

TRAUMA, BELONGING AND NOSTALGIA:
SITUATING ÜNYE'S ARMENIANS IN THE DISPLACEMENT OF THE
EARLY 20TH CENTURY

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BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

2025

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Thesis submitted to the
Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

History

by

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2025

Trauma, Belonging and Nostalgia:
Situating Ünye's Armenians in the Displacement of the Early 20th Century

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July 2025

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Cafer Sarıkaya, certify that

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

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ABSTRACT

Trauma, Belonging and Nostalgia:

Situating Ünye's Armenians in the Displacement of the Early 20th Century

This study aims at researching the memory of the Armenian community in Ünye and its surroundings, focusing on their sense of belonging, where trauma and nostalgia produce mixed feelings. Ünye is a small town connected to Ordu and is located between the towns of Samsun in the west and Ordu in the east. Prior to the *Tehcir* of Armenians in 1915 and the Population Exchange in 1924, Ünye was, as was the whole Black Sea coast back then, heavily populated with Armenians and Greeks. This thesis focuses therefore on a particular historical period, when internal and external motives were effective in the displacement of populations and when social changes gained momentum in parallel with the political movements in the Ottoman geography. The population of the Central Black Sea region experienced a significant change with the arrival of Crimean and Caucasian immigrants and the departure of Armenians and Greeks. Using published materials like books, newspapers and memoirs on the one hand, this study also adopts an oral history approach, collecting narratives from both Armenian and non-Armenian inhabitants on their regional memory. The research also consists of a fieldwork conducted mainly in Turkey. Nevertheless, to reach Armenians from the Black Sea region of Turkey, it also included oral and archive sources during visits to Armenia, Lebanon, Greece, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Caucasus (Georgia, Abkhazia).

ÖZET

Travma, Aidiyet ve Nostalji:

Ünye’deki Ermenilerin 20. Yüzyıl Başı Göçleri Çerçevesinde Konumlandırılması

Bu çalışma, travma ve nostaljinin karışık duygular ürettiği Ünye ve çevresindeki Ermeni toplumunun hafızasını, aidiyet duygularına odaklanarak araştırmayı amaçlamaktadır. Ünye, Ordu’ya bağlı küçük bir ilçe olup, batıda Samsun ile doğuda Ordu illeri arasında yer almaktadır. 1915’te Ermenilerin *Tehciri* ve 1924’teki Nüfus Mübadelesinden önce, o zamanlar tüm Karadeniz kıyılarında olduğu gibi Ünye’de de çok sayıda Rum ve Ermeni yaşıyordu. Bu tez, iç ve dış etkenlerin nüfus göçünde etkili olduğu ve Osmanlı coğrafyasındaki siyasi hareketlere paralel olarak toplumsal değişimlerin ivme kazandığı belirli bir tarihsel döneme odaklanmaktadır. Orta Karadeniz bölgesi nüfusu, Kırım ve Kafkas göçmenlerinin gelişi ve Ermeni ve Rumların göçüyle önemli bir değişim yaşamıştır. Bir yandan kitap, gazete ve hatırat gibi basılı materyallerin kullanıldığı bu çalışma, bir yandan sözlü tarih yaklaşımını da benimseyerek hem Ermeni hem de Ermeni olmayanların kendi yerel hafızaları üzerine anlatılarını bir araya getiriyor. Araştırma aynı zamanda ağırlıklı olarak Türkiye’de yürütülen bir saha çalışmasından oluşmaktadır. Bununla birlikte, Türkiye’nin Karadeniz bölgesinden Ermenilere ulaşmak için Ermenistan, Lübnan, Yunanistan, Fransa, Kanada, İngiltere, Amerika Birleşik Devletleri ve Kafkasya’ya (Gürcistan, Abhazya) yapılan ziyaretler sırasında sözlü ve arşiv kaynaklarına da yer verilmiştir.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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DEGREES AWARDED

PhD in History, 2025, Boğaziçi University

MA in History, 2010, Boğaziçi University

BA in History with two Minors in Political Science and International Relations (in English), 2005, Yeditepe University

AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

The Armenians in the late Ottoman Empire and Republican Turkey, Diaspora, Black Sea and Middle Eastern Studies.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research and Teaching Assistant in the Department of English Language and Literature, Yeditepe University, September 2005-August 2013.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

M.A. Thesis

Celebrating Difference: “Turkish Theatre” in the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 (Advisor: Prof. Arzu Öztürkmen), Boğaziçi University, Turkey, 2010.

Book Chapters

“Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar ve Sait Faik Abasıyanık’ın Müze Evleri Bağlamında Türkiye’deki Müzecilik Politikalarına ve Yönetimlerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Bakış” [“A Comparative Perspective of Museum Politics and Management in Turkey in the Cases of Museum Houses of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar and Sait Faik Abasıyanık”] in *Profesör Süheyla Artemel’e Armağan / Tribute to Professor Süheyla Artemel*, edited with a foreword by Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu, Aslı Tekinay, Özlem Ögüt Yazıcıoğlu and Cafer Sarıkaya, Istanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları / Boğaziçi University Publications, 2019, 224-227.

“Kürt Tiyatrosu 1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarında” in *Kürt Tiyatro Tarihi*, Çetoyê Zêdo & Yavuz Akkuzu (eds.), Istanbul: Evrensel Basım Yayın, 2016, 178-187. This chapter also appeared in *Kürt Tiyatrosu: Mezopotamya’da Tiyatronun Doğuşundan Modern Kürt Tiyatrosuna*, Aydın Orak (ed.), Istanbul: Doruk Yayınları, 2016, 45-56.

“Di 1893yan de Şanoya Kurdî li Fûara Chicago ya Cîhanê” in *Dîroka Şanoya Kurdî*, Çetoyê Zêdo & Yavuz Akkuzu (eds.), Stenbol: Weşanên Peywend, 2015, 158-167.

“The Ottoman Theatre in the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago” in *Celebration, Entertainment and Theatre in the Ottoman World*, Suraiya Faruqi & Arzu Öztürkmen (eds.), London and New York: The University of Chicago Press, Seagull Books, Enactments Series, 2014, 461-484.

Journal Articles

“20. Yüzyılda Karadeniz’deki Soykırımlar, Katliamlar ve Savaşlar”, *Sanat ve Hayat*, Sayı.47/04 (Yaz 2016) 122-130. [“Genocides, Massacres and Wars in the 20th Century Black Sea”, *Art and Life*, No.47/04 (Summer 2016) 122-130.]

“1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’ndaki Osmanlı Yemekleri”, *Yemek ve Kültür*, Sayı.32 (İlkbahar 2013) 112-121. [“Ottoman Dishes in 1893 Chicago World Fair”, *Food and Culture*, No.32 (Spring 2013) 112-121.] This article also appeared in *I.Türk Mutfak Kültürü Sempozyumu (Osmanlı Mutfak Kültürü) 1st Symposium on the Turkish (Ottoman) Culinary Culture, 14-15 Ekim 2010, Bilecik*, Arif Bilgin & Özge Samancı (eds.), Bilecik: Bilecik Şeyh Edebali Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2012, 461-486.

“Kürt Tiyatrosu 1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarında”, *Kürt Tarihi*, Sayı.2 (Ağustos-Eylül, 2012) 42-49. [“Kurdish Theatre at 1893 Chicago World Fair”, *Kurdish History*, No.2 (August-September, 2012) 42-49.]

“1893 Şikago Sergisi’nde Osmanlı Tiyatrosu”, *Toplumsal Tarih*, Cilt.22, Sayı.147 (Mart, 2006) 66–71. [“Ottoman Theatre in the 1893 Chicago Exposition”, *Social History*, Vol.22, No.147 (March, 2006) 66–71.]

Online Articles

Լոկուսը մնաց հիշատակ. իսլամաց(վ)ած հայերը սևծովյան շրջանում և մի քաղցրավենիքի հարատևության պատմությունը. Հոդվածը թուրքերենով հրատարակվել է հետևյալ գրքում՝ “Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler Konferans Tebliğleri, կազմող՝ Altuğ Yılmaz (İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2015)”, էջ 260-273: <http://akunq.net/am/?p=53049>

Memories and Reminiscences

“Kanatları Olmayan Bir Melek: Prof. Dr. Süheyla Artemel” [“An Angel Without Wings: Prof. Dr. Süheyla Artemel”] in *Profesör Süheyla Artemel’e Armağan / Tribute to Professor Süheyla Artemel*, edited with a foreword by Nedret Kuran-Burçoğlu, Aslı Tekinay, Özlem Öğüt Yazıcıoğlu and Cafer Sarıkaya, İstanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yayınları / Boğaziçi University Publications, 2019, 345-346.

