

ÜLKÜCÜ COMMUNITY IN ZEYTİNBURNU:
VIOLENCE AROUND WORDS AND ENCOUNTERS

FIRAT ULAŞ ATALAY

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Fırat Ulaş Atalay

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The thesis of Fırat Ulaş Atalay
has been approved by:

Assist. Prof. Nazan Üstündağ
(Thesis Advisor)

Assist. Prof. Ali Tuna Kuyucu

Assist. Prof. Erdem Yörük

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Thesis Abstract

Firat Ulaş Atalay, “Ülkücü Community in Zeytinburnu:
Violence around Words and Encounters”

This thesis aims at comprehending the dynamics of hostility and violence against Kurds in ülkücü community in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul, through focusing on the violent attacks against Kurds that took place in Zeytinburnu. My analysis depicts the violence as an outcome of both macro relations of nationalist politics and micro dynamics of the ülkücü community and the locale. A discussion of the conventional perspectives on ethnic violence is reassessed to provide an insightful analysis on hostility and violence from the perspective of anthropology focusing on the details of everyday life. This thesis attempts to compare various experiences of nationalism and to reveal how radical nationalism (ülküçülük) differs from them. Ülkücü community is analyzed through their discourses that inscribe certain affects on their bodies, which constitutes them as a distinct political group on the urban space. Then, it is argued that the hostility against the Kurds in Zeytinburnu is constructed through encounters on the local topography. Finally, violence is both conceptualized as an outcome of heterogeneous micro-dynamics of power and as a passionate performance constituting the ülkücü community in certain forms.

Tez Özeti

Fırat Ulaş Atalay, “Zeytinburnu Ülkücü Cemaati: Kelimeler ve Karşılaşmalar etrafında Şiddet”

Bu tez, Zeytinburnu’nda Kürtlere karşı yapılan saldırılar üzerinden, Zeytinburnu’ndaki ülkücü cemaatin Kürt düşmanlığı ve şiddetle olan ilişkisini anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu çalışma, şiddeti hem makro milliyetçi politikanın güç ilişkilerinin, hem de ülkücü cemaatinin ve yerelin mikro dinamiklerinin bir sonucu olarak ele almaktadır. Düşmanlık ve şiddet üzerine gündelik hayatın detaylarından bakan antropolojik bir perspektif sağlamak amacıyla, etnik şiddet üzerine daha önce sunulan perspektiflerin bir tartışması yapılmıştır. Bu tez, milliyetçiliğin farklı tecrübe edilme biçimlerini karşılaştırarak ülkücü milliyetçiliğin kendine has özelliklerini göstermeye çalışmaktadır. Ülkücü cemaat, bedenleri üzerinde duygulanımlar bırakan söylemleri etrafında analiz edilmiş ve bunun nasıl da onları, özgül bir cemaat olarak kentsel mekanda kurduğunu anlatılmıştır. Daha sonra, Zeytinburnu’ndaki Kürt düşmanlığının yerel karşılaşmalar sayesinde oluştuğu iddia edilmiştir. Son olarak, ülkücü şiddet hem çeşitli mikro iktidar dinamikleri üzerinden ortaya çıkan bir sonuç olarak; hem de ülkücü cemaati belirli biçimlerde kuran tutkulu bir performans olarak teorize edilmiştir.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, my concern is to analyze the hostility against the Kurds inside *ülkücü*¹ community² in Zeytinburnu. I would like to analyze the reasons behind this hostility and how it relates to the violent attacks that took place in Zeytinburnu. Through this analysis, I will argue that the *ülkücü* community who experiences the politics of nationalism intensely keeps its body alert, which ends up in communal violence through the encounters with the Kurds. As communal ethnic violence against Kurds becomes prevalent in Turkey, conventional political and sociological conceptualizations fall increasingly short in capturing the complex dynamics behind violence. These mainstream analyses that will be discussed in this chapter usually register to abstract general concepts such as neoliberalism or racism in explaining ethnic violence. However, the increasing number of lynching attempts³ and performances of mass violence as forms of ethnic violence, and the subtle threat of ethnic violence as a new millennial phenomenon needs explanations derived from the specific temporal and spatial conditions. Especially, a brief look on the macro and institutional dynamics would reveal that at the time when the war between the

¹ The word *ülkücü* actually means “idealist”. The word is mentioned in the texts date back to Ziya Gökalp and Nihal Atsız who mentioned a “national ideal” for Turkish nation. In that sense, the term idealist refers to the people who are after that “big ideal” of merging with other Turkish states and becoming the most powerful country on the world. In time, the word had become increasingly used by the radical nationalist party and by young radical nationalists to define themselves. Now, we can confidently claim that *ülkücü* (idealist) refers to the radical nationalists who are under the umbrella of MHP.

² In this thesis, the word “*ülkücü* movement” is used to refer to *ülkücü* people in Turkey as a whole. “*Ülkücü* community”, on the contrary, refers to the *ülkücü* youngsters in Zeytinburnu.

³ Lynching against an ethnic or religious group will be conceptualized under the broader category of ethnic violence. The main theme of this thesis is ethnic violence against Kurds both as lynch, lynch attempts and violent attacks as well as the threat of violence.

state and the PKK⁴ has lost its intensity and when there has been an ongoing so-called “democratization” and “peace” process on the high level politics; how come the people at the bottom carry hostile feelings and violent attitudes towards the Kurds. Thus, the important question to be problematized is why on the one hand the state and media are increasingly softening their aggression on the issue compared to 1990s, but on the other hand, the hostility and the violence against Kurds on a societal level are increasing asymmetrically.

Although the discourses of the Turkish state and of the mainstream media against Kurds can be considered as examples of the linguistic forms of implicit suppression and exclusion of Kurds, there has not been any systematically mobilized discourse of explicit hostility towards the Kurds as a homogenous ethnic entity by the state, by institutions of education and the mainstream media,⁵ as ideological tools of manipulation and mobilization. The attempts of mainstream media, education and the state on the Kurdish people have usually oscillated between the denial (assimilation) of Kurds as a different ethnic nation and an intentional and political discursive separation between the Kurds and the PKK. Furthermore, a closer look to the last decade of Turkish politics reveals that the events of communal violence against Kurds increase at times of cease-fire between the Turkish state and Kurdish movement. In such conditions, I would like to ask how this hatred and hostility towards the Kurds as an ethnic community, separate from PKK, came into being despite a softening of the vocabulary against Kurds in

⁴ PKK: Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Workers Party. PKK is the armed organization of the Kurdish political movement. PKK has been fighting against the Turkish state since 1984 for nearly 30 years. Although PKK has declared truce many times, the last truce alongside the so-called “peace process” is the most substantial one. The peace talks continue between the state and the PKK.

⁵ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr’dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 48.

the “peace process” and despite a decrease of lead by the meaning-making institutions and the state.⁶

In addition to the question above, I will try to analyze them around the answers my respondents from the *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu provided. Although the hostility against the Kurds is not limited to the *ülküci* movement since it is considered as a general phenomenon in Turkish public; *ülküci* community is (or thought to be) involved in many of the instances of direct violence against Kurds described above. Zeytinburnu, where I did my field research, has a specific importance since the recent big materialization of hostility against the Kurds as an upheaval and the attempts of lynching them have taken place in that district.

As this thesis, first and foremost, tries to go beyond stereotypical perceptions and analyses on nationalism, ethnic violence and *ülküci* movement, in doing this, I will deploy an anthropological perspective which would give voice to the *ülküci* people themselves and analyze the unique and peculiar dynamics of that specific locale. Thus, in the second chapter, I will explain this anthropological perspective where briefly explain my methodology and I will discuss the particular dynamics of the locality, Zeytinburnu.

In the third chapter, I will analyze the particular experience of radical nationalism in Zeytinburnu by examining different performances of nationalism in the society. In order to draw a picture of radical nationalism, I will deploy a theoretical duality between pop nationalism and radical nationalism. In doing this, I will enter into a dialogue with Saraçoğlu and his subjects to show the differences

⁶ Saraçoğlu points out to the same dilemma. However, I will argue in chapter V that the state and the media cannot be independent of the hostility concentrated among the western Turkish public against the Kurds. There is a subtle and implicit relationship between the hostility against PKK and against the Kurds, which I will explain.

between middle class experience of nationalism in İzmir and the lower class experience of nationalism in Zeytinburnu.

In the fourth chapter, I will depict the anatomy of *ülküciü* community in Zeytinburnu through analyzing their discourses. I will argue that there is an underlying vocabulary consisted of these discourses, which inscribes particular affects on their bodies. These affects will be analyzed in terms of the forms of relating the *ülküciü* bodies to the others.

Then, in the fifth chapter, firstly I will discuss different possible explanations about the construction of otherness for the *ülküciü* community. I will demonstrate the role of encounters in the construction of the other for the *ülküciü* community in Zeytinburnu. Afterwards, I will examine different types of encounters between *ülküciü* community and Kurds. There, I will conceptualize the challenge felt by the *ülküciü* community because of encounters taking place with the Kurds on the urban space. Consequently, I will argue that the reason behind the hostility against Kurds lies on the confrontation of these groups on the urban space where the *ülküciü* body gets threatened by the challenge of losing the honor and the ownership over the locale.

In the sixth chapter about violence, I will investigate into the dynamics that play a role in the violent attacks against Kurds in Zeytinburnu. At that point, I will argue that violence as an outcome of losing the honor and intimacy takes the form of a public staging through mass attacks against the Kurds.

This attempt of understanding the hostility inside the framework of micro-politics of the locality, I will deploy a particular vantage point and a comparative path. Therefore, in this chapter, first, I will discuss what the *ülküciü* movement represents in Turkish politics in last decades. Then, I will try to deconstruct the

common analyses about nationalism, *ülküçü* movement and ethnic violence in Turkey.

Since the beginning of the millennia, the *ülküçü* movement in Turkey has not been as publicly visible as it was in 1990s, when its discourses and images were more pervasively in circulation in the public sphere and when it held a more significant position in Turkey's mainstream politics.⁷ Indeed 1990s have been an intense decade for the *ülküçü* movement because during this time, it drew the attention of the public with its performances and appearances at soldier funerals, soldier celebrations, university fights against socialists and street demonstrations. *Ülküçü* communities also had powerful effects in their neighborhoods.⁸

Although radical nationalist politics has always found representation in Turkey's politics, *ülküçü* movement was highly significant especially during 1970s as it was in 1990s. In 1970s, before the coup d'état, *ülküçü* people were acknowledged as one major part of the left-right conflict for their violent attacks to leftists. They were held responsible for the death of many socialists,⁹ when the left-right political axis of the Cold War has defined the framework of the political atmosphere. The decade after the military intervention in 1980 was a politically inactive and quiet time period because the *ülküçü* movement was shocked and

⁷ The analyst Kerem Dağlı argues that the rise of the *ülküçü* movement in 1990s is very much connected with the state's policy to support *ülküçü* movement against the Kurdish political movement when the state's policies were based on denial and destruction. Kerem Dağlı, "Ülküçü faşist hareketin tarihi" *Marksist Tutum*, February, 2007. Available online at: <http://www.marksisttutum.org/ulkucufasisthareket3.htm> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

⁸ Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can; *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP*, İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi, 2004. Pp. 249-314.

⁹ There were symbolic figures inside the *ülküçü* movements in 1970s: Abdullah Çatlı, Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu, Mehmet Ali Ağca, Haluk Kırcı, Oral Çelik were the "heroes" who are held responsible for killing many leftist writers, youngsters and academicians.

surprised for being punished by the military after the coup d'etat¹⁰. After a shock wave inside the movement, the movement has lost its important elements such as the Islamist wing of the party that has always been a core component inside the movement as the tradition of *ülkücü* movement has always depended on the nationalist-conservative political ideas.¹¹

Now, they are primarily recognized by their images of violent performances that circulate in mainstream media including the lynching attempts and hostile upheavals against the Kurds in many places in Turkey. Indeed, *ülkücü* movement today becomes only visible through their relation to violence, yet not only by actual acts of violence but also by the threat of them. For example, nowadays, they are again in the political agenda through their political party, Nationalist Action Party (MHP¹²)'s opposition to the “peace” process between the AKP government and the Kurdish political movement. MHP organizes meetings around the country where the party invites and tries to convince people to be against the peace process. The slogan addressed to the leader of MHP, Devlet Bahçeli, “Say shoot we’ll shoot, say die we’ll die!”¹³, which was used in the first of these meetings in Bursa on 23rd of March has been heavily debated in the political arena because many people were surprised by the answer of Bahçeli to this slogan, when he stated that the time for actual violence would also come. Although it was not surprising to that the *ülkücü* youth uses a slogan calling for violence, it was new that Bahçeli held an approving

¹⁰ The punishment of *ülkücü* people in the military regime was not expected by the *ülkücü* movement. See: Elif Çağlı, *Bonapartizmden Faşizme: Olağanüstü Burjuva Rejimlerin Marksist Bir Tahlili*, İstanbul, Tarih Bilinci Yayınevi, 2004. Pp.257. Also see the discussion in chapter IV on the perception of the state by *ülkücü* community for a detailed analysis

¹¹ The Islamist wing of the party has opened the new party “BBP” under the leadership of Muhsin Yazıcıoğlu. See Tanıl Bora, Kemal Can; *Devlet-Ocak-Dergah: 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Ülkücü Hareket*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 1991. Pp. 191.

¹² Will be referred as MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)

¹³ Translated from: “Vur de vuralım, öl de ölelim!”

position of violence.¹⁴ He was known as the leader who tried to refrain *ülküci* members from violence. Due to his “peaceful” stance, he had been appreciated by various political movements in Turkey. The reactions of pro-peace-process politicians and columnists focused on the potential danger of this approval, which implicitly invites the radical nationalist youth to use violence against the “enemy” and opens a space for violent encounters in the big cities where Kurds and Turks are located heterogeneously. The government harshly criticized Bahçeli claiming that he was calling out a potential danger of “civil war that recalls the old violent days” before 1980 coup d’etat, when the radical nationalist youth and the leftists were positioned against each other and have killed many people from both sides.¹⁵

As *ülküci* youth - radical nationalist youngsters - has been presented around their relationship with violence in the political memory of Turkey, *ülküci* youth themselves also embraced this image,¹⁶ emphasizing their will to violence. Although the perception and interpretation of violence has differed according to political view- either as negative or positive; their association with violence has stayed as a common image in Turkey’s politics.

¹⁴ Cengiz Çandar even argued that Bahçeli is a threat against the “peace process” Cengiz Çandar, “Süreçte Ciddi Meseleler”, *Radikal*, March 29, 2013. Available online at: http://www.radikal.com.tr/yazarlar/cengiz_candar/surecte_ciddi_meseleler-1127125 (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹⁵ Mehmet Ali Şahin claimed that after that slogan, Bahçeli would be responsible if anything happens to “akil insanlar”. “Akil İnsanlara Bir Şey Olursa!..”, *Milliyet*, April 21, 2013. Available online at: <http://siyaset.milliyet.com.tr/-akil-insanlara-bir-sey-olursa/siyaset/siyasetdetay/21.04.2013/1696472/default.htm> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹⁶ Their discourse on violence will be discussed in chapter IV.

One may argue that the *ülküci* movement always constitutes and reproduces itself through the construction of an enemy,¹⁷ which was the socialists in the 70s¹⁸ and the PKK in the 90s and that violence is a meaningful tool in this reproduction. Yet, it is an interesting question to ask how the Kurds have become the enemy of *ülküci* movement in 2000s. Although the ongoing war between the Turkish state and the Kurdish armed resistance was much more intense in 90s, hostility and violence against the Kurds in western cities is a new millennial phenomenon. As the war has lost its pace in 2000s, the hostility and the violence against the Kurds as a distinct ethnic group in urban space has increased intensively,¹⁹ I will discuss certain examples of these violent events and attempts of lynching in the following section.

Throughout the history of Republic of Turkey, popular violence against various minorities has been very common. Although there had been massive violent attacks to Allevis, Greeks and Jews as a separate religious or ethnic identity, mass violence against the Kurds was not in Turkey's political agenda as a form of ethnic violence. However, beginning with 2003, we have witnessed a number of such events in the mainstream media.²⁰ As Gambetti states, there is a significant increase in the lynching and violence events especially since 2005, which have gained a new pace after the claims about burnings of the Turkish flag in the Newroz

¹⁷ Murat Belge, "Türkiye'de Zenofobi ve Milliyetçilik", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 190.

¹⁸ Yüksel Taşkın, "Anti-Komünizm ve Türk Milliyetçiliği: Endişe ve Pragmatizm", *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 619.

¹⁹ The examples of this will be given below.

²⁰ Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye'nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011. Pp. 10.

celebrations²¹: In a year and a half, 30 lynch attempts have been on the mainstream media, which are mostly against Kurds and leftists.²²

Although we cannot claim that *ülküci* youth was the main actor in all of these events, in many of them, either the *ülküci* community is a major part of the tension or some members of the community are involved in these events. As this thesis is limited to the hostility and violence of *ülküci* youth against the Kurds, I will only take certain canonical examples in which *ülküci* community of that locale is involved:

On 15th March 2003, an *ülküci* group of 100-150 people have attacked DEHAP²³ party building in Balıkesir.²⁴ On 2nd May of 2004, an *ülküci* group in Bodrum has attacked a Kurdish bar owner.²⁵ On 6th April 2005, a group has attacked TAYAD²⁶ members in Trabzon. The attackers legitimized this act through claiming that a Turkish flag was burnt and a PKK flag was unfurled by the protesters. There were *ülküci* people among the attackers. After the police took the protesters in custody, the group asked the police “to submit the terrorists to them”.²⁷

²¹ Newroz is the celebration of welcoming of spring constructed upon a mythology in Kurdish history. Since 1950's, it has political overtones for the Kurds both in Iran, Syria, Iraq, Turkey and in European countries.

²² Zeynep Gambetti, “Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti”, Toplum ve Bilim No. 109 Yaz (2007). Pp. 1.

²³ Since the parties that represent the Kurdish political movement had been sequentially abolished by the Constitutional Court many times, the movement has renamed the new parties with new names. DTH, HEP, DEP, DEHAP, DTP AND BDP are respectively the political parties that represent the Kurdish political movement. DEHAP was the former political party of the movement which is now represented by BDP.

²⁴ “Ve Devlet “Vatandaşı” Yarattı”, *Sol Portal*, December 16, 2009. Available online at: <http://haber.sol.org.tr/devlet-ve-siyaset/ve-devlet-vatandasi-yaratti-haberi-21642> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

²⁵ Türkiye İnsan Hakları Vakfı Dokümantasyon Merkezi..

²⁶ TAYAD is the organization for the solidarity of the relatives of the convicted people who are sentenced because of political reasons.

²⁷ This discourse of “submitting” will be elaborated in detail in chapter VI.

On 12th May same year in Mersin, again TAYAD members were attacked by *ülküci* youngsters who were shouting “to hell with the PKK”.²⁸²⁹ Between 16th and 22nd of July 2011, Zeytinburnu witnessed a major wave of anger and upheaval against the Kurds. Many people on the streets were asked where they come from in order to find whether they are Kurds. Some violent attacks took place although nobody has been killed.³⁰

On 4th January in 2013 in Zeytinburnu again, the wedding ceremony of a family from Batman³¹ has been attacked by a group of 50 people with rifles, knives, stones, choppers and pistols. The group shouted that they would not let people in the neighborhood to sing Kurdish songs and dance. Many people inside the group were seen as doing “the wolf sign”³² with their hands.³³

The number of the examples that *ülküci* community of that locality has involved in violence against the Kurds can be multiplied. But, for the sake of this thesis, I have kept the list shorter trying to include diverse examples from different parts of Turkey. As these events demonstrate, *ülküci* communities participated to ethnic violence against Kurds at different degrees. In this thesis, departing from the

²⁸ Translated from: “Kahrolsun PKK”

²⁹ It is important to note that the same slogans are addressed when the attempts of violence target the leftists. In many instances, PKK is instrumentalized as a discursive tool being the umbrella rubric under which all the “dangerous” ethnic and political groups can be melted.

³⁰ This particular event in Zeytinburnu will be discussed in chapter VI.

³¹ Batman is the city in the southeast region of Turkey where mostly Kurds are populated.

³² Wolf is a political sign attributed to and used by *ülküci* movement, which refers to the constituting mythology of “Turkish nation”.

³³ “İstanbul İli Zeytinburnu İlçesi Etnik Linç ve Saldırı Heyet Gözlem Raporu - İHD (15 Ocak 2012)” *Dap Platform*, February 10 2013. Available online at: <http://www.dapplatform.com/news.php?nid=26080> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

particular event in Zeytinburnu, I will try to analyze the hostility against Kurds among *ülküci* community in that locality.

But, first of all, in the following section, I will show different perspectives analyzing nationalism, ethnic violence and *ülküci* movement in Turkey. First, I will begin by showing the analyses on both radical nationalism and ethnic violence in the world. Then, I will analyze the mainstream ideas and stereotypes about the *ülküci* movement in Turkey. Lastly, I will show the arguments of different academicians on the increasing number of ethnic violence events in Turkey.

There is an important line of academic literature focusing on nationalism, which is built on psychology, especially on psychoanalysis. These analyses, such as Adorno's or Wilhelm Reich's, usually construct the argument on some social and psychological elements. Adorno's concept of mass psychology, where the mass is libidinally merged with the leader who is the father figure, provides a more complex answer to the question. This approach tries to explain the commitment of the nationalists to the leader's will and it derives its legitimacy from the authoritarian culture in the society.³⁴ A second line of psychological analysis argues that the nationalists are the people who implicitly have inferiority complex and do not have self-esteem and self-respect. This view argues that they find this esteem and respect in the identification with an imaginary powerful nation idea. Through this projected identification, they can have a narcissistic merge with the nation.³⁵ These psychological arguments look convincing, especially in our context, given the fact that the Turkish nationalist hegemonic culture praises heroism, wars, feelings of conquer and superiority. There is a strong belief in leadership in that culture and this narcissistic identification can easily take place in Turkish society.

³⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, *The Authoritarian Personality*, New York, Harper & Row, 1950.

³⁵ Wilhelm Reich, *Faşizmin Kitle Ruhu Anlayışı*, İstanbul, Payel Yayınları, 1975.

However, the conceptualization of psychological analyses such as “mass psychology” totalizes and abstracts the nationalist communities into one agency. This kind of an attempt assimilates the local dynamics of violence. As it can clearly be seen, these analyses take the nationalist subject as not having the self-respect or self-esteem, which directly produce a need for a completion with an assisting identity. Here, we witness with the constitution of the subject through psychological discourses. These kinds of arguments define the subject around a theory of absence because the cause and effect reasoning depends on a certain lack of the subject.

Secondly, psychological discourse of “inferiority complex” is also problematic by assuming a pre-given pathological subject. In this framework, the subject is either pre-constituted or imagined as an abnormality, a deviation in need to be analyzed. The subject of analysis becomes already constructed in a hierarchy between the researcher and his/her objects. Thus, these arguments both deny the agency of the subjectivities and constitute them in a state of irrationality and abnormality.

The sociological arguments, on the other hand, when it comes to analyzing nationalism, emphasize the dissolution of traditional bonds in the modernization process. In this perspective, it is argued that nationalism provides a secure base for the people who, after migrating to cities, needed new bonds of connection with the already-provided identities. Nationalism in that context has been a meaningful answer to this feeling of emptiness where people can imaginarily feel the togetherness with the other members of the same nation without even knowing them. Such analyses usually focus on the nationalism as a modernist attempt of

constructing the nation through providing new identities that are able to answer the search for ontological security of individuals.³⁶

Yet, the same analyses can be applied also to religions and religious identities. Nationalism, in that sense, is not the only *specific* grand narrative that provides a meaning for the people to explain the world around them. Every ideology and politics addresses people's needs and provides meaningful answers and beliefs to hold on. Hence, every ideology reproduces the daily relations on a material basis and every ideology is successful so far as it can reproduce the ordinary of everyday life for the people who believe and perform it.

The usual framework in the analysis of nationalism deployed by socialists for many years has been based on the concept of "false consciousness".³⁷ For sure, the ideology literatures from late Marx³⁸ to Gramsci³⁹, Lukacs⁴⁰ and Althusser⁴¹ have questioned this perspective of ideology as illusion. Yet, the implicit assumption of false consciousness has always been significant inside mainstream socialist discourses. Whether the term false consciousness is explicitly used or not, the assumption was always there that the nationalists are the people who are manipulated by capitalism not to fight for their economic conditions but are rather

³⁶ For more information on historical processes of the construction of the nation, please see: Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991) and Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Benedict Anderson *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, New York, Verso, 2006.

³⁷ Ömer Laçiner, "Önsöz", in Tanıl Bora, Kemal Can, *Devlet Ocak Dergah: 12 Eylül'den 1990'lara Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2009. Pp. 14.

³⁸ Karl Marx, *Capital Vol. III*, New York, International Publishers, 1959. Pp. 508.

³⁹ Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks: Three Volume Set*, New York Columbia University Press, 2011. Pp. 213-28.

⁴⁰ Georg Lukacs, *Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat*, London, Merlin Press, 1967. Pp. 132.

⁴¹ Louis Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*, Paris, La Pensee, 1970. Pp. 75-105.

disoriented into a different enemy. In other words, for the socialists, nationalism has been an ideology that masks the class antagonisms. This view implicitly supposes that there is a right political position for the poor class where their true benefits lie and nationalism is an ideology to conceal it.

First of all, the conceptualization of nationalism as false-consciousness is a reductionist attempt that renders the complex dynamics of the operation of nationalism invisible. At this point, it is much more meaningful to look at the daily practices and discourses that reproduce the ordinary and the exceptions for those people. Everyday relations are much more complex and creative where these subjectivities do not take grand ideologies at face value but rather reproduce and recreate them in their localities.⁴² Hence, it is not the point of content and politics of *ülküci* movement but the point of poetics⁴³ that materially compels people to be a part of that specific space of politics. Therefore, it is not the case that some subjects are irrational and manipulated, which would stop them from seeing their true benefits. Every subject is produced as an effect of power and the subjects are not passive receivers of certain manipulations.⁴⁴ Rather, the subjectivities, their narratives, their affects and their bodies are produced through everyday relations of power where they actively participate to reproduce those relations with their performances and interactions/encounters.

⁴² Meltem Ahıska, Ferhat Kentel and Fırat Genç “*Milletin Bölünmez Bütünlüğü*” *Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Parçalayan Milliyetçilik(ler)*. İstanbul. Tesev Yayınları. 2007. Pp. 1.

⁴³ The term is borrowed from Warner who establishes the relationship between the subject and the public through the concept of poetics (Warner, Publics). The term poetics refers to the everyday relations, performances inside the locality and the vocabulary deployed in certain settings that constitute them as a community. See chapter IV for a detailed analysis of “poetics”.

⁴⁴ Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power”, *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 8, No. 4 Summer, 1982. Pp. 778.

Moreover, throughout my research, after being exposed to many narratives of *ülküci* youth in Zeytinburnu, I can confidently argue that the violence as an act does not need grand narratives about nation, religion or ideology. On the contrary, everyday performances are much more significant than macro political ideas and beliefs in the formations of violence. Thus, I argue that the subject's constitution does not depend on certain political ideas and beliefs but rather, depends more on feelings of togetherness, sense of loyalty, repeated patterns of daily performances and a hostile atmosphere produced by everyday vocabulary.

At this point, I find it important to look over and problematize the common beliefs and stereotypes about *ülküci* groups, the image and the perception of *ülküci* youth by general public, the interpretations of *ülküci* movement and its relation to violence by different political views on Turkish nationalism and *ülküci* movement. It is important because this thesis first and foremost tries to go beyond the binary perspectives, abstract explanations and macro analyses about *ülküci* movement.

When we look at the most visible vocabularies used to define the radical nationalist youth, we see two obviously different and value-laden perspectives. While the leftist analyses interpret *ülküci* movement in negative ways, the rightist vantage point takes their practices as neutral or positive.

As a central phenomenon in *ülküci* movement, the ways the *ülküci* youth utilize violence as a form of political action have been interpreted differently. For most of the state officials and for the center right of the political spectrum in Turkey, the *ülküci* youth have been labeled as “sensitive young people who love their motherland and nation’ despite the fact that ‘sometimes they transgress the limits of legality and the realm of legitimacy when they use violence against the other’”.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye'nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim, 2008. Pp. 12.

In that sense, the central right political presentation interprets the violence of *ülküci* youth, depicting them as protective and sensitive to national values.

According to this common view among the central right public, radical nationalists act “emotionally” in certain situations where they are assumed to have been provoked by others. In other words, their violence is a reactionary and reflexive action perceived as a legitimate defense of a sacred ideal.⁴⁶ According to this mentality, *ülküci* youth have the “right to be provoked”⁴⁷ and it is not proper to transgress their sensitivities and their borders of acceptable. When these borders are violated, their violence becomes “non-penalizable” and legitimate, if not legal.

This perspective depends on the assumed legitimacy of nationalism and makes the socio-historical reasons for the production of hatred and the ecology of violence invisible. Furthermore, it makes the violence against the other legitimate by referring to the sensitivities that are “officially” permitted and by pushing certain types of sensitivities outside of the legitimate.

The discourse among the leftists and socialists usually mention *ülküci* people as “fascist”, “racist”, or as “violent attackers”.⁴⁸ The daily words used for *ülküci* youth such as fascist and racist are not used to refer to a political concept but rather to insult or disdain them in an abusive language. This type of categorization directly attributes violence as a part of the *ülküci* essence and naturalizes it as a general *ülküci* phenomenon. The image of the *ülküci* as a violent fanatic renders the possibility of a proper analysis impossible. Rather than leaving a room for understanding what is behind *ülküci* violence; this discourse turns *ülküci*

⁴⁶ Aslı Çırakman, “Flags and Traitors: the Advance of Ethno-Nationalism in the Turkish Self-Image”. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol:34 No:11, November 2011. Pp. 1894-1912.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 12-14.

