority” within which ambiguities must be denied and differences should be fixed. Building on
Cowan (2008: 12) who criticises Kymlicka’s perception that bounded groups already exist in the country awaiting the state’s recognition and that minority rights and multicultural policies should protect, I showed the ways in which the process of asking for recognition created the need for the non-recognised group to define who they are and categorise their practices in order to resist the domination of the Sunni Muslims and to be recognised by the Turkish government. However, the heterogeneity of the perceptions on Alevism and the diverse ways and degrees of practising Alevism make it difficult for them to agree on what kind of recognition they want.
CHAPTER 6

CONVIVIALITY AND BURGAZ ISLANDERS’ REPRESENTATION OF DIVERSITY

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the content and nature of conviviality in Burgaz taking into account the islanders’ daily life and their perceptions and representations of how it is to live in a plural society. I respond to Grillo’s (2007) call for anthropologists to go beyond the analysis of multiculturalism in the normative sense, and to move away from the philosophical reflections at an abstract or institutional level. Grillo (2007) and Cowan (2006) highlight the importance of understanding what happens on the ground, of exploring the practices of cultural pluralism at a grassroots level and of analysing the social actors’ conceptualisation and representation of diversity. In this chapter, I explore the ways in which Burgaz islanders theorise, conceptualise, interpret and represent their “living together in Burgaz”. In the first section, I analyse two novels about Burgaz written by Aktel, a Burgaz islander, a locally-produced documentary about the diversity in Burgaz and interviews and conversations I had with the islanders. By analysing the terms (multiculturalism, monoculturalism and cosmopolitanism) and the metaphors and allegories they use to represent the cultural pluralism of Burgaz (mozaik see figure 19 and 20, ebru see figure 21, and open-air ethnographic museum), I aim to understand how the islanders categorise differences, interpret and reflect on how much interaction and bonding goes on between and within communities and the ways in which the islanders make sense of their living together - conviviality.

As I explained in the introduction of my thesis, Couroucli (2010) argues that in contemporary Turkey, multiculturalism is the remnant of the coexistence under the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. It is like the dust of an empire (Couroucli 2010: 220-221). Couroucli concludes that today it would be wrong to treat the lifestyle on the Princes’ Islands as “cosmopolitan” (ibid) because most of the non-Muslims have already left Turkey and the Princes’ islands. Couroucli’s cosmopolitan and multicultural model in Turkey is based on the millet system. In other words, this dominant discourse implies that
the multiculturalism in Turkey is dependent on the presence of millets - Rums, Armenians and Jews. I demonstrate that in Burgaz, the discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet is reproduced only to an extent. Rums, Sunni Muslims, Jews and Germans who lived in Burgaz between 1920s and 1970s, who experienced the times where the Rums were in majority, argue that the island was more multicultural (çokkültürlü) because there were people from different religions and millets living on the island. Çokkültürlülük is the translation for multiculturalism and the etymology comes from the combination of the word çok (many) and kültür (culture). When I talked about my research with one of my informants (half-Jewish, half Sunni Muslim), who has lived in Burgaz since birth, she asked me the rhetorical question “What multiculturalism are you talking about?” and added: “We sent ‘them’ all away.” She referred to the older discourse of multiculturalism based on the Ottoman millet system which goes in parallel with Couroucli’s argument (2010). Nonetheless, Burgaz islanders refer to the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system to criticise the homogenisation process in Turkey. My other informants like Haydar, Ajda, Niko and Nuri also become sad to recall the departure of the Rums because the homogenisation process took away their friends, who had been a part of the diversity in Burgaz.

The islanders articulated alternative discourses of plurality which goes beyond the millet system, and challenge mosaic multiculturalism and the concepts of cosmopolitanism by Werbner (1999) Zubaide (2002) and Sennett (2002) through emphasising the intimacy of social relations between individuals and Burgaz identity which embraces all sorts of diversities. In the second (last) section, I provide an example of conviviality; I explore social interactions among people from different ethnicities, classes and religions while they talk, share food and hang out at a restaurant and manage together a crisis of blood feud concerning the waiter of the restaurant.
Figure 19: Mozaik (mosaic) ³¹

Figure 20: Destroyed mosaic ³²

³¹ http://www.thejoyofshards.co.uk/history/index.shtml

³² http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/04/Greatpalacemosaic.jpg
Figure 21: Ebru\textsuperscript{33} (marbling)

6.2 Beyond the Millet System – beyond Cosmopolitanism and Multiculturalism

a) Kestane Karası and Son Eylül by Engin Aktel

Engin Aktel’s novel entitled, Kestane Karası, depicts life in Burgaz in the 1940s and 1950s. Aktel’s grandfather, a Turkish Sunni Muslim, was the head of a district in Thessaloniki and he was assigned to continue his job in Istanbul. He came to Burgaz in 1914, where he was given a house. Engin Aktel, born in 1942, has been living in Burgaz since then. The characters of Kestane Karası are based on the people who lived in Burgaz. He combined his imagination and the island life to tell the story of Burgaz. Kestane Karası is the name of the storm. As Burgaz was a “Rum fishermen village”, that storm affected

\textsuperscript{33}http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?q=ebru+sanati&um=1&hl=en&biw=855&bih=476&tbnm=isch&tbnid=maxpdsNc5O3WaM:&imgrefurl=http://www.islamvetasavvuf.com/index.php%3Faction%3Dmgallery%3Bsa%3Ditem%3Bid%3DD440&docid=9qAGxk3CbQ_RqM&w=320&h=448&ei=qnB7TozZrYrOKQCjy ULpgw&zoom=1&iact=hc&vpx=624&vpv=113&dur=3667&hovh=266&hovw=190&tx=140&ty=197&page=2&tbnh=80&tbnw=80&start=9&ndsp=9&ved=1t:429,r:3,s:9
the lives of many fishermen and the islanders. The novel starts with Stelyo Reis (captain), a Rum fisherman, who gets lost while fishing when Kestane Karasi hits. In the beginning of the novel, a young man, Sami, from Erzincan arrives in Burgaz after the Erzincan earthquake in 1939. As a person who never had any experience of the sea or fishing, he gets fascinated to see the fish that Stelyo caught and displayed in front of kahve. Sami starts yelling in front of the fish “alive, alive... fresh these fish” and attracted people to come by, have a look and buy them. Having helped him in this way, Sami walks away without asking for money. Stelyo Reis likes Sami’s attitude and employs him to help him fishing and selling fish. They build a father/son like relationship. Sami calls Stelyo Reis’ wife Despina “Mama” (mother in Rumca). Despina sees Sami as her son, cooks for him and washes his clothes. Despina behaves equally to Elpida her daughter and Sami. Sami and Elpida have feelings of love for each other but they do not reveal it to each other.

One day in September (1949), Stelyo does not come back from fishing. It is the time of Kestane Karasi. The whole island tries to find Stelyo in the sea. Stelyo’s friends Topal Ismail (crippled), Arnavut Muzaffer (Albanian), Naylon Mehmet Ali (nylon), Şilep Hasan (ocean carrier), Mülkiyeli Muvakkar (political science graduate), Sami, Lüfer Mehmet (name of a fish) and Zangoç Todori (verger) all gather in Sabri’s kahve to make a plan. Topal, Zangoç, Sami and Muvakkar go on the sea to search for Stelyo. The others take care of Despina and Elpida. The islanders bring Despina and Elpida to kahve to keep company with them while they are waiting. Topal, Zangoç, Sami and Muvakkar search for Stelyo in the storm for days and days and come back to Burgaz with no good news.

After Stelyo’s loss, Topal, Zangoç and Muvakkar want to help Despina and Elpida and secretly they gather money from the islanders. However, they know that Despina would not accept the money, so they make a plan. They tell Despina that they will sell Stelyo Reis’ old boat and with the money they get, they can buy a new boat so that Sami can go fishing, earn money and take care of Despina and Elpida. After they gather the money, they tell Despina that two people from Istanbul wanted to buy Stelyo’s boat. They
take Stelyo’s boat away and with the money gathered, they get a new boat for Despina, Sami and Elpida.

Elpida talks about her feelings towards Sami to Despina and Despina supports their marriage. Elpida breaks the news to Sami about Despina’s approval. Sami becomes worried because he knows that the Rum community will object this. Elpida offers to convert to Islam but Sami does not want this and they are trying to find out how they can get married without converting. In the meantime, Muvakkar and Zangoç also feel the love between Elpida and Sami; they want them to get married. However, there were several stories in the novel (as well as in narratives told to me during my fieldwork) about disproving the intermarriage between Rums and Muslims. A Rum lady committed suicide after she fell in love with a Muslim because the Rum community was against their marriage. Muvakkar and Zangoç do not want this to happen to Elpida and Sami. And something happens... A fire breaks out in the church located at the far north of the island. Sami is the courageous one who saves the priest, Papaz Andon, from the church. Sami then becomes a hero. Muvakkar and Zangoç take this opportunity to tell the priest that Elpida and Sami want to get married and the priest approves this. During the Christmas celebration to which all the islanders are invited, Papaz Andon announces Elpida’s and Sami’s engagement.

A few weeks later, Sami goes for fishing and does not come back for three days. During these three days, Burgaz islanders express their suspicion towards Sami. Aktel writes that even though Sami had lived for two years, he had not yet become a Burgaz islander. The islanders gossiped that he escaped and that people should not have trusted him. At the end of three days, Sami turns back with three orkinos and the rumours come to an end. The islanders look for a nick name for Sami. When you are given a nickname by the islanders, you become an islander, like Topal, Şilep and Naylon. After Sami had caught orkinos and proved that he was a proper fisherman, they called him Banker (like a banker) which they thought that with the money he will earn from fishing he might have a good life.
Sansar Nuri (marten) is not liked by the islanders because he tries to fish using dynamite and he steals people’s lobsters and goods. Like Yuakim, a Rum fisherman, who lost his arm while putting dynamite to a fish nest (where fish live), Sansar also loses his arm. The islanders say that if you go against the sea and nature, sooner or later you will get punished. Sansar had killed a man in his village in the Black sea region and escaped to Burgaz to survive. The islanders heard the rumour of the blood feud but they are not sure whether it was true or not until the day two men came to Burgaz to look for Sansar. Even though the islanders do not like Sansar, they still protect him, lie to these two men and send them away. Furthermore, Sansar also harasses Elpida and he gets very angry to hear about Sami getting engaged to Elpida. On Elpida’s and Sami’s wedding day in July at Paradiso Gazino, Sansar comes in with a gun and points it at Sami, Sami jumps on him and Sansar shoots somewhere else but the bullet hits Despina’s leg. Sansar is arrested, and the islanders take Despina to the hospital in Istanbul.