Translations

“Ermeni Diasporası Söylemini Tekrar Düşünmek: Dil(ler), Kültür(ler), İlişki(ler)”, *Postdergi*, 25 Mayıs 2018. [“Rethinking the Discourse on the Armenian Diaspora: Language(s), Culture(s), Affiliation(s)”, *Postdergi*, 25 May 2018.]

“Tahta Kutulardaki Elmalar Bana Sırıttıyor”, *Sanat ve Hayat*, Sayı.46/05 (Sonbahar 2016) 119-121. [“Apples in Square Boxes Grin at Me”, *Art and Life*, No.46/05 (Autumn 2016) 119-121.]

“Ve 1915 Sonrası Türkiye’de Yaşamaya Devam Edenler”, *Kürt Tarihi*, Sayı.18 (Mayıs-Haziran, 2015) 58-59. [“And Those Who Continued Living in Turkey after 1915”, *Kurdish History*, No.18 (May-June, 2015) 58-59.]

“Türk Tıp Tarihi: Bebek Bakımı Nasıl Olmalı? Bebek Sağlığıyla İlgili, Tarihten İki Makale: ‘Valide ve Çocuk’ ile ‘Süt Çocuklarının Beslenmesi’ ”, *Asklepios: Tıp Kültürü Dergisi*, Sayı.14 (Nisan-Mayıs-Haziran, 2007) 54-61. [“Turkish Medical History: How to Care for Infants? Two Historical Articles Concerning Baby Health: ‘Mother and Child’ and ‘the Nutrition of Nursing Infants’ ”, *Asklepios: Journal of Medical Culture*, No.14 (April-May-June, 2007) 54-61.]

Conference Proceedings

“19. Yüzyıl Dünya Fuarlarındaki Osmanlı Katılımlarında Kültürel Karşılaşmalar ve Sanatsal Yansımaları” in *Osmanlı Dünyasında Kültürel Karşılaşmalar ve Sanatsal Yansımaları: Prof. Dr. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu’na Armağan Makaleler*, Ayşe Pelin Şahin Tekinalp, Mehmet Fatih Müderrisoğlu, Ünal Araç (eds.), Ankara: Hacettepe Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2017, 197-203. [“Cultural Encounters and Their Artistic Reflections during the Ottoman Participations in the 19th Century World’s Fairs” in *Cultural Encounters in the Ottoman World and Their Artistic Reflections: Essays in Honor of Prof. Dr. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu*, Ayşe Pelin Şahin Tekinalp, Mehmet Fatih Müderrisoğlu, Ünal Araç (eds.), Ankara: Hacettepe University Publications, 2017, 197-203.]

“ ‘Bu Türkü Annemin Türküsüdür, Onları Çok Özlediğim Zaman Bu Türküyü Söylerim’: Karadeniz’deki Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeni Çocukları” in *Geçmişten Günümüze Şehir ve Çocuk*, Osman Köse (ed.), Samsun: Canik Belediyesi Kültür Yayınları, 2016, 689-694. [“ ‘This Song Is My Mother’s, I Sing This Song When I Miss Them A Lot’: The Islamized Armenian Children in the Black Sea Region” in *City and Child from Past to Present*, Osman Köse (ed.), Samsun: Canik Municipality Culture Publications, 2016, 689-694.]

“Lokum Kaldı Yedigâr: Karadeniz’deki Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler ve Bir Lezzetin Direniş Öyküsü” in *Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler Konferans Tebliğleri*, Altuğ Yılmaz (ed.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2015, 260-273. [“Only Lokum Remains: The Islamized Armenians in the Black Sea Region and the Resistance Story of a Flavour” in *Islamized Armenians Conference Proceedings*, Altuğ Yılmaz (ed.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Foundation Publications, 2015, 260-273.]

“1873 Viyana Evrensel Sergisi’nde Mardin ve Çevresinin Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihine Bakmak” in *Mardin Tebliğleri: Mardin ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Konferansı*, Emre Ayvaz & Altuğ Yılmaz (eds.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2013, 27-43. [“Looking at the Social and Economic History of Mardin and its Periphery from 1873 Vienna Universal Exposition” in *Mardin Proceedings: Social and Economic History of Mardin and the Region Conference*, Emre Ayvaz & Altuğ Yılmaz (eds.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Foundation Publications, 2013, 27-43.]

“1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’nda Diyarbakır ve Çevresinin Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihine Bakmak” in *Diyarbakır Tebliğleri: Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Konferansı*, Bülent Doğan (ed.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2013, 112-127. [“Looking at the Social and Economic History of Diyarbakır and its Periphery from 1893 Chicago World Fair” in *Diyarbakır Proceedings: Social and Economic History of Diyarbakır and the Region Conference*, Bülent Doğan (ed.), İstanbul: Hrant Dink Foundation Publications, 2013, 112-127.]

ORGANIZED PANELS

Constanța, Romania, 14-16 September 2023, “Natural Resources and Economy of the Ottoman Empire” in *the Annual Conference: Environment, Energy and Economy in the Black Sea Region*, organized by the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland in partnership with Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanța, Romania.

Bamberg, Germany, 19-21 September 2018, *Hristiyanılaşdırılmış Türkiye: Geç Osmanlı ve Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemlerinde Müslümanlaş(tırıl)an Hristiyanlar* [Dechristianized Turkey: The Islamized Christians in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic] in *III. Avrupa Türkoloji, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Araştırmaları Toplantısı* (Turkologentag 2018) [*Third European Convention on Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies*] organized by the Society for Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies (GTOT) in co-operation with the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Bamberg.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

İstanbul, Turkey, 19 April 2025, “Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar ve Sait Faik Abasıyanık’ın Müze Evleri Bağlamında Türkiye’deki Müzecilik Politikalarına ve Yönetimlerine Karşılaştırmalı Bir Bakış” [A Comparative Perspective of Museum Politics and Management in Turkey in the Cases of Museum Houses of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar and Sait Faik Abasıyanık] (Chair: Esen Kunt) in *Birinci Uluslararası Kent Sempozyumu: Kent ve Edebiyat / First International Kent Symposium: City and Literature*, İstanbul Kent University.

Ann Arbor, Michigan, United States, 4-5 April 2025, “Conducting a Study of Oral and Local History in the Black Sea Region” in the panel “Local Communities’ Knowledge and Preservation Practices” (Discussant: Patricia Garcia) in *the 14th Annual International Graduate Student Workshop in Armenian Studies: “The Archive in Theory and Practice in Armenian Studies”*, sponsored by the University of Michigan’s Center for Armenian Studies and funded by the Manoogian Foundation. A Turkish version of this paper entitled “Karadeniz’de Sözlü ve Yerel Tarih Çalışması Yapmak” was also read in *II. Sosyal Bilimler Doktora Öğrencileri Çalıştayı: Türkiye Çalışmaları* [2nd Social Sciences PhD Students’ Workshop: Turkish Studies] (Chair: Selçuk Dursun) organized by Graduate School of Social Sciences, Middle East Technical University, Culture and Congress Center, Ankara, Turkey, 17-18 April 2014.

Binghamton, New York, United States, 21-22 March 2025, “In Search of a Family’s History in the Black Sea Region of Turkey” in the panel “Armenian and Assyrian Genealogy, Demographics & Ego Documents” (Chair: Kent F. Schull) in *the Ottoman Demographic and Family History Symposium (ODFHS)*, co-sponsored by Binghamton University’s Center for Middle East and North Africa Studies (CMENAS) & FamilySearch International (FSI), Binghamton University, SUNY (upstate New York).