⁴⁸ Ibid. 4-10.

movement into an obstacle to fight against. The *ülküci* subjectivity, thus, immediately becomes an eternal enemy.⁴⁹

The word “racist” also politically denotes something very different and cannot be used for the *ülküci* youth in Turkey because one cannot find any explicit claim of a biological superiority in their discourses as the word racism really connotes. In addition to this, concepts such as racism, fascism or fanaticism are too general and abstract to do an analysis of complex micro-social dynamics in the construction of violence and hostility.

In Turkey, it is fashionable to explain everything under the rubric of “foreign powers”. The interpretations on *ülküci* movement are not unbound from that common cliché. In many discourses of socialist left in Turkey, they represent the anticommunist reaction boosted by imperialist NATO to fight against socialism. This type of an analysis interprets *ülküci* violence through models of conspiracy theories and discourses of imperialism. Especially, about the narration of violence before 1980 coup d’etat, the discourse that the *ülküci* movement is used by imperialist forces and state institutions is a common type of analysis.⁵⁰

It is important to note here that it is not my aim to assess the accuracy of this argument. Today it is widely accepted that in many countries the radical nationalism is fed and supported against socialist movements.

However, rather than a question of truth, there is a point in this type of argumentation that I would like to deconstruct. These arguments concentrate on the macro level explanations of the nationalist violence and do not consider the local

⁴⁹ Ömer Laçiner, “Önsöz”, in Tanıl Bora, Kemal Can, *Devlet Ocak Dergah: 12 Eylül’den 1990’lara Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2009. Pp. 44.

⁵⁰ Kerem Dağlı, “Ülkücü faşist hareketin tarihi” *Marksist Tutum*, February, 2007. Available online at: <http://www.marksisttutum.org/ulkucufasisthareket3.htm> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

and complex dynamics as part of the problem of violence. By referring to an outside force, the agencies seem like ready to be manipulated by some powers or, similarly, are depicted as ready to be provoked by inconsiderate others who do not take their sensitivities into account. In both ways, the subject is either innocent and passive or an abnormal fanatic. In that respect, the case of *ülküci* youth cannot be understood simply as a plan of an outside imperialist force or as supported or tolerated by state institutions. The question is what makes these people to use violence at the very final moment of act in that specific space and time.

Pointing out to an external enemy in such analyses is the easiest way to explain important social experiences. Although the settled capitalist world order has used radical nationalisms in different contexts as its defense against socialist threats;⁵¹ the perpetrators were not some NATO soldiers or American agents. Therefore, it is more important to ask the question how these nationalist people themselves, at the last moment, commit the acts of violence against the socialists or the Kurds. To understand these peculiar dimensions of violence will also help us to refrain from conspiracy theories. Although these conspiracy claims of “secret information” about outside forces compel people to circulate them, they produce a certain effect of analysis which reduces the problematic into one dimension and renders the history of nationalism, state compliance and subjects’ relation to violence invisible. In that sense, such explanations produce the effect of an empty signifier that is itself an ideological choice of looking to the world.

⁵¹ Desmond Fernandez in his research about counter-guerilla in Turkey states that CIA trained the “Gray Wolves” (American naming for *ülküci* militants) who were the youth wing of MHP. (Fernandes, Desmond; Ozden, Iskender (Spring 2001). ["United States and NATO Inspired 'Psychological Warfare Operations' Against The 'Kurdish Communist Threat' in Turkey".](#)) ,???? link çalışmıyor!!!!

The phenomenon of the communal violence against Kurds as a homogenously defined and perceived ethnicity, is relatively new.⁵² We can list the works of a few academicians about this topic: The brilliant works of Tanil Bora on Turkish nationalism and lynching,⁵³ the pioneering study of Cenk Saraçoğlu⁵⁴ on the “reorganization and exclusion” of the Kurds in big cities, Zeynep Gambetti’s article on the relationship between lynching and the neoliberal paradigm⁵⁵ and Murat Paker’s essay⁵⁶ on the psycho-politics of lynch have been the prominent works within that specific field. In these analyses, whereas Gambetti and Paker tries to analyze the lynching attempts by looking at the subject, Bora looks at the state’s reactions to these events. In her analysis, Gambetti locates the subject and the society as parts of a global structural transformation. Alternatively, Paker applies the individual psychological dynamics of reflection and catharsis into the social process of communal violence.

Gambetti, starts with the variable of increasing lynching and lynch attempts in Turkey and the reactions of the Turkish state to these events. She argues that Turkey is not a specific case and the rise in lynching attempts is a global phenomenon. Thus, she offers to look at the dimensions that affect the world globally and finds these dynamics of violence in the neoliberal transformation. She emphasizes the connection between the withdrawal of the state from the public

⁵² Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr’dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011. Pp. 21-27.

⁵³ Tanil Bora, *Medeniyet Kaybı: Milliyetçilik ve Faşizm Üzerine Yazılar*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2007..and Tanil Bora, *Türkiye’nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011.

⁵⁴ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr’dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011.

⁵⁵ Zeynep Gambetti, “Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti”, *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 109 Yaz (2007).

⁵⁶ Murat Paker, “Lincin Psiko-Politiği: Nedir, Niçin, Nasıl?”, *Birikim*, Sayı 211, 2006, Pp. 28-30.

sphere and the public's increasing claim for power on that emptied space. This transformation refers to certain violent social practices which recall and re-legitimize the state violence on the level of the civil society. However, this phenomenon cannot be explained by focusing on changing ideas in the society. On the contrary, this shift is heavily affected by economical inequalities, which came as an outcome of this neoliberal transformation. There is a dialectical relationship in the violence of the state and of the civil society. Hence, she concludes that the public takes up the state's role of punishing the criminals, providing security and protecting the land.⁵⁷

Tanıl Bora similarly finds the rising number of lynching practices in Turkey significant and he has written various chapters on the same topic. He both makes a comparative analysis between Nazi Germany lynchings and contemporary Turkey; and elaborates on the relationship between "Kurtlar Vadisi" and lynchings; as well as analyzes the after-party atmosphere of the lynching. In his first chapter, he states that the reaction of the state to these violent events is basically leaving them unpunished. Bora argues that this is a new form of governing in order to keep the ethnic war potential as a pendulum over democracy.⁵⁸

Despite the fact that Cenk Saraçoğlu, mentions the violent attacks against the Kurds in the beginning of his piece, he specifically analyze not "the violence against" but "the exclusion of" Kurds in İzmir. Different from the works listed above, Saraçoğlu makes an ethnographic research and analyzes the discourses of middle class İzmir residents about the Kurds. Similar to Bora, Gambetti and Paker; he argues that the exclusion, ethnic violence and lynching attempts against the Kurds

⁵⁷ Zeynep Gambetti, "Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti", *Toplum ve Bilim*, No. 109 Yaz (2007).Pp. 9.

⁵⁸ Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye'nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011. Pp. 16.

belong to 2000s as a new phenomenon. He wants to find an answer to the interesting dilemma that although the state and the media do not circulate hostile discourses against the Kurds which blame them as a separate ethnic ethnicity; the exclusion and the aggression against Kurds increasingly takes place in big cities. In conclusion, he argues that both the forced migration of the Kurds to the big cities and the neoliberal transformation have caused these exclusionary discourses and practices in İzmir.

I find Saraçoğlu's work pioneering for my own research because first, he extended my horizon in that topic through showing possible ways of interpretation and, second, there are many similar points we share together in our analysis. Albeit in different locales, we both make ethnographic research focused on the discourse and everyday life of subjects we analyze. In that sense, we both underline the importance of *the encounters* taking place *in the urban space* between the Turks and the Kurds. However, while his respondents are middle class Turkish İzmir residents; mine is the *ülküciü* community in Zeytinburnu, which is such a core dynamic that affects the results into two distinct ways.⁵⁹ Saraçoğlu's work also lacks the analysis of the link between the exclusion of the Kurds and the violence against them. On the contrary, I try to establish this link in my thesis. Furthermore, in his work, Saraçoğlu argues that the reasons behind these exclusionary discourses and practices are in the neoliberal transformation that Turkey has undergone and in the forced migration that pushed the waves of migrating Kurds to the western cities. I do not agree with this last point wholeheartedly as first, neoliberalism cannot solely be the structural reason of exclusion and second, that conclusion undermines the cultural-ideological-discursive construction of hostility (or exclusion) against the Kurds.

⁵⁹ For this distinction between middle class nationalism in İzmir and radical nationalism in Zeytinburnu, see chapter III.

Although all arguments above sound logical and provide answers to specific parts of the problem of ethnic violence, there is a certain characteristic shared by all, which I would like to problematize. All these arguments deploy the concept of neoliberalism in order to explain the exclusion and violence against Kurds. However, neoliberalism as a theoretical tool refers to a macro scale transformation all over the world, which render everyday relations where the politics is felt and experienced by singular subjects invisible. Except Saraçoğlu's work, both Gambetti and Bora as well as Paker deny the agency of the subjects they are analyzing by not giving voice to the people who are agents of this phenomenon. In addition to this, these macro scale perspectives reduce the complexity of the question into one answer. On the contrary, I argue that violence and subjectivity can never be understood by singular deterministic explanations. Although the cases of violence are never disjointed and isolated, the act of violence as a final performance is always contingent and over-determined. In order to understand the over-determination of violence and subjectivity, we should look at the complexity of the local dynamics and to singular narratives rather than grand discourses because subjectivity cannot solely be explained through grand theories.

As Bora, Gambetti, Saraçoğlu and Paker analyzed the question of exclusion and ethnic violence against the Kurds in different ways, I would like to categorize their arguments into three different sections and discuss the particular roles of these three dimensions in this phenomenon. In my point of view, all these three dynamics play a particular rendering the hostility and ethnic violence against Kurds possible in the urban space. First section is about the role of the state, second is the role of economic conditions that produce a specific environment for violence and third is about the cultural construction of hostility.

If we would like to analyze the role of the state in ethnic violence against Kurds, there are two distinct ways of examining the “state factor”: One is the deep-state policies that might start violence against another ethnicity and the second is the state’s passive role in the post-violence situation by leaving the acts of massive violence against Kurds unpunished. Both ways of examining nationalist violence can be considered inside the borders of theory driven rational action approaches such as Posen’s analysis focusing on the absence of a central authority⁶⁰ or Carment et al’s approach examining state-led violence.⁶¹

We can argue that because the state institutions such as the police, army and the judiciary leave the attempts of violence against the Kurds unpunished; the public might find the space of legality empty, as it was the case in Bora’s argument. Thus, they take courage to transgress the borders of legality. Either the police did not take the attackers into custody or the judiciary did not give a punishment for the acts. As mentioned above, in some of the cases several state officials even supported these acts. An example to this would be the infamous reaction of Rize mayor after a lynching attempt: “If I had known, I also would hit them”.⁶²

Another line in this perspective refers to the absence of the state authority in controlling the spaces where such communal acts of violence happen.⁶³ According to this view, the lynching belongs to a backward society where the judicial space is

⁶⁰ B. R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict”, *Survival*, 35(1), 1993.

⁶¹ D. Carment, D. Rowlands and P. James, Ethnic conflict and third party intervention. In *Enforcing Cooperation: Risky States and Intergovernmental Management of Conflict*, ed. G Schneider, P Weitsman, New York, MacMillan, 1997.

⁶² Translated from “Bilsem ben de vururdum”

⁶³ Serhat Korkmaz, “Linç: Yaşam Hakkına Müdahale”, *Bianet*, August 4, 2012. Available online at: <http://bianet.org/biamag/toplum/140122-linc-yasam-hakkina-mudahale> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

not justly practiced. It also points out to the dilemma that the state authority is inconsistent with its basic foundational principle of claiming the monopoly of violence. This kind of analyses take the ethnic violence and lynching as a criminal act; perceive them as mob violence and attributes them the qualities of “premodern”.⁶⁴

However, as Godoy argues, ethnic violence and lynching cannot be limited to the category of “criminal”.⁶⁵ Ethnic violence, by its very essence is a political language and it is meaningful thought in specific conditions. The attribution “premodern” should also be problematized because ethnic violence actually belongs to the modern urban space where encounters of ethnic heterogeneity are possible. Also, the discourse of “mob violence” totalizes the ethnic violence and assimilates its peculiar and unique dimensions. It also carries the risk of rendering the agencies of violence invisible. Such arguments tend to blame the absence of modernization in one country and the lack of institutional responses to public crimes implying that the people take the responsibility and punish the “criminals”. However, in Turkish case, we can never claim a lack of institutional and judiciary response to “Kurdish political crimes” which ought to be the reason provoking ethnic violence. On the contrary, acts of ethnic violence take place in the most urban, modern spaces where state institutions such as police, army and judiciary are very powerful.

Here, at the first glance, it seems a critical question to ask why the state leaves these acts of violence unpunished under the assumption that any given state

⁶⁴ Which Tanıl Bora seems to fail very close when he argues that lynch refers to an absence of civilization, although he never uses the term in its orientalist sense. Alternatively, he interprets lynchings as obstacles to the ideal modernist imagination of public sphere. Tanıl Bora, *Medeniyet Kaybı: Milliyetçilik ve Faşizm Üzerine Yazılar*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2007..and Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye'nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011. Pp. 17.

⁶⁵ Angelina Snodgrass Godoy, “When “justice” is criminal: Lynchings in contemporary Latin America.”, *Theory and Society* 33(2000): 621-651.

would be willing to keep the monopoly of violence in its hands and that any ethnic violence has the potential to turn the country into a place of civil war. There are certain possible answers given:

First, the state might be afraid of the nationalist reaction wave from the same people who see such violence legitimate. Second, state institutions such as the police, army or the judiciary might have a settled political idea in the same parallel with the public reaction. Third, as Tanıl Bora argues, the state might want to keep the threat of lynching and public violence as a form of governing. Last, the state might be using this potential as bargaining power against the Kurdish political movement.

But, whatever the reason behind this general reflex of the state and its institutions is, it is more crucial to look into the *effect* of leaving these violent attitudes unpunished. At the space where state leaves the acts of violence against the Kurds unpunished, the *ülküci* community finds a path to communicate with the state. At this very unique moment, the *ülküci* subjectivity claims the right to question the state by asking to submit the terrorists to them. Thus, this effect creates a moment of dalliance between the *ülküci* subjectivity and the state in the appearance of the police officer.

The role of neoliberalism is the most concentrated dynamic in the hostility and violence against Kurds. Zeynep Gambetti, Cenk Saraçoğlu and Murat Paker have all underlined the importance of neoliberal transformation either as economical frustration or as a paradigm of state's withdrawal. The second way of positing neoliberalism in Gambetti's style emphasizes the neoliberal transformation as a paradigmatic shift, which opens the space for the public that is emptied by the state. However, as I have underlined above, I do not prefer to see neoliberalism as the

reason behind the problem because it is both too abstract and over-attributed concept used in explaining almost everything.

Saraçoğlu argues that the neoliberal transformation in the urban space produced economical insecurities and as a result, inter-ethnic competition causes to the exclusion of the Kurds. The economic frustration and the competitive context caused by neoliberal transformation can be argued as a part of the problem in line with Olzak's explanation of the racial violence in USA, referring to economic competition between whites and blacks in the labor market in 19th century.⁶⁶ Some cases of communal violence can partially be explained inside the borders of neoliberalism that connotes an economically competitive ecology. On the other hand, particular examples of ethnic violence need explanations based on the conceptualization of other micro dynamics of the space that are beyond neoliberalism and competition. Furthermore, these interpretations that are built on neoliberalism lack how the subjectivities are formed around the affect of hostility.

I argue that economical dynamics play a very different role, which can be explained not under the rubric of neoliberalism but under the concept of *atmosphere*. I will discuss the effects of the class-based dynamics on the construction of the atmosphere of Zeytinburnu's political space in detail in the chapter III. The economic conditions of the urban space in Zeytinburnu and the economic positions of *ülküçü* subjectivities play an important role in the constitution of the violence against the Kurds. Hence, I also place economic dynamics into the picture of hostility and violence against Kurds; but by economic, I mean that the violence, as another form of hostility, requires the ecological setting where violence is used as an intermediary vehicle for constituting subjectivity. Hence, this economic

⁶⁶ Suzan Olzak, "The Political Context of Competition: Lynching and Urban Racial Violence, 1882-1914", *Social Forces*, 69 (2): 1990. Pp. 398.

insufficiency of the specific urban space might characterize that ecological setting for violence differently than richer urban places. As there is no evidence that the middle class subjects of Saraçoğlu's research have used violence, there is a coexistence of poverty and violence in our case, in Zeytinburnu.

The analysis of ethnic hostility and violence is commonly made on the basis of culturalist approaches. However culturalist literature has various subfields in itself. Here, I give importance to the ones who focus on the discursive forms of the construction of ethnic violence. For example, Feldman who focuses on the rituals, symbolism and performance of violence,⁶⁷ Arextaga emphasizing on the gendered devastation of ethnic violence,⁶⁸ Veena Das examining the discursive construction of hostility⁶⁹ are all prominent academicians who underlined the cultural construction of ethnic violence. However, the culturalist analyses in Turkey usually focus on the ideological construction of violence, which makes sense as it is a well-known fact that the nationalism dominates Turkish public sphere as part of the hegemonic ideology. The analysts who deploy a cultural perspective usually refer to the Turkish culture's nationalist dispositions. They argue that the Turkish history is also the history of constructing enemies and others,⁷⁰ which seems logical when looked at the exclusionary discourses about the Greeks, Jews, Armenians, Kurds, Allevis etc. However, in such explanations, nationalism turns into an empty signifier like neoliberalism, which has the capacity to include everything.

⁶⁷ Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991.

⁶⁸ Begona Arextaga, "Dirty Protest, Symbolic Overdetermination and Gender in Northern Ireland Ethnic Violence", *American Anthropological Association*, 23(2): 1995.

⁶⁹ Veena Das, *Violence and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*, California, University of California Press, 2006.

⁷⁰ Ayşe Kadioğlu, "The Paradox of Turkish Nationalism and the Construction of Official Identity", *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 32, no. 2 (April 1996).

I underline the importance of cultural explanations about hostility against the other, not through a casual analysis but in the sense of a discursive formation of hostility against the Kurds as an interpretative understanding of “nationalist culture”. Brubaker’s argument about cultural approaches to ethnicized violence gives a framework about interpretive understanding:

[Cultural analyses are used in]...framing nationalist violence as meaningful, culturally constructed, discursively mediated, symbolically saturate and ritually regulated. Some cultural analyses expressively reject causal analysis in favor of interpretative understanding. Such violence makes sense not in instrumental terms but in terms of its meaningful relation with other elements of culture.⁷¹

For example, as I have argued before, the controversial relationship between the softening of the presentation of war, violence and otherness and the rising communal violence prevents the analysts to establish a meaningful connection between discursive construction of hostility and ethnic violence against Kurds.. However, I will argue in the chapter V that the anger, anxiety and hatred produced in mobilizing nationalistic sentiments and projected towards the PKK and the Kurdish political movement has been indirectly canalized to the Kurdish people as an ethnic community. In that respect, by cultural, I mean the discursive formations of the subjectivities both through their own vocabulary and through the atmospheric effect of mainstream media’s and state’s discourses against PKK led to the attachment of those affects to the Kurds. This discursive formation should not be inside the limits of a textual analysis but on the contrary, vocabulary and discourse are taken as a performative social action of constructing subjectivities and the other (That will be discussed in detail in the chapter IV).

⁷¹ Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence”, *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 24: 1998. Pp. 443.

Hence, I argue in this thesis that there are both institutionalist and economic as well as cultural dynamics involved in determining the *ülküci* hostility and violence against Kurds in Zeytinburnu. By institutionalist, I mean, the state's and its institutions' role in the public violence against Kurds. That is, the state reaction of leaving these violent acts unpunished; produces an effect of dalliance and legitimacy among the *ülküci* community. By economic, I mean that there is a specific class-based, different hostility against the Kurds. By cultural, I mean that this hostility has a discursive foundation asserting affects on to the body of radical nationalists.

Understanding the institutionalist, economic and discursive dynamics requires a particular vantage point in looking at the subject who is the space of intersection of all above dimensions. In the next chapter I will try to describe my methodology and the context of Zeytinburnu in order to get a better grasp about this specific vantage point about the analysis of the subject.

CHAPTER II

FIELD AND METHODOLOGY

In the introduction chapter, I have claimed that first; I will refrain from macro-scale perspectives by analyzing the everyday relations and micro-politics of a particular space. Second, I have put forward that I will give voice to the local subjects in order to get a better grasp how they experience the politics in their own context. Thus, rather than quantitative analyses that cannot be adequate to comprehend the complexity of singular cases, I have done a qualitative research based on the discourses and performances of *ülküci* youngsters in Zeytinburnu. Therefore, for this study I chose to conduct in-depth interviews rather than applying pre-made questionnaires or collecting statistical data.

In-depth interviews have provided me with unique details of everyday life. These details offered me information about what I have wondered the most: How politics are constructed in these individuals' everyday relations and how the subjects constantly reproduce politics in their locality. Moreover, I did not look for the underlying intentions of their statements and I took their words as my analysis objects. In that sense, I have been mostly concerned with what is at the surface, what constitutes them as *ülküci* subjectivities in their relation with the other and violence.⁷²

The interviews provided me with an extensive space about the relation of *ülküci* community to their locality and to Kurds. The respondents' general look on politics, their vocabulary and discourses, their encounters with the other and the

⁷² The analysis of the surface is borrowed from Feldman: Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991.

violence against the other are the primary topics of this study. That is why, this thesis is not a grand theory of *ülküciü* movement. The movement is analyzed in the narrow limits of *ülküciü* hostility and violence against the Kurds in Zeytinburnu.

Since the first recorded interview, I conducted 20 interviews in 3 years talking to some of the same individuals at different points in time. Although the number of the people who I have interviewed has changed in different settings, there have been a group of nine *ülküciü* individuals who have participated most of the interviews. I decided not to conduct one-on-one interviews because, from the first time onwards, I felt that a communal production of hostility and violence through discourses circulating in a space of collocation is much more significant in analyzing the atmosphere of cohesion and solidarity. As Brubaker argues, group is an event with the phases of extraordinary cohesion, *moments of intensely felt collective solidarity as something that happens*⁷³ (Emphasis added). As it can clearly be seen from the example below, the dimension of togetherness adds something extra to the politics and poetics of the community. When they get together, become a group, the *ülküciü* community becomes something more than the sum of its individual members.⁷⁴ There is a surplus produced in this togetherness through which the communal patterns of action and narration change.. Here is a quote from a discussion in *Ülkü Ocağı*: R and E talk about the opinions of the *ülküciü* youth about the incident where some people in İzmir have attacked DTP supporters:

R: Those times have passed. Now the *ülküciüs* won't follow any provocations. I mean in here there wouldn't be any event similar to the events in İzmir. If it occurs, it will be done by the people, the *ülküciüs* are deliberative on these matters now.

⁷³ Roger Brubaker, "Ethnicity without Groups", *European Sociology*, XLIII, 2, 2002. Pp. 168

⁷⁴ Emile Durkheim, *Suicide*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 2010. Pp. 12-18.

E: How come it wouldn't happen? If they pass from here like that, we will even fuck their mothers... Yes man if they provoke us we will fuck them.
R: Well if they drive a car onto us, well we will respond but I still don't approve any impulsive means such as throwing stones.⁷⁵

The above example shows us that the intra-group discussions have the potential to push the main idea of the topic into a very different path. Thus, the group dynamics play an important role of transformation, which cannot be comprehended by single-person interviews. In focus group interviews, we can witness that the communal affects become intensified through the discussions among the members. These argumentations can sometimes take the discourses to their limits, as the above quotation clearly shows. This aspect of extreme experience will be discussed in detail in the chapter IV.

For the sake of analyzing the particular features of the experience of radical nationalism in Zeytinburnu, I have made a comparative textual analysis of both *ülkücü* community's discourses and the nationalist discourses of middle class İzmir residents. At this point, Cenk Saraçoğlu's book on the exclusion of Kurds in İzmir⁷⁶ provided me with the necessary data about the discourses deployed by middle class İzmir residents. In chapter III, I have named this middle class experience of nationalism as "pop-nationalism". There, I have extensively relied on the quotes of pop-nationalists derived from the data of Saraçoğlu. Thus, I his invaluable data rendered my comparison between radical and pop-nationalism possible.

For the interviews, I did not prepare a set of questions before interviewing the respondents as I did not want my questions to manipulate or orient their answers

⁷⁵ Focus group interview with R and E.

⁷⁶ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011.

into certain directions. Rather, after opening a topic, I have only observed and recorded how the discussion gets intensified as they begin to speak. Brubaker puts forward that any given community should not be conceptualized as a discrete group but relational, processual, and eventful.⁷⁷ Therefore, the spontaneity of the answers and the absence of manipulation of the respondents were important for me. This also positioned me in the observatory position of a “novelist” to observe and analyze the details inside the community. This position offers a vantage point for an analyzer both as a listening practice and as an observing practice. The experience of observation requires the proximity of the researcher in order to see the richness of the texture.

I made my field research in Zeytinburnu. I reached my respondents through a friend of mine, who has been a radical nationalist since I met him. He lived in Zeytinburnu and had a reputation in the district as one of the prominent figures of *ülküçü* youth. He also had been appointed as the leader of Zeytinburnu *Ülkü Ocağı*⁷⁸ for 2 years. . When we both traveled to Istanbul 11 years ago from Trabzon, where we met, he introduced me into his group of *ülküçü* youngsters.

Reaching the respondents through a common friend made it easier to gain access to a closed circle of individuals and talking about politics, a sensitive issue. On the other hand, this opportunity of easy access might have created a bias from my perspective, as having my friend there might have refrained me from delving into certain topics and questions.

I made half of my interviews in Zeytinburnu *Ülkü Ocağı* which locates at the very center of the district. *Ülkü Ocağı* is specifically important as a space for this research because it is the place where the *ülküçü* youth come together. The debates

⁷⁷ Roger Brubaker, “Ethnicity without Groups”, *European Sociology*, XLIII, 2, 2002. Pp. 16

⁷⁸ The person in command in a certain district who is highly respected and well listened among *ülküçü* community in that given neighborhood.

take place in this specific space and *Ülkü Ocağı* gains its importance as a central place where the narratives about daily issues circulate. In addition to this, *Ülkü Ocağı*, as the place of meeting, is also a crucial space to observe the communal patterns of narration, action and behaviors. Thus, it provides an area for analyzing the dimensions and effects of togetherness rather than concentrating on single, personal acts of telling and behaving.

Even though I have purposefully gathered recorded information about *ülküci* youth youth for the first time for a school paper 4 years ago in addition to 20 in-depth focus group interviews for this thesis, I have years of participation in social spaces of this group of *ülküci* youth and their discussions about politics.

My first interview lasted for six hours, and I both used a recorder and took notes during that interview. The problem in the beginning was the huge gap between what they wanted to tell me and what I thought I was looking for. They began with usual, formal political claims of MHP, which can be found anywhere, but I tried to deepen and warm up the discussions according to my areas of interest through my questions. Although they were first surprised and a little anxious, every interview has turned into an informal discussion and provided me with the information that I was looking for.

When I began to study *ülküci* movement in Zeytinburnu, I have realized that Zeytinburnu is an intriguing location for my research. Because I study the hostility and violence of *ülküci* community against the Kurds, the district has provided me with an intense and rich texture as ethnically more heterogeneous than many places in Istanbul and as one of the biggest concentration of Kurds. The fact that I have done my analysis in Zeytinburnu which is one of the few places in Turkey that has an ethnically heterogenous context, I have built my thesis upon the concept of

encounters⁷⁹ between the *ülküci* youngsters and the Kurds. The recent upheaval against the Kurds in 2011 summer is an evidence supporting this fact.

Other than that, it was also interesting that in Zeytinburnu *ülküci* young's have always been more effective in their locality not in the sense of politics but in terms of local relations among the residents than in many other parts of Istanbul. I will discuss and demonstrate this specific issue in the last part of this chapter.

Zeytinburnu historically is one of the first and biggest *gecekondu*⁸⁰ areas in Istanbul. The population of the district began to increase enormously in 50s when the first migration waves of rural workers came to Istanbul. Deniz Yonucu puts forward that after the first migration, hundreds of new factories and small workshops were built in Zeytinburnu and it rapidly became a working class district with 30.000 squatter houses by the mid 1950s.⁸¹ That was the period of industrial developmentalism when the city needed workers for the factories. The housing necessity is responded by the state as permitting informal housing.⁸² Therefore, the whole district has been built as “*gecekondu*”.

⁷⁹ For the hostility and violence to be properly analyzed, I put forward the concept of encounter. Encounter is the experience where the fantasy about the other and about the self is challenged. This experience of violation of the framework that the radical nationalist subject already drew for the Kurdish figure leads to the damage of honor where the subject cannot contain the fantasy that he has invested affects in. Here, the hostility springs out through the form of encounter. Hence, the differences are not pre-marked on the other's body; the differences come to be materialized in the relationship of touch and visibility between bodies.

⁸⁰ Translated from “Slum”.

⁸¹ Deniz Yonucu, “A Story of a Squatter Neighborhood: From the Place of the “Dangerous Classes” to the “Place of Danger””, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 52, Violence (2008). Pp. 51.

⁸²For a detailed analysis on neoliberal transformation's effects on urban space see: Ayfer Bartu Candan and Biray Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism: A Gated Town and a Public Housing Project in Istanbul”, *New Perspectives on Turkey*, No. 39, 2008. Pp. 5 – 46; Çağlar Keyder, “Enformel Konut Piyasasından Küresel Kont Piyasasına”, in Çağlar Keyder (eds.), *İstanbul: Küresel ile Yerel arasında*, İstanbul, Metis, 2009, and Ali Tuna Kuyucu and Özlem Ünsal “Urban Transformation and State-led Property Transfer: an Analysis of Two Cases of Urban Renewal in Istanbul”, *Urban Studies*, Vol: 47, No. 7 2010 Pp. 1479 – 1499.