Then a miracle happens. Muvakkar and Sami see Stelyo at the hospital. They cannot believe that Stelyo might be alive and approach the doctor who tells them that that man was found at the shore and brought to the hospital in Istanbul in September, almost a year ago. Since that time, he was under shock, lost his memory and was not able to talk. When the doctor takes Stelyo to Despina’s room, Stelyo’s memories come back: he remembers. Sami and Muvakkar take Stelyo and Despina back to Burgaz. The islanders celebrate Stelyo’s arrival back to Burgaz in kahve. The novel, however, does not have a happy ending. Stelyo realizes that he is not as good a fisherman as he had been before. On a day when Kestane Karasi hits the sea, he gets on his boat and leaves...

When I read Kestane Karasi in the beginning of my fieldwork, I felt distant to the life in Burgaz, and did not understand why the islanders were so fond of the novel. This feeling of not being emotionally driven by the novel made me feel like a stranger. For a non-Burgazian, it is a beautifully written novel about fishing and living on one of the Princes’ Islands where the islanders live together, form deep friendships and cooperate at
hard times. However, when I read the book again at the end of my writing up stage, I felt a feeling of warmth. It all made sense to me.

It was a book written for the Burgaz islanders. I could not have understood what it means for a Rum and a Muslim to get married and feel for Sami and Elpida’s concerns, if I had not listened to Manos’ and Ajda’s love story. Topal, Zangoç, Naylon and Şilep would have stayed as characters in a novel if I had not listened to Haydar’s memories. I would not have sympathised with how Sami felt in order to be accepted by Burgaz islanders, if I had not felt frustrated to meet with the islanders, trying hard to be approved by Burgaz islanders during my fieldwork. After having lived in Burgaz for 14 months, listening to the memories of the islanders, strolling in the streets, sitting in cafes and restaurants, gone to churches, talking for hours and hours, writing and thinking about Burgaz for another two years, I have realised that the *adanın tipleri* that Haydar was talking about, the love story between Ajda and Manos, the fun at the *gazinos*, the fish I ate, the trees I passed by, the *kahve* where I sat and watched the islanders play backgammon, the sea in which I swam, were all in *Kestane Karası*.

My understanding of conviviality in Burgaz was similar to Basso’s embodied practice and sense of place where the islanders’ “relationships to geographical place are most richly lived and surely felt” (Basso 1996: 54). As Basso (1996: 55) points out, people’s relationships embedded in place “cannot be known in advanced”. This was why, *Kestane Karası* made sense to me during and after my ethnographic encounter in Burgaz with the islanders.

*Kestane Karası* is about the representation of Burgaz for Burgaz islanders. It is not about multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism and coexistence of how different ethnic and religious groups live together; it is a book about conviviality, about individuals making the life as it is in Burgaz. The book reflects on a lot of analytical points. It shows the discouragement of the Rum community for intermarriages, yet it also shows that individuals can negotiate these community boundaries. It gives the message that anyone, regardless of where they come from, can become a Burgaz islander; however, one has to
do a lot to become one. It is not enough to spend years. One has to become a part of the island’s conviviality and internalise the values of being a Burgaz islander. Sami learnt how to fish, caught orkinos, went out in the storm to search for Stelyo, and saved a man from a fire. Only then was he considered a Burgaz islander. Burgaz is not a land of utopia. Even though, Sami was a part of the conviviality, and saved the priest from the fire, he still faced the suspicion from the islanders. The islanders gossip and do not trust and one always has to keep proving oneself. The people who harm nature are excluded like Yuakim and Sansar who get “punished” when the dynamite explodes in their hands while they want to fish more and more.

When I talked to Engin Aktel about his novels, I asked him

Deniz: In Kestane Karası, you describe the life in Burgaz in 1940s and 1950s. In your second novel, Son Eylül [Last September], you focus on a specific event, the 6-7 September events. Why?

Aktel: After I retired - I was a journalist - I wanted to write novels about Burgaz. I wanted to narrate how we used to live because life in Burgaz is different today. 6-7 September events were horrible. Istanbul and the other Princes’ Islands got destroyed. We had to protect our island. There were only 10 policemen in Burgaz and it was not enough to protect the whole island so the islanders protected the harbours, Indos, the cemetery, the town centre, Kalpazankaya bay and beaches. We managed not to let the attackers set foot in Burgaz. The issues in Cyprus were a pretext for the 6-7 September events and the target was the Rums. The Rums did not lessen in number right after the 6-7 September events however it was the beginning of an end. As things got worse, the Rums left in big numbers in 1964-68, and in 1974-78.

Deniz: So do you mean that the island life changed because the Rums left?

Aktel: In a way, yes. We used to be çokültürlü [multicultural]. When the Rums left, we lost our çeşitlilik [diversity].

Deniz: What do you mean by multiculturalism?

Aktel: Multiculturalism is köklü [rooted] diversity. Multicultural societies kök salyorlar [to root], keep the roots of their different cultures and transmit these differences to different groups in the society and to further generations. For example, the Rum culture, the Jewish culture is in
me and you can find the continuation of the Rum culture in people in Burgaz. For instance, Muslims or Jews who grew up with the Rums, learnt Rumca while playing with each other as kids, they know Rum religious days and traditions. Burgaz is more multicultural than Büyükada. Büyükada is kozmopolit [cosmopolitan] but Burgaz isn’t.

Deniz: What do you mean by saying that Burgaz is more multicultural than Büyükada and not cosmopolitan?

Aktel: Burgaz is not cosmopolitan because in cosmopolitan societies communities do not leave their impact or transmit their cultures to other groups and to further generations. For example, new migrants, French, Germans and Austrians do not root themselves and integrate their cultures to the society. Cosmopolitan people and communities are distant, more superficial, and temporary, not bonded and are in less contact with each other. Both Burgaz and Büyükada are both very diverse but people in Burgaz are kaynaşmış [blended, commingled, mixed].

When we were talking Aktel emphasised the continuity of relationships between Burgaz islanders who left and those who stayed in Burgaz. He said: “Just yesterday, I phoned an old friend from Burgaz who now lives in Athens. We celebrated our 50th anniversary of friendship. Let me tell you, two years ago, Burgazlılar organised a reunion in Athens. 400 Burgazlı turned up. There was no space in the room, not enough chairs. I gave a speech, signed my novels. Now my novels are being translated into Greek and they will be published.”

Aktel has a complex and controversial view about whether Burgaz is still multicultural today. On the one hand, he says that Burgaz used to be multicultural; on the other hand, he says that Burgaz is more multicultural than Büyükada today. His contradiction shows that he acknowledges the departure of the people, mainly Rums from Burgaz. In his concept of multiculturalism, he still associates multiculturalism with the millet system, stating that diversity lessened in Burgaz when the Rums, people from the Rum millet left. However, he uses the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system to criticise the homogenisation process in Turkey. This is one of the reasons why he wrote one novel about the 6-7 September events which created discomfort in lives of the non-Muslims.
On the other hand, he also points out that multiculturalism is not only about how many people left Burgaz. He draws attention to the fact that multiculturalism is about the internalisation and embodiment of different cultures in the self and in the society and that this internalisation cannot be taken away from individuals and societies. The Rum culture is not something exclusive to Rums. It lives in Burgaz islanders and today, the Rum culture continues in Burgaz not only by the Rums who stayed but by the people who embodied it. Burgaz culture lives in the Rums who now live in Athens. In his view of multiculturalism, communities are integrated with each other and keep intimate relations. In Burgaz, there are intimate relations between individuals who then have a strong sense of solidarity and belonging in Burgaz. This embodiment of diversity in Burgaz goes beyond the *millet* system. The characters in *Kestane Karası* show the diversity within *millets*. Sami, like Nuri, Mustafa and many Zaza, Kurdish Alevis from Erzincan also become a Burgazlı.

His perception of diversity challenges the multiculturalism as depicted in Taylor (1992), Honneth’s (2003) and Kymlicka’s (1995) works. Taylor (1992), Honneth (2003) and Kymlicka (1995) put emphasis on the cultural differences and identity of groups. However, according to Aktel, multiculturalism is not about the identity of different groups, it is behaviours, shared ways of living together and communal life. A person is recognised as Burgazlı because of being a part of the conviviality in Burgaz. While Rums are depicted “as a vase or a decorative item” and as the colours of a multicultural rainbow in Istanbul as stated in Levi’s and Özyürek’s books (Örs 2006b: 264-265), *Kestane Karası* is not only about the Rums or the minorities who appear as symbolic characters, objects or representatives of a multicultural past. Örs points out that:

“As it appears in this nostalgia literature, the way popular Turkish discourses relate to Rum Polites is rather abstract, functioning as reminders of a cosmopolitan, modern, urban Pera culture to the consumers of nostalgia today; Mario Levi (1999) finds that the minorities are “not more than symbols” in this picture. As Cohen (1985) reminds us, in our everyday discourse, the past, itself symbolic, is recalled to us symbolically. While the image of Rum Polites serves to express symbolically a cosmopolitan past, it also acts as an indicator of the discontinuity of past and present. In the case of Rum Polites, the discourse that puts them in the
center of a cosmopolitan picture of Istanbul is one that seeks to evoke some feeling of sympathy, like one toward an endangered flower species. Reacting to those in Turkey who see them as a color contributing to the multicultural decoration of the city, the Rum Polites resent being objectified, as if they are “a vase or a decorative item” (sanki bir vazo, bir süslenmiş gibi), being reduced to a mechanical role they are made to play, an empty place they have to fill in the cultural rainbow of Istanbul.” (Örs 2006b: 264-265).