Tbilisi, Georgia, 12-13 September 2024, “Multiculturalism, Conflict and Belonging in the case of Jewish Migrants in the Black Sea Region of Turkey” in the panel “Minority and Integration” (Chair: Richard Wittmann) in the Workshop: *Recovering & Uncovering the Past of Diverse Communities in Imperial Spaces: Memory & Self-Organization in Urban Centres of the Eastern European & Ottoman Realms*, organized by Max Weber Foundation – Georgia Branch Office & Orient-Institut Istanbul in cooperation with Ilia State University, Tbilisi, Georgia. The first version of this paper was presented in the panel “Imperial Spaces and Movement of the Population” (Chair: Yevhen Zakharchenko) in the Research Workshop: *Multiplicity of Divisions: Boundaries and Borders of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian Empires in the 19th – early 20th Century*, organized by the Center for Interethnic Relations Research in Eastern Europe and History Faculty, Hryhoriy Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, participation supported by the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe at the University of St. Gallen and Kowalsky Program for the Study of Eastern Ukraine in Kharkiv of the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, Kharkiv, Ukraine, 28-29 September 2017.

Paris, France, 21-22 May 2024, “Modernity and Violence in the Black Sea Region of Turkey” in the panel “(Post-)Imperial Modernities: Spaces and Challenges” (Chair: Melvin Bernard & Discussant: Elif Becan) in CETOBaC and CERCEC Graduate Conference 2024: *Modernities Debated. Crossed perspectives from Russian, Soviet and Ottoman (post-)imperial spaces: Central and Eastern Europe, Balkans, Eastern Mediterranean, Caucasus and Central Asia/ Modernités en débat. Perspectives croisées dans les espaces (post-)impériaux russes, soviétiques et ottomans : Europe centrale et orientale, Balkans, Méditerranée orientale, Caucase et Asie Centrale*, funded by CETOBaC and CERCEC, with the support of the PRI de l’EHESS « Les sciences sociales et le monde ».

Paris, France, 17-18 November 2023, “State, Party and Society in the Black Sea Region of Turkey” in the panel “The Single Party Regime in Early Turkey: Reconsidering Interplays Between State, Party, Society” (Chair: Yavuz Köse & Discussant: İpek Yosmaoğlu) in *CEST 2023 Symposium Paris: Party, State and Society in Turkey and Beyond*, organized by CEST, Consortium for European Symposia on Turkey in partnership with Stiftung Mercator and CERI, Centre de recherches Internationales/The Centre for International Studies at Sciences Po Paris.

Constanța, Romania, 14-16 September 2023, “Samsun as a Greek City in the late Ottoman Empire” in the panel “Natural Resources and Economy of the Ottoman Empire” (Organizer: Cafer Sarıkaya & Chair: Anna Chebotarova & Discussant: Silvana Rachieru) in *the Annual Conference: Environment, Energy and Economy in the Black Sea Region*, organized by the Center for Governance and Culture in

Europe, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland in partnership with Museum of National History and Archaeology, Constanța, Romania. The first version of this paper was presented in the panel “Cities and Countryside” (Chair: Paschalis Kitromilidis) in the 3rd International Congress of Pontic Studies: *Pontus in the Late Ottoman Empire (1774-1908): Society and Economy*, co-organized by the Department of Modern and Contemporary History, Folklore and Social Anthropology, Faculty of Philosophy, School of History and Archaeology, the Department of Church History, Christian Literature, Archaeology and Art, Faculty of Theology, School of Theology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, participation supported by Charitable Foundation of Ivan Savvidi, Thessaloniki, Greece, 18-20 November 2016.

Tbilisi, Georgia, 12-15 September 2022, “Migration, Mobility and Displacement in the Central Black Sea Region of Turkey” in the panel “History of Migration and Mobility around the Black Sea” (Chair: Anna Chebotarova & Discussant: Silvana Rachieru) in the *Annual Conference: Migration, Mobility and Displacement in the Black Sea Region*, organized by the Center for Governance and Culture in Europe, University of St. Gallen, Switzerland in partnership with Indigo, Tbilisi, Georgia.

Beirut, Lebanon, 21-23 June 2022, “Women and Gender in the Middle East after the First World War: Food Narratives in Fethiye Çetin’s *My Grandmother*” in the panel “Gendered Approaches to History and Memory” (Chair & Discussant: Hoda ElSadda) in the *International Conference: Women and Gender Studies in the Middle East*, organized by the Association for Middle East Women’s Studies (AMEWS) in partnership with the American University of Beirut and Lebanese American University.

Paris, France, 29-30 November 2021, “An Ottoman Woman Writer in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition: Fatma Aliye Hanım” in the session “Exporting Islam: Power and Self-Representation in the Face of Alterity” in the PhD Workshop: *Unthought Perspectives in the Study of Turkish Islam: Methodology and Research Prospects* / Atelier doctoral: *Des impensés de l’islam turc: méthodes et perspectives de recherches*, organized on the Campus Condorcet, with the help of the Center for Turkish, Ottoman, Balkan and Central Asian Studies (CETOBaC) Centre d’Études Turques, Ottomanes, Balkaniques et Centrasiatiques at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales by Théo Malçok (EHESS-CETOBaC) and Samuel Verley (EPHE-GSRL, EHESS-CETOBaC). The first version of this paper was presented in the session “Labor and Industry” (Chair: Pablo Hernandez Sau) in *13th International Congress of Ottoman Social and Economic History (ICOSEH)*, a joint conference of International Association for Ottoman Social & Economic History (IAOSEH) and Universidad de Alcalá with the contribution of Turkish Embassy to Spain, San Ildefonso Major College, University of Alcalá, Alcalá de Henares, Spain, 1-5 October 2013.

Chicago, United States, 3-5 May 2019, “Migration Movements in the Black Sea in the First Half of the 20th Century” in the session “[Im]migration Studies” (Chair: Luiza Osorio Guimarães da Silva) in the *34th Annual Middle East History and Theory (MEHAT) Conference*, supported by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies (CMES) and the Franke Institute for the Humanities, the University of Chicago,

Illinois. A Turkish version of this paper entitled “20. Yüzyılın İlk Yarısında Karadeniz’de Göç Hareketleri” was also read in the session “State, Settlement and Resettlement” (Chair: Nur Bilge Criss) in *Göç Konulu Öğrenci Çalıştayı* [Graduate Workshop on Migration] organized by Bilkent Historical Society and Department of History, Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey, 25-27 April 2012, participation supported by Bilkent University.

New York, United States, 23 April 2019, “Multiculturalism, Conflict and Belonging in the Black Sea Coast of the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic” in the panel “Islam, Identity and Integration” (Chair: Erum K. Hadi) in *the Fourth World History Theory and Practice Conference: Migrants and Refugees*, organized by the History Department, St. John’s University, Queens, New York. The first version of this paper was presented in the session “Human Rights and Politics” (Chair: Jonathan Napier) in 7th Global Conference: *Multiculturalism, Conflict and Belonging*, organized by Inter-Disciplinary.Net (A Global Network for Dynamic Research and Publishing), Mansfield College, Oxford, United Kingdom, 1-3 September 2013, participation supported by Boğaziçi University.

Gaziantep, Turkey, 7 December 2018, “Karadeniz’den Arjantin’e Göçler (1889-1979)” [Migrations from the Black Sea Region to Argentina (1889-1979)] in the panel “Türkiye Siyaseti” [Turkey Politics] (Chair: İlker Aytürk) in *Siyasi İlimler Türk Derneği, XVI. Lisansüstü Konferansı* [16th Graduate Congress of the Turkish Political Science Association] Hasan Kalyoncu University. The first version of this paper was presented in *VII. Uluslararası Canik Sempozyumu: “Geçmişten Günümüze Göç”* [The 7th International Canik Symposium: “Migration from Past to Present”] organized by Canik Municipality and the Journal of History Studies, Canik Cultural Center, participation supported by Canik Municipality, Samsun, Turkey, 17-19 February 2017.

Beirut, Lebanon, 30-31 October 2018, “The Druze Representation in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition” in the panel “Druze in International Venues” (Chair: Tufan Buzpınar) in the International Conference: *The Druze: Celebrating a Thousand Years of Diversity*, organized by the Center for Arts and Humanities - Mellon Grant, Faculty of Arts & Sciences, American University of Beirut, participation supported by American University of Beirut.