By 1980s Zeytinburnu's makeshift squatter houses turned into 4 or 5 story buildings and these new available housing provided shelters for thousands of Kurds who were forced to leave their villages in the 1990s.⁸³ From the first time the rural migrants came to Zeytinburnu, it was a residence area for people who mostly do not have had a formal job. We can derive the fact that the situation has got worsened in the neoliberal era when the spaces of production have been closed down. As Yonucu argues, At the brink of the 21th century, it is predominantly a residential district whose inhabitants consist of workers who are employed in informal small-scale workshops, unemployed job-seekers and the permanently unemployed.⁸⁴

When the state decided to cut off the logistical support from the Kurdish villages to PKK in the region, the state forced people either to become "korucu"⁸⁵ against PKK or to move out of the village.⁸⁶ According to different sources⁸⁷, between half a million and two million people have left their villages and migrated to either closer city centers or to the western cities such as Istanbul, İzmir, Mersin, Ankara, Adana. After this major wave of forced migration, some districts of those western cities have become homogenously populated with Kurdish people. Kadifekale in İzmir, ... in Mersin, Tarlabası, Fikirtepe, Bağcılar in Istanbul are canonical examples of these ethnic neighborhoods. Zeytinburnu populating

⁸³ Deniz Yonucu, "A Story of a Squatter Neighborhood: From the Place of the "Dangerous Classes" to the "Place of Danger", *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 52, Violence (2008). Pp. 53.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 52

⁸⁵ "Korucu" means the person who lives in the rural Kurdish region and who had been employed by the state for fighting against the PKK guerillas.

⁸⁶ Dilek Kurban, Ayşe Betül Çelik and Deniz Yükeker, *Overcoming a Legacy of Mistrust: Towards Reconciliation between the State and Displaced*, İstanbul, TESEV, 2006.

⁸⁷ Dilek Kurban, Deniz Yüksek et al., *Zorunlu Göçle Yüzleşmek: Türkiye'de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın Yeniden İnşası*, İstanbul, TESEV, 2006.

relatively smaller proportion of Kurdish population compared to them, still has become one of the most densely Kurdish-populated districts.

Thus, first of all, we can claim that Zeytinburnu is one of the poor neighborhoods in Istanbul. Secondly, it has a relatively bigger concentration of Kurdish population after the forced migration between 1991 and 1995. This information would support our analysis providing the data that the ecology of Zeytinburnu is susceptible for the encounters between the *ülkücü* and Kurd both coming from the lower classes.

Until very recently, till the process of urban transformation and the rise in real estate prices there, it has always been a poor neighborhood in economic terms. Now Zeytinburnu is one of the densely populated districts of Istanbul with official population reaching of 269.234.⁸⁸ As the district has become geographically more central in the city, the real estate value of Zeytinburnu has increased and one of the biggest urban transformation projects has been in operation in Zeytinburnu⁸⁹. I have to note here that although the district has gained value and the rent prices has increased, there is no visible reflection of this transformation to the economic conditions of the urban poor living there.

At this point, I want demonstrate the class dynamics of Zeytinburnu because the economic conditions of the urban space in general and especially the lower class background of *ülkücü* subjectivities are important factors that contribute to the construction of hostility against Kurds and to violence as an outcome of ecology of

⁸⁸ Population of Zeytinburnu Province according to 2011 Population Census. "Zeytinburnu'nun Nüfus Yapısı", *Zeytinburnu Belediyesi*, 2011. Available online at: <http://www.zeytinburnu.com.tr/Sayfa/7/zeytinburnu-hakkinda/nufus-ve-profil.aspx> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

⁸⁹ "İstanbul'da İlçe İlçe Konut Fiyat Artışları", *Emlak Haberleri*, August 20, 2013. Available online at: http://www.emlakhaberleri.com/emlak-haberleri/istanbul-da-ilce-ilce-konut-fiyat-artislari_101582.html (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

the space. To put it differently, the fact that the *ülküci* youngsters that I have interviewed with are from lower class background shapes the form of encounters between *ülküci* community and Kurds. In doing this, I will be in a dialogue with Deniz Yonucu's research on Zeytinburnu youth⁹⁰ who also emphasizes the lower class background of the youngsters in Zeytinburnu.

When I was fourteen years old and first went to Zeytinburnu to see my *ülküci* friend, I was surprised of witnessing that kind of a poor district in Istanbul. I have never had the same experience before. The housing of the landscape was remarkably disordered and significantly many people on the streets had the appearance that a middle class person like me would be afraid to see. Deniz Yonucu brilliantly describes the economical conditions of the young people living in Zeytinburnu and their relations to crimes in his article on emerging youth of Zeytinburnu as druggies, petty criminals and imitators of middle class. There, she argues, that the desire of the Zeytinburnu youth to be a part of the middle class contributes to their exclusion and marginalization because they involve in petty criminal acts to get money and to imitate the middle class consumption patterns.⁹¹

In different times, I have spent many days there and I perceived that most of Zeytinburnu's landscape can be considered urban dangerous zones especially at certain times at night. Yonucu tells a similar experience about Zeytinburnu: "Thievery, drug dealing and petit crimes are very common in Zeytinburnu and Zeytinburnu has recently become one of the centers of drug"⁹².

⁹⁰ Deniz Yonucu, "A Story of a Squatter Neighborhood: From the Place of the "Dangerous Classes" to the "Place of Danger"", *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 52, Violence (2008). Pp. 60.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* 62.

⁹² *Ibid.* 64.

Also Yonucu argues that Zeytinburnu youth: “They have always been conscious of the symbolic and material distance between themselves and the middle class... They imitate the middle class by performing middle class norms and they carry a noteworthy anger against the system that excludes and marginalizes them. They engage in self-consciously “vengeful practices” against the middle classes”.⁹³

As I will try to demonstrate, *ülküçü* community in the neighborhood have always had a prestige and influence over the young people living there. Although the *ülküçü* community enjoyed this power in 1990s much more than now, still they are one of the most influential group in the neighborhood. Their potency on the neighborhood can easily be felt on ordinary people and even they are well-respected by the criminals of the district. I have several times witnessed that some “tough men” from the neighborhood having disputes among themselves and coming to the *ülküçü* youngsters to find a solution. As R. talks about the power of *ülküçü* youngs in the neighborhood:

R: In the meaning you have asked, *ülküçü*'s were dominant over neighborhoods in the 90's. I mean we have fined the people who have wronged in the neighborhood but of course this order has been abused too. People have started to make tons of wrong acts using our name. Some young people have come to *ocak*'s to find friends who will fight for them. Well of course this is not unique to us, the power corrupts everywhere. But still, if you have a situation for example, we take care of it; if you are right we fight for you.⁹⁴

Beside the words of R., I have witnessed many times people coming asking help from the *ülküçü* leaders to find solution for their disputes between different groups. Furthermore, I have also listened to many stories of interventions of *ülküçü* leaders to daily disputes not because of political reasons, but because of daily

⁹³ Deniz Yonucu, “A Story of a Squatter Neighborhood: From the Place of the “Dangerous Classes” to the “Place of Danger””, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 52, Violence (2008). Pp. 53

⁹⁴ Interview with R.

problems among the residents of the district such as “girl issues”⁹⁵, “borrowing issues”⁹⁶, “a wrong act to a friend”⁹⁷ etc.

Here are some examples that I have personally observed illustrating the potency of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu:

Once I have witnessed that a club owner in Bakırköy was complaining to my *ülküci* friend that there are some youngsters from Zeytinburnu who sell ecstasy inside the club and that he could do nothing to stop them because they are dangerous. He asked my friend’s help and my friend made a phone call after which two guys have come to apologize from the club owner and promised that they will never do that again.

More recently there had been a fight between a small criminal gang composed of people from Adana who have a significant respect at the district. One of the *ülküci* youngsters, E., was harmed by a pistol shot and after that the leader of Adanalı gang came to apologize both from Erol personally and from the leader of *Ülkü Ocağı* in order to close the case and reconcile.

In short, what I want to demonstrate is if we draw a pyramid of power dispersion about the neighborhood, albeit not distinctively separated, there are some “tough men” and petty criminals who the middle class people from other districts and some of the Zeytinburnu residents are afraid of. Yonucu gives the example of a remarkable quote from one of her interviewees: “Imagine a guy from Bakırköy, imagine that he is the most dangerous guy in the world. For me, he is nothing. He is

⁹⁵ Translated from: “*kız davası*”

⁹⁶ Translated from: “*alacak-verecek meselesi*”

⁹⁷ Translated from: “*bir arkadaşta yapılan yanlış*”

from Bakırköy”.⁹⁸ Hence, these hardmen and petty criminals of the place have a certain level potency in the district. On top of this, there are *ülküci* youngsters who are respected by those petty criminals. In that sense, they can be considered as the dangerous of the dangerous. However, we cannot imagine the same hierarchy between the *ülküci* community and the Kurds in neighborhood. They do not get in touch that frequently inside the locale and when that happens, it is not a daily dispute or a fight but it is a signal of a big war, or namely ethnic tension.

As I have demonstrated the lower-class profile of the district in general, I would like to give information about the economic background of *ülküci* youngsters I have interviewed with. H. who had been the leader of *Ülki Ocağı* for two years is now 28 years old. He works in a canteen in Zeytinburnu as a worker. His monthly wage is a little bit higher than the official minimum wage in Turkey. E. is a thirty-year old *ülküci* and he has never been employed more than one month. S., 31 years old, is a permanent unemployed living with the state support for the poor people. A. is 33 years old and is an owner of a coffee shop which is not located in a central place in Zeytinburnu. G. and H are both 23 and they do not have a formal job but they work for daily wage in construction sector as workers. R., 28, is working as an assistant in an account firm which is owned by an older *ülküci* who is one of the prominent figures inside the movement. In many of the interviews, there were also several younger members of the community who never talk when they are with their older comrades. Therefore, I had never had the chance to learn their ages, their occupation and their ideas.

These members of the community that I have interviewed are either employed in low-wage works or are permanently unemployed. I argue that this

⁹⁸ Deniz Yonucu, “A Story of a Squatter Neighborhood: From the Place of the “Dangerous Classes” to the “Place of Danger””, *Berkeley Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 52, Violence (2008). Pp. 66

economic dynamics of the youngsters contribute to the construction of hostility and to the potential of violence. However, I do not want to imprison the act of violence inside the category being a lower class member of the society. Rather, this economic condition of the *ülküci* youngsters should be considered together with the atmosphere of Zeytinburnu urban space as a dangerous zone of crimes and *ülküci* community's relations with the criminal people in the district. As we will see in the chapter V, the respect that is paid both by ordinary local people and by petty criminals to *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu opens a space for the *ülküci* youngsters to protect the ownership and the honor of the space against the others. In the chapter V, therefore, I will argue that these very conditions shape the encounters between lower class *ülküci* youngsters and Kurds into a specific form of hostility.

CHAPTER III

RADICAL NATIONALISM VS POP NATIONALISM

In this chapter, I will analyze the particular experience of nationalism of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. In Turkey, nationalism is embraced by different political movements at the same time.⁹⁹ It is possible to analyze the differences among different experiences of nationalism through looking at political ideas, party politics and daily performances of nationalism. In order to understand radical nationalism specifically, we should examine the particular features of *ülküci* community. I find this step necessary because the direct linkage between the experience of nationalism and violence against the Kurds can only be understood under this diversification. As Saraçoğlu analyzes the middle class nationalism in İzmir, he does not establish a linkage between his respondents and violence. I argue that the absence of violence against Kurds in middle class nationalism is directly based on their different experience of nationalism. Here, I will argue that the violence as an outcome of hostility against Kurds needs particular class-based dynamics and a political ecology of violence of a given locality. In order to make a clear distinction between the middle class nationalism in İzmir and the radical nationalism in Zeytinburnu, I will name the first one as pop-nationalism¹⁰⁰ and the second as the radical nationalism.

⁹⁹ Umut Özkırmı, "Türkiye'de Gayresmi ve Popüler Milliyetçilik", in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 713. In his article, Özkırmı defines four different categories of nationalism: Islamist nationalism, Turkist nationalism, White-Turkish nationalism and left-Kemalist nationalism.

¹⁰⁰ The term pop-nationalism is borrowed from Tanıl Bora's concept of "pop-ülküçülük". Tanıl Bora in using this concept, implies the mass support for popular nationalism in Turkey in 1990s. There, he points out to the massive absorption of the Turkish public into popular nationalism and into the hostility against Kurdish movement. Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can; *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP*, İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi, 2004. Pp. 255.

Turkey is a country where most of the people would self identify as a “nationalist”.¹⁰¹ That is why, it is extremely important to differentiate among various nationalisms both on ideological and performative levels, if possible. To discover the specific place that *ülküciü* community acquires inside different nationalisms we would have to look at the construction of nationalism on the everyday level. As I have said before, apart from the Kurdish political movement, some liberal democrats and certain socialist groups, nearly everyone might label himself or herself as a nationalist. Nationalism is not only an ideological-epistemological category but also a performative one reproduced and experienced differently by diverse groups.¹⁰² At times all parts of the political spectrum, ranging from Kemalists, social democrats and conservatives to radical nationalists, and even to liberals, agree upon a decision or come together around the same discourse. When this nationalist consensus happens, they usually agree on “the fundamental sensitivities” of the country. These sensitivities basically consist of one flag, one country, one language and one nation. These can be regarded as “the red lines” of the hegemonic political culture in Turkey, and its understanding of nationalism. These potential or actual transgressions of sensitive points, the red lines, might be directed towards the symbols of Turkishness such as the flag and Turkish as the formal language. For example, all these movements claim to be against the right of education in mother tongue for Kurdish people. Furthermore, all these movements mobilized nationalist discourses when it is said that in Newroz celebrations in 2005

¹⁰¹ Meltem Ahıska, Ferhat Kentel and Fırat Genç “*Milletin Bölünmez Bütünlüğü*” *Demokratikleşme Sürecinde Parçalayan Milliyetçilik(ler)*. İstanbul. Tesev Yayınları. 2007. Pp.1.

¹⁰² Ibid. 3.

a Turkish flag was burned, which ended up in a flag frenzy.¹⁰³ Hence, the fundamental sensitivity over the indivisibility of the country has been a common threat for all three major parties and the associated movements. Since transgressions of these lines implicitly refer to an exceptional context, it is a rare moment that different political groups can come together on that exceptional base, which is “the protection of nation” and the mobilization of nationalism for it.

Even though these major parties have very different political views on the discursive level, they only have nuances on the idea and policies about nationalism, agreeing upon these “red lines”, refraining from the reconciliation of the painful past experiences of the Kurds in Turkey and recklessly mobilizing nationalism as a form of populism.

Let us have a look at the roots of these similarities on the construction of various nationalisms in Turkish political spectrum to find out how nationalism has become the central pillar of Turkish hegemony. The downfall of socialist and social democrat movements in 1980s all around the world provided an empty space to be filled by right wing parties, both religious and nationalist¹⁰⁴. The reflection of this trend in Turkey was the enormous attempts of the military rule to canalize the political ecology towards Turkish nationalism and Islam against the “threat” of socialism.¹⁰⁵ Starting with the changes in the constitution, education, media, penal code etc. have all been affected by this harsh indoctrination and suppression.¹⁰⁶

Thus, the general political climate both in the world and in Turkey is regarded as

¹⁰³ Jonny Dymond, “Flag-waving Frenzy Grips Turkey” *BBC News*, March 24, 2005. Available online at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4379675.stm> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹⁰⁴ Tanıl Bora, *Milliyetçiliğin Kara Baharı*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 1995. Pp. 13.

¹⁰⁵ İsmail Kaplan, *Türkiye’de Milli Eğitim İdeolojisi*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 1999. Pp. 12.

¹⁰⁶ Emre Kongar, *12 Eylül Kültürü*, İstanbul, Remzi Kitabevi, 2005. Pp. 95.

one of the reasons behind the concentration of political ideologies around nationalism.

The further rise of nationalism as a reaction against the Kurdish movement in 1990s mobilized the mainstream western Turkish public to react against the Kurdish movement in a way closer to MHP's line. These people empathized with the radical nationalist view more frequently. The rising votes to radical nationalist party, MHP, was the sign of this transformation. The war between PKK and the Turkish army was the hot topic of these days, when the media channels concentrated on a certain type of presentation of this war that led to the mobilization of nationalist sentiments. The images of funerals of the soldiers who died in that war were boosted in the news in a pornographic fashion.¹⁰⁷ Under these conditions, many sides of political spectrum were under the influence of nationalist mobilization and the dominant culture's reaction was formed through blaming the Kurdish political movement. This context instigated the political center to shift more to the right on the political spectrum accompanied with an attempt of Bahçeli to situate his party more in the center of the spectrum.¹⁰⁸ In this period, the distinctive lines became much more invisible among political parties about their nationalist reactions.

¹⁰⁷ I use the concept 'pornographic' in the sense of the term Hasan Bülent kahraman describes it: "Pornografi, izleyenle izlenen, özne ile nesnenin arasındaki mesafenin bütünüyle kalktığı, maksimum görünürlülük yaratan bir alandır ve gerçeklikle sorunlu bir ilişkisi vardır". (Hasan Bülent Kahraman, *Cinsellik, Görsellik, Pornografi*, İstanbul, Agora Kitaplığı, 2010. Pp. 9.) In this text by the meaning of 'pornographic representation of the news', I mean that the news about the war between the state and the PKK has been presented in a way that the distance between the receiver and the image is disrupted. This particular way of presentation produces the narcissitic self-identification of the receiver with the victorious images of Turkish state. All these contribute to the huge mobilization of nationalist sentiments among the Turkish public.

¹⁰⁸ Cenk Saraçoğlu argues that MHP has advantaged from the rising nationalist wave in Turkey. Cenk Saraçoğlu, "Ülkücü Hareketin Bilinçaltı olarak Nihal Atsız", *Toplum ve Bilim*, 2004.

At this point, it is necessary to examine different experiences of nationalism between different levels of the society as nationalism has become the common space where diverse political views came closer and an important rubric where different political groups use similar discourses and favor similar policies to protect the “holy” boundaries.

I have indicated above that the nationalist consensus seems somehow independent of opposing politics and class dimensions. However, it is also important to ask where we find the differences in experiencing nationalism and the essence of radical nationalism. In this thesis, I argue that the difference lies not at the level of macro-politics but in everyday experiences of nationalism by the people. In order to elaborate this conceptualization, I will utilize a theoretical dualisation between radical nationalism (*ülküçülük*) and pop-nationalism.

Moreover, in order to demonstrate how these nationalisms are constructed differently on a daily basis, I will use the concept of “encounters”, which I will elaborate in detail in the chapter V. Hence, the answer to this central question is also highly related to the theoretical conceptualization of this thesis. Although we witness similar arguments by different parties from major sides of the political spectrum about the Kurdish question, on a the micro level; the discourses about the Kurds distinguish according to the economic background, to particular features of the urban space and to the political ideas of people. Therefore, their everyday encounters with the other make them construct a different nationalist paradigm on both discursive and performative levels. That is to say, as this thesis would argue, nationalism as a materiality is constructed discursively and performatively in the minute details of daily life. This material construction of nationalism makes the people have different standing points against the other. In that sense, a meaningful

distinction between an upper-middle class CHP supporter and a lower-middle class MHP follower nationalist rests on the difference between pop-nationalism and radical nationalism. Here, I want to emphasize that radical and pop nationalism are not the only two categories about the experience of nationalism. Rather, they signify two significantly different experiences of hostility against Kurds. In the following section, I will argue that this difference lies on the diversification of the experiences of daily encounters with the Kurds. The important dynamics making these encounters diverse experiences are first, the class position of the nationalist subject in economic terms and second, the ecology of the space where the subject lives. I will try to show this through a comparison between my data from Zeytinburnu *ülküci* community and Cenk Saraçoğlu's findings¹⁰⁹ from İzmir middle class people.

The diversification between radical and pop-nationalism can extensively be captured through the image, the perception and the experience of the other, the Kurds. There is a clear-cut difference on the poetics¹¹⁰ of the construction of hostility between these two different experiences of nationalism on an everyday basis. I should also say that the separating lines between these different experiences of nationalism get blurry in certain discourses where the discourse on the other becomes very similar. However, there is significant data to mark this division as a theoretical binary opposition. In making this split, violence is the determinant factor in the sense that violence against the Kurds is the significant outcome of radical nationalism whereas we cannot attribute violence to pop-nationalists. The cities and districts where violence against the Kurds has taken place give an important clue on the economic base of violence: Zeytinburnu in Istanbul, Düzyazı in Sakarya,

¹⁰⁹ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011.

¹¹⁰ Concept of 'Poetics' brief definition is done in Chapter II and its detailed elaboration will be made in Chapter IV.

Mustafa Kemal Paşa in Bursa, Faroz in Trabzon while we can not attribute the same outcome for middle class and upper-middle class residential districts in Turkey. In the following part, I argue that this difference lies on a certain aesthetics of hostility perceived by the nationalist subject, which shapes a different micro-politics on the urban space in the encounters between Turks and Kurds.

Although the hostility against the Kurds is a general phenomenon in Turkey, when we compare the middle class İzmir residents' discourse about the Kurds with the discourses deployed by the *ülküçü* community in Zeytinburnu, we see a clear difference between radical and pop-nationalism. Cenk Saraçoğlu's book provides a textual information of the middle class nationalist discourse against the Kurds, which I will put into dialogue with my own research. In this thesis, I will name the middle class nationalist experience "pop-nationalism".

It is important to note here that we both depart from same methodological basis as we both construct our arguments on the concept of *encounters* between Turks and Kurds in the urban space. Secondly, both Saraçoğlu and I attribute the *class-based dynamics* as a determinant factor in the construction of hostility against the Kurds.

However, Saraçoğlu puts the economic dynamics in a very different path in to the picture than I do in this thesis. He focuses on the importance of neoliberal transformation, which rendered earning a living for middle class people more precarious than before. Hence, he concludes that this fall in the quality of middle class lives contributed to an economically competitive ecology where middle class İzmir residents began to carry hostile feelings against Kurds. This argument rests on the middle class discourses about the "unjust gain", "informal employment" of Kurds.

A similar vein can be detected in the literature on the relationship between ethnic violence and an economically competitive atmosphere. For example, Olzak argues that the core reasons behind the increasing number of lynchings against the blacks between 1882 and 1914 in USA are both the trembling of the white economic superiority and the rising competition between blacks and whites in the labor market.¹¹¹ From a parallel perspective, Godoy states that the regions in Latin America where the lynchings mostly take place are the spaces where the peasants cannot subsist their lives because of the impoverishment caused by neoliberal transformation.

However, my perspective differs from the above examples taking economic conditions' role in rising competition. From an alternative point of view, I argue that the lower class economic background of the radical nationalists in Zeytinburnu opens the space for a totally different poetics constructing a particular type of hostility that renders violence possible. By comparing radical and pop nationalism, I will juxtapose the divergent poetics of hostility between two experiences of nationalism. Below, I claim that it is not aesthetics of beauty that forms the hostility in *ülküci* community as it does in middle class nationalism. Rather, it is the aesthetics of honor that determines the distinct experience of hostility and the outcome of violence as a possibility. I have categorized the comparison of the poetics of hostility between radical and pop nationalism into three categories: Feelings of superiority, aesthetics of hostility, economic references about the other and the threat perception from the Kurdish image in the urban space.

¹¹¹ Suzan Olzak, "The Political Context of Competition: Lynching and Urban Racial Violence, 1882-1914", *Social Forces*, 69 (2): 1990. Pp. 397,398

The pop-nationalist people in Turkey have been from the most educated high cultural capital, “modern” segments of the society¹¹². As Saraçoğlu describes the nationalist experience of middle class İzmir residents, these middle class people are the educated ones who have a formal job as white-collar workers in state institutions or in private sector¹¹³. I argue that this *habitus* leads them to construct a nationalist experience over *superiority*. *Habitus* denoting the class-based categories of consumption patterns, lifestyles and daily dispositions¹¹⁴, draws the borders of the framework about the discourses about the other. The discourses of “backwardness”, “non-civilized Kurds”, “uneducated people”, “Kurds with many children”¹¹⁵ demonstrate that this *superiority* experience of pop-nationalists carries xenophobic tones, which is very similar to the European contemptuous gaze to the immigrants.

On the other hand, the radical nationalist perception of the other does not directly reflect such an experience of superiority. As the pop-nationalist discourse blames the Kurds as “uneducated”, “illiterate”¹¹⁶ I have never witnessed such an emphasis on education in radical nationalist discourse. This might be because the radical nationalists in Zeytinburnu are mostly high school drop-outs or graduates of elementary school.

¹¹² Tanıl Bora calls this nationalism “racism filmed over with middle class egotism”, translated from: “Milliyetçilik doğallıkla meşrulaştırılmaz” See: Tanıl Bora, “Milliyetçilik Doğallıkla Meşrulaştırılmaz”, *Altüst Dergisi*, March 2012. Available online at: <http://www.altust.org/2012/04/tanil-bora-milliyetcilik-dogallikla-mesrulaştirilamaz/> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹¹³ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 32-35

¹¹⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1984. Pp. 165-171.

¹¹⁵ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 125.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.* 127

Similarly, I did not find any traces of civilization discourse among *ülküci* youngsters about Kurds. For example, the pop-nationalist discourse that the Kurds give birth to many children¹¹⁷ is not in circulation among radical nationalists. On the contrary, for *ülküci* youngsters in Zeytinburnu, to have more children is something to be proud of. Thus, there is no discourse of backwardness in opposition to modernity and civilization, among *ülküci* youngsters compared to pop-nationalists.

The difference between the pop-nationalist and radical nationalist discourses approach to the other through the idea of civilization, can also be seen in their views on Turkish immigrants in Europe. Here, we see that the European xeno-phobic discourse against the Turks in Europe¹¹⁸ is also deployed by the middle class residents in İzmir. Saraçoğlu shows that, when asked about the similarity of the exclusion of Turks in Europe and the Kurds in İzmir, the middle class discourse claims that the Europeans have a right to blame the Turkish immigrants because they also disrupt the social tissue in Europe.¹¹⁹ On the other hand, the *ülküci* discourse about the Turkish expatriates is the extreme opposite of this xenophobic language, claiming that the Turks are harshly suppressed and subordinated in Europe through assimilation.

In conclusion, the positioning of the pop-nationalists and the radical nationalists against the Kurds differs. Whereas the pop-nationalists have a feeling of superiority through the civilization discourse; for radical nationalists, the Kurd is rather an image of an enemy to honor who stands in a symmetrical position against

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 118.

¹¹⁸ For a detailed discussion on European xenophobia see: Aziz Al-Ahmed and Effie Fokas, *Islam in Europe: Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007. Pp. 3. See also, Liz Fekete, "Anti-Muslim Racism and the European Security State" *Race and Class*, Vol. 46, No. 3, 2004. Pp. 1-29

¹¹⁹ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 160.

the Turk.¹²⁰ In that sense, it is interesting to note that although nationalism, at the final analysis, is an idea of difference and superiority, radical nationalists who are at the extreme point of nationalism do not carry the superiority images against others as the pop-nationalists do. For radical nationalists, the threat coming from the other rests on the danger of damage to the honor and to belongings.¹²¹

One of the most important features of different experiences of nationalism lies in the hostility arising from a certain aesthetical perception of the Kurdish image. The reason that I use the conceptualization of aesthetics of hostility is the fact that the term refers to a certain imaginary construction of otherness where the fantasies about the other are extracted. Therefore, rather than analyzing the construction of hostility through the ethics of the subject, which implies a cognitive construction of subjectivity, aesthetics provides us with the imaginary space that the affects can be inscribed upon. To illustrate, whereas the pop-nationalists derive a more funny, grotesque and monstrous figure of the Kurd such as the “*kıro*”¹²² stereotype or the label of “*maganda*” who is dirty, unrefined and uneducated; radical nationalists derive a different aesthetics of otherness, which is subversive and disturbing.

Among pop-nationalists, the common discourses on aesthetics of Kurdish figure concentrate on the claims that they distort the urban space and the social relations with their ugly appearance, their social behaviors and their accent. As Saraçoğlu demonstrates, the middle class İzmir residents describe Kurds as dirty,

¹²⁰ How the Kurds are perceived by radical nationalists will be discussed in detail later in chapter V.

¹²¹ This threat perception will be detailed in the last category of poetics of hostility in the end of this chapter. Furthermore, the confrontation between *ülküçü* community and Kurds on the urban space over the concept of honor will be made in detail in chapter V.

¹²² *Kıro* connotes some kind of barbaric, abrupt, uneducated, low-mannered image and is used to be an adjective usually defining the Kurd.

ugly and stinky who do not properly fit to the urban space.¹²³ In addition to this, this hostile perception of the Kurdish figure, at best takes the form of implicit contempt through the discourse of “*kıro*”, which produces a funny and grotesque image of the other.

One of the prominent discourses of such aesthetics of hostility is the “*gecekondü*” discourse. This discourse blames the Kurds by pointing out that they have come to the city and built slums without any land registry, which also refers to the deforming of the urban land.¹²⁴ Yet, when we look at the radical nationalist discourse in Zeytinburnu, it is absolutely impossible for them to look down upon the Kurds through the same classifications because most of the older generations here settled in the city through same way as Kurds have done recently.