However, as I explored in the 4th chapter about memories, Haydar, Ajda and Nuri give specific examples from their daily life, moments and anecdotes that they had with their Rum friends. Through their narratives, they make their Rum friends come back to life. Haydar was angry, because his Rum friends left Burgaz. The nostalgia of Burgaz islanders is not an empty and a symbolic one like “a vase or a decorative item”. It is about the continuation of internalised and embodied traditions and Burgaz culture, of which Rum culture is one part. It is about the people in Burgaz, all belonging to different backgrounds, contributing to the diversity of Burgaz with their accents, swear words, jokes, their fatness, disability, drunkenness, kind-heartedness, tricks and gossip. Burgaz islanders’ enthusiasm in preparing the reunion on 24 August 2012, their visits to their friends in Greece and the memoire like novels written by Engin Aktel (2005, 2008) and Bercuhi Berberyan (2010) are ways of keeping connections among Burgaz islanders. The islanders organised pre-Reunion meetings in Athens this year and some of Burgaz islanders who left 40-50 years ago will return to Burgaz for the first time since then.

b) Nearby yet Far Away – Isle of Burgaz Documentary

Robert Schild and Nedim Hazar see Burgaz from a different perspective than Engin Aktel and the islanders who have been living for half a century or more on the island. Robert Schild moved to Burgaz in 1988 as a summer inhabitant, Nedim Hazar about ten years ago. When they moved in, the majority of the island was not Rum anymore and they have realised that there are about twenty different ethnic and religious groups living in Burgaz. This diversity fascinated them. Robert Schild had the idea that a documentary about the diversity in Burgaz and representing the multicultural aspect of
Turkey might benefit the country’s bid to enter the EU. He asked Nedim Hazar, a documentary maker, to shoot it. While Robert Schild wanted to emphasise the diversity in Burgaz, Nedim Hazar wanted to focus on the friendship between a Rum (who left Burgaz and came back to visit years later) and a Turk. Hazar told me “I wanted to give the message that friendship was above everything”. Thus, they combined these two aims and shot the documentary in 2004.

In this documentary, at least one person from each ethnic, linguistic and religious group is shown (Ashkenazi Jew, Sephardic Jew, Karayim Jew, Rum Orthodox, Armenian Orthodox, Kurd, Alevi, Levantine, German, Macedonian, Austrian, and Sunni Muslim etc.) and they talk about who they are, where they come from, and which language they speak. Different religious rituals at different religious places are filmed (in the synagogue, Orthodox Church, Catholic, Chapel, mosque and Alevi gathering house). The political events such as the 1955 riots and the 1964 expulsion are mentioned as events that made the Rums leave the island. The documentary has a very positive tone and the argument is that the island is a very diverse and multicultural place, in which all people live happily together. So, the documentary illustrates the ethnic and linguistic diversity within religious groups. Furthermore, it not only shows the millets (Jews, Armenians, Rums and Muslims) and their places of worship, but also the Alevi gathering house, a place of worship which is not recognised by the Turkish state. Therefore, the documentary challenges the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system.

It is interesting to see how the documentary reflects the change of discourse of multiculturalism in Turkey. The documentary did not have an emphasis on minorities: Rums, Jews and Armenians who were the non-Muslim millets of the Ottoman Empire. The documentary demonstrates the events which made the Rums leave, like the riots and the expulsion of Rums with Greek citizenship, but it was not trapped in the romanticism of the millet system. It gave the message that the island belongs to all the people from different ethnic and religious groups. Within their discourse of multiculturalism, they gave place for the diversities within the non-Muslim millet (like Suryanis, Keldanis, Levantines)
and the Muslim *millet* including the non-recognised Alevis and Kurds. As Couroucli (2010) argues in her work, Schild and Hazar are among those ones who would like to promote Turkey’s entry to the EU and they had a political aim in representing the diversity of Burgaz: to give the message that Turkey is multicultural. However, they challenge Couroucli’s statement that only the non-Muslims – Rums, Armenians and Jews- could make a Muslim country multicultural. Schild and Hazar include the diversities within *millets* and the non-recognised Alevis and Kurds as also contributing to the multiculturalism of Turkey. For instance, Alevi cemevi is shown as a place of worship.

I wanted to talk to Robert Schild about the documentary and his perception of diversity of Burgaz, so I interviewed him. Let me here give some background information about who he is. Dr. Robert Schild, Ashkenazi Jew, was born in Istanbul. The mother of his maternal grandmother was born in Odessa (Ukraine) in 1881. The father of that grandmother had been a tailor there and when the new Tsar came to power he feared that the Tsar would have an anti-Semitic agenda in his head, so, he took all his family and moved to Istanbul. Schild’s paternal greatfather was born in Austria and he also came to Istanbul (Schild does not know the reason why) and Schild’s father was born in Istanbul. Robert Schild only has an Austrian passport. He is married to a Sephardic Jewish woman of Turkish citizenship. He undertook his PhD in international marketing before working in the iron and steel industry. He is very interested in theatre, music and many other arts and publishes articles in the Jewish newspaper entitled *Şalom* as a critic and as a commentator on issues concerning multiculturalism in Turkey.

In the documentary Schild said that there are twenty different ethnic and religious groups living in Burgaz and then continued with the quote with which I began my thesis: “*Anthropologists, sociologists and political scientists should come here and see how people can live in friendship and harmony. It is an example to the whole world.*” I started asking him what these twenty groups are. As a response, Schild started naming them:
There are Jews, who are separated into three groups, Ashkenazis from Eastern Europe and Sephardics from Southern Europe and Karayimli from the Middle East, mainly Crimea. Catholic Armenians, Gregorian Armenians... then Rums, mainly Orthodox but some Catholic... Hmm Suryanis, Keldanis... Then Bulgarians, Macedonians... Germans! Germans are very important, they are called “Boğaziçi Germanleri” [Bosphorus Germans]; they have been living here for a century or more... Austrians, the priests and soeurs you know. Then Sunni, Alevi, Kurd. Hmm, I am missing some. Levantines and Italians.” [I asked: “how about the English and Finnish people who married Sunni Muslims, and people from Central Asia like Kirghiz, Azeri and Turkmen who help out the grocers and horse-cart drivers?”] When I told you these ethnic and religious groups, I only counted the ones who are “made in Turkey, made in Burgaz” [he said this in English].

His categorisations were interesting and confusing. He first started with the subcategories of the non-Muslim millet. The Jews are separated in terms of the places from which they arrived in Ottoman lands. The Armenians and the Rums were considered as ethnic groups among which they were separated into religious groups. Suryanis and Keldanis came right after the Armenians and the Rums; he might have cited them after Rums and Armenians as they are Catholics and Christians. Then, he mentioned Bulgarians and Macedonians, who refer to ethnic groups. He counted Boğaziçi Germanleri and Austrians, because they migrated to Burgaz during the Ottoman Empire. While Austrians and Germans count, English and Finish people do not count because they came to Burgaz because of intermarriage. Levantines are a mixed community formed of Rums, Suryanis, Armenians, and Italians who migrated to Ottoman lands as merchants. They intermarried and some do not know from which ethnicity their parents were. Italians still have Italian passports but Levantines have Turkish passports. “Made in Burgaz or made in Turkey” is not about citizenship or having a Turkish passport, according to Schild. What is important is to be born in “Turkish lands”, which were at different times in history belonged to different Empires. This concept of “made in Burgaz and made in Turkey” challenges greatly the social science literature on cosmopolitanism (Zubaide 2002, Beck 2000, Calhoun 2002, Werbner 1999, Hannertz 1999), which sees mobility and border-crossing as making a person cosmopolitan and the city diverse. By contrast, in Burgaz and in Turkey, cultural pluralism is about “being born, staying and not crossing borders”. His
reflection of a multicultural place implies that people from different ethnic and religious groups should stay in this place and continue their generations. In his multicultural model of Burgaz, Schild counts the people who were “made in Turkey, and born in Burgaz”. The Germans, Jews, Rums and Turks were born in Burgaz and they kept reproducing; and Alevis and Kurds also settled in Burgaz and are still continuing their generation. Schild does not include in his model English, French, Finnish, Swedish, and Americans who moved to the island after marrying Turks or to reside on the island in summer. He also does not include the Kirghiz, Azeri and Turkmen who came to the island to work. I told him “When I think of the diversity in Burgaz, I would also add the people you do not include because while the Rums left, Alevis and Kurds came and settled to Burgaz; and, maybe in another 10-20 years, the immigrants from Central Asia might also bring their families and become locals.” When I suggested including the new comers taking into account the dynamic changes of who settles and who leaves the island, he told me “I have not thought of it before but, it is true that there is globalisation and migration everywhere and you should explain your interpretation of diversity in your thesis.” The fact that he does not include the new comers in his model implies that he sees them as temporary, which implies that for a place to be multicultural there must be continuity and permanence for its inhabitants.

In his way of categorisation, Muslims are separated in three main categories, Sunnis, Alevis and Kurds. I told him that there were also Şafis, who are ethnically Kurds and there were also Zaza Alevis in Burgaz. It was interesting how he divided Muslims in three subcategories: Sunnis and Alevis refer to different religious practices; Kurds refers to an ethnic group. This also implied that Sunnis include Turks but not the Kurds. This also shows the current political discourse within Turkey. As Erdoğan came up with the “democratic packages34” under the name of “Alevi opening” and “Kurdish opening”, the majority of the Muslims are then considered as Sunnis in difference to Alevis and Kurds. Schild was surprised to hear that some Kurds were Şafi and that there were Zazas on the

---

34 Please refer to pages 115-118 of the thesis for information about the “democratic packages” and the criticism of them.
island. He thought that Zazas were Kurdish, which is a very common assumption about Zazas and Kurds. Many people, including some Zazas and Kurds, especially from eastern Anatolia, from the cities of Erzincan, Dersim and Sivas get confused about whether they are Zaza or Kurdish. Zazas and Kurds from that region usually identify themselves with the place of origin such as from Erzincan, Sivas or Dersim and with being Alevi. During my fieldwork, I began to learn Zazaki and it is different from Kurdish. Some Zazas, with whom I spoke Zazaki, did not know that it was Zazaki language and they said that they spoke Kurdish. However, Kurdish people from southeast of Turkey are aware of the fact that they are Kurdish and that they speak Kurdish. Some of these Kurds are Şafi Muslim and some are Sunni Muslim.