Bamberg, Germany, 19-21 September 2018, “Orta Karadeniz’deki Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler” [The Islamized Armenians in the Central Black Sea Region] in the panel “Hristiyanlaştırılmış Türkiye: Geç Osmanlı ve Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemlerinde Müslümanlaş(tırıl)an Hristiyanlar” [Dechristianized Turkey: The Islamized Christians in the Late Ottoman Empire and the Early Turkish Republic] (Organizer & Chair: Cafer Sarıkaya) in *III. Avrupa Türkoloji, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Araştırmaları Toplantısı* (Turkologentag 2018) [Third European Convention on Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies] organized by the Society for Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies (GTOT) in co-operation with the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Bamberg.

Ramat Gan, Israel, 28 May 2018, “Jewish Participation in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition” in the session “Ottoman Jews and their Diasporas” (Chair: Eliezer Papo) in the International Conference: *“Between Coffee and Ayran” Jews*

and Culture in the Ottoman Empire and in Modern Turkey, organized by the Dahan Center, Bar-Ilan University, participation supported by the Dahan Center.

Istanbul, Turkey, 11 March 2017, “Ömer Seyfettin’in *Bir Ermeni Gencinin Hatura Defteri*’nden Şahan Şahnur’un *Sessiz Ricat*’ına: Türk ve Ermeni Edebiyatında 1915 Tehciri’nin Yokluğu ve Varlığı” [From Ömer Seyfettin’s *The Diary of an Armenian Youth* to Shahan Shahnur’s *Retreat Without Song*: The (non)existence of the 1915 Massacre in Turkish and Armenian Literature] in *Yavuz Selim Karakışla’yı Anma Sempozyumu* [Commemorative Symposium for Yavuz Selim Karakışla] Boğaziçi University, Cultural Heritage Museum.

Istanbul, Turkey, 4 November 2016, “Bir Zamanlar Ünye” in *Beyoğlu Sohbetleri*, Ünder Ünyeliler Derneği. An English version of this paper entitled “Once Upon a Time in Ünye” was also read in *Black/North SEAS Xpedition Turkey: Expedition of Artists and Researchers to Turkey (Akçakoca-Ünye-Çamlıhemşin-Hopa)*, Ünye, Ordu, Turkey, 17-18 September 2010.

Yerevan, Armenia, 16-19 September 2016, “Only Lokum Remains: The Islamized Armenians in the Black Sea Region and the Resistance Story of a Flavour” in the session “Trauma Survival Reconstruction” (Chair: Raymond Kevorkian) in the International Conference: *After Genocide: From Trauma to Rebirth: A Gendered Perspective*, organized by Women in War (Paris) in partnership with the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Yerevan and AGBU (Armenian General Benevolent Union) and DVV International (Yerevan) sponsored by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie and the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah (Paris) Kvinna till kvinna (Sweden) Academic Swiss Caucasus Network (ASCN).

Edinburgh, United Kingdom, 3-4 December 2015, “Arabic Participation in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition” in the panel “The Art of Representation” in *Cultures of Diversity: Arts and Cultural Life in Arab Societies before Independence*, organized by the Centre for Advanced Study of the Arab World (CASAW), School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures, University of Edinburgh, participation supported by University of Edinburgh.

Moscow, Russia, 23-24 October 2015, “Women, Gender and the First World War: Food Narratives in Fethiye Çetin’s *My Grandmother*” in the session “Memory, Representation and Humanitarian Aspects of the Armenian Genocide” (Moderator: Ruben A. Safrastyan) in the International Scientific Conference: *Genocide as a Spiritual and Moral Crime against Humanity*, organized by the Genocide Museum and Institute of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia in the temple complex of the Russian and Novo-Nakhichevan diocese of the ACC, participation supported by the Diocese of the Armenian Church in Russia and New Nakhichivan.

Izmir, Turkey, 2-6 September 2015, “20. Yüzyılda Karadeniz’deki Soykırımlar, Katliamlar ve Savaşlar” [Genocides, Massacres and Wars in the 20th Century Black Sea] in the panel “Ölümün Adı Yok: Soykırım, Soyyıkım, Tehcir ve Tarih” [Death Has No Name: Genocide, Ethnic Cleansing, Deportation and History] (Chair: Fırat Gündem) in *10. Karaburun Bilim Kongresi, Sermayenin Doğası: Soykırımlar*,

Katliamlar, Savaşlar [10th Karaburun Science Congress, The Nature of Capital: Genocides, Massacres, Wars] Tepekule Congress and Exhibition Center.

Yerevan, Armenia, 8-12 July 2015, “Food Narratives in Fethiye Çetin’s My Grandmother” in the panel “Survivors and Memory Narratives” (Chair: Rubina Perroomian) in the Twelfth Meeting of the International Association of Genocide Scholars: *Comparative Analysis of the 20th Century Genocides*, hosted by the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, American University of Armenia, participation supported by the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute.

London, United Kingdom, 11-13 June 2015, “Ottoman play performed during 1893 Chicago World’s Fair entitled the Kurdish Drama” in the panel “Representation and Image” (Chair: Karima Laachir) in *Minorities and Popular Culture in the Modern Middle East Conference*, organized jointly by the Woolf Institute and SOAS, University of London, Centre for Cultural, Literary and Postcolonial Studies, in SOAS, University of London, Brunei Gallery, participation supported by the Woolf Institute and Boğaziçi University.

Samsun, Turkey, 15-17 May 2015, “ ‘Bu Türkü Annemin Türküsüdür, Onları Çok Özlediğim Zaman Bu Türküyü Söylerim’: Karadeniz’deki Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeni Çocukları”[‘This Song Is My Mother’s, I Sing This Song When I Miss Them A Lot’: The Islamized Armenian Children in the Black Sea Region] in *IV.Uluslararası Canik Sempozyumu: “Geçmişten Günümüze Çocuk ve Şehir”* [*The 4th International Canik Symposium: “City and Child from Past to Present”*] organized by Canik Municipality and the Journal of History Studies, Canik Cultural Center, participation supported by Canik Municipality.

Jerusalem, Palestine, 2-4 July 2014, “Representation of the Holy City and its communities in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition” in the panel “The Making of Jerusalem’s Image” (Chair & Discussant: Talin Suciyan and Boris Adjemian) in *The Making of Jerusalem: Constructed Spaces and Historic Communities*, organized in the Calouste Gulbenkian Library within the Armenian Convent of St. James in Jerusalem with the support of the Armenian Communities Department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon and St. Sarkis Charity Trust, London.

Istanbul, Turkey, 6-7 June 2014, “Ottoman Participation in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition” in the session “The Ottoman Legacy” (Chair: Brian Edwards) in *Introduction to Turkish American Studies Inaugural Workshop*, organized by the Cultural Studies Association of Turkey, Boğaziçi University Alumni Association Building.

Ankara, Turkey, 16-18 April 2014, “1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’ndaki Osmanlı At Meydanı” [Ottoman Hippodrome in 1893 Chicago World Fair] in the session “Osmanlı İmparatorluk Atları” [Ottoman Imperial Horses] (Chair: Mehmet Öz) in *Dörtmala Tarih: At ve Atlı Kültürün Tarihi Üzerine Uluslararası Sempozyum / Galloping History: An International Symposium on the History of Horses and Equine Culture*, organized by Bilkent Historical Society and Department of History, Bilkent University, participation supported by Bilkent University.

Munich, Germany, 11-14 February 2014, “1893 Şikago Sergisi’nde Bir Osmanlı Kadın Yazarı: Fatma Aliye Hanım” [An Ottoman Woman Writer in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition: Fatma Aliye Hanım] in the panel “Political Fiction” (Chair: Olcay Akyıldız) in *I. Avrupa Türkoloji, Osmanlı ve Türkiye Araştırmaları Toplantısı* (Turkologentag 2014) [*First European Convention on Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies*] organized by the Society for Turkic, Ottoman and Turkish Studies (GTOT) in co-operation with the Institute of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich, participation supported by Boğaziçi University. The first version of this paper was presented in *Uluslararası Multidisipliner Kadın Kongresi “Değişim ve Güçlenme” / International Multidisciplinary Women’s Congress “Change and Empowerment”*, Dokuz Eylül University, Izmir, Turkey, 13-16 October 2009, participation supported by Yeditepe University.