Another difference between these two groups on the aesthetics of hostility is about the discourses on the Greeks and Armenians. Whereas, as Saraçoğlu argues, middle class İzmir residents deploy a nostalgic discourse about the out-migrated non-Muslims, there is a clear hostility against the non-Muslims among *ülküci* youngsters in Zeytinburnu. This is the aesthetics of hostility for pop-nationalism because for the middle class residents in İzmir, the non-Muslims in İzmir were a beautiful color in the multi-religious heterogeneity of the city.¹²⁵

The last proof of this pop-nationalist hostility arising from a certain form of aesthetics lies in the perception of and reaction to the accent of the Kurdish people when they speak Turkish. While the middle class İzmir residents get disturbed of

¹²³ Ibid. 113

¹²⁴ Ibid. 118.

¹²⁵ Ibid. 171.

this accent,¹²⁶ *ülküci* youngsters in Zeytinburnu do not feel any detest from it. This might be because of the fact that many radical nationalists in Zeytinburnu have also their own accent coming from the different regions of Turkey, which do not properly fit to the formal “Istanbul” Turkish. On the contrary, as I will elaborate in detail on the chapter IV, what disturbs the *ülküci* subjectivity mostly is a Kurdish figure speaking in Kurdish in the urban space. This practice of speaking Kurdish is perceived by the *ülküci* subjectivity as a sign of being challenged and dishonored.

When we take the superiority experience and the aesthetics of hostility together, I argue that for upper middle class pop-nationalists, the Kurd is a representation of the backward, ugly subject who reverses the imagination of nationalist-modernist progress. In that sense, it is more of a disgust and abstention¹²⁷ towards the Kurd, to not see and feel the proximity of the Kurdish subject in daily life. This disgust, for sure, contains class-based dimensions. The reaction of pop-nationalists can be regarded similar to the European xenophobic stance against the migrants where the migrants are blamed for idleness, backwardness and irrationality.¹²⁸ Although European xenophobia is a huge literature including discussions about various types of exclusionary discourses from orientalism to Islamophobia, I use the term intentionally to refer to certain similarities between European xenophobia and middle class anti-Kurdish hostility in Turkey. In both cases the inequality of financial and cultural capital between opposed ethnicities plays an important role. In that sense, it recalls the stigmatization of the other from a

¹²⁶ Ibid. 112.

¹²⁷ Here I use the term disgust in the sense that S. Lawler uses it describing middle class experience of lower classes. Stephanie Lawler, “The disgusted Subjects: The making of Middle-Class Identities” *The Sociological Review*, Vol. 53. Issue 3, August 2005.

¹²⁸ For European xenophobic experience about the other, see Jocelyn Sezari, “Muslim Identities in Europe: Snare of Exceptionalism” in *Islam in Europe: Diversity, Identity and Influence*, Aziz Al-Azmeh and Effie Fokas eds. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007.

more “refined” perception of the subject for itself. On the contrary, *ülkücü* youth’s Kurd figure is more constructed as the enemy to the honor. Therefore, I have built my comparison on the difference between the aesthetics of beauty deployed by middle class nationalists and the aesthetics of honor labored by radical nationalists. Whereas the first one refers to a disturbance from the deformation caused by the other; the latter one implies a challenge by the other to the respect and honor of the subject.

The third type of discourse where the difference between pop and radical nationalism shows is the hostility arising from two different economic frameworks. Saraçoğlu argues that the claims that the Kurds do not pay taxes, and that they gain money unjustly and illegally are very common among middle class İzmir residents.¹²⁹ The belief that “the Kurds are earning much more money than they do” lies in such discourses saying that “I do not earn the money that the Kurds do” or “They give birth to a lot of children because they make them beg on the streets so that they collect a lot of money”.

Such discourses about the economical unjust gains of Kurds such as “*gecekondü*” as house without land registry, and “electricity theft” cannot be found in radical nationalist discourses against the Kurds. Actually, Saraçoğlu himself argues that this discourse of “unjust gain” is very specific to the middle class.¹³⁰ Such a discourse arises specifically from a formal, white-collar, wageworker perspective. In that respect, the *ülkücü* youngsters who are from the lower class do not circulate the same discourses against the Kurds because, on the contrary, in Zeytinburnu, the *ülkücü* youngsters have no formal-permanent jobs and no secured

¹²⁹ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr’dan “Tanıyarak Dışlama”ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 102

¹³⁰ Ibid. 104.

wages.¹³¹ This situation makes earning a living depend on a much more precarious base that in turn renders the *ülküci* youngsters do similar jobs with Kurds to subsist their lives.¹³² Contrary to the middle class perception of Kurds by İzmir residents, as Yonucu argues, the youth in Zeytinburnu already internalizes the same contemptuous discourses produced about them by middle classes. In that respect, we can argue that the class based dynamics and Zeytinburnu's economic conditions lead *ülküci* youngsters to have different discourses about the Kurds than middle-class residents in İzmir.

When the dimensions described above, which produce differences in experiencing nationalism, are taken together, they all intersect and lead to the diversification of threat perception between pop and radical nationalism. Whereas the pop-nationalist perception of the Kurd is a threat of proximity arising from a “danger of ugliness”, radical nationalist feels more threatened by a specific experience of honor.

The concept of honor in relation to ethnic violence is not much elaborated in the academic literature. Brubaker similarly complains of the absence of knowledge about the social and psychological processes within groups that push the group members into ethnic violence.¹³³ However, he is willing the academicians analyze an alternative interpretation of honor than I would like to do. Brubaker is interested more on the intra-group dynamics about the distribution of honor through symbolic

¹³¹ See chapter II.

¹³² Departing from this point, Saraçoğlu established the connection between exclusion against the Kurds and neoliberalism; now, it is clear that in Zeytinburnu there is no established relation of hostility with neoliberalism in the sense that Saraçoğlu establishes. Although radical nationalist hostility has a class base, there is also an ideological investment inside the radical nationalist subjectivity that differs from pop-nationalist.

¹³³ Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence”, *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 24: 1998. Pp. 427

rewards.¹³⁴ On the other hand, I am mostly concerned with the contestation and the challenge to the honor of the community by an outsider. In my perspective, the honor is related to protecting the ownership of the space, to keep the spatial control and to save the acknowledgment of high respect that has been already paid by the locale.

Kenneth Pole in his article where he analyzes the relationship between contest of honor and violence falls closer to my conceptualization of honor. There, he examines the characteristics of those (male, young, lower class) who feel threatened by the possible damage to their honor and the interactional dynamics of moves and countermoves that produce violence as an outcome.¹³⁵ Continuing from this departure point, honor in the context of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu means to protect what is “sacred” against any form of leakage. Otherwise, such a sense of leakage that is highly connected with the honor causes unbearable affects for the *ülküci* bodies.¹³⁶

Hence, the *ülküci* subjectivity does not construct its perception of threat on a dichotomy between beauty and dirt but on *unbearableness* of being raped and penetrated through the conflict in the urban space. In that respect, radical nationalist perception depends on honor and the threat finds its reflection in the claims of *ülküci* youngsters over spatial ownership and command in Zeytinburnu.

This can properly be explained in the example of middle class İzmir residents’ discourse on danger: We cannot walk on the streets at night because there

¹³⁴ Ibid. 435.

¹³⁵ Kenneth Polk, “Males and Honor Contest Violence” *Homicide Studies*, 3, February 1999. Pp. 13-14.

¹³⁶ Detailed analysis about space, encounters, honor and leakage will be made in chapter V.

are Kurds who are dangerous.¹³⁷ When we look at the lives of Zeytinburnu youth, we see that the middle class people from richer areas around Zeytinburnu (Ataköy, Bakırköy) deploy the same discourse to them, implying that they are the dangerous ones. Thus, *ülkücü* youth are also subject to the same discourse by other middle class residents of the urban space, which makes their perception of threat about the Kurds very different than that of the pop-nationalists.

Even though I discussed the differences between two types of nationalisms, these should not be taken as strict distinctions. This distinction, first and foremost, is valid between middle class İzmir residents' nationalist experience and lower class Zeytinburnu radical nationalist experience. Furthermore, albeit seldom, I have come across the discourses of pop-nationalism circulating also inside the *ülkücü* community and they can share common stereotypical reactions against the Kurds in certain contexts. Also, it would be equally false to argue that the pop-nationalists never perceive the Kurds as a threat to their honor. Rather, my attempt is more to categorize dominant ideal types of nationalist experiences in the society in order to be able to differentiate where *ülkücü* community stands inside different nationalisms and to put the light on this community specifically.

When we compare pop-nationalism and radical nationalism, we see that middle class nationalists deploy a theory of absence constructed upon the blaming of “not having” such as “no education”, “no civilization”, “backwardness” etc. For both experiences, the Kurdish figure is an image that does not properly fit to the urban space due to different reasons. While the “not-belonging” image of the Kurd by pop-nationalist stems from habits, aesthetics, superiority and economic

¹³⁷ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*. İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi. 2011. Pp. 112.

references; the “being out-of-place” image for the radical nationalist arises from the sense of being challenged.

In this chapter, Saraçoğlu’s study has provided me with necessary data and enlarged my vision on the same question. Yet, I want to note here that Saraçoğlu builds his arguments on the specific context of İzmir and tries to explain the general exclusion of Kurds in Turkey. However, in this thesis, I argue that although Saraçoğlu’s perspective can provide meaningful answers about the hostility against Kurds in economically higher-profile urban places such as İzmir, Beşiktaş, Mersin, and Bursa it cannot explain the violent attacks that took place in places such as Trabzon, Ordu, Zeytinburnu, and Sakarya. This important difference in the outcome of hostility (exclusion and violence) depends on the diverse experience of nationalisms sourcing from different class-based dynamics and from different ecologies of urban space.

In the next chapter, I will analyze the vocabulary of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. I will argue that the discourses circulating inside the community produce certain affects that are inscribed on their bodies. Through this analysis of their discourses, I will try to show the pathos of *ülküci* community and how this pathos is related with the construction of hostility against the other.

CHAPTER IV

VOCABULARY

In this chapter, I will inquire into the vocabulary of *ülkücü* youth. What I mean by vocabulary is a circulation of discourses, words and certain usages of these words in the discussions. This circulation has an underlying meaning that can be felt as a totality with a specific theme. Thus the concept “vocabulary” does not refer to a set of political ideas and beliefs, which can be summed up as the political ideology of *ülkücü* movement.¹³⁸ Vocabulary is not only related to the content of the speeches but there is a certain effect produced by those expressions, their repetitions and specific usages. This effect will be analyzed in this chapter.

Any analysis of the vocabulary cannot be thought independent of discourse.¹³⁹ I will elaborate on the operation of discourse through its capacity to make and reproduce the community. I propose that any given community comes into existence through the circulation of discourses within that community. In the conceptualization of the relation between discourse and community I follow Warner’s argument that “the public” is a space of discourse organized by nothing other than discourse itself, which only exists by the virtue of being addressed.¹⁴⁰

Warner builds up his theory of public and discourse through developing Austin’s

¹³⁸ For a detailed analysis about the political ideas of *ülkücü* movement throughout its history, see Kemal Can, “Ülkücü Hareketin İdeolojisi”, in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 663-668.

¹³⁹ Foucault argues that discourse means ways of constituting knowledge and social action, which involves power relations. Thus, discourse constructs the topic, it defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked and reasoned. In that sense, discourse is beyond the duality of language and practice. Discourse constitutes and performs. Stuart Hall, ‘Foucault: Power Knowledge and Discourse’, *Colorado University Library*, 2007. Available online at: <http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/circulation/ereserves/pdfs/courses/FALL/LING%204100.%20SIKOS/ON%20COURSE%20NOW/FOUCAULT%20POWER,%20KNOWLEDGE%20AND%20ISCOURSE.pdf> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹⁴⁰ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 50

argument that the discourses have performative characters and that they operate not only as words pointing out to the things but also they “do” and “perform” the things by the fact that being deployed.¹⁴¹ However, I have to put an important reservation here. Although Warner elaborates the relationship between public and discourse and intentionally separates the public and the community from each other, I think a similar relationship exists between community and vocabulary because the community is also produced as an effect of circulating discourses since the existential meaning of the community lies at the very heart of its discursive construction. As Warner states, a public can only produce a sense of belonging and activity if it is self-organized through discourse.¹⁴² Hence, every time a member of the community speaks in a communal space, the rhetorical addressee is the community, which builds up and reproduces itself in a certain form.

Foucault claims that the concept “discourse” cannot be thought independent of power relations.¹⁴³ I further argue that, since discourse accommodates power relations, performing the discourse inside the community has the capacity to determine and allocate momentary sovereignty to the members of the community. Therefore, there is a performative dimension of discourse in the sense that one should treat expressions, speeches and conversations not only as forms of texts but also as forms of social action that continuously produce and reproduce the power relations among the members and outside of the community. As Warner marks that telling to the public makes one sovereign through actively claiming moral

¹⁴¹ In this chapter, the effects of a vocabulary are conceptualized under Austin’s theory of performative utterance. J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1962. Pp. 4-24.

¹⁴² Ibid. 52.

¹⁴³ Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge*, London, Routledge, 1972. Pp. 35.

authority,¹⁴⁴ grasping the performativity of words and sentences provides us with the answer to the question of what the specific vocabulary of *ülküciü* community enable, empower and energize.

Here, I use the concept “vocabulary” as the underlying theme of the community constituted by the movements of discourse through the space from one body to another. Thus, in a Foucauldian sense, the body becomes the realm where clashing discourses are inscribed on.¹⁴⁵ The mechanism of this inscription processes operates through the construction of affects by the underlying vocabulary. Similarly, Warner argues that in the scene of circulation, discourse creates the repertoire of highly temporalized affects.¹⁴⁶ Here it should be noted that the concept of vocabulary that I deploy includes not only words, sentences and, texts but also forms, styles, pose, toning and wording. Hence, vocabulary is very important in the sense that a certain type of vocabulary produces certain affects such as hate, rage, disgust, fear and shame. Through the usage of this vocabulary, these affects become inscribed on bodies. Consequently, the bodies begin to move and orient in certain directions and in turn those affects determine the hierarchical positions of these bodies inside the community. Discourse both creates the framework of content dividing the inside and the outside and also it gives clue about the power relations inside the community. In that sense, performativity of the words constitute and reproduce the broader relations of power of the community. As Warner states, talk value has an affective quality: you do not just mechanically repeat signature phrases

¹⁴⁴ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 54.

¹⁴⁵ Scott Lash, “Genealogy and the Body: Foucault, Deleuze, Nietzsche”, *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 2 No. 2, June 1984 Pp. 6.

¹⁴⁶ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 71.

but you perform them through your social placement.¹⁴⁷ This affective quality of the vocabulary is a “magical” dynamic that this magic actually lies in the affects that are inscribed on the bodies and it compels the bodies to be shocked, surprised and charmed by it. Hence, the vocabulary that talks the sovereign, the death, the morality, the lust, the sacrifice, the passion and the hate produces this magic that tailors the community in certain forms.

Those affects are the gluing mechanisms that keep the bodies in a sense of belonging and togetherness. This specific vocabulary obtrudes the epic¹⁴⁸ of the narrative into the bodies of radical nationalists. By using the concept of “epic”, I mean that the nationalist constitution of the subject does not lie on a failure; but, as the term denotes, it is a performance of composing various discourses and affects into a consistent melody that sings the poem of their *pathos*. Therefore, the process of the construction of subjectivity heavily relies on the active laboring of the self. In that respect, vocabulary is the *pathos* of the movement where they produce the narration of their own tragedy. The term pathos is highly important to get a better grasp of the affects inscribed on *ülküciü* bodies. Hence, the concept pathos is used in its Ancient Greek meaning like the pathos of Jesus: Both as passion and as pain, frustration and sacrifice. It is an experience appealing to emotions.

Hence, the concept “pathos” as a theoretical tool deployed in this thesis refers to the affective construction of subjectivities and of the community itself. Pathos arises neither from the content of their speeches nor from grand narratives of macro politics. Pathos stems from the *poetics* of the community. Warner provides the following theoretical construction of the concept of “poetic”:

¹⁴⁷ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 73.

¹⁴⁸ I use the concept ‘epic’ denoting intense affectionate circulation of power, pleasure and pain inside the discourses.

“The point here is that this perception of public discourse as conversation obscures the importance of the poetic functions of both language and corporeal expressivity in giving a particular shape to publics. The public is thought to exist empirically and to require persuasion rather than poesis... The community remakes its poetics not only through discursive claims but also at the level of pragmatics, through the effects of speech genres, idioms, stylistic markers, address, temporality, mise-en-scene... Public discourse says not only: “Let public exist,” but also: “Let it have this character, speak this way, see the world in this way”.¹⁴⁹

I argue that the particular poetics of *ülküciü* vocabulary creates the pathos of *ülküciü* subjectivities. It gives the character to the community, creates the framework for them to interpret the world through and move the bodies in certain directions. In the following part, I will inquire into the specific vocabulary of *ülküciü* community in Zeytinburnu.

Ülküciü vocabulary in Zeytinburnu carries its own character. To witness this specific vocabulary, doing recorded interviews is not a proper methodological tool because, when asked about their political ideas in recorded interviews, *ülküciü* youth try to set their words as close as possible to the formal grammar of macro-politics. Therefore, witnessing their local vocabulary requires attempts going beyond the pre-mediated and recorded interviews such as observation and spending more time with *ülküciü* youth in addition to the interviews.

Ülküciü vocabulary in Zeytinburnu, like any vernacular folk usage of language, has artfulness in it. Anyone who spends a certain amount of time with them will be exposed to the usage of poetic words that are consisted of speech genres, pronunciations, artistic usages and idioms. For example, figures of speech

¹⁴⁹ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 82

(*Şişeyi kırmak*), catchphrases (*Reis!, Allaha emanet!*), informal speech (*Atarlanmak*) and, metaphors (*Ben de ona attım bi tane*). Furthermore, this artfulness implies that there is an active participation of the *ülküçü* subjectivity in the construction of micro-politics of the community., Rather than a process of passive subjectivity, which is ready-to-be-manipulated by macro-level politics., the community has its own capacity of embodied creativity and world-making, as Warner theorizes¹⁵⁰ Beside the specific usages of sentences and words, there is also vocabulary inside their *poses* produced by their bodily movements in the urban space, which communicates an image both inside and outside the community.

The image of the *ülküçü* consists of differing modalities of bodily movements, stylized postures and acquired objects. When I was with the *ülküçü* youth in Zeytinburnu, I have observed that their bodies are also a part of the pose, which has its own vocabulary for the *ülküçü* community. This pose specifically refers to a stylistic corporeality because through bodily rhythms *ülküçü* subjectivity moves to a particular ideal image that is a three-dimensional pose like dancing as a performance. Corporeality here has powerful expressions - maybe more than any other given political community in Turkey.

The pose contributes to the efforts to embody the ideal *ülküçü* subjectivity by using the right bodily movements. I observed that there is a certain form of the rhythms of bodily movements when walking, sitting and standing. There is toughness in what they do. There are certain movements, which are not in the borders of legitimate movements, including those that might recall a sense of softness and femininity. These specific movements of the body assert the *ülküçü* body in the locale as the sovereign in this specific zone. By sovereign, I mean that

¹⁵⁰ Ibid. 54

they act like they own the space: the spatial command of the relations in that zone belongs to them, as they are well-respected figures of the locale. In the center of Zeytinburnu, on the place that people call “*Depo*”, the corners are taken by standing *ülküci* youth who watch the space and talk to the local people they know. Hence, the posing body of the *ülküci* has a threatening and protective image in the “political iconography”¹⁵¹ of the neighborhood.

Furthermore, acquiring certain objects that communicate with the locale is also a part of this vocabulary of pose. There are certain visual artifacts, such as the printed symbol of Turkish flag on the rear window of the cars, accessories with the insignia of Ottoman empires, some impulsive and striking sentences on the cars, and *tesbih* (composed of 33 stones), which are all samples of these kitsch¹⁵² objects they acquire.

The tragedy inside the pathos meets with the aesthetics of kitsch. The relationship to these objects around them is noteworthy because all these surrounding objects produce a certain pose and a specific atmosphere, which orient and move the body in certain ways and which communicates with the locality at the same time.

As Warner argues, the form of discourse can be understood as an act in the world and as a claim for moral authority and for sovereignty.¹⁵³ This is also valid for

¹⁵¹ Term borrowed from Feldman. Allen Feldman, “Violence and Vision: The Prosthetics and Aesthetics of Terror”, *Public Culture*, 10 (1997): Pp.37

¹⁵² The relationship of *ülküci* youngsters with kitsch is borrowed from Tanıl Bora. For Walter Benjamin, kitsch is, unlike art, a utilitarian object lacking all critical distance between object and observer; it “offers instantaneous emotional gratification without intellectual effort, without the requirement of distance, without sublimation”. Walter Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt. New York: Harcourt. 1968. Pp. 34.

¹⁵³ Michael Warner, “Publics and Counterpolitics.” *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 75

the pose among the *ülküci* youngsters. The aesthetics of the postured body inscribes itself on the micro-politics of the landscape. Feldman, who devotes great deal to the body as an instrument, claims that to talk of a politics of the pose is to take an aesthetic act and to show how it can be politically magnified, fetishized and institutionalized.¹⁵⁴ Like the discourses circulating inside the community, the pose speaks to both within and outside of the community as well as to the very self of the *ülküci* subjectivity. Even if the pose does not establish a truth claim by itself, it empowers and reinforces the already established truth over the micro-politics of the space.

This image provides a sort of power to the image owner as the others associate this image with that community. Moreover, as the choice of clothing and all those kitsch objects they possess create an image of *ülküci* subject in the neighborhood, the performance of acquiring those objects and wearing that kind of clothes reproduce them as *ülküci* subjectivities. When they begin acquiring the right image of the *ülküci* subject, they draw the framework of the ideal image of *ülküculük*, which they fulfill by their bodies, objects and performances. Although it is not proper for me to attribute a definition of the this particular image they acquire, at least I can argue that the ideal of *ülküculük* is not realizing a grand narrative of macro political ideas nor the big ideals such as *Turan*.¹⁵⁵ I believe that the ideal position of the *ülküci* subjectivity rests on that very locale and is related with being sovereign on that zone in both political and social terms. While they are fulfilling this ideal image of *ülküci* subjectivity, they assert their power on the urban terrain

¹⁵⁴ Allen Feldman, "Violence and Vision: The Prosthetics and Aesthetics of Terror", *Public Culture*, 10 (1997): Pp.44

¹⁵⁵ *Turan* is the grandiose ideal of radical nationalism in Turkey dating back to texts of Ziya Gökalp where the merge of the all Turk-populated countries is imagined.

of Zeytinburnu. As they are known as dangerous, respected people in the neighborhood,¹⁵⁶ they also invest in this subject position by their pose and performances. One can understand this assertion of the body as sovereign in the image of the posing body, which is intensely gendered because the rhythms of bodily movements recall the rituals of manhood. Here, being sovereign necessitates to be able to protect self-honor by not being challenged and humiliated through proving the braveness. Thus, sovereignty metaphorically implies the masculine contests of adolescence of tribal communities where the male figure has to prove his stamina against the pain and his braveness in risking sacrifice. This concept of sacrifice will be met several times in this text as it denotes the passion and the pain of the community. While I have examined the pose as a visual vocabulary, in the next part, I will begin by the deconstruction of their vocabulary on a textual basis, where we will understand the pathos of the community in detail.

One of the significant dimensions of their vocabulary is the usage of a set of grotesque words and sentences. As we will see in the excerpts, there is an effect of overemphasis created by this specific performance of telling. This grotesque¹⁵⁷ vocabulary produces the effect of a sense of emergency and immediacy through putting everything at stake. At first glance, this grotesque vocabulary is unable to persuade people, due to its implausible exorbitance about the truth of the claim. The surprising fact is that this type performance of exaggerating, ornaments and glorifies the beliefs of the community members. Thus, the performance of exaggeration and its unrealistic nature do not nullify the effect of these discourses. On the contrary, it produces its own truth effect on the symbolic terrain. Furthermore, this grotesque, in

¹⁵⁶ See chapter II.

¹⁵⁷ I use the concept of grotesque in the architectural sense of the term that implies sharpening the limits and emphasizing the extremities and peaks.

artistic means, takes the words to their limits in order to experience their tragedy and passion in its extremes.

E: If it comes to kill someone, the more loses more and the less loses less. Come on then!

S: Whatever happens, even if there are fifty men. If they do such act when I am there, whatever! I can't stand there even if I know I would die. This isn't up to me anyway. I mean I can't hold myself there.

H: Are you going to think about yourself after that point? Say fuck it and fight them all!¹⁵⁸

Taking the words and sentences to the extremes has specific implications. First of all, the discursive experience of the extreme provides the space for the subjectivity to prove himself as an insider within the community. As Warner puts forward, discourse creates countless nuances for the performance of subjectivity.¹⁵⁹ Through this performance, the member of the community can momentarily become sovereign by the act of telling, which constructs and projects his pose to the community. By claiming to risk the extreme possibility, by proving the sacrifice until death, the speaking body becomes sovereign momentarily because the message is taken by the community. Through this argument, I presuppose that any given community has its own test of membership. Albeit in a discursive sense, the member should prove his pose.

Tanıl Bora, in his chapter on *ülkücü* culture, mentions Serkan Seymen's work which looks at the mostly repeated significant words in *ülkücü* songs.¹⁶⁰ According to Seymen's textual analysis, the words "*ülkü*", "*ülkücü*", "*başbuğ*", "*bozkurt*", "*Türk*", "*Türkiye*", "*Türk milleti*" take place more than two-hundred times. The words "*şehit*", "*şeref*", "*şan*", "*yiğit*", "*mert*", "*namus*", "*kan*", "*öfke*",

¹⁵⁸ Focus group interview with E, S and H.

¹⁵⁹ Michael Warner, "Publics and Counterpolitics." *Public Culture*, Volume 14, Number 1, Winter (2002): Pp. 72

¹⁶⁰ Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can; *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP*, İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi, 2004. Pp. 318

“*süngü*”, “*silah*”, “*öç*”, “*kin*”, “*kurşun*”, “*mermi*”, “*ölüm*” take place more than hundred times. The words “*kahpe*”, “*hain*”, “*kopek*”, “*bölücü*”, “*düşman*”, “*şerefsiz*”, “*namussuz*” take place more than 70 times. Although it can be assumed that any political vocabulary should deploy strong words in order to mobilize feelings; as the above examples demonstrate, the *ülküci* vocabulary possesses a set of intensely loaded strong words. Both the words referring to highly strong affects such as fame, honor, braveness, martyrdom, anger and the words referring to a hostile construction of other such as blood, aggression, pistol, revenge, hatred, death are all constituting parts of *ülküci* subjectivities through inscribing affects on their bodies.

When we analyze this performance of taking the words into extremes, the community proves that it can take the risk of sacrifice. In such contexts, pushing to the extreme produces the feeling of experiencing an epic story. Hence, sacrifice gives an existential meaning to the *ülküci* community¹⁶¹ because the poetics invites the subjectivity to prove the *ülküci* ideal image, to fulfill the necessary subject position, to attain the right to belong and to be a respected member of the community. The closer the subjectivity feels to this image through the imagined experience of extreme, the more a sense of belonging to the community is realized around the solidarity of co-membership.

The energy of the community rises at moments when the community is invited to the margins of proving itself through claiming the potential for sacrifice. There is an intense affective charge in being inside the *ülküci* body. The whole fulfillment of anger, hate and fear gets intensified in the body of the *ülküci* subjectivity and this affective charge then becomes the embodiment in either the discourses of hate or in the act of violence. Moreover, taking the words to their

¹⁶¹ This concept of sacrifice will be elaborated in the following parts about intimacy and sincerity.

margins is as much the ethos as it is the pathos of the community. This means that if you do not push or perform and are not involved, it is perceived as a betrayal to the *ülküci* community. The member who let the community down should be ashamed. Thus, the experience of pushing to the extreme provides both cohesive and passionate affects, which inscribe the tragedy on the bodies. The ethical responsibilities of connectedness become internalized by the *ülküci* body in that process.

Beside the imagined experience of extreme and sacrifice on a discursive level, there is another element of the pathos which is the sharpness of the discourses about the Kurds. Certain claims of *ülküci* subjects are significantly rigid and sharp as if the information provided in the discourse is the only truth of the discussion topic. This self-esteem and the rigidity of the words produce a truth effect stemming from the absoluteness of the words. Here is a discussion from 2010 in Zeytinburnu Ülkü Ocağı:

S: The only solution is to fight. They will cut as too of course but eventually we will kill.

H: Why man? Fight the outsider powers instead of them. Didn't they fight among us in Çanakkale or War of Independence?

S: No, look up! They are all documented. The Kurds didn't fight among us.

R: Oh S. man you have allergic to the Kurds.

S: I know their anatomy.

R: Man we shouldn't generalize, we have Kurdish friends too.

G: The best Kurd is the dead one. I swear I didn't see a right one. They are either in drug business, gun smuggler or they are selling women. Actually I only know tradesman among them. But most of them are dirty you know.¹⁶²

The sentences from the above quote such as “The only solution is war” or “Look at the documents” or “The best Kurd is a dead one” are examples of the clear-cut claims that always arise in a certain incisive rigidity. This specific performance of telling produces an atmosphere in which the other is constructed in a sharpness of

¹⁶² Focus group interview with S, H, R and G

emotions. The state, the politics, the pose and the community itself are also constructed and presented in the same rigidity.

It can be argued that these rigid claims lack a certain level of modesty. The proposals of violence as the only solution and the claim of essential evil inside the other are all examples of these simple, direct, fundamental and rigid judgments. But, how can they be so sure about what they propose? I argue in my analysis that the more rigid the claims that are spoken out, the higher the truth effect they produce in that environment, which makes the community more cohesive and sharper. Thus, the level of rigidity of these arguments becomes the determinant factor of the degree of pathos and the level of solidarity created around it. In conclusion, both the experience of the extreme and the discursive construction of the other in a sharpness produce the passionate side of the pathos. In the following part, I will discuss the tragic side of pathos that includes pain and frustration.