After talking about what kinds of diversity exist in Burgaz, I asked Schild “Which term and word would you use to describe the diversity of Burgaz, then?” He first explained which terms are used to describe diversity in general (e.g. multiculturalism, cosmopolitanism, and mosaic) and diversity specific to Burgaz (e.g. mosaic, ebru, open-air ethnographic museum) and then told in the end which terms fit Burgaz better. He started like this:

Let me first tell you about my theory of diversity in Burgaz. I have found the multicultural aspect of Turkey in Burgaz. Before I wanted to make a documentary/film about Burgaz, I wrote a few articles in the Radikal newspaper and Istanbul Dergisi [1999] about Burgaz being “an open-air ethnographic museum”. What I argued with this allegory is that Turkey had been multicultural for centuries but it had long been losing its diversity. When one came to Burgaz, one could still see a sample of each group within this diversity.

So on the one hand, Schild points out Turkey is still multicultural. Yet, as the number of the Rums, Jews and Armenians as well as Keldanis, Germans, Macedonians, Levantines lessened to a great extent, he describes these people as “museumised”. During the interview, when Schild explained how the number of these people decreased, he talked in great depth about the Wealth Tax in 1942, the 6-7 September events, the expulsion of the Rums with Greek citizenship, and the non-Muslims who left to other countries for economic reasons. As, this demonstrates, he does not in any way ignore the
homogenisation process. To the contrary, he shows the ways in which these policies and political events had an important impact which triggered migrations from Turkey. Schild then continued:

You might have heard that people use the terms mosaic and cosmopolitanism to talk about diversity. I do not like the allegory of the mosaic because it puts boundaries between groups, and like the people who do not like the term mosaic, I prefer the term *ebru* [marbling, Figure 21]. In *ebru*, patterns fuse into each other with blurry boundaries. The stones in the mosaic could fall as the pieces are separated from each other but in *ebru* the patterns fuse into each other thus *ebru* is more permanent and solid. So, an *ebru*-like society has more cohesion between different groups and it is more solid. Do you know the famous quote “Ne mozaiğiulan?” from Alpaslan Türkëş?  

The nationalists are against the mosaic of differences. Nonetheless, I like the metaphor of the mosaic because it conveys an *emotional* [he said emotional in English] message; because each stone does not have significance unless all the stones in the mosaic are put together and form a meaningful shape. Both *ebru* and *mosaic* appeal to the wholeness of the picture. There are still distinct patterns in *ebru*; however; the boundaries of the patterns are not clear-cut like in the mosaic, so *ebru* suits better to Burgaz than mosaic.

Cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism are also used to talk about diversity. The etymology of cosmopolitanism comes from “cosmos” and “polis” which means a global town. In that respect, cosmopolitanism suits Burgaz; however cosmopolitanism does not bring any *emotional* [said in English] connotations such as the mosaic. It just means diverse people living in a place, does not give the message of wholeness, togetherness and solidarity as the term mosaic. Cosmopolitanism is about London, Paris, many people living together. However, in these cities there is only one *medeniyet* [civilisation], in Istanbul or Turkey there are many *medeniyet*. This is why I used the allegory of “open-air ethnographic museum”.

On the other hand, I still think that the term multicultural suits Burgaz better than cosmopolitanism. I divide multiculturalism in two. The first one refers to diverse people living in a geographical area. The second one refers to individuals being multicultural. Both definitions of multiculturalism are relevant for Burgaz. When I compare Turkey with Yugoslavia and Yugoslavia was multicultural but *kan gövdeyi göttürdü* [the literal translation is “the blood took away bodies”], which means that

---

35 Alpaslan Turkes was the previous head of the nationalist MHP. In his quote “Ne mozaiğiulan??”, he implies “How come you talk about a mosaic? We are all Turks!”
everyone killed each other] while in Turkey people did not kill each other and there are still many ethnic and religious groups living together in Turkey. My second definition refers to people who have been in contact with different cultures, places and mentalities. When I say “culture”, I do not refer to the term in *académie française* [said it in French] as high culture. Culture does not have an authentic meaning or notion or definition or content. For example, I am multicultural as I am Austrian, Ashkenazi Jew, who was born in Istanbul, who speaks many languages, who went to German school. In Burgaz, you can find many multicultural people like me. Let me give you an example of a non-multicultural person. I know a Sephardic Jewish woman in Istanbul, who only goes dancing and does not know what is going on around her, in the city or country. Both of us are Jewish, but she is stuck in her own bubble and life. This kind of multicultural person refers to people who break out of their own bubbles, who are curious about and engaged with other people and things.

Robert Schild’s views challenges the conceptualisations of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism. He criticises mosaic multiculturalism by introducing the allegory of *ebru*, which is similar to Benhabib’s criticism of mosaic multiculturalism, who argues that “cultures are complex human practices of signification and representation” (Benhabib 2002: ix) and that “Cultures are formed through complex dialogues with other cultures” (ibid). Like Engin Aktel, Schild sees multiculturalism as the internalisation of different cultures; a person is multicultural if they engage with people from diverse backgrounds or – to use Schild’s own words- if they “break out of their own bubble”. When Schild refers to Burgaz being cosmopolitan and multicultural, he pays attention to the nature and degrees of interactions across groups. So for him, measuring diversity is not simply a matter of counting the number of different ethnic and religious groups and categorising them, but also of asking what kinds of interactions occur between individuals belonging to different “groups”. With his statement that Burgaz is cosmopolitan, he takes Sennett’s (2002) concept of cosmopolitanism a step further. Sennett (2002) states that in a cosmopolitan city, cosmopolitans do not interact with each other. Racial, class, ethnic and religious differences bring indifference between individuals. However, in the case of Burgaz, people are not indifferent to people’s ethnicity and/or religion. People, like Schild and Aktel, recognise ethnic and religious differences, but they also highlight strongly the
bonding of the community in Burgaz. The use of *ebru* allegory and the emotional aspect of mosaic give the message of wholeness.

Schild also challenges Zubaide’s (2002) perception of cosmopolitanism. According to Zubaide (2002), cosmopolitanism is mainly about elites and intellectuals, who migrated to big cities such as Cairo and Istanbul during the Ottoman Empire. However, when Schild talks about the cosmopolitan and the multicultural nature of Burgaz, he does not restrict cultures to “high culture”. The Jewish lady he refers to may come from an upper-class background, but because she remains within the narrow confines of her particular social world – he does not consider her to be multicultural. Schild includes Kurds and Alevi in the diversity of Burgaz. When I had talked to him in the beginning of my fieldwork, he had told me “you should also interview the current permanent islanders, who are mainly Alevi and Kurds, who work in the shops and restaurants, who drive horse-carts.” The diversity in Burgaz includes people who belong to different classes, which I explored in Chapters 4 and 5 of the thesis. Werbner (1999) challenges the perception of cosmopolitanism as being exclusive to upper class elites and intellectuals. Werbner (1999) criticises Hannerz’s distinction between transnationals and cosmopolitans because according to Hannerz, transnationals are working class labourers while cosmopolitans are educated, upper-middle class business men and women who “engage with Other in order to make business” (ibid: 17-19). Werbner shows that middle-class transnationals could also be cosmopolitans through “engaging with the ‘Other’” (ibid: 20). In her view, in order to be cosmopolitan, one has to cross borders.

Schild’s conceptualisation of multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism resonates with Örs’ call for “a more comprehensive study of ethnographic varieties of cosmopolitanism” (Örs 2006b: 118). By examining how Rum residents in Istanbul live together in a plural city, Örs challenges Zubaide’s, Werbner’s and Sennett’s concepts of cosmopolitanism; arguing that one does not need to cross borders, or belong to an upper-class. In her PhD thesis, Örs demonstrates that living in Istanbul, a place that has
been melting point of diversities dating back to Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, make its inhabitants cosmopolitan (Örs 2006b: 276). Örs writes:

“Constantinopolitan cosmopolitanism has less to do with experiencing, witnessing, knowing the world, but more with experiencing, witnessing, knowing Istanbul, the center of the world, the city of world’s desire. Polites are not cosmopolitan because they are world citizens who travel, but because they are citizens of the City rooted in Istanbul. This lies in stark contrast to the existing literature on cosmopolitanism where intercultural contact is taken to be generated through mobility. (…) In this case, the very location itself is considered to be cosmopolitan thanks to the diversity of its natives, residents, and visitors, being attached to that location, therefore, is an immediate way to construct the self as cosmopolitan, and a rooted one at that.” (Örs 2006b: 276).

Furthermore, the ways in which Aktel and Schild reflected on the diversity, pluralism and the nature of relationships between Burgaz islanders were articulated by many islanders like my informants Nuri, Mustafa, Ajda, Haris, Haydar. The documentary received both appreciation and criticism from Burgaz islanders. Several islanders, including male, female, Rum, Alevi, Sunni, Kemalist and Jewish also expressed their criticisms. One summed up their criticism by saying “The documentary was superficial, it talked about who is who and how diverse the island is but it did not tell what kinds of relationships people have with each other. The documentary was also too positive. Yes, we are happy on Burgaz, but we also gossip behind each other’s back; we are jealous of each other, there are some rich, some poor people. You have to write all of these in your thesis.”

These criticisms were very interesting because the islanders wanted their conviviality and daily life to be represented as realistically as possible including people’s worries, tensions and jealousies. They found the representation of people’s ethnicity and/or religion superficial. Their criticisms were crucial in the ways in which I constructed the argument of my thesis. For them, cultural pluralism and diversity were not only about ethnic and religious groups. What kinds of relationships take place between individuals is important. For them, conviviality in Burgaz is not only about happy moments, but also about tensions, jealousy and economic problems. In the next subsection, I analyse the
criticisms that came from “monoculturalists” towards the documentary in Burgaz and towards people who argue that Burgaz is multicultural.