Istanbul, Turkey, 2-4 November 2013, “Lokum Kaldı Yadigâr: Karadeniz’deki Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler ve Bir Lezzetin Direniş Öyküsü” [Only Lokum Remains: *The Islamized Armenians in the Black Sea Region and the Resistance Story of a Flavour*] in the panel “Hafızanın İzleri: Müzik, Yemek ve Anı Çalışmaları” [Traces of Memory: Music, Food and Stories] (Chair: Ferhunde Özbay) in “Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Ermeniler” Konferansı [Conference on “Islamized Armenians”] organized by Hrant Dink Foundation with the cooperation of Boğaziçi University History Department and Malatyahayder (The Benevolent Malatya Armenians Culture and Cooperation Association), Boğaziçi University South Campus Albert Long Hall (BTS), participation supported by Hrant Dink Foundation.

Barcelona, Spain, 24-26 October 2013, “Cross-Cultural Visual Representations in the Paris Universal Expositions” in the session “Cultural Identities” (Chair: Bruna Alvarez) in *12th Conference “European Culture”*, organized by the Charlemagne Institute of European Studies, International University of Catalonia (UIC).

Bursa, Turkey, 26-28 September 2013, “1909 Bursa Sergisi” [Bursa Exhibition in 1909] in *Mudanya Mütarekesi’nden Günümüze Bursa Uluslararası Sempozyumu* [International Symposium of Bursa from the Armistice of Mudanya to the Present Day] a joint conference of Governorship of Bursa, Uludağ University and Atatürk Supreme Council for Culture, Language and History Atatürk Research Center, Prof. Dr. Mete Cengiz Cultural Center, Uludağ University Görükle Campus, participation supported by Atatürk Research Center and Governorship of Bursa. This paper was also read in the session “Bursa: Şehir ve Mekan” [Bursa: City and Space] (Chair: Hasan Taşçı) in *II. Türkiye Lisansüstü Çalışmalar Kongresi* (TLÇK) [Second Turkish Graduate Studies Congress] a joint conference of Scientific Studies Association / İlmi Etüdler Derneği (İLEM), Bursa Metropolitan Municipality and Uludağ University Research Center of Turkish States and Relative Communities / Türk Devletleri ve Akraba Toplulukları Araştırma Merkezi (TÜDAM), Teyyare Cultural Center, Bursa, Turkey, 6-8 May 2013.

Erbil, Kurdistan, Iraq, 16-18 April 2013, “In Search of a Vanished Performance: *The Kurdish Drama* in the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893” in *The First International Academic Conference on Kurds and Kurdistan in History: Kurds and Kurdistan in Ottoman Period*, a joint conference between Salahaddin University-

Erbil (Kurdistan, Iraq) and Mardin Artuklu University (Turkey), participation supported by Salahaddin University-Erbil.

Lisbon, Portugal, 10-12 March 2013, “Celebrating Difference: ‘Turkish Theatre’ in the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893” in the session “Studying Celebrity Culture: Framing, Positioning, Defining” (Chair: Yaron Girsh) in 2nd Global Conference: *Celebrity, Exploring Critical Issues*, organized by Inter-Disciplinary.Net (A Global Network for Dynamic Research and Publishing), Hotel Real Palácio, participation supported by Yeditepe University and Boğaziçi University.

Ankara, Turkey, 14-16 November 2012, “19. Yüzyıl Dünya Fuarlarındaki Osmanlı Katılımlarında Kültürel Karşılaşmalar ve Sanatsal Yansımaları” [Cultural Encounters and Their Artistic Reflections during the Ottoman Participations in the 19th Century World’s Fairs] (Chair: Mustafa Servet Akpolat) in *Osmanlı Dünyasında Kültürel Karşılaşmalar ve Sanatsal Yansımaları Prof. Dr. Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu Onuruna Sempozyum / Cultural Encounters in the Ottoman World and Their Artistic Reflections Symposium in Honour of Filiz Yenişehirlioğlu*, organized by Department of Art History, Faculty of Letters, Hacettepe University.

Mardin, Turkey, 2-3 November 2012, “1873 Viyana Evrensel Sergisi’nde Mardin ve Çevresinin Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihine Bakmak” [Looking at the Social and Economic History of Mardin and its Periphery from 1873 Vienna Universal Exposition] in the panel “Mardin ve Çevresinin Genel Görünümü” [General Panorama of Mardin and its Surroundings] (Chair: Suavi Aydın) in “Mardin ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi” Toplantısı [Workshop on “the Social and Economic History of Mardin and the Region”] organized by Hrant Dink Foundation with the support of Medical Association of Mardin, Mardin Bar Association, KAMER Mardin, Mardin Cinema Society and Turabdin Assyrian Culture and Solidarity Association, Erdoba Elegance Hotel Conference Room, participation supported by Hrant Dink Foundation.

Paris, France, 2-6 July 2012, “Ottoman Participation in the 1900 Paris Universal Exposition” in the session “Cross-Cultural Visual Representations in Late Ottoman Context” (Organizer: Nilay Özlü) in the 9th International Conference: *Crossroads in Cultural Studies*, hosted by Sorbonne Nouvelle University and UNESCO, participation supported by Association for Cultural Studies (ACS), Yeditepe University and Boğaziçi University.

Diyarbakır, Turkey, 23-24 June 2012, “Tarihe Karışmış Bir Oyunu Araştırmak: 1893 Chicago Columbus Dünya Sergisi’ndeki Kürt Tiyatrosu” [In Search of a Vanished Performance: The Kurdish Drama in the Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893 / Lêkolîna Lîstikekê ku bi Dîrokê ve Çûye: Şanoya Kurd a di Pêşangeha Dinyayê de ya li Columbus a Şîkagoyê, 1893] in the session “Sözlü Kültür, Tiyatro, Eğitim” [Oral Culture, Theater, Education / Çanda Devkî, Şano, Perwerdehî] (Moderator: Ergin Öpengin) in *Kürt Çalışmaları Günleri* [Kurdish Studies Days / Rojên Xebatên Kurdî] organized by the Kurdish Studies Platform, Sümerpark Reception Hall.

Diyarbakır, Turkey, 11-13 November 2011, “1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’nda Diyarbekir ve Çevresinin Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihine Bakmak” [Looking at the Social and Economic History of Diyarbekir and its Periphery from 1893 Chicago World Fair / Di Fuara Cîhanê ya Şikagoyê ya 1893yan de nihêrîna li dîroka civakî û siyasî ya Amedê û derdora wê] in the panel “19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Sosyo-Ekonomik Düzen ve Düzenin Bozulması” [Social-Economic Order and Its Deterioration During the Second Half of 19th Century / Di Nîviya Duyemîn a Sedsala 19emîn de Pergala Civakî-Aborî û Xirabûna Pergalê] (Chair: Dilek Güven) in “Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi” Toplantısı [Workshop on “the Social and Economic History of Diyarbakır and the Region” / Cîvîna “Dîroka Civakî û Aborî ya Amedê û Derdora Wê”] organized by Hrant Dink Foundation with the support of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Diyarbakır Institute for Political and Social Research, Sümerpark Reception Hall, participation supported by Hrant Dink Foundation.

Retz, Austria, 11-15 July 2011, “Ottoman Participation in the 1873 Vienna Universal Exposition” in the panel “Ottoman-Habsburg Encounters” (Chair & Discussant: Claudia Römer) in *12th International Congress of Ottoman Social and Economic History (ICOSEH)*, a joint conference of International Association for Ottoman Social & Economic History (IAOSEH) and Oriental Institute of Vienna University, Hotel Althof Retz, participation supported by the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) and Boğaziçi University.

Istanbul, Turkey, 16-18 December 2010, “An Unusual Young Turk Visitor in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition: Mehmed Ubeydullah Efendi” in the session “Individual Perceptions of the West – Reformist Travelers, their Topics and the Public” in *Travel Writing between Fact and Fiction: Genre, Functions and Boundaries*, a joint conference of the Department of Turkish Language and Literature, Boğaziçi University, Istanbul & Department of Islamic Studies, Institute for Oriental and Asian Studies (IOA), University of Bonn, organized in Boğaziçi University, within the framework of the research project „Europe from the Outside“ funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF). A Turkish version of this paper entitled “1893 Şikago Sergisi’nin Sıradışı Bir Jön Türk Ziyaretçisi: Mehmed Ubeydullah Efendi” was also read in *Doğu’nun Batısı* [East of West] workshop organized by Ali Şükrü Çoruk at Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, Atatürk Library, Istanbul, Turkey, 10 December 2010.