The affects that I will discuss are embedded to a certain extent in the narratives, memories and myths of the community. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the significance of the narration of *ülküci* community's own history, which gives a clue about the affective dynamics of the community. Here, I will discuss *ülküci* youth's relation to their own history, their political party - MHP, the state and its institutions and the historical figures of the movement around the affect of 'intimacy'. In this part, I will show that the nostalgia of the lost intimacy has various dimensions: First, the tragedy stems from the loss of intimacy in party politics. Second, in their perspective, the intimacy is lost in the process of the general transformation of politics from idealism to pragmatism. Third, loss of intimacy deepens in the increasing withdrawal of violence from micro politics of *ülküci* movement as a whole and last, the intimacy gets lost in the disidentification

of *ülküci* movement with the state and with the so called “heroes” of the movement after the coup d’etat in 1980.

As I have demonstrated “sacrifice” is an important theme for the *ülküci* *pathos*; the more the leaders of the movement try to carry the party to the center of the political spectrum and the more the state softens its vocabulary on Kurdish question, the more the *ülküci* subjectivities feel a “loss of intimacy” and detachment of invested affects from their own politics. I will now discuss this process of loss of intimacy connected with the macro-political transformations in Turkey.

As I have noted before, the *ülküci* movement has lost its significance in the 2000s in comparison to their political performance and significance in the political scene in 1970s and in 1990s. Beginning with the imprisonment of the leader of Kurdish movement Abdullah Öcalan in 1999, PKK has withdrawn from Turkish territories and declared truce on different occasions. For a couple of years, the Kurdish movement seemed to be ceased. Although violent conflicts between the state and Kurdish movement continued, the war never reached its intensity in 1990s. Considering this information together with Bahçeli’s effort to make the party look more on the central right with a softer standpoint than MHP’s former leader Alparslan Türkeş, we can say that *ülküci* movement has lost its significance as “the patriotic warrior” in the public space.¹⁶³

At the end of 1990s, MHP’s votes have risen after the party’s new leader Bahçeli has attempted to carry the party closer to the center of the political spectrum by softening their vocabulary of politics,¹⁶⁴ ordering the *ülküci* youth to present

¹⁶³ “Ahmet Türk: Barış olursa CHP ve MHP'nin varlık sebebi ortadan kalkar”, *Marksist*, April 12, 2013. Available online at: <http://www.marksist.org/haberler/11041-ahmet-turk-baris-olursa-chp-ve-mhpnin-varlik-sebebi-ortadan-kalkar> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013).

¹⁶⁴ Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can; *Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP*, İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi, 2004. Pp. 435-457.

themselves through success rather than violence.¹⁶⁵ For some of the *ülkücü* youth, who miss the more “intimate” and “emotional” reactions of the movement and party as a whole, this produced an alienation from the party. The softening of MHP discourse cut off the libidinal links of affectionate attachment between the party and its community because intimacy, as an effect, plays a crucial role in the construction of *ülkücü* subjectivity, as I will demonstrate below.

This existing discomfort with today’s leader, Devlet Bahçeli, finds its place implicitly in the historical analyses of *ülkücü* youth about their own past. One of the important dimensions of today’s narrative about the past is the “golden days” of the *ülkücü* movement. In the discussions, they narrate their history by contrasting the golden days of the past and the “degeneration” of today’s *ülkücü* movement. In their stories, the “old days” represent a time of intimacy and “real” idealism when the *ülkücü* militants were ready to sacrifice their lives in a state of complete and true altruism. For today’s *ülkücü* youth, the older brothers of the *ülkücü* community are the individuals, who are moral, brave, sincere and loyal to the “*dava*”,¹⁶⁶ who would risk their lives for it. However, this nostalgia of good-old-days in the *ülkücü* vocabulary does not rest on heroic names of the past, but rather implies a temporal and affective form of the movement in history. It is as if the past figures of the movement represent the *ülkücü* subjectivities, which can completely fulfill the ideal *ülkücü* image. H.’s comments on this demonstrate this fact clearly:

¹⁶⁵ Cem Küçük, “Ülkücü Hareket Engellendi - 2” *Yeni Şafak* January 13, 2012. Available online at: <http://yenisafak.mobi/yazarlar/CemKucuk/%C3%BClk%C3%BCc%C3%BC-hareket-engellendi--2/35114> (Accessed last on September 15, 2013)

¹⁶⁶ For the first time in this thesis, I mention the word ‘*dava*’ that is the linkage to the *ülkücü* ideology after the big ideal (*ülkü*). As I have discussed in the fantasy of *ülküçülük*, ‘*dava*’ is still not an aim of creating the turan (The merge of the Turkish states from Anatolia to Middle Asia) like the ‘*ülkü*’ mentioned in Gökalp’s or Atsız’s texts but it is a fantasy of fulfilling the ideal *ülkücü* subject position.

H: See Oktay Vural came and made an announcement, saying we are no longer a party of ideology. Well in that case I naturally ask for what reason so many *ülküci* have died. Ideological parties get always lesser votes but they are more intimate.¹⁶⁷

So, we see that if the party makes more pragmatic moves, the feeling that the deaths of old *ülküci* youngsters become waste. Thus, it gives the impossibility to register their deaths in the meaningful framework about the past, which they have invested their affects.

Moreover, the discourse of "good-old days" also rests on the death of their revered leader "başbuğ"- Alparslan Türkeş.¹⁶⁸ For most of them, Türkeş is their real leader rather than Bahçeli or even Atatürk. The change of leadership in MHP implicitly points out to a change in the politics experienced in everyday relations. In that sense, they believe that the party has become more pragmatic and has moved toward the center of the political spectrum. This break represents a radical change from the times of "idealism" into the times of "pragmatism" as they put it in their own words.

Following parts of an interview constitute an illustrative example for this change in their state of mind and for the myths they have constructed around their former leader:

R: Now a differentiation is being made as before and after Türkeş, but this is wrong. It is as if *Başbuğ* was a hawk and Bahçeli is a pigeon. Look, Türkeş didn't want to see any *ülküci* suffering, even from a bleeding nose. But Türkeş was intimate. He didn't make any politics; still if he was alive we wouldn't even dream of being in the government.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Interview with H

¹⁶⁸ Alparslan Türkeş is the first person who founded the first radical nationalist party CKMP. Since that time until his death in 1997, he had been the leader of the *ülküci* movement.

¹⁶⁹ Interview with R.

At this point there is an interesting dilemma in two dimensions. First of all, although the past represents the good-old days of the *ülküciü* movement, they continuously question the fact that their idealism, patriotism, innocence and braveness was manipulated by the state and they were canalized to kill socialists in the bloodshed of 1970s. Secondly, although they are in a state of nostalgia about the past that denotes the passionate and sincere days, at the same time, they seem to have internalized the mainstream liberal perspectives about the "irrationality" of the same period.

R: Those times have passed. Now the *ülküciüs* won't follow any provocations. I mean in here there wouldn't be any event similar to the events in İzmir. If it occurs, it will be done by the people, the *ülküciüs* are deliberative on these matters now.¹⁷⁰

As it can be seen in these excerpts, politics is used in two opposite ways. On the one hand, "doing politics" means being pragmatic, non-idealistic and insincere; on the other hand, the word "politics" is also used in defining "intimacy" because politics also means sacrifice in this age for the *ülküciü* community. They have an explicit comparison between being "political" as opposed to politically apathetic youth. In this vocabulary, they are proud of being "political" because for them it means that they are ready to sacrifice something in order to be political in a sense of idealism and altruism. On the contrary, the radical nationalists depict the political apathy of the contemporary youth as hedonistic.¹⁷¹ For them, this apathy implies an hedonistic existential meaning of life attributed with consumerism as a life with pleasures, opportunities and luxury. As I have stated before, the same theme is encountered in the discourse about the distancing of new MHP from idealism on behalf of pragmatism. Here is another quote denoting this altruism in a state of nostalgia:

¹⁷⁰ Interview with R.

¹⁷¹ Hedonistic is deployed as opposed to altruistic.

R: No one has true belief any more. No one would die for anything anymore. In the past both the leftist and rightist were more intimate. There is no politics in high schools anymore, let alone high schools, not even in the universities. I don't know, we are really troubled about this issue. The old, believing youth is no more. Of course the drugs came into this issue. The new generation is clubber you know. They don't deal with politics. Me for instance and I am sure the left as well are seeking for the old days. In the 90's there were pill dealers on the streets. When I say pill, it's extacy you know. You know it's like the state deliberately dealt drugs or it closed its eyes to it. Those pills drained a whole generation.¹⁷²

Following the idea of “politics as intimacy”, violence fulfills the affect of intimacy through a sense of bravery inside the *ülküci* vocabulary. For them violence does not mean the absence of any language. On the contrary, violence in itself is a language that speaks in a particular form. Besides, this is the communication of intimacy among the bodies inside the community. Like the slogan of “Say shoot we shoot, say die we die!”¹⁷³ addressed to Bahçeli,¹⁷⁴ the vocabulary of violence calls its receivers into a state of intimacy, idealism and honesty. It is positioned by the *ülküci* youth as opposed to the hypocrisy of liberal macro politics and to the circulating discourses of democracy. In that respect, that vocabulary of violence invites the radical nationalists to the authenticity, honesty and the solidarity of brotherhood. It stands against the artificial politeness of bourgeoisie and emphasizes the sincerity in the naturalness and spontaneity of violence. Following excerpt shows this affection clearly:

E: What would you sit and talk with them? Talking, finding a mid position is intellectual crap. In that case we always lose at the table. But we always have fought with honor.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Interview with R.

¹⁷³ Translated from: “Vur de vuralım, öl de ölelim!”

¹⁷⁴ See chapter I.

¹⁷⁵ Interview with E.

Both as a language for the solution to the problems and as an invitation to intimacy, violence is perceived as an act of honesty and refinement. Thus, violence produces the affect of pride simultaneously with intimacy. At this point, it is understandable why the *ülküçü* community has lost its affective bonds with the leader cadre of the party, after the party's efforts to refrain the *ülküçü* youth from violence. The absence of violence in the performance and the vocabulary produces disaffection for the subjectivities. The more the party internalizes the liberal discourses of democracy, tolerance and non-violence, the less the *ülküçü* youngsters feel the *pathos* as a totality in their movement. As the intensified-aggressive moments of moving and clashing discourses praising violence constitute temporary excitements, strengthening the bonds; the liberal discourses of tolerance and democracy circulating in the mainstream cut off the libidinal bonds of the members to the macro-politics by inviting them into calmness.

Furthermore, this intimacy of violence has another dimension: This vocabulary of violence as intimacy provides a phallic energy to the body of the *ülküçü* subjectivity because this kind of masculinity proves itself through heroism, altruism and machismo. It brings the subject closer to his ultimate nightmare of protecting the holy belongings of the community. The vocabulary of violence as bravery and intimacy transforms the body into a state of arousal and alertness. This urgent invitation for intimacy and alertness keeps the body ready to prove masculinity, braveness and sacrifice as if the members who would not prove this intimacy would be excommunicated. Therefore, there is a continuous implicit shaming of those who try to refrain from praising violence in the discourses. As the loss of idealism and violence is a signifier of loss of intimacy; the emphases on the necessity of violence and power are the attempts to bring the intimacy again back to

the community where it has been lost. In the next part, I will deal with these attempts of bringing back the nostalgia to the temporality of present through the claims for violence and power.

Here, my analysis of *ülküci* vocabulary will show their fluttering trust in power and its ability to solve problems. Contrary to the liberal paradigm, which sees power and violence as illegitimate tools of governance, they believe in the force of violence and power. This is an aspect that all of them share and defend in a coherent manner albeit at different degrees. I believe that the belief and trust in power is one of the significant themes in *ülküci* narratives. They seem convinced that if the Turkish state were more powerful, it could have solved the Kurdish problem before. As the following claims indicate, they believe that power always attracts people and there would be no resistance if the suppression would be harsher. This claim has the potential to move the subject towards the necessity of violence.

R: The soldier must definitely make his power felt in there. I mean I don't understand how a state can allow a terrorist to live. If you don't strike, they in fact get their strength from that.

R: PKK taking food, taking guns from villages by force... It is all because of the absence of state in that area. If the state were powerful there, why would that man even need to help PKK? If the army can establish its hegemony, none of those would happen. There is an absence of authority. Well, naturally the people would follow the stronger.

R: Well, it's not only the army, the teachers or religious functionaries can handle that as well. Assemble a board of experts, and state shall make its power felt there.¹⁷⁶

Any radical nationalist convinced by this claim carries the paradox of accepting the state as incompetent/impotent while he invests in his ideal image of omnipotence of the state. On the one hand, this discourse of power intrinsically emphasizes the need for a more authoritarian state in such conditions; on the other hand, R.'s claim that "this state is not our state", was a sign of their detachment from the state. This

¹⁷⁶ Interview with R

disaffection from the state is the result of both a disruption of their libidinal bonds with the state because “the weak state” is not something for them to invest in and the feeling of resentment¹⁷⁷ against the state.

Hence they have a philosophy of power. However, it would be misleading to think of their philosophy of power and human nature only inside the framework of functionalist approach. They do not believe in violence and power only because they are the optimum solutions. But also, they believe in power and violence because the exercise of power and violence is the space where they can claim sovereign and bring back the lost idealism, sacrifice of death, and the experience of extreme.

Beside this affectionate detachment from the state in the absence of violence and power, risking the death also points out to the need for violence as a final and absolute solution at the ultimate point of total surrender or total victory. The need for simple and fundamental solutions is an implicit flow in many of the sentences. The *ülküücü* youth assume that the discourses of democracy only transform simple issues into complicated questions. In that respect, according to them, making the problems complex is another strategy of “polite liberals” and socialists. The authentic and refined character of violence becomes clear in their discourses:

S: The only solution is to fight. They will cut as too of course but eventually we will kill.

S: The genetics of them is obvious. Didn't they sell us when America enters Iraq? The solution to that matter is war. There is no peace without a war.

R: I swear, I don't even want to see two friends fisting each other in this beautiful country.

S: It is the state man! Not a fight between friends! The states are founded by wars.¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁷ Resentment to the state will be discussed in detail in following parts.

¹⁷⁸ Focus group interview with S and R.

Hence, I argue that the politics as they perceive depend on the basis of violence and force. They believe that, even though people talk about democracy and “other liberal stuff”, at the end of the day, the powerful one always wins. We can conclude from their discourses that the discussions about democracy and legitimacy are just seen as breaks between the real times of war and violence. The final and absolute determinant is the power and violence. This is both a functionalist and an affectionate celebration of violence. As the absence of violence leads to the loss of intimacy, the feeling of betrayal by the state also participates to the detachment from the invested object such as the state or any of its institutions. Below, I will discuss this feeling of betrayal inside the *ülküci* community.

If the non-violent attempts of the state to solve the Kurdish question, such as the “peace process” and “liberal discourses” for democratic reforms, lead to a detachment of the *ülküci* subjectivity from the state, then it is important to look at the violent face of the state and its institutions to see their affective relation to the state. Here, one can notice that there is an intense circulation of discourses about the “deep-state” practices in the past. There are tales narrated about the war, mentioning how the secret security departments such as JITEM¹⁷⁹ killed and tortured people. So, contrary to one’s expectations of *ülküci* youth’s denial of violent experiences of the state against the Kurds, they actually acknowledge the existence of such violent practices conducted by formal state institutions.

Moreover, there is magic in this vocabulary that compels the *ülküci* youth towards the violent rituals of the state. However, the magic does not produce an affectionate attachment to the state and its institutions¹⁸⁰. On the contrary, we can

¹⁷⁹ JITEM is attributed to be the counter-guerilla organization founded and led by the army in the 1990s in order to fight against the Kurdish political and armed movement.

talk about the existence of resentment and disapproval of state's violent face in the *ülküci* vocabulary. So, it is an interesting dilemma that on the one hand the *ülküci* community celebrates the violence of the state, detaches from the state in the absence of violence and there is a compelling magical vocabulary about the counter-guerilla organization of the state; but, on the other hand, they do not approve the violence exercised by the very same organization. I argue it is because of the fact that they feel betrayed by the state when they were punished during the military rule in 1980s.

Therefore, this resentment of *ülküci* movement against the Turkish state dates back to the 1980 military coup when many radical nationalists were imprisoned alongside the members of the socialist groups.¹⁸¹ During this period, when he was also imprisoned- the eternal-leader and the most prominent figure of MHP and *ülküci* movement, Alparslan Türkeş has said “We are inside but our ideas are outside.”, which implied that the military rule and their policies are in line with MHP's politics even though the militants of radical nationalist movement were imprisoned. The *ülküci* youth have been gradually detached from the ideological core of the state in the subsequent decades and have been in a coddled resentment against the state. As one of my interviewees said:

R: Well I am at equal stance to both the state and the organization (PKK). This state is not our state.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰ The affective distance between the army and *ülküci* is bilateral. Ayşegül Altınay argues that the Turkish army dreaming of construction an elite nation has always put a distance towards the 'common' *ülküci* community. Ayşe Gül Altınay and Tanıl Bora, “Ordu Militarizm ve Milliyetçilik”, in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 152.

¹⁸¹ Mete, Ömer Lütfü, “Türk Milliyetçiliği’ne Sivil Bir Bakış”, in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 699.

¹⁸² Interview with R.

The feelings toward the state also include the sense of being cheated, deceived, used and fooled by the state. It is common in the discourses about the time period right before the 1980 coup and afterwards that “the state has used them” against the socialist movement and then “threw them” in jail.

R: Right now we are acting extra carefully because we don’t want to fall into a provocation. The state has always used the *ülküçü* movement of its own benefit. And then it threw it away. This is known by the every *ülküçü* at any position in the movement.¹⁸³

The same resentment is also directed against the politicians of MHP in the National Assembly. In one incident, after one of their *ülküçü* friends stabbed two anarchist students from Istanbul Lisesi, the *ülküçü* attacker Z. has been caught by the police. This incident, which I also remember from my high school years, started from a fight between radical nationalists and the anarchists in the same high school. One of the *ülküçü* youngsters was the son of a member of parliament at that time. It is said that Z. had been invited by the son of the deputy in order to take the revenge of that confrontation. *Ülküçü* youngsters that I have interviewed had been complaining about the fact that the member of the parliament did not look after Z. when the police took him into custody and brought him to the court.

H: Zafer went and made an event for them. Father of that child, even though he was a member of the parliament, did not back Zafer. They left him alone with polices and the courts.¹⁸⁴

In line with this resentment, the significance attributed to the heroic figures of the movement is not as remarkable for the *ülküçü* youth in Zeytinburnu as one would assume for their collective memory. *Ülküçü* community in Zeytinburnu does not share the heroic historical perception of old *ülküçü* militants. They have doubts on the well-known heroes of *ülküçü* movement, such as Abdullah Catli, whose secret

¹⁸³ Interview with R.

¹⁸⁴ Interview with H.

relations with the state officials have been revealed two decades ago¹⁸⁵. Both the revelation of the role-model heroes' compliance with the state in Susurluk and the feeling of being cheated by the state contribute to this resentment.

This loss of intimacy and the resentment of the *ülküciü* community contribute to another dimension of the vocabulary, to the poetics of pain. Considered together with the feeling of sacrifice to reach the intimacy, the tragic side of the pathos is produced through the poetics of pain as an underlying sense of vocabulary. The poetics of pain refers to the aesthetization of subalternity¹⁸⁶ This aesthetization of subalternity is consisted of their invested love into arabesque music, of the circulating catchphrases claiming a painful experience, of a praise to destitution and of individual rebellions to everyday conditions of life. The feeling of altruism created around the experience of sacrifice goes hand in hand with this aesthetization of subalternity.

However, the daily poetics of subalternity of *ülküciü* community does not seem to be transferred into a political language as the leftist discourse builds its poetics on this romance of subalternity. Yet, I strictly want to emphasize that, although this aesthetics of subalternity seems quite detached from politics, the affect that it inscribes on the body does have a powerful effect on the micro politics of the urban space. On the one hand the individual poetics of pain, frustration and resentment do not communicate with the macro-politics directly. On the other hand, however, the loss of intimacy, the poetics of pain and the language of violence as an absolute solution prepare these bodies of the community for violent encounters with Kurds. The vocabulary and the affects risen from it can easily be converted into

¹⁸⁵ Tanıl Bora and Kemal Can; Devlet ve Kuzgun: 1990'lardan 2000'lere MHP, İstanbul. İletişim Yayınevi, 2004. Pp. 420

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. 258

hatred, anger and loathing against the other because violence is a commensurable tool for catching the lost intimacy, again, in the daily politics of the locale in Zeytinburnu. This seems to provide an implicit and subtle legitimacy for the radical nationalist subjectivity to accept the *challenge*¹⁸⁷ proposed by the Kurds, stemming from the daily feeling of frustration and nostalgia. This canalization of the romance of subalternity into violence against the other is materialized through the linkage of encounters, which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

In conclusion, all these dynamics of vocabulary provide certain affects to be in circulation inside the community. When I look at this vocabulary as a totality, I see the epic tragedy¹⁸⁸ of *ülküçü* movement produced in those narratives. Thus, this vocabulary of pain, excitement, hatred, sacrifice and war is the pathos of the *ülküçü* movement, which moves their bodies into certain directions for possible violent encounters. This tragedy compels the people by calling the bodies into honesty, sacrifice, braveness and war.

All the words in the vocabulary of their tragedy come out spontaneously and the act of telling as a performance produces the experience of this tragedy both as real and as virtual. Their tragedy is the sorrow of the dead militants of *ülküçü* movement and of the waste bodies of the war, which produces the anger that their efforts in all these years are perceived as in vein. Looking from a distance, this is the passionate and hostile production of the base of encounters. Thus, it provides the necessary narrative to the movement, which is the epic poem of their own life. All those slogans, abusive words, interrogative questions, threats of braveness move

¹⁸⁷ The concept of challenge will be elaborated in chapter V.

¹⁸⁸ Tragedy not in terms of a sense of sadness, but as a total narrative in its integrity and consistency

them to the extreme limits and they show that they are able to go to that limit through this vocabulary.

As Blanchot argues, every community creates its own solidarity at the risk of death.¹⁸⁹ *Ülkücü* youth believes that they risk facing death virtually or in reality and challenge that ultimate point of non-existence through their vocabulary and violence. I argue that the *ülküçü* movement is the eroticism of nationalism because they are the ones who risk going to the limits and take the level of nationalism to its extreme. Clastres analyzes what the figure of warrior represents around the theme of violence in the archeology of primitive society. There he argues that the figure of warrior is the one who is destined to death, who is prestigious, who carries the past wounds of the society and who is in a melancholic state.¹⁹⁰ I find the *ülküçü* experience of nationalism very similar to Clastres' concept of warrior because *ülküçü* subjectivity carries the fantasy of being the one who is brave for risking death, who is well-respected, who is proud of his pains and who is in a state of nostalgia. Thus, they are the eroticism of nationalism and this is the epic tragedy of their story.

¹⁸⁹Maurice Blanchot, *İtiraf edilemeyen Cemaat*, İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1997. Pp. 76.

¹⁹⁰ Pierre Clastres, *The Archeology of Violence*, London, Mit Press, 1997. Pp. 281-322

CHAPTER V

ENCOUNTERS

In this chapter, I will discuss the reasons behind the hostility against Kurds among the *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. I will argue that the hostility against Kurds is constructed and performed in the *urban space* through *encounters* where the radical nationalist body experiences the *challenge* by the Kurd who he has invested fantasies in. Hence, I will state that the other is not constructed in the realm of pure ideas but in the everyday practices and discourses that produce the affects of hostility against the other. This chapter attempts to be the connecting point between the pathos of *ülküci* movement and the violence against Kurds performed by *ülküci* bodies. In that respect, it will be argued that the alert bodies produced by a particular vocabulary of the community encounter with the bodies of the other community and the violence arises as an outcome of this process. The elaboration of this argument would give us the clue about how the discriminative discourses and the exclusionary practices operate against the Kurds on the urban space in western cities.

In order to understand this process, we should change our perspective and rather than looking at the most visible and potential spaces where in our case we cannot find any cruel construction of the Kurd; we should look inside the very normalcy of everyday discourses. There, in their details of micro-politics of the *ülküci* community one can see the traces of phantasmagorical construction of the other and affectively charged self subjectivities that are constituted through daily

encounters with Kurds. Here, the two concepts, *fantasy*¹⁹¹ and *encounter* will help us to construct a theory of hostility not about the imagined other but about the experienced one. This conceptualization will open a clear space to understand most of the ethnically hostile dynamics of the urban space in Zeytinburnu among the *ülküçü* youngsters.

Here, I would like to be in a dialogue with Saraçoğlu's text in terms of demonstrating the divergence and convergences between my perspective and Saraçoğlu's theoretical structure. To begin with the concept of the encounter, Saraçoğlu similarly argues that the ethnically heterogeneous urban space is the topography where the recognition and exclusion emanates and this phenomenon is realized through *the encounters* in that space.¹⁹² His pioneering analysis draws attention to the significance of local dynamics; therefore, he builds his argument on the concept of encounter in the urban space. I also depart from a similar anthropological point by saying that the ethnically heterogeneous urban space is the social terrain where the ecology of hostility and violence comes into existence.

Secondly, for me, the encounter creating the possible violent outcomes is not the encounter between the middle-class, pop-nationalist Turkish subject – who is the research subject of Saraçoğlu¹⁹³ - and the Kurd in the urban space. Rather, it is the encounter between the lower-class, radical nationalist Turkish subject and the Kurdish other in the urban setting, which is the topography of possible violence.

¹⁹¹ Fantasy as a psychoanalytical concept is deployed here to denote the ideal imaginary subject position which can never fully be captured and fulfilled but at the same time which is pursued and yearned desperately. For a fruitful discussion of the concept, please see: Slavoj Žižek, "Fantasy as a Political Category", *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, 2010. Routledge. New York.

¹⁹² Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011. Pp. 27.

¹⁹³ Ibid. 29.

Moreover, Saraçoğlu argues that through these encounters, the middle class Turks have acquainted a *misrecognition* or prejudice about the Kurds.¹⁹⁴ The concept *misrecognition* refers to a “false imagination” about the other, which implies that a “right” cognitive process of constructing the other would save the subject from this “illusion”. However, I argue that the problem is far beyond being a *misrecognition* problem. The construction of hostility is not a cognitive process but it requires an affectionate investment labored by the *ülküciü* body. This is a choice also emphasized by Saraçoğlu, when he says that he deliberately uses the term *discourse* not in a Foucauldian sense but from the perspective of ideology literature.¹⁹⁵ Therefore, I use the word *discourse* in Foucauldian sense as something circulating in power relations, reproducing them, producing affects, filling the bodies, inscribing themselves on the bodies and moving the bodies in certain directions.

As Brubaker notes a certain vein of explanations about the relationship between the other and the self focus on the cultural construction of hatred by rhetorical processes, symbolic resources, and representational forms through which a demonized, dehumanized, or threatening other is constructed.¹⁹⁶ However, I would like to focus on the phantasmagorical construction of otherness that is reproduced and challenged by encounters. These analyses that focus on the representations of otherness take the discourses, visibilities and imaginations about the other as a

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. 146.

¹⁹⁵ He conceptualizes ideology as transferable between people, reproducible something that has the function for the people to give meaning to the world around them. However, my conceptualization of the discourse does not involve *misrecognition*. It is not at the level of language, texts and ideas but it lives inside the performances and affects.

¹⁹⁶ Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence”, *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 24: 1998. Pp. 442.

coherent body of produced knowledge informing a particular type of otherness that is positioned in an asymmetrical relationship with the self.

Alternatively, the construction of the other through fantasies acknowledges the inconsistency of the discourses circulating about the other. Fantasy rather than being a cognitive process, resides on the affectionate investment given by the subject rather than being purely ideological. These two dimensions correspond to *ülküci* imagination about the Kurds properly. Hence, the analysis on the discourses about the other lies outside of any cognitive or rational chain of reasoning. The radical nationalist's glance to politics is not taken as an ideological radicalism but is taken as an affectionate and passionate fanaticism reproduced in their everyday life through fantasies and encounters. At the very heart of the speaking about the other, of the performances of telling, and fantasizing, there lies the economy of production and mobilization of affects. In order to understand the inconsistency of discourses circulated by *ülküci* community about the Kurds, I will show particular quotes from different *ülküci* youngsters:

H: The Kurds don't want to be terrorists but if they don't Pkk will come and burn their villages, shoot their babes and rape their daughters. They have to in a matter. The state has to protect the Kurds from the PKK.¹⁹⁷

Yet, after a while, H. claims the following sentence:

H: Well the Kurds are looking for a reason to rebel. When you look up, if there is backwardness, a crime, treason; the Kurds are there. Well they have some things too.

S: There have been wrong political actions on the Kurds. Now the state made some mistakes too of course.

S: They are Armenians anyway. There is nothing they can be fixed I believe.

R: Now, violence is not something we approve. I mean those problems were not solved by violence until this day. The only solution is economic investment and unification under the roof of Islam.¹⁹⁸

At another occasion R. says these:

¹⁹⁷ Interview with H.

¹⁹⁸ Focus group interview with H, R and S.

R: The soldier must definitely make his power felt in there. I mean I don't understand how a state can allow a terrorist to live. If you don't strike, they in fact get their strength from that.¹⁹⁹

In these claims, the Kurds can become both “inherently inclined to treason” and “victims of PKK violence” in the same context. Or the reason behind the problem can be both “the essence of Kurds which cannot be changed over time” and “the policies of the state which made the Kurds enemies of the state” at the same time. In that sense, the fantasies about the Kurds do not correspond to a homogenous entity. Hence, the construction of other does not depend on rational-cognitive processes of mind but rather, it depends on the affectionate investment circulating inside the vocabulary and fantasy of *ülküciü* community that is reproduced and challenged through encounters.