c) Monoculturalism - Tekkürültülük

One of the controversial debates about the diversity of Burgaz revolves around whether Burgaz is monocultural or multicultural. There are two discourses of monoculturalism in Turkey. One discourse of monoculturalism and anti-multiculturalism draws its roots from the hegemony of Turkish nationalism, which Schild had mentioned referring to Alpaslan Türkeş’ attitude against “mosaicness”. Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi (the MHP, Nationalist Action Party) is the only party which is sceptical and critical about Turkey’s entry to the EU (Canefe and Bora 2003: 127). They have anxieties that the EU has a hidden agenda and that the EU is to bring turmoil through promotion of minority rights, human rights, crystallising ethnic, linguistic and religious differences, making them obvious so that Turkey will have inner-conflicts and disintegrate. The current head of MHP, Devlet Bahçeli criticises the EU for imposing its own solutions about how to solve the Cyprus issue without recognising the point of view of the Turkish state and blames the European countries for not recognising the PKK as a terrorist group (Canefe and Bora 2003: 136). These two points Bahçeli makes back up the MHP’s scepticism that the EU is challenging the national security in Turkey. However, Canefe and Bora (2003) point out that although the MHP plays a leading role in expressing Euro-scepticism, they are joined by a new generation republicans who- despite being less nationalist than the MHP - are also uncomfortable with Europe’s attitude to Turkey and sceptical about Turkey’s entry into the EU. Kemalists were influenced by European countries’ legal and political systems to rule the nation. However, the new generation republicans argue that Turkey has no need to copy Europe, nor to be a member of the EU; because Turkey has been becoming a self-sufficient country (Canefe and Bora 2003: 138). In Burgaz, it is this second discourse of monoculturalism which is articulated by the monoculturalists who, in other respects a range of different political views.
For instance, some of the new generation republican monoculturalists in Burgaz told me that even though I was a good person who wanted to do research in Burgaz, that British universities gave me funding and supported it because they wanted to know how people live happily, in harmony all together on the island so that they could “divide and rule” as they did during the colonial times. This implies a conspiracy theory-like scepticism: European countries, like Britain, would want Turkey to enter the EU, they would first want Turkey to disintegrate and accept the “Western part of Turkey”. Furthermore, the fact that the negotiations for Turkey to join the EU were going badly made these the new generation republicans sceptical about what the EU wants from Turkey. For instance, some do not want Turkey to join the EU and be under the EU’s hegemony. Unlike those who favour Turkey’s entry to the EU and promote minority rights, human rights and praise the multiculturalism of Turkey, these monoculturalists believe that multiculturalism emphasises differences, ignores the shared values and hence hinders the cohesion within the society.

One group of monoculturalists frequently socialise at one bay. They were mainly leftist secular Muslims and ethnically Turkish and some had Arab and Tatar ethnic origins. Some of them liked communist and Marxist ideology. Some were strong Kemalists and secularists who supported the CHP, read the leftist nationalist Kemalist journal *Cumhuriyet* (Republic). One common point between all these people were that they all enjoyed drinking by the bay and eating together in restaurants. I was introduced to this group by an Armenian lady whom I met at another bay and whose neighbours socialise at this bay. I explained my doctoral thesis topic to them and they asked me “Do you have a political agenda behind doing this thesis?” I answered them “I am not supported or funded by a political party or organization. I am doing research on diversity in Burgaz for my anthropological doctoral thesis, funded by a British university. Hmm... I have seen the documentary of Burgaz and was interested to know what kinds of diversity are in Burgaz and how people interact with each other” When I mentioned the documentary of Burgaz, I did not know that these people were monoculturalists and it was very interesting to see
their perspective. One lady became very annoyed when I talked about the documentary. She said:

*Mozaik, mozaik mozaik!* Multiculturalism, multiculturalism, multiculturalism! That documentary was shot only to show that Burgaz is multicultural. Multiculturalism emphasises the differences. Here in Burgaz there is only one culture and it is the culture of Burgaz! It is not *çokkültürülüük*, it is *tekkültürülüük*! No one talks about what we share on the island! Yes, people have different religions and they practise them in their places of worship, but in life, daily life, we all live together. We share so much and no one talks about it! I was born in Burgaz. We grew up on this island and we live the same life!

A Marxist man jumped in and said: “The concept of *mozaik* and the promotion of differences are “wrong” divisive ideologies. You know, that documentary was made to support the reopening of the closed Rum Orthodox Priest School in Heybeliada. The European Union supports its reopening.” A Kemalist man added “It is the AKP who promotes the reopening of the Priest School because that also implies the opening of Muslim religious schools, Koran courses and Muslim religious cults. This will in the end ruin the secularism and Kemalist ways of governing the country.”

This heated conversation was very interesting because, on the one hand, these monoculturalists used the discourse of monoculturalism to emphasise the shared ways of living. On the other hand, they did not ignore religious differences. They highlight that when multiculturalists talk about differences, they ignore what people share with each other. The monoculturalists emphasis on what they have in common in Burgaz, as a distinctive identity – being Burgazli – rather than focusing on the religious, linguistic or ethnic differences between them has a similar aspect with the “authentic hybridity” that Ballinger (2003) develops with regard to Istrian identity. Her informants in Istria stressed “We can’t distinguish ourselves as Croat or Slovene or Italian – rather we are Istrians” (Ballinger 2003: 254). Yet, Ballinger also pointed out the inclusions and exclusions which are embedded in what constructs the authentic hybridity of Istrian identity. The “genuine Istrians” include the Latin-Slav cultural fusion, however, the newcomers, such as the

---

36 Istria is in Western Croatia, bordering Slovenia and the Gulf of Trieste, Italy.
Serbs, Bosnians, Kosovars and Albanians are excluded from the “authentic hybridity” of Istria (Ballinger 2003: 245-265). Yet, in Burgaz, the new comers such as the Armenians, Jews, Alevis and Kurdish settlers, as shown in Kestane Karasi and the documentary of Burgaz and are included in the collective Burgaz identity, which is stressed by the monoculturalists.

The Kemalist man uses the monoculturalism discourse to criticise the AKP government. He is sceptical about AKP’s pro-EU attitude because he believes that the AKP has a hidden agenda in promoting the rights of the non-Muslims in order to open the religious Koran schools and increase his power. Interestingly, when the Rum Orthodox Priest School was reopened for the first time to the public to display an exhibition, one year after our heated conversation, that Kemalist man and his wife went to see the exhibition. I went with them to the reopening and they were excited to see the school and the exhibition and took many photos. So, these monoculturalists did not use the discourse of monoculturalism to argue for a radical nationalistic view, they do not ignore people’s differences but they do use it to emphasise what people have common in Burgaz and to defend secularism against the AKP’s religious agenda.

One of my informants, Maryam, of Keldani Arab origin (aged 50 and who lived in Burgaz since birth) summed up well the representation of diversity in Burgaz, when I asked her at the end of my fieldwork about what she thinks on monoculturalism and multiculturalism debates on Burgaz and she said: “If monoculturalism emphasises the solidarity between the islanders and means that we are all equal, and then it is a good attitude. However, this monoculturalism should not dominate multiculturalism with the aim of ignoring differences because for me, Burgaz is the land of freedom, of diversity and togetherness. Burgaz is both monocultural and multicultural, because we all follow our different religions and we all share Burgaz culture”.

6.3 Tahin-Pekmez Dessert

In the previous section, I explored the ways in which the islanders perceive their living togetherness in Burgaz, analysing the terms and allegories they use and how they
Talk about Burgaz. In this section, I analyse what the islanders do. I tell a story of a particular event that happened during my fieldwork to explore the ways in which people socialise, interact with each other, in what situations tensions arise and how people manage these tensions.

In the previous chapter, I had already introduced Orhan, the chef and owner of the Zeytin restaurant and Ethel and Orli, the clients of Zeytin. This ethnographic anecdote includes them and some of the clients of the restaurant. It was the end of my first summer in Burgaz, October 2009. Orli had invited me to her house to stay overnight because her husband went abroad for business. We spent the day together in SC and we decided to have dinner in Zeytin restaurant with Ethel. In late afternoon, Orli called Gül, Orhan’s wife and the cook of Zeytin, to pre-order what we would eat and when we would go there for dinner. When Orli and I came back from SC, in the late afternoon, Orli and I chatted for hours, she showed me her house, pictures on Facebook and we did not realise how the time had flown and that we were late to go to Zeytin restaurant.

The fact that Orli and I arrived late and that Ethel came even later started the night with a bit of tension. In most situations, it would have been fine to keep the chef or the cook of a restaurant waiting but, in this situation Gül and Orhan were also their friends, so it was like keeping friends waiting. That night, I sat with Ethel and Orli. The cook, Gül, had joined the next table and was eating dinner with them, while she was also serving at the same time. As these customers eat here all the time, the client/customer relationship turns into friendship. However, this brings with it a lot of tension, because it is difficult where to draw the lines between friendship and clientship. Even though, we were sitting at two separate tables, the conversations of the two tables were joined. Osman, who was sitting at the other table, joked: “o cemaatin kadınlarıyla gezme çünkü onlar hep geç gelirler.” (“Do not hang out with the women from that (Jewish) community, they are always late”). It is a stereotype of Jewish women, which they give a lot of importance to how they look and take a long time to put on makeup and get ready. Furthermore, Orli and I did not feel like drinking that night. The other table interfered
many times asking “Why aren’t you drinking? Come on, have some wine or raki.” While we were having our main meal, the next table had already eaten their dessert. They had had *tahin-pekmez* dessert, where you mix tahini and grape molasses. Osman always asks for *tahin* and *pekmez*, mixes them himself and treats friends at the next tables. Osman kept turning towards our table and talking to us, and Ester kept joking and asking him when he would offer us his *tahin-pekmez*. As Orli was asking Osman for *tahin-pekmez*, Osman kept asking Gül, the cook for *tahin* and *pekmez*. Gül was eating with the group but also was going back and forth to bring orders. Gül said from the other table “There isn’t *any* *tahin* and *pekmez* left” and Orli did not hear that and kept asking through joking. At one point, Orli and Gül got both tense and Gül came to our table and told Orli: “You are always late and I told you that there isn’t *any* *tahin-pekmez* left anymore and you kept asking. I can offer you another dessert or I can go and buy some *tahin* and *pekmez* from the next shop. What would you like?” Orli got offended, she said any other dessert is fine. When Gül left, Orli told me “Gül should have served me more nicely and professionally because I am the customer”.

In the meantime, Orhan was having a conversation with Ethel. Orhan was sitting in between the two tables and drinking more than usual. A famous kebab restaurant from Bursa another city had just opened a new branch on Büyükkada. Ethel had been there to eat and said: “That restaurant in Büyükkada is the same as in Bursa”. Orhan kept arguing with Ethel: “No! it cannot be the same as the chef and the ingredients used are different even though it is the same chain!” They both kept arguing over and over the same thing. The tension was building up from that side as well. Orli yelled for Ibrahim, the waiter to ask something and Gül said: “Ibrahim left to his hometown in Muş, due to family problems”. Gül did not explain more.