Istanbul, Turkey, 19-22 October 2010, “1893 Şikago Sergisi’nde Osmanlı Müziği” [Ottoman Music in 1893 Chicago Exhibition] (Chair: Serpil Murtezaoglu) in *İkinci Uluslararası Müzikte Temsil ve Müziksel Temsil Sempozyumu / Second International Representation in Music and Musical Representation Symposium*, organized by Turkish Music State Conservatory, Department of Musicology, Istanbul Technical University.

Bilecik, Turkey, 14-15 October 2010, “1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’ndaki Osmanlı Yemekleri” [Ottoman Dishes in 1893 Chicago World Fair] in the session “Reklam ve Fuarlarda Osmanlı Mutfağı” [Ottoman Cuisine through Advertisements & Exhibitions] (Chair: Harun Tunçel) in *Birinci Türk Mutfak Kültürü Sempozyumu (Osmanlı Mutfak Kültürü) / 1st Symposium on the Turkish (Ottoman) Culinary Culture*, Bilecik University, participation supported by Bilecik University.

Barcelona, Spain, 19-24 July 2010, “An Arabic Performer in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition: Ahmad Abu Khalil al-Qabbani” in the panel “Theatre Performance” in *World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies (WOCMES)*, organized by European Institute of the Mediterranean (IEMed), Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), participation supported by Yeditepe University.

Istanbul, Turkey, 27-29 May 2010, “Bir Mikro Tarih Çalışması: Ünye’de Yaşamış Son Ermeni Aileleri” [A Micro History Study: the Last Armenian Families Lived in Ünye] in the panel “ ‘Türkiye’nin Toplumsal Hafızası’ Hrant Dink’in Anısına” [‘The Social Memory of Turkey’ in the Memory of Hrant Dink] (Chair: Meltem Ahıska) in *Tekil Çalışmalar, Ortak Hassasiyetler: III. Atatürk Enstitüsü Lisansüstü Öğrenci Konferansı* [*Individual Studies, Common Sensibilities: The Atatürk Institute Third Graduate Student Conference*] Boğaziçi University. The first version of this paper was presented in the panel “Milli Kimlik, Azınlıklar ve Çokkültürlülük” [National Identity, Minorities and Multiculturalism] (Chair: Murat Akan) in *Siyasi İlimler Türk Derneği, VIII. Lisansüstü Konferansı* [8th Graduate Congress of the Turkish Political Science Association] Okan University, Istanbul, Turkey, 4 December 2010.

Istanbul, Turkey, 6-7 May 2010, “1893 Şikago Dünya Fuarı’nda Sergilenen Bir Osmanlı Oyunu: Kürt Tiyatrosu (*The Kurdish Drama*)” [*The Kurdish Drama: An Ottoman Play Performed in 1893 Chicago World’s Fair*] in the panel “İmparatorluktan Ulus-Devlete Doğru” [From Empire to Nation-State] (Chair: Bülent Bilmez) in “*Dönüşümün Tarihi, Tarihin Dönüşümü*”: I. Lisansüstü Öğrenci Konferansı [“*History of the Transformation, Transformation of the History*”: First Graduate Student Conference] organized by Department of Atatürk Principles and the History of Revolution, Yıldız Technical University. The first version of this paper was presented in the panel “Sanat” [Art] (Chair: Onur Ali Taşkın) in *17. Sosyoloji Öğrenci Kongresi* [17th Sociology Students Congress] Dicle University, Diyarbakır, Turkey, 26-28 April 2011.

Istanbul, Turkey, 29-31 October 2009, “Representation of the Ottoman Theatre in the Chicago World’s Fair of 1893” in the panel “Rethinking 19th Century Ottoman Theatre and Its Music” (Chair: Philip Sadgrove) in *Musical Societies and Politics: Ottoman and Early Republican Turkey in its European Context* [Osmanlı ve Erken Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye’sinde, Avrupa Bağlamında Müzikal Oluşumlar ve Siyaset] a joint conference of Boğaziçi University, Istanbul & the European University Institute, Florence, organized in Boğaziçi University, within the framework of the research project “Europe and Beyond: Transfers, Networks and Markets for Musical Theatre in Modern Europe, 1740-1960”.

Istanbul, Turkey, 22-23 September 2006, “1893 Şikago Sergisi’nde Osmanlı Tiyatrosu” [Ottoman Theatre in the 1893 Chicago Exposition] in the panel “19. Yüzyıl Osmanlı Tiyatrosu Oyuncuları” [Performers in the 19th Century Ottoman Theater] in 11th Annual Workshop on Ottoman Material Culture: *Temaşa: Performances in the Ottoman World*, organized by Suraiya Faroqhi & Arzu Öztürkmen, Boğaziçi University, Cultural Heritage Museum.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My long-term process of studying, accumulating, thinking and writing has come to an end today thanks to the support and contribution of a number of individuals and institutions. The present study would not have been possible without them. I would like to express my gratitude to all those who made the process and completion of this thesis possible. In the writing phase, I benefited greatly from many invaluable comments and helpful suggestions offered by my thesis committee members, namely Arzu Öztürkmen, Oya Pancaroğlu, Ahmet Ersoy, Burcu Yıldız and Fahriye Dinçer. First and foremost, I would like to express my special thanks to my thesis advisor Arzu Öztürkmen, whose lecture developed my theoretical and analytical skills. In addition, I have greatly benefited from her academic professionalism and friendship. I would also like to express my thanks to the other committee members, Oya Pancaroğlu and Ahmet Ersoy, for their attentive interest in the manuscript of my thesis. As my academic advisor, Ahmet Ersoy was always very kind and helpful. I am deeply thankful for his guidance and patience throughout my entire study at Boğaziçi University. I thank Burcu Yıldız and Fahriye Dinçer accepted to be on my committee. After graduation from the History Department at Yeditepe University, I started my masters' degree in the History Department at Boğaziçi University. During my doctoral studies in the same department, I had the chance of taking classes from the most respected professors in their fields, including Ahmet Ersoy, Anestis Vasilakeris, Arzu Öztürkmen, Edhem Eldem, Fatma Türe, Mahir Şaul, Meltem Toksöz, Selçuk Esenbel, Selim Deringil, Suraiya Faroqhi, Yaşar Tolga Cora, Yavuz Selim Karakışla and Zeynep Çelik who introduced me to a new world of ideas, theories and philosophers while giving me friendship, encouragement and support.

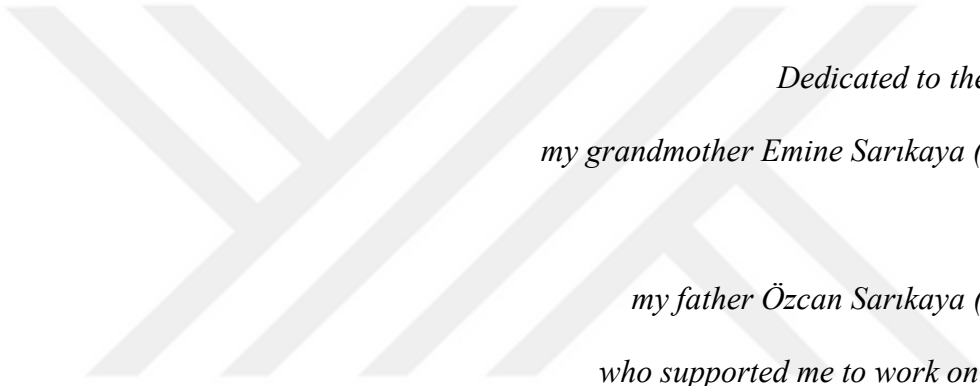
In addition, in the research phase, I was very lucky to receive guidance from the most respected academicians including Antranik Dakessian, Anush Hovhannisyan, Araz Kojayan, Armen Marsoobian, Armen Melkonyan, Avedis Hadjian, Aylin Vartanyan, Aysın Candan, Boris Adjemian, Claude Mutaflan, Damla Demiröz, Diana Kerselyan, Edgar Hovhannisyan, George Aghjayan, Haykanush Mesropyan, Hervé Georgelin, Hratch Tchilingirian, Kevork Hintlian, Lerna Ekmekcioğlu, Raymond Kevorkian, Rubina Perroomian, Sosi Antikacıoğlu, Stavros Anestidis, Tigran Zargaryan, Vahé Tachjian, Vera Gosdanian and Yervand Grekryan who all showed genuine interest in my work. I would like to thank the administration and staff of the libraries and archives for facilitating my research. I received tremendous assistance from the staff at the Interlibrary Loan Office of Boğaziçi University Library, notably Zeliha Günday and Filiz Flores Mamondi. They always found a way to help and support me during my research period. Here I would like to express my special thanks to the staff of the Near Eastern Section of Boğaziçi University Library, especially to Seyfi Berk and Kamber Yılmaz, for their friendly and professional support. I would also like to thank Ayşe Çekici, Ersen Göl, Lamia Kabal, Şükran Beyde and Ünal Zenginobuz, the administrative and support staff of the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences at Boğaziçi University for their assistance in handling bureaucratic procedures during my doctoral studies.

Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge the support of my friends and colleagues who helped me in more ways than one. I am indebted to Ani Sarukhanyan, Arlet İncidüzen, Gevorg Kalloshyan, Linda Mıgdis Şeker, Lusine Sahakyan, Meline Anumyan, Melissa Bilal, Nazlı Temir Beyleryan and Varduhi Balyan for helping me in the translations of Armenian materials and for sharing their critical comments. I am deeply indebted to Arlet İncidüzen who is my best friend. I

am very grateful to her for the invaluable advice she has given me both in work and life, but most importantly for being a great friend. I am particularly indebted to her for editing and proofreading the final version of my thesis at short notice.

I would like to thank my other friends and colleagues, Akgül Zorbay, Buket Sargan, Burcu Gültekin Punsmann, Burcu Halaç, Çağdaş Aydoğan, Dünya Başol, Elçin Başol, Ellinor Morack, Engin Gündoğan, Gappas Charalampos, Helin Anahit, İhsan Seddar Kaynar, Jade Cemre Erciyes, Mehmet Ali Düzgün, Meriç Öztürk, Murat Yıldırım, Natali Katıköy, Naz Vardar, Nilhan Erol, Özgen Kaya, Rouben Koulaksezian, Sesil Artuç and Seval Yılmaz Matter for their contributions for my master's thesis. I would also like to thank some local people who helped me during my field research, Ahmet Derya Varilci, Alyssa Mohin, Aras Ergüneş, Berke Baş, Dora Ioannidou, Garo Aprahamian, Haluk Civanbay, Harout Iskahadian, Hovsep Artinian, İsmet Küçükoglu, Mark Arslan, Mark Gavor, Megerdich Kouyoumjian, Nurhan Becidyan, Paris Papageorgiou, Raşan Erdoğan Yılmaz, Sebouh Terzian, Serhat Sarıkaya, Sinan Temir, Takuhi Tovmasyan and Zaven Peter Tokatlian.

Finally, I am profoundly indebted to my mother, Güzin Küçükoglu and to my dear sisters, Figen Sarıkaya and Funda Kıyat, as well as my brother-in-law Emre Kıyat and my niece Asya Kıyat. This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my grandmother Emine Sarıkaya (1926-2015) and my father Özcan Sarıkaya (1946-2024) who supported me to work on the subject. Prof. Süheyla Artemel (1930-2018) and Prof. Özlem Kumrular (1974-2024) were also among the close followers of my doctoral process. I wish they could see that I was able to finish this thesis, but I am happy that they saw it, even if it was from afar. Lastly, for this thesis, interviews were conducted with Armenians from Ünye who wanted to tell their stories. I would like to thank all my interviewees, both mentioned and not mentioned in the thesis.



*Dedicated to the memory of
my grandmother Emine Sarıkaya (1926-2015)
and
my father Özcan Sarıkaya (1946-2024)
who supported me to work on the subject.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study aims at researching the memory of the Armenian community in Ünye and its surroundings, focusing on their sense of belonging, where trauma and nostalgia produce mixed feelings. Ünye is a small town connected to Ordu and is located between the towns of Samsun in the west and Ordu in the east. Prior to the *Tehcir* of Armenians in 1915 and the Population Exchange in 1924, Ünye was, as was the whole Black Sea coast back then, heavily populated with Armenians and Greeks. Using published materials like books, newspapers and memoirs on the one hand, this study also adopts an oral history approach, collecting narratives from both Armenian and non-Armenian inhabitants on their regional memory. The research also consists of a fieldwork conducted mainly in Turkey. Nevertheless, to reach Armenians from the Black Sea region of Turkey, it also included oral and archive sources during visits to Armenia, Lebanon, Greece, France, Canada, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Caucasus (Georgia, Abkhazia).

My interest in Ünye's history was first sparked by the region's Armenian communities and further piqued by my own family history. Being a native of Ünye, I have long been occasionally collecting information, through family conversations or conducting casual interviews. Our home in Ünye was located in the formerly Greek neighborhood of the town, where as a child, I always felt intrigued by the silent presence of the Greek Church.

My oldest memory about this issue goes back to questioning my paternal grandmother who was acknowledging the presence of Greeks and Armenians. But it was during my college years that I learned the disguised identity that my paternal

grandmother was from the Circassian community. The real surprise however came when I learned that my great grandfather's second wife was an Armenian lady called Mari, who took the name Zeliha after getting married in 1915. When I asked my family members the reason for their silence about the issue, the answer was even more surprising. Apparently, there were many more "such brides" from my maternal side and Mari, my great grandmother made it possible for herself and her family to stay in the region by marrying my great grandfather and converting to Islam. I was also told that she followed her own Christian faith, living her life as a crypto-Muslim, a matter that the rest of her new family knew. The disclosure of this long-disguised truth in my family coincided with the emergence of the new research in this field, which revealed many such cases (Çetin, 2004). According to Ayşe Gül Altınay, there are an estimated two million Turks, whose grandparents can narrate similar stories (Altınay, 2015, pp. 18-19).

As I began my preliminary studies on the history of Armenian communities, I soon realized that the ethnic diversity was more complicated than I presumed. This diversity naturally comprised Greeks but also Circassians and Georgians, who have migrated to the region at the turn of the 20th century. My preliminary review also revealed that the conflicts between Muslim and non-Muslim communities have received more attention than the conflicts among the incoming Muslim communities. When I began more focused ethnographic research and started to conduct oral history interviews, I began to hear several stories about the diversity of the Muslim communities and their conflicts as well. ¹ My ethnographic research in Ünye, showed

¹ In fact, this intra-Muslim conflict has not been much researched in written sources. I was able to hear about this matter more through oral history. One reason for this lack of sources has been the fact that both Georgians and Circassians were newly migrated communities in Ünye and its surroundings. The attention was given rather to a much broader category of "Caucasian migration" which transcended Black Sea region.

how strong the boundaries between the nearby settlements like Ordu and Samsun are. The Turks living in the region had relations with Armenians and Greeks during the imperial times and these communities were later replaced by Circassians and Georgians during the Republican era. This completely changed the religious profile of the communities that the Turks had relations within the past.

To understand the intricacies of this social change, this study used published materials such as books, newspapers and memoirs and adopted an oral history approach by collecting regional and national memory narratives both from Turkish and non-Turkish inhabitants of the region. Even though knowledge about the historical experiences of people living outside of Turkey is not the focus of this research, one should mention the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens which has a rich database. Likewise, there is a settled population from Black Sea region in Kallithea and Nea-Smyrni districts of Athens. This population has established its own associations over the years. Another important line of research consisted of some Greeks and Armenians who lived in Ünye and its surrounding area in the past and who came to Turkey to visit their towns. As my research coincided with the covid pandemic, interviews with these people could only be conducted online.

This study focuses therefore on a particular historical period, when internal and external motives were effective in the displacement of populations and when social changes gained momentum in parallel with the political movements in the Ottoman geography. The population of the Central Black Sea region experienced a significant change with the arrival of Crimean and Caucasian immigrants and the departure of Armenians and Greeks. Although the non-Muslim communities in the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic received increasing interest in scholarly works, the issue of non-Muslim communities has not been addressed properly in the

context of Black Sea region/coast of the Ottoman Empire and Turkish Republic except for Hemşin. This is mainly since the academics working on Armenians principally focus on the eastern part of Anatolia while the academics working on Greeks focus on western and partially central part of Anatolia.