However, fantasy similar to any other perspective about the symbolic construction of otherness, cannot be the sole reason behind hostility and violence performed by *ülküciü* youngsters in Zeytinburnu. As Brubaker notes, such culturalist explanations have a tendency to overpredict ethnic violence²⁰⁰ because at any place on the world we will see the traces of such processes of socially constructed other, whose natural outcome should had been violence at any given place. However, the actual instances of ethnic violence can be considered rare when compared to possible violent conflicts between different identities. Thus, we need other dynamics that contribute to the construction of this hostility.

For the hostility and violence to be properly analyzed, I put forward the concept of encounter. Encounter is the experience where the fantasy about the other and about the self is challenged. This experience of violation of the framework that

¹⁹⁹ Interview with R.

²⁰⁰ Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, “Ethnic and Nationalist Violence”, *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 24: 1998. Pp. 443

the radical nationalist subject already drew for the Kurdish figure leads to the damage of honor where the subject cannot contain the fantasy that he has invested affects in. In making this connection between fantasy and honor, I presuppose that the honor rests on the fantasy that there is an already-well-protected holy space that the transgression and the penetration has been prohibited to the out-of-place bodies of the other community. Thus, the hostility against other springs out through the experience of encounters. In that sense, the differences are not pre-marked on the other's body; the differences come to be materialized in the relationship of touch and visibility between bodies.

Encounters are about the body politics of a given space whether virtual or real.²⁰¹ In this thesis, I am mostly concerned with real encounters in the urban topography of Zeytinburnu. Zeytinburnu is not only the context that these encounters take place but also the district itself is taken as the very part of this encounter. At this point, a theoretical conceptualization of the term “encounter” would be beneficial for the sake of my argument. Encounter does not only involve the micro dynamics of a given space but it also carries the traces of macro-social and political discourses. As Sara Ahmed argues, the framing of the encounter is constructed by broader relationships of power and antagonism and the particular encounter, hence, carries the traces of those broader relationships.²⁰²

Departing from the argument of Ahmed, I will claim that nationalist discourses put into circulation by meaning making institutions contribute to the form and the content of the encounter in certain ways that I will discuss in this chapter. Furthermore, encounters reproduce those broader relations of power on the

²⁰¹ Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, London, Routledge, 2000. Pp. 4.

²⁰² Ibid. 8

locale by involving the production of meaning as a form of sociality. In these experiences, Ahmed states, the bodies of the others are produced through tactile encounters with other bodies.²⁰³ In the following part, I will demonstrate how the encounters between the bodies of *ülküciü* community and of the Kurds produce particular forms of hostility on the urban space of Zeytinburnu.

There are different types of encounters that create diverse experiences of otherness, hostility and affects. Although the nationalist subjectivity is not willing to face the Kurd, the Kurd seems to be always present in the everyday life, at school, on the street, in the workplace, in the market. This is caused by the massive waves of forced migration to the bigger cities when the state displaced Kurds from their villages in the southeastern Turkey. At the peak of assimilationist policies when most of the people did not know or acknowledge the Kurds as a different ethnicity; the Kurd was a “non-existent” category. The Kurdish other was someone from “the east”, from “there”. Thus, the body of the other was not marked by his Kurdishness but by his “eastern accent” in speaking Turkish. That was the image of the Kurd who has been infantilized, ridiculed, transformed into a grotesque figure in mainstream representations and discourses. However, as the Kurds become visible as a different ethnic identity, the western Turkish society witnessed the shifting conditions of encounters when the Kurdishness has been acknowledged by state and media discourses: The Kurd who speaks Kurdish, the Kurd who migrated to the west, the Kurd who is the backward agent of honor killings. Then, by the end of 1990s the political visibility of the Kurd began to be exposed to the western Turkish

²⁰³ Ibid. 10.

bodies.²⁰⁴ The former paradigm constructed on the division between PKK and the Kurds had begun to shake off and crack down through the magnificent Newroz celebrations in the western cities. In this type of encounter, we witness the implicit and subtle conflicts of corporeal expression of political Kurdish community as an exposure to the western Turkish bodies. Hence, the experience of nationalism and the affects inscribed on the body differ according to the type of the encounter. Especially, in an ethnically heterogeneous place like Zeytinburnu, the encounters with the other take place frequently. I have categorized these material and virtual encounters into three types:

- 1) The Kurd speaking Turkish in his own dialect
- 2) The Kurd speaking in Kurdish in daily life
- 3) The Kurd with his political visibility in daily life

I have been inspired by the TV series “Tek Türkiye” in STV which made me think about this categorization. That TV series takes place in the Kurdish region and its main topic is the conflicts about the Kurdish question. There, we witness a similar scale about the representation of the Kurds:²⁰⁵ The good Kurds are the ones who speak proper Turkish. The neutral Kurds depicted as “village people” speak Turkish in their own accent. The worst characters speak in Kurdish who are also the politically visible Kurds either as politicians or as “terrorists”. Thus, the degree of “evilness” increases in relation to the type of language they speak. This imagined encounter of the Kurdish figure by the receiver can be projected towards the urban space as material encounters between Turks and Kurds.

²⁰⁴ Saraçoğlu describes this growing visibility of Kurdish political movement in the western cities in a very detailed analysis. There, he argues that the massive meetings organized by Kurdish parties (HADEP, DTP, BDP) have shown that there is a mass support from Kurdish people to the PKK. See, Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011. Pp. 122.

²⁰⁵ Interview with Adem Demir, *Express*, No. 127 April (2012)

I argue that the hostility arising from the first type of encounter is related to the pop-nationalist experience of otherness. There are two sub-types of pop-nationalist encounters with the Kurds. One is the imaginary encounter which is mediated by representations of Kurds. The second is the Kurd who is encountered in the urban setting and who speaks Turkish in his own accent. The imagined encounters take place at a certain distance, for example in an imaginary setting through the representations of the Kurdish other in mainstream media or in daily narratives where the Kurdish subject is not the real one, but rather an imagined, fictitious one affected from mainstream discourses and stereotypes. This type of encounter is very much affected by the economic and spatial experiences of pop-nationalism. As I have mentioned in Chapter V, in Saraçoğlu's case, where pop-nationalism is effective, the construction of the other rises on the discourses of "*medeniyetsizlik*", "*şehirli olamama*", "*eğitimsizlik*", and "*düzgün konuşamama*". Here is an incident that I witnessed in Zeytinburnu, which can be presented as an example of pop-nationalist experience:

In Zeytinburnu, a friend of *ülküçü* youngsters has come to visit his friends. He was a middle class strong Kemalist from Zeytinburnu who works in a mid-scale company as an account manager. He has a university degree. He also joined to our discussion. It was interesting for me to see that clear-cut division between pop-nationalism and radical nationalism:

K: Well, I have a tolerance on many things of the Kurds. Recently, they hanged a quilt on their balcony after they washed it. Water drops from it. Ignorant people are the Kurds. The man still thinks he lives in his village. I myself for example, while renting my apartment, say to the real estate agency not to rent it to a Kurd. I say to the neighborhood not to rent to Kurds too. I mean this is not discrimination, because they ruin the fabric of the neighborhood. There are problems occurring while taking the rent money. Those reasons are not ethnical. The problems are about civilization. This is completely about their not becoming urbanized. The man comes to my

coffee shop, we talk from time to time. He can't put two words together. I don't understand what he is saying anyway.²⁰⁶

Then, S. intervened to K.'s speech and claimed that "you are talking as if only the Kurds are putting their wet duvets on the balcony". Here, the experience of dispersed nationalisms has come to the foreground. One of the common demands of the Turkish pop-nationalists has always been that the Kurds should speak Turkish in public spaces. Yet, as soon as the Kurds begin to speak Turkish in a Turkish public space, the pop-nationalist Turkish subject immediately distances, alienates and loathes by the very fact that the Kurd speaks Turkish not in a proper way but in his own dialect. At those times, the subject experiences the hatred against the uninvited other which is unbearable for the self. In that space and time, the subject encounters with the insufferable existence of the other. The proximity produces hatred and disgust. In the example above, the water drop from the duvet here embodies the out of hand surplus. The embodied hostility in the form of water drop or in the form of speaking Turkish in a different accent violates the fantasy. It is possible that it may have been appeared in the form of dirt: "The Kurds are dirty". When the distance is shook off, the normalcy of the situation begins to crumble. As Stuart Hall brilliantly puts forward: "Dirt in the garden is fine but dirt in one's bedroom is a matter out of place: It is a sign of pollution, of symbolic boundaries being transgressed and creates the need to bring back the normal state of affairs".²⁰⁷ This type of encounter is sourced from a pop-nationalist aesthetics of Kurdishness²⁰⁸ which is fundamentally different from the radical nationalist experience of otherness.

²⁰⁶ Interview with K.

²⁰⁷ Stuart Hall; "The Spectacle of the Other", in *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, eds. Stuart Hall, London, SAGE Publicaton, 1997. Pp. 236.

²⁰⁸ See Chapter III.

The second type of encounter is unique because it involves the spatial dynamics of the urban terrain and it represents the Kurdish other who speaks in his own language, Kurdish. The mediated encounter mentioned above has a different temporality because whatever the image refers whether past or future; it is always pre-designed and presented by another mediator. However, face-to-face encounters in which the other represents himself generously in his own identity are in the temporality of present. The act of political self-representation is generous since it is proudly performed by the Kurdish bodies on the urban space and that is why, it is perceived as an arrogant and shameless move of the other by the *ülküçü* body. This type of encounter is the form where we can analyze the *ülküçü* experience of the Kurd. Here we can see the particular dynamics of radical nationalist hostility coming into existence.

At this point, it is important to make a conceptualization of the term “space” as I have argued that space is the direct agent of the affects inscribed on the bodies of *ülküçü* youngsters. In our case Zeytinburnu as an ethnically heterogeneous space is the social landscape of encounters. I have already demonstrated the scene in *Depo* – the central square of the district – where the corners taken by *ülküçü* bodies claiming their existence and sovereignty over the locale. So, the space operates through the claim of ownership by the subjectivities. In that sense, the Kurdish talk on an “*ülküçü*-owned” space takes up the form of an exposure and challenge. Sara Ahmed argues: “There are some-bodies who simply are strangers, and who pose danger in their very co-presence in a given street”.²⁰⁹ In the case of Zeytinburnu, the strangeness of the Kurdish body is not marked with a visual dimension if the Kurdish body does not present his political claim through visual symbols. Rather the

²⁰⁹ Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, London, Routledge, 2000. Pp. 6.

transgression of the owned space (The central square in Zeytinburnu, Depo) happens when the strange body begins to talk in his own language: Kurdish. By this experience of being challenged by the very fact the Kurd speaks Kurdish in an *ülküci*-owned space, “the outsider takes on a spatial function, establishing relations of proximity and distance within the homeland. Outsiders allow the demarcation of spaces of belonging: by coming too close to home, they establish the very necessity of policing the borders of knowable and inhabitable terrains.”²¹⁰

For an analysis of this type of encounter, here are some excerpts from the conversations:

S: A man sits next to me in a shared taxi. He talks Kurdish on the phone. Do I have to listen to that? Think about it, there is someone next to you, saying some things that you don't understand. Wouldn't that annoy you?

A: Why? It's his language; of course he can talk it between them.

S: Man, that is not the problem. Of course he can talk. But I am sure that they both know Turkish. It's like he does that on purpose. As if he *challenges* in a way. It's only show I believe (emphasis added).

Z: Recently, M. came by. He asked to play rummikub. I said we were only two and asked how we would play. He said we can some people in the coffee house. The coffee house belongs to A. You know there are a lot of Kurds there. Anyway we looked at the coffee house. There were two boys from Diyarbakır that M. knew. We said fine, there were people we knew. We started to play, M. and I was a team and they were the other team. We were playing against each other. After a while, they started to talk Kurdish between themselves. I said that, if you were going to talk, talk Turkish. How would I know they weren't cheating or anything? We were playing a game and they ruined it. I noticed they weren't giving a fuck. I took the cue and hit to his head. There was blood all over his face, you can't even imagine.²¹¹

The spaces that these events had happened are the most central public spaces of Zeytinburnu. Here, we witness that the encounter between the Kurd with his claimed identity and the *ülküci* body reconstitutes the bodies and boundaries between them. Before the Kurdish body speaks Kurdish, his difference is not marked as a political category on which the hatred and hostility can be built. As

²¹⁰ Ibid. 3.

²¹¹ Focus group interview with S, A and Z.

Ahmed puts forward, it is through the strange encounters the figure of the stranger is produced.²¹²

In these examples, we see that the Kurdish as a foreign language but not only by this peculiar fact that it is foreign - because we cannot assume same affects would be inscribed on radical nationalist bodies when someone speaks in English – but also by the very fact that Kurdish does not belong to this space; is perceived as a challenge for the *ülküci* body. As soon as the other begins to speak in a politically threatening language, Kurdish; the degree of unbearableness intensifies. There is an anger produced by the very fact that the other now exists in a shell of mystery in which there might exist whole fantasies attributed by the *ülküci*: The Kurdish does not communicate only the unknown but also the possibility of inherently subversive plans of the Kurds. In that mysterious shell of the language – Kurdish, there exists the hatred produced once for the PKK. This incapability of not knowing what the other speaks, turns the nationalist subject mad and angry. The subject seeks the hidden truth behind the curtain of Kurdish and this curiosity pushes the subject to uncover this curtain. The violence pops up as a reaction to this unknown space where the other represents its identity generously. However, it is not only the mystery of the unknown but most importantly - whatever the Kurd speaks in Kurdish; it is more about violating the boundaries of the *ülküci*-owned space. The Kurdish speaking other produces the feeling of a “challenge” through the Kurd’s generous exposure of his identity. Thus, in such encounters the local exchange of affects comes into existence.

The third category of encounters is the representation of the Kurdish identity by Kurdish bodies in a political manner. This form of encounter is not

²¹² Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, London, Routledge, 2000. Pp. 3

fundamentally different from the second type of encounter. Mostly, the degree of unbearableness of the Kurdish figure increases in such cases where the Kurd claims his political visibility on the urban space. Here, the *ülküci* youngsters claim that they feel an intense sense of provocation and threat. Also, the represented political identity of the Kurdish body is already marked as the other in the scopic regime of the locality.

Whereas the accent and the foreign language mark the body of the ethnic other in second type of encounters, visual image of the political other is signified by the flag or dresses with holy-fetishistic “*trois couleurs*” of Kurdish movement: Yellow, green, red. Zeytinburnu is one of the most proper places to understand this nervous relationship between political visibility of Kurds and *ülküci* community. In Zeytinburnu, the Kurdish political movement has a firm base and in recent years they usually make their political meetings such as the Newroz celebrations of İstanbul in Kazlıçeşme, Zeytinburnu. Therefore, Zeytinburnu is a politically charged space of conflicting movements and communities.²¹³

In the territorial organization of the space in Zeytinburnu, such encounters always create a tension between Kurds and *ülküci* youngsters. As Sara Ahmed also points out, encounters between embodied others involve spatial negotiations.²¹⁴ While the *ülküci* pose and performance of taking the corners at the center of Zeytinburnu constitutes the place as “nationalist”; the Kurdish political march seems to reconstitute the space in a different way which disturbs the *ülküci* fantasy and its settled hierarchical regime in the district. The power of the *ülküci* community gets

²¹³ I have already mentioned the *ülküci* visibility in the neighborhood in the chapter on Zeytinburnu.

²¹⁴ Sara Ahmed, *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*, London, Routledge, 2000. Pp., 24.

challenged by the implicit fact that the *ülküci* youngsters' first mission is to protect the owned space against any violations of borders. Feldman points out to a similar point in his article on Belfast and visibility: "Spatial domination implicitly connects scopical regimes with the spatialized politics of nationalism and related projects of topographic control."²¹⁵

The *ülküci* youngsters' discourse on this issue clearly shows the sense of provocation created by Kurdish politics in the space:

R: Ulaş, those men made a meeting here in Kazlıçeşme, they all opened flags of the PKK. Ok come here and celebrate what you want. But you can't open a PKK flag.

S: It's good if it were only PKK flag. During the last election running, that Sırrı Süreyya came here. He was walking in the neighborhood, with a lot of Kurdish people behind him. Some of them had placards of Abdullah Öcalan in their hands.

A: Look Ulaş, you know me. There are Kurds in my coffee house. I don't say a bad word to any of them but a man came and delivered election brochures of the BDP. He was also talking Kurdish with the people he knew. I've got angry and said: "You can't come in here if you start to make political acts. There are people here from every view. Don't disturb them."

H: There is a limit to everything. You say democracy you know, but if you become a PKK activist in the name of democracy, I fuck that democracy. For example, how come they can have a protests on the streets with PKK flags, terrorist uniforms etc.²¹⁶

The example above shows us clearly that there are certain actions which are unbearable and unacceptable for "*ülküci*ler". They implicitly attempt to put a limit on to what extent the Kurds can politically represent themselves in the public sphere. The ownership of the space is a nervous symbolic struggle for *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. Actually, we cannot claim that there is an equal representation of politically visible performances of both sides. Except the political marches, the space can be argued to belong to the category of Turkishness already. However, this Turkishness of the space is perceived in the normalcy of everyday life as neutral for

²¹⁵ Allen Feldman, "Violence and Vision: The Prosthetics and Aesthetics of Terror", *Public Culture*, 10 (1997): Pp. 47.

²¹⁶ Focus group interview with R, S, A and H.

the *ülküci* bodies. That's why, they claim that the "Turkishness" of public sphere becomes challenged at those times when the Kurds represent themselves in their political identity. They cannot bear the feeling that there is the "other", the Kurd in that space and the other represents itself generously, breaching consensual norms of the very constitution of the space.

Until this point, I analyzed the form of the construction of hostility against the Kurds. It was an answer to the question how the hatred and hostility comes into existence as a form of social experience between embodied others. Now, it is time to answer the question what exists beyond this hostility that causes the politically always-already charged bodies of *ülküci* community. In Saraçğlu's case among the pop-nationalists, he argued that it was the neoliberal transformation behind these exclusionary discourses against the Kurds because as the neoliberal transformation has pushed the middle class subjects into precarious life conditions; they have blamed the Kurds for the deepening of their own suffering. Alternatively, in my case about the radical nationalists in Zeytinburnu, I argue that it is the state institutions' and mainstream discourses of media that are reproduced and circulated among society²¹⁷ charged the bodies with affects of anxiety, hatred and hostility against Kurdish people in an indirect way. Thus, we cannot externalize state, its institutions and particularly pornographic presentation of the war by mainstream media from this hostility. The hostile discourse of state and the media since years have produced affects in the public that are canalized, stick and attached to the Kurds in daily relations through the political visibility of Kurds, especially in last two decades, where the state-led discursive division between PKK and the Kurds get erased. In the following part, I will try to explain this process in detail:

²¹⁷ For an analysis of state-led mobilization of nationalism in Turkey, see Tanıl Bora, and Nergis Canefe, "Türkiye'de Popülist Milliyetçilik", in *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 635-642.

We should not forget that in all the years of ongoing war, PKK has been represented as a monstrous, subversive, divisive, evil, dehumanized and hostile entity. The official discourse has rested on the quasi-separation of Kurdish people and the PKK: The strategic movement was to claim the absence of massive support for the PKK. According to this discourse, there was no grass-roots support for the PKK in the Kurdish population. So, there is a constructed space where the affects of hate, anxiety and hostility towards PKK generated by the state's and mainstream media's discourses are concentrated, invested and accumulated. This space is the body of the *ülküci* subjectivity and this affect did not diminish in peace time but stays there as a surplus effect of all those invested, inscribed discourses. Hence, the western Turkish public has invested in this fantasy that the PKK has no basis inside the Kurdish community. In the meantime, there was a massive increase of Kurdish population in the western metropolitan areas. These Kurds beginning with the Newroz celebrations after the mid of 1990s have presented their support to PKK²¹⁸. Subsequently, the visibility of Kurds both politically and socio-culturally have increased enormously.

So, when the western Turkish public has faced with the magnitude and intensity of the Kurdish political movement in the western metropolises, the illusion has begun to crack and shake off. It has become obvious that the belief about the forced participation to PKK or about the frustration that Kurds suffering under the hands of PKK was not reliable anymore. There has to be an anger and disappointment arising from this crack on the fantasy inside the *ülküci* community. The Kurdish body by transgressing the borders of the framework that the *ülküci*

²¹⁸ Saraçoğlu also underlines a similar point that the Newroz celebrations beginning by the end of 90s in bigger cities in west showed that PKK has a grand basis in Kurdish community: Pkk and Kurds have become identical. See: Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama"ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011.Pp., 121-22

subjectivity has drew for him, disturbed the *ülküciü* body and the *ülküciü* body began to detest.

Hence, political visibility of Kurds made these encounters a challenge for the Turks. So, it is not because the before-assimilating state has left the category of Kurdishness empty since its discourses has left the definition of another ethnicity living inside the same borders empty and the public has filled inside of it, as Saraçoğlu argues.²¹⁹ Or it is neither the case as Gambetti argues that the public has begun to take up the role of the state in creating an exclusive category of Kurdishness. On the contrary, state and the media have always been indirectly involved in the construction of Kurdishness: State and media boosted hate against PKK that has become canalized towards the Kurds as a total homogenous ethnic entity because the war has been presented and marketed so intensely by the state and the media that the invested hate out of this representation has left as a surplus which is subsequently attached and projected to the Kurds.

I have mentioned in the third chapter that the threat perception of the radical nationalists is fundamentally different from the pop-nationalist. The *ülküciü* subjectivity is not threatened through a beauty-dirt dichotomy but by perceived danger of losing *honor*. When “honor” is in circulation; the attributed significance honor goes always hand-in-hand with anxiety. Honor denotes the unbearable anxiety of violation of the owned space and the belongings as in the case of the “owned” feminine body in a culturally-bounded communal structure.²²⁰ Hence, the

²¹⁹ Cenk Saraçoğlu, *Şehir, Orta Sınıf ve Kürtler: İnkâr'dan "Tanıyarak Dışlama'ya*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2011.Pp. 94.

²²⁰ For a similar metaphorical analysis of gendered experience of nationalism see, Nükhet Sirman, “Kadınların Milliyeti”, in *Modern Türkiye’de Siyasal Düşünce: Milliyetçilik*, İstanbul, İletişim Yayınevi, 2002. Pp. 226-245.

concept carries the codes of masculinity and a particular perception of honor derived from these codes within itself. I would like to conceptualize and analyze the term honor and its working inside the *ülküci* community.

As I have argued above, the Turkishness of the space has become challenged and this challenge becomes crystallized in the particular subversively fetishized objects such as flags or dresses with the colors of yellow-green-red. When the *ülküci* subject witnesses the yellow-red-green flags, he feels the affect of being penetrated by the other, which is not a lived perception but is an affect of shame within the body that is scripted by the other. In the circus of Zeytinburnu, there are certain bodies on that space who have the power of surveillance and who represent themselves to the outsider gaze. In such a space of micro-politics, the *ülküci* subjectivity has the most assertive claim of sovereignty over the space. This sovereignty requires continuous laboring of the self-image through daily performances that includes the protection of the space from the others. Therefore, this is an ecology of anxiety of losing the honor for *ülküci* subjectivities.

Furthermore, the ownership of the space is not the only claim of the *ülküci* community. The sense of belonging over the urban space can be questioned by any of the groups mentioned above. However, the *ülküci* assertion both implicitly and explicitly claims the Turkishness of the space that is owned. Thus, the visible Kurdish politics on that specific space produces the sense of violation not only for the *ülküci* community but also for the ordinary people of the district. In other words, considered from the sensitivity of the alert *ülküci* body; the space becomes recaptured by the other, the political Kurd, through the political marches into the terrain and most importantly this has been witnessed by the optics of the “normal” people.

It is a fantasy that the *ülküci* subjectivity invests in; and more importantly, he claims that he owns the space and protects the space in terms of its political color. When the Kurds become politically visible, the *ülküci* body feels the sense of being assaulted. The public (the politics of nationalism) becomes privatized and the borders of the owned spaces become violated by the Kurdish political bodies. This shakes off the settled power relations inside the space because the micro-politics of the neighborhood is determined also by the scopic regime of the topography. Feldman, in his article, focuses on the ethnically charged symbolism of urban space in Belfast both as a consequence of ethnic war and as a reinforcing cause for future violence. There, he argues that marches and processions through the space “owned” by another group have triggered violence in Northern Ireland and India with sufficient regularity and predictability of warrant calling these too rituals of provocation.²²¹

Another dimension, which is deeply connected with the concept of honor is the sense of *leakage*. Leakage means that there is something slipping out of hands, which cannot be taken under control. In our case, *ülküci* bodies feel that all the labored nationalist politics of decades, their investment in the mourning of the dead bodies of the war and their the attempts of protecting the belongings would become in vein if they do not stop the leakage because they have begun to lose what they have attributed to own. In that sense, leakage implies that the settled relations of power are challenged on behalf of the other. The ownership of the space, of nationalism, of violence is questioned while the normal state of affairs goes worse for the community that cannot prevent the leakage. This sense of leakage produces the virtual need for obsessive appropriation of *belongings*. If not prevented, the

²²¹ Allen Feldman, *Formations of Violence: The Narrative of the Body and Political Terror in Northern Ireland*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1991. Pp. 29-30.

process carries the threat and the fatal potentiality to prolong until loss of all community possesses. In that context, because the *ülküci* body has to keep the borders protected against the transgressions and violations; the body becomes intensely sensitive against any possibility of leakage, which also canalizes the hatred and anger against the other, the Kurds. Considered together with the fantasy of the lost nostalgia²²² arising from the loss of intimacy, the melancholia of the past refers and yearns for the good-old days when the belongings were already protected gets intensified inside the body.

Moreover, this concept of leakage discursively connects the micro politics of the urban space to the macro politics of Turkey. As the bodies of the *ülküci* community cannot carry the burden of the lost fantasy when the political visibility of the Kurds enters into urban space, we see a similar feeling of unbearableness when the political leaders of the Kurdish movement speak out on TV channels. Here, we are again faced with a mediated encounter. Here are the reactions against these encounters:

S: At evening, the bitch started to talk. That Gültan Kışanak. They openly want to aggravate people.

R: Last evening, Gültan Kışanak was talking, saying “Öcalan is the leader of the Kurdish people, there is nothing without him.” This inattention needs to be stopped.

H: Until the 2000s, those were the things the West couldn't tolerate. That side was careful about what they said until 2000s. Now they say anything they want.

R: We find them all irritating. There is no special reason for the events in Zeytinburnu. But all of these things had an effect. We can say it's a social reaction. Unleashing the cumulative anger, or forcing the limits of tolerance of the people, the events are because of them.

H: In there, in Diyarbakır, the DTP or the PKK made people go out of business by force. See in Muş, they threw stones to a man's shop just because he didn't close it; after that he shot them with a Kalashnikov. You threaten someone's job. Those people are all looking for provocations. Look what Osman Baydemir said. People hardly contain themselves.

H: They should pray the tolerance of western public opinion.

²²² See Chapter IV.

R: Actually the western public opinion has a high level of tolerance. This actually is traditional for Turkish nation. We are people with tolerance. This tolerance is because of lately occurred belief of unjust treatment. I mean unjust treatment to the Kurds. Social engineering of the media: whether they were massacred, or they don't have roads or hospitals. It's to break the definite lines. I believe the reactions given now are pretty soft, if it were ten years ago, the reactions would be a lot harder.

S: Well all these events, they play with the nerves of the Turkish nation. They are hitting slowly with a sledge so they can make us accept while we get used to that. If they hit hard, it wouldn't be so. They do it slowly.

H: We believe this softening is not good, because, the opposite side would always want more. It's about the education level of the opposite side. If the education is low, they become greedy. For example, look at the Mediterranean geography. Spain, Yugoslavia, Greece. They all had a civil war. Only we didn't have one. It all started like that in those countries. It started like that in Yugoslavia. Always by giving more things. Democratic autonomy means this: "We don't want to separate. Divide the apple into two pieces, half is ours and the other half belongs to both of us."

A: Five months ago, the DTK (Demokratik Toplum Kongresi, Congress of Democratic Society, an organization that involves every aspect of Kurdish political movement, including the BDP) made an election in 48 cities. They voted the democratic autonomy and then they declared democratic autonomy. They established people's courts in Diyarbakır and performed 500 lawsuits. 296 people were fined and all of them, look this one is important, accepted those penalties. We are still sleeping here. We can't accept education in native language. The Turkish nation had this inattention several times in its 5000 years history. They all ended up with chaos. Even the idea of "negotiation" is bad. Afterwards it's followed by "truce". We want everyone to have an hospital. Before were more senseless too. Before we all followed the army. Now we are more sensitive. I am emotional on this subject. I don't want to see any mother crying. I now do not want this. All of our sons will join the army. And in the army my son will become martyr. What motherland, what long live the motherland man. He is my only son. But on the other hand, there is no way we can do this with that sensibility, because you can't stop it by giving and giving more. You have to give, but give what, sending an x-ray apparatus for example.²²³

The intriguing dimension in this anxiety of losing and the need for protecting is that they also ask the question "Were all the deaths, their political efforts in all these years for nothing?" In that respect, there is a labored politics in all these years by the *ülküci* community in the space. Now, when the discourses of democracy are in operation and the rights to the Kurds are discussed; they feel the fear the whole

²²³ Focus group interview with S, R, H and A.

invested labor and affects on the micro politics might become wasted after *losing* everything they have owned.