After the meal, Osman (Sunni Muslim) and Hrant (Armenian) played backgammon as usual. By this time, the customers on the other table had left and it was only Orhan, Gül, Ethel, Orli, Osman, Hrant and I remained; sitting near each other at random chairs. From the *tahin-pekmez* tension, they jumped to discussing one another’s
hospitality. The hospitality across tables in the restaurant reflected the inner calculations of the islanders, which was similar to Derrida’s (2000) problematisation of unconditional hospitality. According to him, “Pas d’hospitalité” presents a contradiction because it means “no hospitality” and “step of hospitality” at the same time (Derrida 2000: 75). Therefore, hospitality is not an altruistic behaviour but embeds what goes in the mind of the host and the ones who accepts the hospitable behaviour, what each thinks the other is expecting and also the wider political, ethical and social codes of the society (Derrida 2000). Orli justified herself as being hospitable by saying: “Osman, you, my husband and I are very hospitable to each other. You always offer us tahin-pekmez and my husband offers you drinks. The people at that table where you sat, that the group is too much into themselves.” In that group, there was one Armenian (Hrant); the others were secular Sunni Muslims. Osman replied back “Orli, you call that group too much into themselves but the Jewish community is also into themselves. I know that you, Ethel, Fortune, you guys hang out with everyone, you are open. What I want to say is that this kind of separation of living side by side comes from the Ottoman millet system”. Orli started to cry in the middle of the conversation and people thought it was due to what Osman had said. Orli then explained (while Gül was in the kitchen) “No, it is not because what Osman said, it is because of Gül. She should have treated me better. She knows the hard times I had recently after my sister died. I am always nice to her, why isn’t she a bit more careful?” Hrant and Osman asked us to go for a walk; they had something to tell us. When we went for a walk, we learned the main cause of the tense atmosphere at the restaurant. Hrant explained:

The waiter, Ibrahim, received a call from his father who told him to leave the island as soon as possible to come back to Muş. Ibrahim’s uncle had killed his kanlı [the man with whom he had blood feud] 8 months ago. Now, the relatives of the victim are looking for Ibrahim to kill him in revenge. This is why Orhan and Gül were very tense and sad that night. Gül had even cried that Ibrahim was in danger. So don’t take Gül’s tense attitude personally, Orli. Gül was very sad and tense. I suggested hiding Ibrahim in my house but Ibrahim did not want to and he followed his father’s order. Deniz, write this in your thesis. Half of these Kurds who came to the islands were the ones who escaped from kan davası [blood feud]. I was an employer at construction business, and I had a lot of Kurdish
employees who told me that they came to Istanbul in order to escape from the blood feud at home.

Orli, Ethel and I were shocked to hear about the extension of the blood feud to Burgaz. The revengers could have come to the island, to the restaurant, threaten the owners of the restaurant, or maybe kill, who knows? We could have found ourselves in the middle of a blood feud.

After the walk, Orli wanted to drop by Zeytin restaurant and order the strawberry jam that Gül makes. Then Hrant dropped Orli, Ethel and me to Orli’s house. It was already 1am in the morning. Another argument started between Orli and Ethel. Ethel criticised Orli: “Orli, you are too vulnerable and sensitive. You take everything personally. See they were tense because of the blood feud and you took it personally”. Orli replied: “Gül should have been nicer to me anyways, as I am a client. You know sometimes they are also not nice to you either.” Ethel said: “I consider them as my friends and I don’t mind being criticised or joked about. When you are friends, you joke, you criticise, you yell and it shows intimacy. But as you are vulnerable, you cannot deal with criticism or being told off!” They kept arguing over the same event for couple of hours, yelling at each other until Ethel decided to leave abruptly. After she left, Orli told me about Ethel’s weak points and gossiped.

The next morning, Orli and Ethel called each other and behaved as if nothing happened between them. They also decided not to tell Gül and Orhan that they knew about the blood feud and that they would talk to them as if nothing happened. Orli told me “you know what Ethel told me? She said that we should not have had an argument in front of you and I should not have trusted you right away and talked to you about personal things! I can’t believe!” I told Orli: “She is right, I am a new friend to you and I understand the fact that she has a more reluctant attitude towards me.” She was a bit surprised to hear what I said and we stopped the conversation there and got ready to go to SC.
These consecutive events and talks on that night were very rich cases to understand the nature of conviviality, the fissures within groups and the interactions between individuals belonging to different groups. When Orli and Osman discussed hospitality with each other, they expressed their categorisation of differences and the inclusions and exclusions at the restaurant. First of all, Osman’s categorisation of groups was based on the *millet* system. He expressed the fact that Jewish community is a more closed group and said “Oh, they are Jewish and they are into themselves”. When Orli made a similar criticism of the people seated at the other table, she did not suggest that their cliquishness was related to the fact that most of them were secular Sunni Muslims. Orli explained to me later that that particular group, of around ten people, because they do not include anyone else in their clique, regardless of the ethnicity or the religion of the person. They are just an exclusive group. In my own experience, I also found that social circle to be arrogant at times, because they tend to give the impression of knowing everything and not wanting to listen to other people’s views. This is in a way similar to high school dramas, in which people have their small groups and exclude others. But what is interesting is that after Orli said that “that group was too much into themselves”, Osman automatically took the matter to the exclusivity of the Jewish community, but on the other hand, he also recognised that not all the Jewish people were a closed group, as some individuals -including Fortune, Ethel and Orli- were friends with people from different religious groups.

Conviviality is not just a matter of sharing food and conversation at a superficial level: people’s lives cross each other. At the time of crisis, like in the blood feud, the Armenian man, who belongs to upper class, offered to hide the Kurdish waiter, when his life was in danger. At this point, class, ethnicity or religion, employee, employer, customer, client boundaries disappear. Anatolian traditions are present in island life (as they are also in Istanbul). The employers, the owner of the restaurant and the cook are also very concerned about the waiter’s safety. The owner and the cook share their anxieties with some of their clients. At the time of crisis, the tensions that have been building up through conviviality - such as being late for dinner, joking with each other,
interfering into each other’s meals, talks and drinks - become more intense. People expressed these tensions over small conversations such as the argument between Ethel and Orhan about a kebab restaurant. A dessert, like tahin-pekmez became an issue where people expressed to each other all the accumulated tension they felt towards one another. On the other hand, the fact that Orli told Gül that she wanted to buy the strawberry jam from her was also one way of attempting to reconcile with Gül. These tensions were due to spending lots of time with each other and having similarities. As these loyal customers spend time together, they are hospitable to each other; they feel the intimacy to joke or to interfere in each other’s business. But too much intimacy also brings tensions, arguments and disputes. The fact that the customers share a relatively high level of wealth and education does not automatically follow that they will have an easy or harmonious relationship. Their similarities also cause tension.

On the other hand, the argument between the two ladies also shows that there is not always cohesion and harmony within the same community. Two Jewish ladies are very close friends, they know each other’s secrets, they support one another in difficult times; but they can also gossip behind each other’s backs and reveal each other’s secrets to outsiders. One way of dealing with these tensions is also pretending as if nothing happened and not to make a big deal of things. Furthermore, belonging in an ethno-religious community does not mean that people within the same community get along well. There are rivalries, jealousies and tensions within communities. For instance, my Rum, Armenian and Jewish informants would often complain to me – a person who is not from their own community - about the level of jealousy and competition within their communities. As the minority groups are small in number, everyone knows each other within their community. If someone dates another person within the community, breaks up, buys a house, does well or poorly in business, the community knows and gossips. It is important to behave according to what the community expects. People judge each other on the “code of conduct” that their community abides by. One of my Jewish informants said that it was to escape the level of gossip at the Blue Club (mainly Jewish members) that they signed up to the Sports Club.
As another example, there is a Rum community who lives within the property and land of the monastery on the island. My Rum informants described the disputes, which regularly take place in their neighbourhood. For example, they said that when someone’s carpet falls from the second floor to someone else’s balcony on the first floor, this brings tension to such an extent that they call the police to resolve the issue between them. If someone’s radio or television is too loud, they start disputing, and again, they would call the police. Once, the police joked with one of my Rum informants asking him: “Well you have not called us these days. Hasn’t anyone’s carpet fallen?” Furthermore, the visibility in the neighbourhood also creates tensions of conviviality. Everyone sees who enters and leaves your house, what you do when. If a family is hosting a dinner and invites some families but not some others, the inclusions and exclusions cause tension and families start talking behind each other’s back.

For this reason, as a person from Turkish Sunni Muslim background, my Rum, Armenian and Jewish informants would tell me what and who from their community annoyed them and have a critical approach to their community. Also, in my friendships since childhood, my Jewish, Armenian and Rum friends complained to me about feeling restricted by their communities and told me that they confided more of their secrets to me than their friends from their communities.

6. 4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I aimed to explore the ways in which the islanders perceive their diversity and conviviality in Burgaz by analysing the islanders’ representation of Burgaz in the novels they wrote and the documentary they shot, the conversations and interviews I had with the islanders, as well as analysing an empirical example from the practices of conviviality in Burgaz.

I concluded that the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system was articulated to a certain degree. One reason why the islanders referred to the millet system was to acknowledge the departures of the non-Muslims, especially the Rums from Burgaz. The second reason was to use that discourse and say that “we used to
be multicultural” in order to criticise the homogenisation process in Turkey. My informant’s phrase “we sent ‘them’ all away”, Aktel’s novel about the 6-7 September events in 1955 and Schild’s analogy of Burgaz as an open-air ethnographic museum are examples which show the islanders’ disapproval of the Turkish state’s attitude towards the non-Muslims.

Nonetheless, islanders like Aktel and Schild, state that Burgaz is still multicultural. Their conceptualisation of multiculturalism challenge Taylor’s (1992) and Honneth’s (2003) approach towards multiculturalism and Joppke and Lukes’ (1999) mosaic multiculturalism and Kymlicka’s liberal approach to multiculturalism (1995). As stated in *Kestane Karası*, the diversity in Burgaz is not about the identity of different groups. People’s ethnicity and religion are recognised, but what is important is the bonding, intimate relations and solidarity between individuals and the sense of belonging in Burgaz. As shown in *Kestane Karası* and Schild’s concepts of multiculturalism, people are multicultural because they embody different cultures; hence the ones who left Burgaz and the ones who stayed continue the multiculturality of Burgaz.

The monoculturalists’ criticism to “mosaicness and multiculturalism” of Burgaz, *Kestane Karası*, and Schild’s concept of *ebru* unite in one point: the shared ways of living in Burgaz. At critical moments such as during the 1955 riots or the blood feud incident during my own time in Burgaz, Burgaz islanders help each other regardless of people’s different class, ethnicity and religion.