All these discourses of “something slips out of our hands”, “we are sleeping but there is something leaking”, “Kurds are already over-tolerated” points out to the sense of leakage and the reaction sourcing out of obsessive appropriation. The discussions inside the *ülküci* community on “democratic autonomy of Kurds” as discourses of Kurdish political leaders, on the movements of Kurdish political bodies inside the space in Zeytinburnu refer to the growing anger of losing what they have owned before. As it can be observed from above quotes, there is also the feeling that the loss is not replaceable. Once, the belongings get lost or captured by the other, there is no way to take them back.. This sense of leakage sources from the feeling that they have lost the game because the conditions have turned into a state where they perceive that the majority of the public which was once on their side, has chosen to be with the “enemy”. The support for the “peace process” among the society, the transformation of hostile discourses into discourses of “tolerance”, “brotherhood” and “peace” feed their resentment to the state and the society. They think that they gone all the way into the direction that was showed to them as the right path. Now, they feel the sense of leakage because the Kurds, the other side, has won the second half of the game. The hostility against the Kurds is constructed mostly around this sense of leakage which is produced in the encounters as an insult to their honor. As I will mention in the next chapter, this nostalgic appropriation of the past and the feeling of losing the game come together and contribute to the violence as an outcome of this hostility.

CHAPTER VI

VIOLENCE

In this chapter, I will try to establish the linkage between violence and the concepts I have introduced previously through an analysis of the mass violence that took place between 16 and 22 July 2011 in Zeytinburnu against Kurds. In doing this, first, I will demonstrate several other perspectives in the analysis of ethnic violence and explain how I try to provide a unique framework in understanding mass violence. I already have elaborated the arguments of Bora, Saraçoğlu, Gambetti and Paker in chapter I, and already discussed which points are missed by these theories of ethnic violence, lynch and hostility. In this chapter, I argue that the place where the pathos of the community and the encounters between the *ülküci* bodies and Kurds intersect is the available space on which violence can become the register to claim the truth, to restore the honor and to reassert the ownership of the space. On that particular place, grandiose narratives of nationalism, abstract concepts of politics and official categories of ethnicity fall short in explaining violence. In this specific micro space we find the traces of the capillaries of hostility on which the core reproduction of nationalism rests on hostility and violence. In doing this, the events that took place in Zeytinburnu will be the case that I will inquire into. In this specific case, there is rich material about the micro-social dynamics that construct violence as a core part of the *ülküci* subjectivity.

I will deal with the *ülküci* community's participation and relation to these events, which would give us clue about their relation to violence. Thus, I will examine the reasons behind the violence and argue that violence is over-determined both by macro dynamics of politics (broader historical context of hostility and

mobilized nationalist sentiments by state and media) and by micro dynamics of local relations (vocabulary, affects, encounters and rumor). In doing this, first, I will draw a picture of what has happened these days in Zeytinburnu both from the perspective of an outsider gaze and by giving voice to ülkücü youngsters.

Between 16th and 22nd of July 2011, Zeytinburnu witnessed a major wave of anger and upheaval against the Kurds living in the district. Just two days after thirteen soldiers of Turkish army were killed in the rural area of Silvan, Diyarbakır, many people in Zeytinburnu demonstrated on the streets and attempted to attack Kurds after the rumors that Kurds have attacked to a mosque and burned down some coffeeshops in Zeytinburnu. Angry crowds searched for finding Kurds on the streets of the neighborhood and attacked to Kurdish people, to coffee shops of Kurds, to the BDP building in the district. In that process, some Kurdish citizens were injured by the violent attacks of groups of young people. Yet, nobody has died in these events in Zeytinburnu. Below is an excerpt from a newspaper summarizing what has happened in these days:²²⁴

In the lynching environment constructed in last four days, the attacks to Kurds still continue in the district where the Kurds are intensely populated. After the march of angry crowds on Monday, BDP building and some places of Kurdish organizations in the district were attacked by ülkücü groups. Crowded ülkücü groups with knives and sticks demonstrate on the streets while shouting slogans against Kurds. The events have continued also on Tuesday and Wednesday when some cars belonging to Kurdish residents have been burned.²²⁵

²²⁴ Evrensel Gazetesi, "Zeytinburnu'nda Kürtler yine hedefteydi.", 22.07.2011. Online at: <http://www.evrensel.net/news.php?id=10335>. Accessed last on 09.09.2013.

²²⁵ Evrensel Gazetesi, "Zeytinburnu'nda Kürtler yine hedefteydi.", 22.07.2011. Online at: <http://www.evrensel.net/news.php?id=10335>. Accessed last on 09.09.2013.

Now, I would like to share the story of those days from the perspective of the *ülküci* youngsters in Zeytinburnu:

G: There were martyrs at that time. There was some news on that day. We, *ülküci*s got together and thought what we could do. First there was a march. That was us.

H: Near Çarşamba Pazarı some groups of PKK attacked to cars and the Kurds broke the glasses of the stores of some shopkeepers.

R: But of course there were some false rumors. There was some news, claiming that there was an attack to the mosques or that there were 3-4 deaths. Of course at that time we didn't know those were lies.

H: And at that time there were TV's shouting "breaking news" about martyrs oldiers. Around 13 martyrs... Also, two cars were burned by Kurds.

S: The general mood was already quite intense. Everyone was waiting for a sparkle. We can say the events occurred spontaneously. It happened by itself.

H: We didn't stop it, not physically I mean. There was a group of 40 people on this street with sticks, machetes and iron bars on their hands.

S: But look, we thought there were thousands of Kurds gathered against us. However when we take the streets, we did not see any gathered group of Kurds. At that point people started to search for individual Kurds on the streets. To tell the truth, I hit a few times to any Kurd I found.

A: Of course after a while the situation got out of control. Even though we were very angry, we never want to kill someone. We thought we would teach them a lesson by beating them and then send them away.

A: Wherever I went, there were mobs of 30 – 40 people on the streets with sticks and machetes on their hands.²²⁶

At the time when I have interviewed with them about the events, the intense effects of the events were still influential on them. Therefore, I could not get a whole, linear story about those days from individual members of the community. Thus, I have chosen to put the disperse narrations about the events together. Although the quotes above do not point out to a linear narrative in its totality, still some relevant points can be detected in line with the arguments of this thesis.

Before moving to the analysis, I feel the need to make some important reservations about the study of violence. First of all, as I have discussed in chapter I, there is a contingency and over-determination of violence that reveals the difficulty of discovering the reasons behind violence. Therefore, any attempt studying the dimensions of violence should refrain from narrowing the explanation to several reasons. Although the frame and the ecology of violence have always been there keeping the potential that can reproduce it, violence as the final act, requires the merge of heterogeneous dynamics.

Secondly, in studying violence, there is a common methodological preference, which focuses on the degree of involvement of agents in violence. These macro analyses presuppose that examining the reasons behind violence becomes feasible after finding the agency, the fundamental subjects and the secret power behind violence.²²⁷ Thus, such analyses have to end up claiming either that ethnic violence is an outcome of external powers' plan and the deep-state's triggering

²²⁶ Focus group interview with G, H, R, S and A.

²²⁷ For a detailed description of the analyses focusing on the agents of violence, see Brubaker's discussion on "rational-action theory" in studying violence, which mainly dominates the literature on violence. Rogers Brubaker and David D. Laitin, "Ethnic and Nationalist Violence", *Annual Reviews Sociology*, 24: 1998.

finger or the agency of violence becomes attributed to marginal groups and violent fanatics. However, I argue that looking for the agents behind violence renders sociological causes behind violence and the effects of violence invisible.

As Godoy argues, while it is important not to take the appearance of mass participation in lynching at face value, it is also important not to adopt analytical lenses that may unwittingly deny these communities any agency in their actions.²²⁸ So, albeit disturbing, the wide range of participants necessitates a brave intimacy to confront. I observed that there is a very thin line separating the people who joined in ethnic violence between radical nationalists and ordinary men. It would be illusive to believe in that ethnic violence is an outcome of some marginal groups' or violent fanatics' attacks. Indeed, if the people who stay silent, who implicitly approved violence, who shouted hostile slogans, who supported the attacks through provoking were not there, the ethnic violence would not be a possible outcome to that extent. A detailed inquiry about the events of mass violence would reveal the extent of the circle in which the active and passive shareholders of the crime of violence are included. Thus, I argue that analyzing the events of violence on the presupposition that it is a minority who joined to the acts violence or that the events have been triggered by some external powers misses some critical micro-social dynamics of violence. Violence, therefore, should not be imprisoned as an act of some marginal groups or should not be limited to the agency of state institutions. In my analysis, first, I will discuss the macro dynamics that prepare the context for hostility and violence in the case of Zeytinburnu. Then, I will locate the state's position in the act of mass violence. Before analyzing the moments of violence as a key dynamic of

²²⁸ Angelina Snodgrass Godoy, "When "justice" is criminal: Lynchings in contemporary Latin America", *Theory and Society*, 33(2000), Pp. 639.

the reproduction of the *ülküci* community, I will explore the role of rumor in the time period of pre-violence.

Although I have claimed not to take structural and ideological conceptualizations about violence into consideration, this does not mean to dismiss the role of the historical memory of conflict and the broader relations of power, which are projected and reproduced in the events in Zeytinburnu. As I have discussed in chapter IV, state and the media has significant effects in the outcome of violence and hostility. Through mobilizing nationalist sentiments in all the years of armed conflict, state and media discourses are parts of the macro dynamics that contribute to violence. Also in our case study, the words of H. give clue about this contribution:

H: The general mood was already quite intense. Everyone was waiting for a sparkle. And at that time there were TV's shouting with "breaking news" of martyrs. Around 13 martyrs... Two cars were burned.²²⁹

Thus, the upcoming of the mass violence right after the news about dead soldiers in Diyarbakır is not a surprise. As H. describes the context, it was an 'intense' setting where the feelings of nationalism have already been mobilized by a specific presentation of the armed conflicts. Beside the particular form of presenting the war, the search for the state's role in violence can be extended to different spaces.

As I have discussed in the first chapter, the role of the state is usually discussed in terms of the presupposition that a weak state and an absence of central authority make the attackers feel free to commit crime without being punished.²³⁰

However, in Turkey we cannot assume that there is a phenomenological absence of

²²⁹ Interview with H.

²³⁰ See, for example Guillermo O'Donnell, "On the State, Democratization and some Conceptual Problems", *World Development*, 21(8), 1993.

central authority over the locale. As my respondents also emphasized “From the first time the events have begun, police forces and the officers who represent the state such as the governor of the city, the president of municipality had always been there”.²³¹ Thus, we can conclude that the state made its existence felt over the locality from the beginning until the end of the events.

Yet, alternatively, we can argue that the unwillingness of police and of the judicial structure to punish the attackers is a reinforcing dimension for the angry crowds to join in violence. As we witness, nobody from the angry crowds had been taken into custody or judged in the court. However, this passive stance of the state and its agents cannot be conceptualized as an absence of central authority. In that sense, rather than being a direct contribution, the reaction of the state to violence as leaving the acts of violence unpunished points out to a space of (d)alliance between *ülkücü* community and the state. Thus, there is a space of shared political ideology on which both the security forces and the *ülkücü* community rests. As I have discussed in the introduction, the violence of the *ülkücü* youngsters has always been considered by the state institutions as sensitive reactions, which should not be provoked by “inconsiderate others”. Gambetti in her analysis gives the example of Trabzon where the attackers to TAYAD members demanded from the police to submit the “terrorists” to them.²³² Also in our case, A.’s narration of one moment when he talks with the police chief is very interesting showing the demand of the crowd to submit the “guilty” Kurds to them and about the police chief’s reply which actually legitimizes the acts of the crowds:

²³¹ Olayların başından sonuna kadar emniyet hep buradaydı. Çevik vardı, özel hareket vardı. Ama hep sessiz kaldılar uzunca bir süre.

²³² Zeynep Gambetti, “Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti”, *Toplum ve Bilim* No. 109 Yaz (2007). Pp. 2.

A: Well actually the police arrested the perpetrators of the act. We said, look these events would become bigger and bigger, give us those people who burned the coffee houses. People would calm down. The chief of police told me: “Yes, you are right, if it were up to me, I wouldn’t even think about it. We would kill them right here, together. But these issues don’t run like that, the state should take care of these issues.” Well, I said that in that matter they couldn’t stop that mass.²³³

I argue that this is the point where *ülküci* community and the state officials experience a moment *flirting* each other in a context of dalliance. The reason that I use the terms “flirting” and “dalliance” is the obvious fact that there is a state of feigning reluctance by the side of the state as if the state officers protect the laws and the legitimacy. However, the police officer at the same time blinks his eyes in a welcoming position to the mass violence. This momentary relationship between the state officer and the *ülküci* subject resembles the type of a pathetic relationship of love between the passionate demanding side and the seemingly reluctant side who is in a state of cutesy. In that sense, the extra-judiciary means of the ordinary people can be embraced and celebrated by state officers as the above quote implies. Indeed these acts of violence are even perceived as a service to motherland where the *ülküci* youngsters seem so brave and sensitive to sacrifice their lives for their motherland ,n the eyes of the state.

However, we cannot assume that the *ülküci* community takes up the role of the state and deploys violence as a punishment as Gambetti puts forward as an argument that claims that the public begins to mirror the state and acts like a surplus state.²³⁴ In our case, as I have showed in chapter IV, because their detachment from the state has already happened, they cannot self-identify themselves with the state. Thus, it is not a question of mimicking the state. On the contrary, they invite the

²³³ Interview with A.

²³⁴ Zeynep Gambetti, “Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti”, Toplum ve Bilim No. 109 Yaz (2007). Pp. 10.

state to the “right position” where *ülküçü* fantasies reserved a place for the state. That position attributes a particular role for the state in which the *ülküçü* community has invested fantasies and affects. In that sense, it is a dalliance, an experience of flirting rather than mimicking the state. In many cases of ethnic violence against Kurds, the attackers put a bargain on the judicial definition of the legitimate and legal. There occurs a secret incest-sexual fascination between the state and the *ülküçü* body as the state officer admits that he would have already killed the Kurds when the conditions were different. I label this relationship as an incestual love relationship because supposedly they are from the same kin, from the same world view of patriotism and at the same time their love is not legitimate in front of the eyes of the state and the public. The reply of *ülküçü* youngsters to state’s reaction implies the covered incest relationship between the state and the demanding *ülküçü* bodies: There, the police is invited to be a shareholder of the violence through the ultimate test of being the right member of the nationalism through transforming from pragmatism to idealism.

This flirting performance with the state exists also in forensic cases where the *ülküçü* youngsters caught by the police when doing something illegal. For example, once A. told me that the police searched their car on the street and found two unregistered guns. When the police began to behave them as criminal, he told me that they asserted to the police, “Are we terrorist?” I have listened another similar case from H. when he was caught by the police who wanted to manacle H.’s arms at his back. There, H. told me that as a reaction, he asked the police, ‘Why are you manaciling my arms at my back, am I a terrorist?’ He said that the police changed his mind after a moment of ambiguity and manacled him merging his arms at front of his body.

In both forensic cases, the *ülkücü* subject communicates with the police from a claimed political position where the situation has no relation with the language of politics. However, the entrance of politics in this minute detail of encounter with the state through such an assertion gives the space for the *ülkücü* subject to regain and reassert the legitimacy he has lost when he was caught. Thus, such a political charge to the police saves the *ülkücü* body from being in a state of total impotency against the state officer. It is as if the betraying lover has been caught by the other side and as if he points out to their “sacred” relationship of love in order to escape from the punishment. At the basis of this assertion lies an implicit *flirtoase* consensus between the body of the police officer and the body of the radical nationalis that there is a political pillar (pillar is used here both as the pillar on the bed and the pillar implying a shared space) on which both can feel closer to each other. This consensus is constructed by implicitly pointing out to the other, the terrorist (Are we terrorist?), the grammar of which is deployed as a discursive term to reclaim a moment of sovereignty. The pointing out of the existence of an “extreme” virtual other, of “the terrorist” gives the radical nationalist body a space for the negotiation with the state. This performance of flirting contributes to the violence as a show of the *ülkücü* body to the state that he is able to risk and sacrifice his body on behalf of their incestual sexual relationship of nationalism with the state. Thus, it is not an act of mimicking the state but rather, it is an act that moves to communicate with the state through feelings of disappointment and sacrifice in a context of romance.

Gambetti mentions that in some lynching attempts that she gives as example, there was rumor circulating in the speeches inside the groups who involved in violence. For example, in Trabzon there was the rumor claiming that the Turkish

flag was burned and that the Kurdish flag was unfurled by PKK supporters.²³⁵ Similarly, Tanıl Bora gives examples where rumor was one of the main actors preparing the mass for the lynching attempts. In some examples he gives, for example in Sakarya or in Mustafa Kemal Paşa, we see that the extent of the triggering event done by the other was highly exaggerated in the rumors circulating.²³⁶ In our case of violence in Zeytinburnu, we again see that rumor plays such a crucial role that the municipal mayor of Zeytinburnu feels the necessity to warn the residents of Zeytinburnu not to believe in rumors.²³⁷ “There are some rumors asserting “That much people have been killed by Kurds.” These are all groundless claims. Do not believe in these”.²³⁸

The sentences of mayor points out to the high intensity of circulating rumor in those days. Mayor’s warning is also parallel with what the ülkücü youngsters have told me when they explain the beginning of the events. As R. tells the beginning the of the events:

R: But the event isn’t about burning a coffee house only. There were rumors that the Kurds murdered 3 people. The coffee house event was true but the death news was all lies. We learned that later of course.²³⁹

Before making an analysis of rumor’s effects in our case, I would like to elaborate in detail how the discourses resembling similarities with rumor play an important role in their daily lives by drawing attention to a similarity between rumor and conspiracy theories which they deploy in their discourses. Both rumor and

²³⁵ Zeynep Gambetti, “Linç Girişimleri, Neoliberalizm ve Güvenlik Devleti”, *Toplum ve Bilim* No. 109 Yaz (2007). Pp. 1.

²³⁶ Tanıl Bora, *Türkiye’nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011. Pp. ??

²³⁷ Evrensel Gazetesi, “Zeytinburnu’nda Kürtler yine hedefteydi.”, 22.07.2011. Online at: <http://www.evrensel.net/news.php?id=10335> Accessed last on 09.09.2013.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Interview with R.

conspiracy theory refer to a specific performance of narrating the events. Both imply a particular construction of otherness either through some attributed moves of other or through the analyses in which a particular other is blamed. However, there is a temporal distinction between the experiences of two concepts. Whereas the temporality of conspiracy theories is archival, the temporality of rumor, is not archival. On the contrary rumor is in the form of a flash light, like a last-minute headline news. Because of this very characteristic of conspiracy theory, it produces the alertness of the body while rumor creates the urgency for the revenge. In our interviews in Zeytinburnu, I have observed that conspiracy theories construct an indispensable part of their vocabulary. Moreover, the conspiracy theories that they constantly argue are not consistent with each other. However, this fact of inconsistency does not nullify the effects of deploying them. Through the repetition of these conspiracy theories, there occurs a particular atmosphere where the construction of otherness is built up on a firm hostility.

Furthermore, I argue that the specific performance of telling conspiracy theory or rumor inside the community to the other members makes the narrating body of the *ülküci* subjectivity *sovereign* in that unique moment. Thus, rumor or conspiracy theory does not only construct the other, but it also gives the theatrical space for the body to take up the role and to stage himself in front of other members through pointing out to the enemy. As Veena Das argues, rumor does not only point out to an external enemy but it also has certain effects produced by the very act of telling.²⁴⁰ However, it is not the degree of trueness that makes the rumor compelling for the *ülküci* community. On the contrary, the degree of scandal in the event

²⁴⁰ Veena Das argues that rumor works in very different levels "not simply by pointing to them as something external, but rather producing the very act of telling" Veena Das, *Violence and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*, California, University of California Press, 2006, Pp. 8.

narrated as rumor is much more productive in shaping and reproducing certain affects on the bodies.

As the body of the *ülküci* is already prescribed with affects of honor, intimacy, melancholia and frustration; the conspiracy theories and the rumors circulating over these bodies leaves its inscriptions of fear, loss and revenge; and attaches the affects of hate and anger on the bodies of the other. Therefore, once conspiracy theory is in circulation, it gets imprinted both on the body of the self and of the other. Thus, conspiracy theory becomes felt by and stick on the bodies as a surplus because it never goes away after it is told and it returns at the scene of violence against the other as the embodiment of revenge.

As the quotes of my interviewees show, rumor has an enormous effect on the warm-up process in pre-violence. Rumor addresses a certain point of time in the past when the other is claimed to have transgressed the red lines. In our case, it creates the need for the immediacy of the reply against the attacks of Kurds. The circulating rumor in our case claims that Kurds have burned cars, attacked to mosques and killed three people. As the quotes of my interviewees reveal, I argue that rumor also points out to the point of extreme *leakage* where everything is felt closer to slip out of hands and to be captured by the other. It is the point where the body becomes to go to the limit because through the rumor what the *ülküci* body owns is claimed to have been captured by the other so that he has nothing to lose anymore. Thus, rumor implicitly makes the bodies move to transform the situation to its old state of affairs. As we can see clearly from the quotes, rumor is the last step taken before mass violence, which will be discussed followingly.

As I have discussed the importance of sacrifice in the pathos of *ülküci* community, violence not only as a discourse but also as an actual act refers to the

risk of sacrifice that reproduce the pathos of the community. In that respect, violence becomes a language in itself, which communicates both with inside and outside of the community. In chapter IV, I have claimed that the pose of bodily movements commensurate the *ülküci* sovereignty over the locale. Violence, in that sense, is another tool that speaks to the members of the community, to the locale and to the other, which reasserts the *ülküci* body's sovereignty on the urban space. Thus, violence creates its own economy of transferring the affects bilaterally. Rather than the visual economy of pose, violence communicates inside an economy of touch where the body risks the death by experiencing the extreme limits of existence through the proximity of the other with intimidations, punches, and blood.

I have discussed the feeling of *unbearableness* caused by the other when the Kurdish subject begins to speak in his own language. The example that one of the *ülküci* youngsters hit the Kurdish guy when he talked in Kurdish showed this feeling of devastation. Here, in the case of Zeytinburnu, we see that the political performances of the other produce this feeling of *unbearableness* when they are perceived to have threatened the ownership of the space. H. describes that he felt challenged by the "Kurds' marches and violence" in the space that is ought-to-be-commanded by the *ülküci* subjectivity:

H: Well, they threw a Molotov cocktail to a coffee house in the middle of Zeytinburnu. They thought this neighborhood abandoned. Who the hell are you, how long this show would go on?²⁴¹

H.'s sentences imply that the enemy already captured a certain degree of owned space. He feels the need to cover the crack where the leakage originates. Therefore, his movement of violence is addressed to the temporality of the past where he yearns for the lost nostalgia of the good-old-days. When the politically visible

²⁴¹ Interview with H.

marches of Kurds through the ‘claimed’ space defiles the belongings and the honor of the *ülküci* becomes insulted and humiliated. Therefore, his honor gets *publicly* violated.

In one of the discussions I have quoted in chapter II, E. claimed that they would ‘fuck their mother’ if the BDP supporters drove their cars in the center of Zeytinburnu with their flags and slogans. It is the same demarcation of the space by drawing borders between ‘ours’ and ‘theirs’. If the Kurdish visible politics transgresses that border, the same feeling of *leakage* enters into circulation through the bodies of the *ülküci* community. There the *ülküci* bodies aim to repair the damaged respect that they own over the locale and to restore the *publicly* humiliated honor in front of the optics of the local people. The *ülküci* body detests and gets angry. He necessitates a *public* revenge and a *publicly* visible restoration of honor because his honor is disrespected in front of an objective gaze.

G: It was such a feeling... We were calling the central office, no one was answering. Finally I found someone, I said: “Chief, here the Kurds are doing such acts; our patience has a limit too.” He told me not to involve in any events and stay calm. How can such thing be possible after all these events? We are respected people around here. Everyone is waiting for a word from us. The Kurds have done those events, how can we stand idle with hands tied. If there is intense provocation, there will be a response, it’s that clear.²⁴²

In order to discuss the public revenge in the form of massive ethnic violence, I would like to introduce the concept of “orgy”.²⁴³ Here, I use the concept ‘orgy’ as a metaphor deployed to refer to the mass violence in Zeytinburnu against Kurds. The term orgy in its modern usage means a sex party where the people freely engage in sexual relationship with others. From my point of view, orgy is not constructed on

²⁴² Interview with G.

²⁴³ The analogy between lynch and orgy is borrowed from Tanıl Bora in *Türkiye'nin Linç Rejimi*, İstanbul, Birikim Yayınları, 2011. Pp ??? However, Tanıl Bora does elaborate on the analogy between orgy and lynch. He only points out to a similarity without giving details. Secondly, I use the term not only for lynch but also for the publicly visible massive ethnic violence.

the sole sexual pleasure of free relations; but rather, it is built on its core dimension of being a *public performance*. Therefore, orgy is not about grasping the pleasure from the freedom of sexuality but rather, its significance rests on the fantasy of success and power *in front of the others*. There is a public gaze circulating on all the bodies in the scene of an orgy. There, any body should prove his/her pose and sovereignty to this public gaze.

This scene of orgy is metaphorically same scene of mass violence against Kurds in Zeytinburnu. In this violent performance, the *ülküci* bodies should prove their pose in a theatrical setting where the crowd watches their movements since they are the respected ones of the locality. The *ülküci* community witnesses itself in the visible shared space in front of the public gaze. It is the moment where the lost nostalgia and the damaged honor will be restored publicly. Therefore, the orgy invites the other bodies into participation, loyalty and approval. H. describes the scene of mass violence:

H: Around Kazlıçeşme we caught a group of Kurds. They had flags and stuff at their hands. Initially we didn't have an intention to beat them. But everyone was looking at us, waiting an act from us. My plan was to find and hit them a few times, so the crowds would calm down. Afterwards, I realized people also started to attack them after I hit them. Let alone the people, our *ülküci* youngsters started to beat them, too. Well, the other side doesn't just stand there; they also reacted against us. Like that, some people were seriously injured there I believe.²⁴⁴

A: Of course after a while the situation got out of control. Even though we were very angry, *ülküci* people don't want to see anyone dying. We thought we would teach them a lesson by beating them and then send them away.

S: But look, we thought there were thousands of Kurds gathered against us. However we did not see any gathered group. At that point people started to turn to single Kurds they found on the streets. To tell the truth, I hit a few times to any Kurd I found.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ Interview with H.

²⁴⁵ Focus group interview with A and S.

The above quotes reveal that many people have joined after H. has hit a few times to one of the Kurds. This gives us the clue that mass violence, like an orgy, is a staging, which is signified by its potential to invite others actively participate in it. It has the capacity to transform the people who watch into active participants of mass violence because it is a call to prove yourself, to restore your honor publicly, and to claim your sovereignty; just as orgy is a call for the others around to prove their sexual performance and fantasy of power. It is an interactive theatre where the spectator feels the public gaze and the need to get involved. The mass violence turns into a pornographic circus of lust and violence so that the spectators enjoy watching and participating in it. Thus, it draws the boundaries between the patriots and traitors because it is an implicit call for loyalty, testing the spectators.

Hence, the success of mass violence does not rest on the number of deaths but on the sensational aesthetics of it, which can be measured by the degree of participation. Only few punches can produce the necessity to prove one's romance because it becomes an ultimate invitation to see the loyal ones and the betrayers at the last moment. However, it is important to note that although "only few punches" seems the triggering act, the case has already transcended being a problem of "few punches". Because everyone should prove his pose and sovereignty in that specific moment, the intensely filled bodies participate to this gambling by outbidding and by pushing the bids higher. Thus, mass violence has the capacity to reconstitute and reproduce the participants as violent agents. Performing mass violence, therefore, continuously calls its receivers to transgress the borders into the extreme. It is a scene where the experience of outbidding is in operation. Outbidding does not get intensified only by the moves of the "patriots"; but also by the countermoves of the "more patriotic ones".

The dynamics that transforms this attempt of revenge into a mass violence is the *orgyical* character of publicly visible ethnic violence. It is the staging, the attempts to prove, the moves and countermoves and the outbidding that turns the attempt of restoration of honor into a series of acts of massive violence. This public performance of mass violence has another quality besides carrying a performative character. It is the force of mass violence as being a constitutive and reproducing part of the community, which will be discussed in the next part.

The more the number of the participants into the angry protests rises, the more the staging of violence takes the form of a carnival. Carnival refers here to a certain temporal and spatial context where the people feel free to transgress their daily routine and push their everyday roles into their extremes. Also, there is a joy in witnessing that the others are participating to the same event increasingly. As it was the case in Zeytinburnu, the extent of the circle of participants to the angry upheaval against Kurds surprises the *ülküci* body because he witnesses the others who also care for the same sensitivities. A. describes the particular moments of this experience of joy:

A: Initially everyone became so satisfied that so many people reacted. I said wow: there are so many sensitive people. I became happy, I mean. There was a real uprising of people.²⁴⁶

At the moments of togetherness, the massive participation transforms the surrounding atmosphere from mundane to sacred.. As Bataille argues, violence as a corporeal experience implies a unique and contingent moment that provides all to transcend the marks of the past wounds and to transcend from the mundane to the sacred.²⁴⁷ Hence, this feeling of solidarity of hate and anger adds a surplus sacred

²⁴⁶ Interview with A.

²⁴⁷ Georges Bataille, *Erotizm: Cinsellikten Dinselliğe*. Kelebek Yayınları, 2006.

halo to the communal performance. The charm of anger lies in the level of scandal and corporeality of the violent performance. This experience is accompanied by glorious slogans and abusive words that signify the pornography of orgy. A. observes these sentences of the crowds:

A: You had to see how everyone was shouting, “We will cut them. We will kill them. Enough, it is a time of vengeance. Our neighborhood is our honor”. Lots of people were saying “we would fuck them. Kill them all”.²⁴⁸

The observation of A. points out to the revenge as a form of upheaval. There, the body of *ülküci* suppresses his feelings of resentment against the politically apathetic mass because now, he sees that people carry the same sensitivities towards the enemy. Therefore, upheaval and mass violence transforms the crowds into a community because as Blanchot argues, every community creates itself in the potential absence of itself at the risk of death.²⁴⁹ This transformation involves the dimensions of the *pathos* of the *ülküci* community. The feeling of the loss and leakage pushes the *ülküci* body into a certain movement through the space. As S. Tells:

S: Well these events happen to evolve so: For example recently there were seven martyrs in Tokat. I felt that pain inside me. Can I make myself clear? I was almost going to cry. I took a Turkish flag to my shoulder. Then, I started to walk on the street and a friend of mine joined me. He said that he watched the news too. In a matter of time we became fifty people.²⁵⁰

This experience of becoming a community around a feeling of loss and pain shows us that the *ülküci* community is constituted at the supremacy of death. In that respect, both death itself and violence as a form of risking death strengthen the bonds of the community and reproduce the feelings of belonging. Here, we see that the violence is as much constitutive as it is destructive for the community because

²⁴⁸ Interview with A.