Finally, through referring to my empirical data and telling the story of the blood feud and the food shared in the restaurant, I argued that in times of crisis, islanders break the boundaries of ethnicity, class and religion in order to help each other. I showed that communities do not have solid boundaries and that they are not homogenous, because there are conflicts and tensions within groups and that there are social interactions going on between individuals belonging to different groups.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to provide an understanding of the existing cultural plurality and diversity in Burgazadasi, within a post-Ottoman and homogenising context in Turkey. To explore the post-Ottoman homogenising context in Turkey, I used a “coexistence” approach to describe the homogenisation process, the construction and perception of categorisations of differences, the crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities and ruptures in cultural pluralism. However, the “coexistence approach” is deficient in describing the continuity of cultural pluralism and what is shared between the members of the community in Burgaz. The analysis of conviviality provides an understanding of the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, change of sociality patterns, shared ways of living, the diversity and differentiations within “different groups”, sense of belonging in Burgaz, their appreciation of diversity and act of solidarity at times of crises.

I concluded that while the homogenisation process in Turkey mobilised Muslims against non-Muslim minorities (like in the 1955 riots) and brought ruptures in cultural pluralism in Turkey, people in Burgaz did not turn against each other. By contrast, it increased solidarity among the islanders and solidified Burgazian identity. As Burgaz is not isolated from the wider political context in Turkey, the homogenisation process had an indirect effect in Burgaz. The minorities of Burgaz, whose friends and relatives started to leave Istanbul, also decided to emigrate. When the majority of the Rums left following the worsening international relations between Greece and Turkey over the issues of Cyprus, Burgaz received Jewish, Armenian, Sunni Muslim, Alevi and Kurdish migrants from various parts of Turkey. The migrations to and from the island created new patterns of sociality and diversity on Burgaz. Shared ways of living, conviviality, the collective Burgaz identity which embraces all types of diversities of its inhabitants played a catalysing role for the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz. At times of crisis, like in 6-7 September events in
1955, and the blood feud case of the Kurdish waiter, Burgaz islanders emphasised their shared Burgaz identity which overrode people’s religious, class and ethnic differences.

In order to formulate my argument, I structured the thesis into 7 chapters. In Chapter 2, I described the setting, the social division of space and the existing cultural pluralism in Burgaz through the analysis of conviviality. I depicted the daily life of the islanders in different parts of the island, at different seasons and analysed the social exclusions and inclusions within space, by using Lefèbvre’s (1991) analysis of space as a tool to understand the social interactions embedded in space. Building on Green (2005), I concluded that the relative ambiguous location of Burgaz, being close to Istanbul, a cosmopolitan city and being separated by the sea from the mainland, made Burgaz, at different times of history, a place of exile, resort and a place of immigration and emigration of people belonging to different ethnic, class and religious backgrounds. I disclosed my methodology in this chapter, by showing how social division of space and the population fluctuation in summer and winter affected the ways in which I conducted my fieldwork. The analysis of space and conviviality together provided an understanding of cultural pluralism which goes beyond the pre-existing categories of ethnicity and religion, and showed that an analysis of cultural pluralism should include socio-economic differences, shared ways of living and diversification of differences (e.g. age, gender, tastes, hobbies, political affiliation). The analysis of conviviality in different social spaces suggested that the islanders form organic groups not because of belonging to an ethnic, class or religious group but because of sharing similar lifestyle and tastes. People being part of the same class, shared similar standards of living, however, this also created competition, jealousy and tension. This was also similar for gender relations. In Burgaz, for certain social activities such as women’s money day, embroidery class and men socialising in kahve in winter, there was gendered segregated leisure (Cowan 1991, Bringa 1991, Ring 2006, Sorabji 1994, Kandyoti 1977, Loizos and Papataxiarchis 1991, Herzfeld 1985). While women and men enjoyed conviviality in separate groups, this also created tensions within the same gender. However, in most cases in Burgaz, men and women
socialised together (Figure 6) through sharing food and drinks, in restaurants and cafes, as well as houses.

In Chapter 3, I contextualised Burgaz within the history of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires and described the post-Ottoman, homogenising context in Turkey. I used the concept of coexistence to explore the ways in which the categorisation of differences were constructed, changed and reinscribed from the Ottoman times to the nation-building of Modern Turkey. Before the 19th Century, the categorisation of difference was mainly based on religion, under the millet system. The Enlightenment, industrialisation, secularism, modernity and the intervention of the Great Powers in Balkan politics towards the end of the 19th Century with their nationalist ideology created a sense of “coexistence” which affected the ways in which the people in the Balkans constructed their ethnic and national identities in opposition to “others”. I situated the emergence of the Turkish state within the nation building processes of the Modern Balkan states during the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Building on Cowan’s (2001) minoritisation process, I concluded that the logic and the bureaucracy of the millet system was incorporated in the Treaty of Lausanne and persisted in a new political form in the Republic of Turkey: the non-Muslims of Turkey (as well as the ones in Burgaz) were turned into minorities. I concluded that nation building was homogenising, because the Balkan states including Turkey used restrictive foreign and domestic policies (e.g. population exchange, economic and linguistic restrictions) against internal others- the minorities. The political tension between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus made the Rum minority the “black sheep” of the situation. In the post-Ottoman context in Turkey, “coexistence” explained the homogenisation process, the construction and crystallisation of ethnic and religious identities of the non-Muslim minorities and brought ruptures in cultural pluralism. These policies and critical events (like the 1955 riots) diminished the socio-economic power of minorities, consolidated their ethnic and religious identities and made them feel different. The homogenisation process changed the demographics in Burgaz. While the Rums were leaving the island, Jewish, Armenian, Sunni, Alevi and
Kurdish migrants settled to Burgaz. Currently, the worsening international relations between Israel and Turkey create discomfort for the Jewish community in Burgaz.

Building on Halbwachs (1992), Passerini (1987) and Bakhtin (1981), in Chapter 4, I explored the ways in which the current political situation in Turkey affects the ways in which the islanders reflect on their pasts. On one hand, the analysis of memory enabled me to understand the homogenisation process, through which foreign and domestic policies and political events made categories of ethnicity, class and religion more salient. On the other hand, memory shed light on the ways in which people remembered their shared ways of living, past conviviality, the construction of a shared local identity and people’s sense of belonging in a place. Through using memory as an analytical tool, I argued that even though the homogenisation process mobilised Muslims against non-Muslims during the riots in 1955, people in Burgaz collectively resisted the riots and emphasised their collective Burgazian identity. Drawing on Guven’s (2006), Todorova’s (2004), and Kuyucu’s (2005) approaches, I analysed the riots not only in terms of what the government and organisations planned but also in terms of how people reacted to the riots. What was striking in Burgaz that the resistance against the riots was a collective act, unlike other parts of Istanbul. Similar to Hart’s (1996) findings, the islanders gave meaning to their resistance: the articulation of the memory of the riots not taking place had a discursive character (Bhaktin 1981) and was articulated as a memory of conviviality, which makes the islanders proud of being Burgazli. While the homogenisation process consolidated ethnic and religious differences and brought ruptures in cultural pluralism in Turkey, it did not rupture the continuity of cultural pluralism in Burgaz, because memories of conviviality and the sense of belonging in Burgaz were stronger than people’s ethnic and religious identities.

The central aim of Chapter 5 was to explore the social interactions between individuals belonging to different religious groups and to investigate the diversities within these groups, through the analysis of conviviality. In this chapter, I focused on “religion” and “religious groups”, because in Turkey, the categorisation of different communities is
based on religion, a legacy of the *millet* system of the Ottoman Empire. My empirical examples suggested that even though the islanders would define themselves as belonging in a religious community, they were eclectic in their religious practices, borrowed some practices from other faiths, and their daily interactions showed that individuals from different faiths interact with each other on many economic, religious and social occasions. I argued that tensions between different religious groups were not due to religious differences but were triggered by Turkish politics, and that class difference was a significant factor which effected people’s social interactions and negotiation of religious differences.

As Young (1990) argued, difference-blind laws have assimilating and oppressing effects on non-recognised groups. This was also seen in the case of the Alevis in Burgaz who are trying to resist Sunni domination in various ways (organising panels and memorials, emphasising their non-religiosity or Alevi traditions, embracing secularism and so on). However this process was difficult for both the Alevi and Sunni inhabitants in Burgaz. I explored the process of asking for recognition for the Alevis and concluded that the politics of recognition created an artificial and forced way for the Alevis to define who they are and what Alevis is. Young (1990) suggests that politics of difference strengthens group solidarity. Asking for recognition cohesion among the Alevis to some extent (preparing panels and memorials together); however, this process also created tension and disagreement amongst the Alevis because Alevism is not only about the practice of religion, but includes traditions, cultural practices and philosophy of life. The framework of recognition forced them to focus on their religious identity. Building on Cowan’s (2008:12) who criticises Kymlicka’s perception that bounded groups already exist in the country awaiting for the state’s recognition, I showed the process of asking for recognition created the need for the non-recognise group, to define who they are and categorise their practices. Alevis who are eclectic in their practice of religion had to separate out “Alevi components” from “Sunni components” and emphasise the differences between Alevis and Sunnis, which complicated relations between Alevis and Sunnis and which underestimated what they share and have in common.
In Chapter 6, I explored the ways in which Burgaz islanders perceive their diversity and conviviality in Burgaz by analysing their representation of Burgaz in the novels they wrote, the documentary they shot, the conversations and interviews I had with them, as well as analysing an empirical example from the practices of conviviality in Burgaz. The islanders’ representation and perception of their diversity demonstrated that the islanders used the dominant discourse of multiculturalism based on the millet system in order to criticise the homogenisation process which led the departure of their non-Muslim friends. The islanders’ conceptualisation of multiculturalism challenge Taylor’s (1992) and Kymlicka’s (2003) approaches towards multiculturalism and Jopke and Lukes’ (1999) mosaic multiculturalism. As stated by my informants, the diversity in Burgaz is not about the identity of different “groups”. People’s ethnicity and religion are recognised, but what is important is the bonding, conviviality, intimate relations and solidarity between individuals and the sense of belonging in Burgaz. Burgaz islanders say that the islanders are multicultural, but what they mean by that is that individuals embody elements of “other” cultures like learning the other’s language, liking to cook the other’s food, visiting the other’s places of worship. Hence, the ones who left and the ones who stayed in Burgaz continue the multiculturality of Burgaz.

By writing this thesis, I aimed to contribute to the anthropology of memory and political anthropology of Turkey which has recently emerged through the works of Navaro-Yashin (2002), Özyürek (2006) Kaplan (2006), Neyzi (2002, 2004a, 2004b, 2008, 2011) and Mills (2010). Even though there is a lot of anthropological work which focuses on the religious experiences and lives of pious Muslims (White (2002), Henkel (2007), Tapper & Tapper 1987) and work on secularism and Kemalism (Navaro-Yashin 2002, Özyürek 2006) the interactions among different ethnic and religious communities have been rarely explored. In the existing literature of anthropology and social sciences in Turkey, scholars (e.g. Bruinessen 1989, Shankland 2007, Bali 1999, 2003 and 2004, Akgönül 2004) focused on one ethnic or religious group. Building on Baumann (1996 and 1999), I explored social interactions in daily life between individuals belonging to different class, ethnic and religious “groups”. Burgaz has provided a good case study because the
migrations to and from the island created new patterns of diversity and sociality. Through the analysis of conviviality, I suggested that an understanding of cultural pluralism should go beyond the pre-existing categories of ethnicity and religion and that one should explore the shared ways of living, socio-economic differences, power relations and interactions between individuals, taking into consideration differences in living style, fusions, fissions, diversities and tensions within “groups”.

I challenged the argument put forward by Couroucli (2010), who concurs with the dominant discourse of multiculturalism in Turkey. She argues that in contemporary Turkey, multiculturalism is the remnant of the coexistence that existed under the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. It is like the dust of an empire (ibid: 220-221). Couroucli concludes that today it would be wrong to treat the lifestyle on the Princes’ Islands as “cosmopolitan” (ibid). She distinguishes between “cosmopolitanism, a spirit related to the lifestyle of the minority elites of the Ottoman society, and the reality of religious plurality and tolerance in Ottoman society, which allowed shared practices at certain moments” (Couroucli 2010: 234). She indicates that these syncretic practices such as Ay Yorgi day\textsuperscript{37} do not now exist in the everyday life of the Princes’ Islands. She notes that most of the non-Muslims had already left Turkey and the Princes’ Islands. She sees these islands as ruins from the Ottoman Empire and as places of residence for the elite, educated upper-middle class people most of whom are non-Muslims. She states that Istanbuliot’s nostalgia for the coexistence of Ottoman times does not reflect today’s reality. She argues that this kind of Ottoman multiculturalism praised by the (Muslim) bourgeois class and the politicians in Turkey is like Herzfeld’s structural nostalgia: it refers back to the plurality of the Ottoman Empire to state that Turkey is still multicultural now in order to “promote minority and human rights” for Turkey’s entrance to the EU (ibid).

Yet, rather than explore the ways in which people live together in daily life on these islands Couroucli has merely considered a few events. Couroucli does not take into account the changes and the new diversity patterns on the Princes’ Islands. She only

\textsuperscript{37} Saint George’s Day takes place in Ay Yorgi Rum Orthodox Church in Büyükada, the Princes’ Island of Istanbul. The majority of the visitors on that particular day are Muslims from Istanbul.
focuses on who left the Princes’ Islands, but not who subsequently settled on the islands. During my fieldwork, by contrast, I witnessed how people from diverse religious and ethnic backgrounds still live together on Burgaz. I have concluded that the Princes’ Islands are not merely the residue or the dust of what is left from the Ottoman Empire. I explored the homogenisation process and the departure of the non-Muslims, as well as the ways in which the migrations from different parts of Turkey (the Black Sea region, Eastern and Southern Anatolia, cities near Istanbul and other Princes’ Islands) created new social forms and patterns of interactions in Burgaz. In the case of Burgaz, although the majority of the Rums left the island, Jews and Armenians from other Princes’ Islands, Sunni Muslims from the Black Sea Region, Zaza and Kurdish Alevis from Eastern Anatolia, Sunni and Şafi Kurds from south-eastern Turkey and workers from Central Asia moved to the island.

Furthermore, Couroucli (2010) argues that the Princes Islands is an elite resort of non-Muslims. I argued that Burgaz is not an elite resort of non-Muslim minorities and I countered Couroucli’s dichotomisation between the lifestyle of the secular upper-class and that of the Anatolian people and her argument that only the former is present on the Princes’ Islands (Couroucli 2010: 223). In doing so, I suggest that there is still a synthesis and symbiosis of diverse ways of living on Burgaz. There is also a significant class difference between the permanent and the summer inhabitants of the island. The economy of Burgaz depends on the mutual relationship between the permanent inhabitants (mainly Zaza, Kurds and Turks who are Alevi, Sunni, or Şafi from eastern and south-eastern Turkey) who run the shops and the restaurants, and on the other hand, the summer inhabitants who are the customers, clients and occasionally the employers (for instance hiring cleaners, gardeners, care takers etc.). There are strong community relationships and friendships between customers and shop owners which go beyond economic exchange involving forms of recognition, respect and gift giving.

The class difference came out to be significant when I explored the islanders’ memories in chapter 4 as well as their current conviviality in chapter 2 and 5. I was influenced by Passerini (1998, 1987) who explored class consciousness while investigating
fascism in Italy through the experiences of Turin’s working class. Even though it is very useful to explore class differences, it is difficult and complex to talk about the “oppressed class” under a totalitarian regime in Burgaz. The minorities on the Princes’ islands, mainly the summer inhabitants are economically quite well off. Most of them are very well educated, wealthy enough to have two houses, one on the islands and one in Istanbul. On the other hand, workers do not form a homogenous group. For example, the first Alevi migrants who came to the island in the 1950s, were male workers who did the menial jobs. There was a class difference between them and the Rum shop owners and the wealthy summer inhabitants. However, through working and saving what they earned, they accumulated capital and brought their families to Burgaz. When the Rums left and the prices of the houses went down, many Alevis bought property or a shop from their Rum employer in Burgaz; some of them have a house in Istanbul and commute to Burgaz to work; some have one house in Istanbul and one on the island. Alevis learnt from their Rum employers how to run restaurants and now they own the restaurants. Furthermore, in the 1980s Kurdish people and in the 2000s immigrants from Central Asia, came to do the menial jobs. There is now a class difference between the Alevis on the one hand, and the Kurds and Central Asians on the other. I found out that the Alevi migrants went through a shift in class. I also concluded that being oppressed was not only a class struggle, but there were various ways of feeling oppressed (e.g. linguistically, economically, ethnically, religiously and politically) that is experienced differently by various ethnic, religious minorities and/or political activists groups. For instance, during the homogenisation process, the Rum community felt oppressed to use Rumca (as seen in Ajda’s encounter on the boat in chapter 4; the Rums with Greek citizenship were expelled in 1964; the Jewish community had to close the doors of the synagogue after the synagogue bombings in Istanbul; my Kurdish informant was reluctant to talk about what the Kurds want from the government.

Furthermore, I found Couroucli’s concept of plurality problematic and reductive because it implied that in order for a society to be plural, there must be different religions; there must be Orthodox, Jews, Armenians and Muslims. It limits diversities to
the millet system. Although I agree with Couroucli that the Muslim bourgeois class uses structural nostalgia, referring to the plurality and tolerance during the Ottoman period in order to promote Turkey’s entry to the EU, this is only one of many discourses of multiculturalism in Turkey. It is the dominant discourse of multiculturalism which is based on the millet system. I argued that the discourse of diversity based on the millet system limits what kinds of diversities can be acknowledged because it divides groups according to their religious differences and fails to acknowledge the “diversities within”. Even though the majority is Muslim in Turkey, in different regions in Turkey, there are diverse styles of living, practices of religion and traditions. In the case of Burgaz, people who settled on the island from different places of origin brought their traditions and ways of living, changed themselves through interactions with the previous settlers and also changed the lifestyle on the island. When Burgaz islanders talked about and represented their diversity, they went beyond the dominant discourse of multiculturalism of the millet system and the pre-existing categories of ethnicity and religion, which I demonstrated in chapter 6.

Furthermore, I criticised the ways in the politicians such as Merkel, Sarkozy, Maurice Cousins, and Cameron, who claimed that a national identity is needed to integrate ethnic and/or religious groups into society and to create unity among citizens. As I explored in chapter 3, such an imposed national identity backfired in Europe and in the Balkans during the 19th and 20th Centuries. I proposed that these politicians and well as policy makers should pay more attention to what goes on the ground. In the case of Burgaz, it was not the national identity that created solidarity among the islanders, but the sense of belonging in a local place and shared ways of living. In contrast, a national Turkish identity imposed by Turkish governments in order to unify the nation oppressed minorities and non-recognised “minority groups”. In Burgaz, a strong sense of belonging in a neighbourhood and community overrides ethnic, class and religious identities of individuals at times of crises and political tension within the country. Whenever there was a threat to the integrity of the society such as in 1955 riots (which I explored in the 4th chapter) or a threat to a person’s life such as in the blood feud incident (which I explored
in the 6th chapter), the islanders opted for communal survival and emphasised their collective Burgaz identity which was more significant than ethnic and religious identities of individuals. Ethnicity and/or religion lost their importance in the face of threats to the survival of the individual and the community. By contrast, in the case of Bosnia (Bringa 1995), the ethnic and religious identities crystallised to such an extent that violence erupted, neighbours killed each other, cultural pluralism was hindered and society collapsed. In Burgaz, ethnic and religious differences are recognised but they do not override the collective plural Burgaz identity. I proposed a grassroots and critical approach to multiculturalism as a political project, drawing attention to the nature and content of social relations, practices of conviviality and the ways in which social actors interpret, conceptualise and represent their diversity. For Burgaz islanders, multiculturalism includes the public recognition of people’s ethnic and religious differences but the island community is not separated into “groups” put together like a mosaic. Rather, they emphasise conviviality, intimate social relations and solidarity, and state that multiculturalism is the embodiment of cultural pluralism.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


BBC News 13/06/2011. Profile: Recep Tayyip Erdogan, 

BBC News Europe 23/11/2011. Turkey PM Erdogan Apologises for 1930s Kurdish killings, 


Destroyed Mosaic.


Ebru Sanatı


264


266