²⁴⁹ Maurice Blanchot, *İtiraf edilemeyen Cemaat*, İstanbul, Ayrıntı Yayınları, 1997. Pp. 76.

²⁵⁰ Interview with S.

violence reproduces the intimacy within the community by providing the space for loyalty and sacrifice. Thus, this show of *pathos* creates the cohesiveness around co-membership.

As I have argued in the beginning of this chapter, trying to discover the sole reasons or the fundamental actors behind violence might be misleading in analyzing the performance of violence against the other. Violence might be an unintended by-product or a natural outcome of all those above. Therefore, I have rather tried to demonstrate a particular set of dynamics contributing to violence and how violence takes certain forms as a performance reproducing communities. In addition to this, violence is not only an outcome of all these institutional, economical, discursive and affective dynamics but also an element that reconstitutes the community in a solidarity around a much more powerful sense of belonging. Here, violence itself becomes generative and constitutive of the community. The fact that the community is constituted and reproduced in these performances of violence reveals that the community does not stand on the macro setting of grand narratives and on an eternal temporality. On the contrary, the community constructs itself in the specific locale and in the momentary performances. Although the broader relations of power and historical context leaves its effects on the act of violence; looking at the micro dynamics provides us with the space where we do not assimilate the unique and peculiar dimensions of violence. Therefore, the anthropology of violence gives us the chance not to rest on ex-post-facto explanations about violence such as through the concepts of neoliberalism or nationalism.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This thesis is attempted to comprehend the reasons behind hostility and violence against Kurds through an analysis of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. The massive ethnic violence and lynching attempts were considered as a relatively new millennial phenomenon that needs to be analyzed carefully. Also, it is an interesting dilemma that although the state spends efforts for a ‘peace’ and ‘democratization’ process, the hostility and violence against Kurds inside the society seems increasing. I have found various dynamics constructing this hostility and violence against Kurds, which are derived from a careful analysis of *ülküci* community and their involvement in violent events in Zeytinburnu against Kurds. In that respect, this thesis argues that the invested and mobilized nationalist sentiments through all the years of the war stay as part of the bodies of nationalist subjectivities and they come out as forms of hostility and violence against Kurds.

First, I have shown that the *ülküci* movement in Turkey has always been associated with their relation to violence and this image has also been embraced by the *ülküci* movement itself. Albeit decreasing, the social imaginary about the *ülküci* youngsters still relates them with violence and their opposition to the so-called “peace process”. This thesis differs from conventional macro-scale nationalism analyses by looking at the dynamics of the micro relations of urban space. Nationalism as a social and political category is problematized by various literature as mass psychology, as a secure base and as a form of false consciousness. In this text, I tried to decipher the conventional analyses about nationalism and put forward

that nationalism is an everyday experience reproduced differently according to specific temporal and spatial conditions. Then, I have elaborated the interpretations of *ülküci* movement by different political groups in Turkey. In this part, the political categories that are attributed to the *ülküci* movement by right and left of the political spectrum have been analyzed to be essentialising and value-laden that render the socio-historical dynamics constructing *ülküci* subjectivities invisible.

Since nationalism is a single concept that includes various ways of experiencing it, I have demonstrated the specific experience of nationalism of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu. It is a significant contribution of this thesis to compare dominant experiences of nationalism that are heavily affected by the patterns of the subjectivities who reproduce it in their everyday life. I have demonstrated that different experiences of nationalism make bodies construct distinct ways of hostility in terms of aesthetics, superiority and threat perception.

Then, in order to answer the main question, I have tried to depict the anatomy of *ülküci* community in Zeytinburnu by analyzing their discourses. This analysis showed us that a specific set of discourses produces a particular underlying vocabulary for the *ülküci* community. This vocabulary in turn inscribes certain affects on the bodies of *ülküci* subjectivities. These affects include loss of intimacy, passion and resentment of the movement as a whole. All these affects that are produced by making and pushing the words as performatives consist the pathos of the *ülküci* movement. This pathos shows their tragedy as sacrifice and passion.

In this thesis, I argued that hostility and violence arise from daily contacts and encounters between the *ülküci* youngsters and the Kurds. I have demonstrated that the conventional theories on the construction of otherness cannot explain the hostile construction of the Kurdishness in Zeytinburnu because it does not only

involve cognitive processes but also affective investments circulating through fantasies. Therefore, I have drawn the picture of the moments of encounters in Zeytinburnu through which the affects reproducing the hostility are made clear. The *ülkücü* bodies that have become alert by the particular pathos produced through the vocabulary experience particular forms of encounters with the other on the urban space. These encounters differ according to the body of the other who is encountered and confronted. I have argued in this chapter that certain forms of encounters produce the feeling of being challenged by the *ülkücü* bodies. There, the honor of the community gets damaged and insulted as a result of the political marches of the Kurds on the urban topography. This is the space where the construction of otherness rises in the form of hostility, which prepares the setting for violent attacks against the others.

Last, I have established the relationship between the vocabulary, encounters and violence against Kurds in Zeytinburnu. The analysis of the role of the state is discussed as a flirting experience between state officers and *ülkücü* bodies. Then, the role of conspiracy theories, which keep the bodies alert against the other and the role of rumor that produces the hot context before violence are elaborated in detail. There, it is argued that the attacks against Kurds in the form of mass violence refers to a staging performance in front of the public because the publicly damaged honor could only be restored through the public revenges. In these specific moments on the urban space, violence invites the people to prove their sovereignty and pose against each other. In this process of performing violence, *ülkücü* community is reconstituted and reproduced through moving from mundane to the sacred.

The question of communal violence in the post-war societies has been increasingly debated in sociology and political science literature in last years.

In that respect, for future research, I can offer a comparative analysis between my findings and the studies from other countries, which compares the similarities and differences of the construction of hostility and violence. Especially a juxtaposition of analyses that focus on the micro dynamics behind violence can be interestingly fruitful in terms of demonstrating the reasons behind this relatively new phenomenon.

APPENDIX A: ORIGINALS OF THE QUOTES IN TURKISH

Footnote 76 (Page 41):

R: Eskidenmiş onlar. Artık *ülkücüler* provokasyonlara gelmez. Yani şurada İzmir'deki gibi bir olay olmaz. Yaparsa halk yapar, *ülkücüler* artık bilinçli bu konularda.

E: Ya, nasıl olmaz? Buradan öyle geçecekler var ya analarını bile sikeriz... Evet abi tahrik ederlerse sikeriz...

R: Ya tabi öyle araba falan sürme olursa üzerimize yani biz de karşılık veririz ama ben yine de taşlamak gibi fevri çıkışları doğru bulmuyorum.

Footnote 95 (Page 49):

R: Senin sorduğun anlamda *ülkücüler* 90'larda baya hakimdi mahalleye. Yani biz yanlış şeylerin falan cezasını keserdik semtte ama tabi bu hukuk istismar da edildi. Millet bizim adımızı kullanarak bi ton yanlış yapmaya başladı. İşte gençler arka bulmak için ocağa geldiler falan. Ya tabi bu bize özgü değil yani iktidar her yerde yozlaşır. Ama hala yani senin bi' meselen olsa mesela, bakarız duruma, eğer haklıysan senin için kavga ederiz.

Footnote 159 (Page 81):

E: İş birbirini öldürmeye gelirse, azdan az çoktan çok gider. Hadi bakalım!

S: Ne olursa olsun, onlar isterse elli kişi olsun. Benim yanımda öyle bir hareket yapacaklar var ya, neyse ne! Öleceğimi bilsem durmam ben orada. Bu zaten bana bağlı değil. Tutamam yani kendimi.

H: Ya artık o noktadan sonra kendini mi düşüneceksin? Sikerler, deyip, dalacaksın hepsine.

Footnote 163 (Page 84):

S: Tek çözüm savaşmak. Onlar da bizi kesecek tabi ama sonunda öldüreceğiz.

H: Neden abi? Dış güçlerle savaş onlarla savaşacağına. Onlar bizimle birlikte savaşmadı mı Çanakkale'de, Kurtuluş Savaşı'nda?

S: Hayır, aç bak! Belgeleri var bunların hep. Kürtler savaşmadı bizimle birlikte.

R: Ya, var ya, S. Abi senin alerjin var Kürtlere.

S: Ben onların anatomisini biliyorum.

R: Ya abi şimdi genelleme yapmamak lazım. Bizim de var Kürt arkadaşlarımız.

G: En iyi Kürt, ölü Kürt'tür. Valla ben düzgününü görmedim. Ya uyuşturucu işinde ya silah kaçakçılığı ya karı satarlar falan. Ben gerçi sadece ticarilerini tanıyorum bunların. Ama çoğunluğ pis yani.

Footnote 168 (Page 87): H:Bak Oktay Vural çıktı bir açıklama yaptı, "Biz ideoloji partisi değiliz artık." diye. Eh ben de sorarım tabi: "O zaman bu kadar ülkücü ne için öldü?" Her zaman ideolojik partiler daha az oy alır ama daha samimidir.

Footnote 170 (Page 88):

R:Şimdi bi' Türkes öncesi bi' Türkes sonrası diye ayırım yapılıyor ama bu yanlış. Yani sanki Başbuğ şahinmiş de Bahçeli güvercinmiş gibi. Bak var ya, Türkes bir ülkücünün bile burnu kanasın istemezdi. Ama Türkes samimiydi. O hiç siyaset yapmadı gerçi sağ olsaydı biz iktidar yüzü göremezdik ama...

Footnote 171 (Page 89): R: Eskidenmiş onlar. Artık ülkücüler provokasyonlara gelmez. Yani şurada İzmir'deki gibi bir olay olmaz. Yaparsa halk yapar, ülkücüler artık bilinçli bu konularda.

Footnote 173 (Page 90):

R: Gerçek inanç kalmadı artık kimsede. Bir şey için ölmez artık kimse. Eskiden hem solcular hem sağcılar daha samimiymiş. Artık liselerde, hatta bırak liseleri, üniversitelerde bile siyaset yok. Bilmiyorum yani bu konuda hakikaten dertliyiz. Eski inançlı gençlik kalmamış. Tabi uyuşturucu çok girdi bu işin içine. Yeni nesil klüpçü ya. Öyle siyasetle falan işi yok. Ben mesela eminim ki sol da arıyordur eski günlerini. 90'larda resmen hap bayileri vardı sokakta. Yani hap dediğim extasy. Sanki var ya devlet bilerek uyuşturucu dağıttı ya da göz yumdu. Bi' nesli tüketti bu haplar.

Footnote 176 (Page 91):

E: Onlarla oturup neyi konuşacaksın? Konuşmak, ortak noktada buluşmak falan entel zırvaları. Biz zaten hep masada kaybettik. Ama onurumuzla savaştık her zaman.

Footnote 177 (Page 93):

R: Asker orada gücünü kesinlikle hissettirmeli. Yani bir devlet nasıl teröristi yaşatır anlamıyorum... Sen saldırmazsan, onlar zaten oradan güç bulurlar.

R: PKK'nın gelip zorla yiyecek alması, silah alması köylerden... Bunlar hep devletin oradaki eksikliğinden kaynaklanıyor aslında. Devlet orada kuvvetli olsa adam niye PKK'ya yardım etmek zorunda kalsın ki? Asker hakimiyetini kursa, bunların hiçbiri kalmaz. Otorite eksikliği var. Eh, tabi halk dediğin kim güçlüyse onun peşinden koşar.

R: Yani sadece asker de değil, öğretmenler, din adamları falan bunu becerirler. Uzmanlar Kurulu oluşturulsun. Devlet gücünü hissetirsin orada.

Footnote 179 (Page 94):

S: Tek çözüm savaşmak. Onlar da bizi kesecek tabi ama sonunda öldüreceğiz.

S: Bunların genetiği ortada. Amerika, Irak'a girince satmadılar mı? Bu işin çözümü savaş. Savaş olmadan barış olmaz.

R: Valla, benim gönlüm razı değil şu güzel ülkede iki arkadaşın bile birbirine yumruk atmasına.

S: Devlet abi bu! Arkadaş kavgası değil! Devletler, savaşarak kurulur.

Footnote 183 (Page 96): R: Ben valla devlete de örgüte (PKK) de eşit mesafedeyim. Bu devlet bizim devletimiz değil.

Footnote 184 (Page 97):

R: Şu anda provokasyonlara gelmemek için çok daha dikkatli davranıyoruz. Devlet ülkücü hareketi her zaman kullandı kendi çıkarları için. Sonra da fırlatıp attı. Bunu hareketin her kademesindeki ülkücü bilir.

Footnote 185 (Page 97):

H: Zafer gitti, onlar için olay yaptı. O çocuğun babası, milletvekili olmasına rağmen bi' sahip çıkmadı Z.'ye. Polislerle, mahkemeye başbaşa bıraktılar.

Footnote 198 (Page 104):

H: Kürtler terörist olmak istemiyor ama olmazlarsa PKK gelip köylerini yakacak, bebeklerini vuracak, kızlarına tecavüz edecek. Mecburlar yani bi' yerde. Devletin Kürtleri PKK'dan koruması lazım.

Footnote 199 (Page 105):

H: Kürtler şimdi aslında isyan etmeye yer arıyor. Bakıyorsun nerede bir gerikalmışlık var, bi' suç var, bir hanlık var; orada Kürtler var. Yani bazı şeyler de var onlarda.

S: Kürtlere yanlış politika uygulandı. Şimdi devletin de hataları oldu elbet.

S: Onlar Ermeni zaten. Düzelebilecekleri bi' durum yok bence.

R: Şimdi şiddet bizim tasvip ettiğimiz bir şey değil. Yani şiddetle çözülememiş bu sorunlar bugüne kadar... Tek çözüm ekonomik yatırım ve İslam'ın çatısı altında birleşme.

Footnote 200 (Page 105):

R: Asker orada gücünü kesinlikle hissettirmeli. Yani bir devlet nasıl teröristi yaşatır anlamıyorum... Sen saldırmazsan, onlar zaten oradan güç bulurlar.

Footnote 207 (Page 110):

K: Valla ben birçok şeylerine hoşgörüyü bakarım Kürtlerin. Geçenlerde balkonda ipe yorgan asmışlar, yıkamışlar falan. Su damlıyor. Cahil insanlar Kürtler. Adam köyde yaşadığını zannediyor hala. Ben mesela, dairemi verirken, emlakçıya, Kürt'e verilmeyecek diyorum. Mahalleye de diyorum Kürt'e vermeyin diye. Yani bu ayrımcılık değil. Adamlar dokuyu bozuyor çünkü. Kira alımında sıkıntılar yaşanıyor. İşte bu sebepleri etnik değil. Medeniyetle ilgili sıkıntılar. Bu tamamen onların şehirleşmemesiyle alakalı. Adam geliyor benim kahveme, konuşuyoruz bazen. İki kelimeyi bir araya getiremiyor. Zaten ne dediğini de anlamıyorum.

Footnote 212 (Page 113):

S: Adam dolmuşta yanımda oturuyor. Kürtçe telefonda konuşuyor. Ya ben dinlemek zorunda mıyım bunu? Düşünsene, yanında biri var, anlamadığın bir şeyler söyleyip duruyor. Sen gıcık olmaz mısın?

A: Neden ki? Adamın dili o, konuşacak tabi kendi arasında.

S: Abi sorun o değil. Konuşsun tabi. Ama ben eminim ikisi de Türkçe biliyorlar. Adam sanki inadına yapıyor. Sanki böyle bir *meşdan okuyor*. Sırf artistlik peşinde bence.

Z: Geçen bizim M. geldi. Okey oynayalım, dedi. Dedim, iki kişiyiz, nasıl olacak. Gel, dedi, kahvede buluruz birini. Kahvede bizim A. Ağabeyin kahvesi. Bilirsin orada çok Kürt olur. Neyse baktık kahveye. M.'nin tanıdığı iki çocuk varmış Diyarbakırlı. Ah, iyi dedik, tanıdık çıktı. Başladık okey oynamaya. Biz de M.'yle ben bir takımız, onlar bir takım. Karşılıklı oynuyoruz. Bunlar bir yerde Kürtçe konuşmaya başladı. Bak dedim, 'Türkçe konuşacaksınız konuşun. Ben ne bileyim sen adama okeye döndüğünü mü söylüyorsun, hile mi yapıyorsun?' Şurada bi' oyun oynuyoruz, içine ettiler. Baktım, hiç beni de siklemiyorlar. Aldım istekayı bunun kafaya çaldım. Böyle kanlar akıyor ağzından burnundan ama nasıl biliyor musun?

Footnote 217 (Page 117):

R: Ulaş, adamlar burada Kazlıçeşme'de bir miting yapıyorlar, hepsi açmış PKK bayrağını. Ya tamam, gel burada neyi kutluyorsan kutla. Ama PKK bayrağı açamazsın.

S: Sırf PKK bayrağı olsa iyi. Geçen seçim çalışmaları zamanı, o Sırrı Süreyya buralara geldi. Mahallede yürüyor, arkasında da bi sürü Kürt. Kiminin ellerinde Abdullah Öcalan posterleri var.

A: Bak, Ulaş. Sen beni tanıyorsun. Benim kahvemde Kürtler olur. Ben hiç birisine ağzımı açıp birşey demem ama adam gelmiş BDP'nin seçim broşürlerini dağıtıyor. Bir yandan da tanıdıklarıyla Kürtçe konuluyor falan. Ben de kızdım, dedim ki 'Burada siyaset yapacaksınız bu kapıdan içeri girmeyin kardeşim. Burada her görüşten insan var. Rahatsız etmeyin insanları'.

H: Her şeyin bir sınırı vardır. Sen şimdi demokrasi diyorsun da demokrasi diye PKK'lılık yapacaksın sikerim öyle deokrasiyi ben. Mesela

sokakta öyle PKK bayrakları, terörist üniformalarıyla falan gösteri yapmak ne demek ya?

Footnote 224 (Page 125):

S: Akşam orospu çıkmış konuşuyor. O Gültan Kışanak var ya. Resmen milleti kışkırtmak istiyorlar.

R: Dün akşam, Gültan Kışanak konuşuyor, diyor, “Kürt isyanının lideri Öcalan’dır. Öcalan olmadan olmaz.” Bu aymazlığa bir son vermek lazım.

H: 2000'lere kadar batının tahammül edemeyeceği şeyler bunlar. O taraf da 2000 öncesi ağızlarından çıkan kelimelere dikkat ederdi. O taraf dediğim, işte bu BDP tayfası. Şimdi maşallah ağızları köpürerek konuşuyorlar.

R: İtici buluyoruz hepsini. Zeytinburnu'ndaki olayların özel bir nedeni yok. Ama tüm bunlar etkili işte. Toplumsal reaksiyon denilebilir. Biriken öfkenin dışarı çıkması, halkın tahammül sınırlarının zorlanması sonucu olan olaylar.

H: Orada, Diyarbakır'da falan, DTP, PKK zorla kepenk kapattırıyor. Al, Muş'ta adam kepenk kapatmadı diye taşladılar adamın dükkanını; sonra o da aldı keleşini taradı hepsini. Sen ekmeğiyle oynuyorsun orada. Bunlar var ya sırf provokasyon peşinde. Bak, Osman Baydemir neler diyor öyle! İnsan kendini zor tutuyor yani...

H: Yatsınlar kalksınlar, batı kamuoyunun hoşgörüsüne dua etsinler.

R: Bakma, aslında batı kamuoyu oldukça hoşgörülü. Yani bu Türk milletinde eskiden gelen bir olay. Hoşgörülüyüz. Bu hoşgörü son zamanlarda yaratılan mağduriyet inancından kaynaklanıyor. Yani Kürt mağduriyeti. Medyanın toplum mühendisliği – işte bunlar katledildi, yolları yok, hastaneleri yok- yapıldı. Keskin çizgileri kırmak için. Bakma, şu an verilen tepkiler gayet yumuşak. Bunlar on sene önce olsaydı çok daha sert tepki verirlerdi.

S: Ya tüm bu olup bitenler var ya, Türk milletinin sinir uçlarıyla oynuyorlar. Balyozla yavaş yavaş tık tık vuruyorlar ki alıştıra alıştıra kabul ettirecekler. Birden indirsel olmaz. Yavaş yavaş yapıyorlar.

H: Bizce bu yumuşama iyi olmadı. Çünkü karşı taraf hep daha fazlasını ister. Bu karşıdakinin eğitim seviyesiyle ilgili. Eğitim seviyesi düşükse açgözlü olur. Şimdi mesela Akdeniz coğrafyasına bak. İspanya, Yugoslavya, Yunanistan. Bunların hepsi iç savaş görmüş. Bi' biz görmedik. Onlarda da hep böyle başladı. Yugoslavya'da böyle başladı. Hep bir şeyler vere vere. Demokratik özerklik, şu demek: “Biz ayrılmak istemiyoruz. Elmayı ikiye bölün, yarısı bizim; diğer yarısı ikimizin.”

A: Bi' beş ay önce DTK 48 vilayette seçim yaptı. Demokratik özerklik oylandı. Sonra da demokratik özerklik ilan ettiler. Diyarbakır'da halk mahkemeleri kurulmuş. 500 tane dava görülmüş. 296 kişi ceza almış ve

bunların hepsi, bak buraya dikkat et, bu cezayı kabul etmiş. Biz hala uyuyoruz. Anadilde eğitim olmaz. Türk milleti 5000 yıllık tarihinde bu aymazlığı bi' kaç kere yaşadı. Bunun arkası hep kaos oldu. "Müzakere" nin fikri bile kötü. Arkadan da "mütareke" gelir. Herkese hastane verilsin istiyoruz. Eskiden biz de daha duyarsızdık. Eskiden askerin ağzına bakardık. Şimdi daha duyarlı olduk. Ben bu meseleye duygusalsı yaklaşıyorum. Hiçbir ana ağlamasın istiyorum. Artık ben bunu istiyorum. Hepimizin evladı askere gidecek. Askere gidecek oğlum da şehit olacak. Ne vatani, ne vatan sağolsun'u kardeşim ya. O benim tek oğlum. Ama bir yandan da bu hassasiyetlerle olmaz. Çünkü verdikçe önüne geçemezsin. Ama vermek lazım, ne vermek? Röntgen makinesi göndermek gibi mesela

Footnote 226 (Page 129): "Kürt nüfusunun yoğunlukta bulunduğu ilçede son 4 gündür yaratılan linç ortamı içerisinde Kürtlere dönük saldırılar geliştirilmeye devam ediliyor. İlçede Pazartesi günü yapılan bir gösteri yürüyüşü sonrası BDP ilçe binası ve Kürtlere ait bazı yöre derneklerine dönük gelişen *ülkücü* saldırılar, Salı ve Çarşamba günleri de benzer şekilde tekrarlandı. Kalabalık gruplar halinde akşam saatlerinde ellerinde sopalarla sokaklara dökülen ülkücü gruplar, Kürtler aleyhine sloganlar atarak gösteri yapıyor. Yine kalabalık gruplar halinde sokaklara dökülen ülkücü gruplar, Kürtlere ait araçların camlarını kırdı."

Footnote 227 (Page 130):

G: O ara 13 tane şehit vardı. O gün bazı haberler dolaşıyordu. Biz ülkücüler olarak toplandık, ne yapsak diye düşündük. İlk bir yürüyüş yapıldı. Biz yaptık.

H: Çarşamba Pazarı'nın orada PKK'lı gruplar arabalara saldırdı. Esnafın camlarını indirdiler Kürtler.

R: Ama tabi gerçekten olanların yanında yalan söylentiler de dolaşıyordu. "Camilere saldırıldı, 3-4 kişi öldü" haberleri yayıldı. Tabi biz yalan olduğunu bilmiyorduk o sırada.

H: O ara bi de şehit haberleri böyle televizyonlar bağıyor, "son dakika" "son dakika" diye. 13 şehit falan. İki araba yakılmış.

S: Zaten genel hava da gergindi baya. Herkes bir kıvılcım bekliyordu. Spontane gelişti olaylar diyebiliriz. Kendiliğinden oluşan bir şey.

H: Biz engellemedik. Fiziken engellemedik yani. Buradan, bu sokaktan 40 kişilik bir grup geçti, ellerinde demirler, palalar, dönerler falan.

S: Ama bak, biz sanıyoruz ki karşımızda binlerce toplanmış Kürt var. Halbuki, baktık ki hiç toplu bir grup yok. İnsanlar bu sefer yoldan çevirdiklerine yöneldi. Yalan yok, ben de bulduğum Kürt'e attım bir iki tane.

A: Tabii belli bir noktadan sonra iş çığrından çıktı. Ne kadar kızgın olsak da, kimsenin ölmesini istemez bir ülkücü. İki şamarlayıp derslerini verip gönderelim, dedik.

A: nereye gitsem, o sokaktan 30-40 kişilik gruplar geçiyordu. Ellerinde demirler, palalar, dönerler falan.

Footnote 230 (Page 132):

H: Zaten genel hava da gergindi baya. Herkes bir kıvılcım bekliyordu. O ara bi de şehit haberleri böyle televizyonlar bağırıyor, “son dakika” “son dakika” diye. 13 şehit falan. İki araba yakılmış.

Footnote 234 (Page 134):

A: Sokak çok önemli. Halk vardı orada, Ulan, bakıyorum; millet bozkurt işareti yaparak yürüyor. Bi’tanesini bile tanımıyorum. Ne Ocak’ta ne İlçe’de görmedim hiçbirini. Ulan dedim, normalde olsa, partinin ocak’ın hiçbir işinde yoksunuz, nereden çıktı bu bozkurt işaretleri”.

Footnote 240 (Page 138):

R: Ama olay sadece bi kahvehaneyi yakma olayı değildi. Kürtler 3 kişiyi öldürmüş diye söylentiler vardı hep. Kahvehane olayı doğruydu ama ölüm haberleri falan hep yalanmış. Biz bunu sonradan öğrendik tabi.

Footnote 242 (Page 141):

H: Yani, Zeytinburnu’nun ortasında adamlar kahveye molotof atmışlar, kahveyi yakmışlar. Buraları sahipsiz sanmışlar herhalde. Ya sen kimsin, bu artistlik nereye kadar sürecek?

Footnote 243 (Page 142):

G: Öyle bir his ki, açıyoruz genel merkezi arıyoruz, telefonumuza kimse çıkmıyor. Neyse sonunda birini buldum, dedim ki başkanım, burada Kürtler böyle böyle yapmış. Biz sabrımızın sonuna geldik. Adam bana diyor ki ‘Sakin olun, olaylara karışmayın’. Ya olaylara karışmayın’ı mı kalmış artık. Biz buranın sözü dinlenen insanlarıyız. Herkes ağzımızdan çıkacak bir lafa bakıyor. Bu kadar olay yapmış Kürtler, biz de elimiz kolumuz bağlı oturalım mı yani? Ağır tahrik varsa, karşılığı verilir, bu kadar net.

Footnote 245 (Page 143):

H: Biz aşağıda Kazlıçeşme’ye doğru bir grup Kürt yakaladık. Ellerinde bayraklar falan. Çevirdik bunları. İlk başta hiç aslında dövme gibi bir niyetimiz yoktu. Ama herkes bizi seyrediyor. Bizden bir hareket bekliyor. ‘Ulan’ dedim, ‘birkaç tane vurayım şunlara, milletin de gazı geçer.’ Bir baktım, ben vurdukça, millet gaza gelmiş onlar da saldırıyor. Bırak milleti bizim ülkücüler de girişti. Eh, karşı taraf da eli armut toplamıyor. Onlar da vuruyor. Böyle böyle orada birkaç kişi ciddi yaralandı sanırım.

Footnote 246 (Page 143):

A: Tabii belli bir noktadan sonra iş çığrından çıktı. Ne kadar kızgın olsak da, kimsenin ölmesini istemez bir ülkücü. İki şamarlayıp derslerini verip gönderelim, dedik.

S: Ama bak, biz sanıyoruz ki karşımızda binlerce toplanmış Kürt var. Halbuki, baktık ki hiç toplu bir grup yok. İnsanlar bu sefer yoldan çevirdiklerine yöneldi. Yalan yok, ben de bulduğum Kürt'e attım bir iki tane.

Footnote 247 (Page 145):

A: İlk başta aslında herkes o kadar tatmin oldu ki aslında bu kadar kişinin tepki göstermesine. Ben dedim ki, vay be ne kadar duyarlı insanlar varmış. Mutlu oldum yani. Orada gerçek bir halk ayaklanması vardı.

Footnote 249 (Page 146):

A: Ya görsen herkes nasıl bağılıyor, keseceğiz, öldüreceğiz onları. Yeter artık. İntikam zamanıdır. Mahalle namustur. Sikeceğiz, sokacağız falanlar havada uçuşuyor.

Footnote 251 (Page 148):

S: Ya bu işler öyle oluyor ki: Mesela geçenlerde Tokat'ta yedi şehit vardı. İçimde o acıyı hissettim yani anlıyor musun? Böyle ağlayacaktım neredeyse. Aldım Türk bayrağını sırtıma. Başladım sokağın başından yürümeye, bi' arkadaş katıldı yanıma, o da izlemiş haberleri. Bir anda 5-10 derken, 50 kişi olduk zaten.

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