The study of the Black Sea region has therefore been problematic in terms of two aspects: The first and foremost was the trauma of the Armenian *Tehcir* of 1915, the intensification of violence with the participation of Topal Osman and other local militia. The second was the fact that the Population Exchange of 1924 mostly targeted western and southern coasts. There were only a limited number of immigrants who settled in central Black Sea region, mostly in Samsun and in Giresun to some extent. So, both for the Armenian *Tehcir* and the Population Exchange, the Black Sea region has not been seen a primary region of interest.

1.1 A brief historical review of the region and the circulation of its ethnic communities

The Black Sea region was, in general terms, an inland sea of the Ottoman State up until the second half of the 18th century and its demographical structure was ethnically diverse including Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Laz people and Georgians. However, the competition that developed between the Czarist Russia and the Ottoman State from the 19th century onward led to significant changes in the region. In his seminal article on the framework for the study of the Black Sea World at the turn of the 19th century, Eyüp Özveren examines the historical-political background of the region, focusing on what the concept of ‘Eastern Question’. He approaches this concept as “a discourse which related Russia and the Ottoman Empire to the then primarily European project of hegemonic rivalry over the control of the globe at a

time when the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire seemed imminent” (Özveren, 1997, p. 80). When the Russian army advanced to Edirne in 1829, the possibility that Russia seizes the Ottoman Straits, access to the Mediterranean, internalize the Black Sea and turn Istanbul to a ‘free port’ became a big threat. The ‘Eastern Question’ was therefore directly related to the waves of migration which were experienced at the turn of the 20th century. Özveren details the ‘polycentric distribution of power’ in the Black Sea region as follows:

The Eastern Question was once more forcefully placed on the map of the Black Sea by the Crimean War which brought the above parties [Britain; Russia and the Ottoman Empire] together in the battlefield. The high point of the British hegemony coincided with the critical moment in the history of the region which was most internationalized. The fact that Britain as an invincible naval power could mobilize European forces to win a war that required massive logistic support attests to the peak of her hegemony. As a result of the urgent demand for provisioning massive armies on land, The Ottoman and the Russian empires turned more than ever before towards the Black Sea. The defeat of Russia by Britain and her allies paved the way to what is known as the “Crimean system,” an international arrangement which would compensate for the weakness of the Ottoman Empire by concerted European support and thereby help contain the Russian threat. Irrespective of the inability of this particular arrangement to stand the test of time (Mosse, 1963, p. 207), the Crimean War not only reduced Russia to one among the several European powers (Seaton-Watson, 1967, p. 331), but also served to institute what came closest to a polycentric distribution of power within the Black Sea zone (Özveren, 1997, p. 80).

This political competition and stress brought an unexpected movement of population in the Black Sea region, leading to important changes in the ethnic distribution of the region. Up until now, this change has been primarily examined in the context of the ethnic conflicts that took place between Muslims and non-Muslims in the eastern Black Sea region (Özcan 2007; Özdiş 2008; Öztürk 2017; Tosun 2018; Eray Biber 2016, 2020). Considered as the largest economic center of the Black Sea region and the city to which Ünye was attached prior to the Republican era, Samsun has always occupied a significant position with its fertile lands and natural port as an

important junction between Central Anatolia and Black Sea regions throughout history (Mortan and Atalay, 2019, p. 59).² Samsun became a transit commercial center for European products after the Crimean War in the 19th century. As the center of tobacco monopoly, which had the best tobacco in the Ottoman Empire, Samsun brought welfare and abundance to the region. While tobacco led to a rapid increase in the population of Greek community, merchants and craftsmen came to Samsun for work from Istanbul, Greece, Cappadocia and surrounding areas (Bozis, 2020, p. 410).

Given this historical-political context, exploring the effects of displacement on different ethnic communities requires also a closer look at the ethnography of memory. In her analysis of oral history narratives in Tirebolu, Arzu Öztürkmen reminds us of the ongoing dialogue between narratives on what people remember and the material cultural context in which these narratives are produced (Öztürkmen, 2003). Her research on ethnic conflicts underscores how personal memory and memory research are also interrelated in situating the ethnographer and the field study. She states as follows:

The ethnographic research on memory is undoubtedly a complicated domain. It involves not only the subject matter to be researched, but also the memory baggage of the researcher, which may include the impact of national education, nostalgia, or even at times, political activism. It is therefore important to ask where the ethnographer stands vis-à-vis the particular locality before engaging into such questions as “How does a nation remember?” or perhaps in this case “How does a locality remember?” (Öztürkmen, 2006, p. 96).

Öztürkmen’s study of the displacements in Tirebolu illustrates the local experience of international political context. Through a series of oral history

² The province of Trabzon consisted of four *sanjaks* including central Trabzon, Canik, Gümüşhane and Lazistan. In the 19th century, while Ünye and Samsun were in Canik Sanjak, Ordu was in Trabzon Sanjak.

interviews she explores how today's Tirebolites remember Greek and Armenian legacy:

While nearby localities and the remote Russian image constituted the main domains of alienation in Tirebolu during Ottoman times, this began to change in the region with new conflicts and new rapprochements. The affinity between Greeks and Russians held a significant place in this change, as it presented a threat to the long-established social order under Ottoman rule. Nationalist movements were on the rise and had a growing impact during a process of war which had begun with the Turco-Russian War of 1877-78 and continued with the Balkan Wars in 1912-13, the First World War and, finally, with the Turco-Greek War of 1920-1922. Tirebolu then was a small but well-informed locality and many of its young male population were drafted into the military on different war fronts, including Gallipoli and Pozantı. The center of the town was directly affected by the news and the political mobilization, while the surrounding mountain villages realized the coming of an ethnic clash much more slowly.

In her important work *Not Even My Name: A True Story*, Thea Halo gives a thorough account of the initial conflicts inside a village community near Fatsa in the Black Sea. *Not Even My Name* is indeed the true story of Halo's Greek mother Sano, who survived the forced exile in 1915 by getting married to an old man and migrating to the United States. Her narrative reveals a process of gradual change from the perspective of a Greek village girl. Sano's life story is a case in point in how international politics affect the life of a young girl who experienced a bitter transition from a secure, happy farm life towards ominous rumors of ethnic conflicts (Halo, 2000).

1.2 Diverse waves of migration: Unexpected displacements and forced hospitality

The region between Samsun and Ordu was one of the places populated densely by the Armenians and the Greeks before the *Tehcir* of Armenians in 1915 and the Population Exchange in 1924. However, the ethnic mobility in this region actually began before the *Tehcir* and Population Exchange. After the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War, the Georgian immigrants, from Batumi-Çürüksu region of the Ottoman

Empire's territories in Georgia came to Trabzon Province and they were placed especially in Ordu-Ünye-Samsun region. This created serious problems with the local Muslim and non-Muslim people of the region. Another important development in the region was the Circassian migration that started in the second half of the 19th century from Caucasia. From the 1860s onward, Circassian immigrants also began to settle in the region between Ordu-Samsun, particularly in Ünye, Terme and Çarşamba. Records show that Circassian and Georgian immigrants frequently engaged in armed conflict with local Muslim villagers and landed proprietors and beys (Özel, 2011, p. 107). The non-Muslim Greeks and Armenians living in the urban and rural areas, who were affected by these clashes attempted to migrate outside of the Ottoman borders, especially to Greece and Russia. However, the knowledge regarding the historical experiences of these groups is rather limited and requires further research in Russian and Georgian archives. To provide a comprehensive account of the population mobility in central Black Sea region during the 19th century and to examine the rising conflicts and negotiations from it, require detailed use of written sources, oral history interviews and material culture.

Migration movements constitute a multi-ethnic structure on the one hand, while on the other, they are also based upon prejudices, incompatibilities and even conflicts that are differences which push societies toward separation and reassert an environment of fear (Poyraz, 2020, p. 267). When we talk about individual, familial and mass migration, it can be seen that it was the Armenian community that first experienced every phase of these three migration experiences. Greeks, Georgians and Circassians generally experienced mass migration rather than individual and familial migrations within shorter periods of time. The literature on the migration experience of the latter communities offers a more compact analysis based on written documents

and memoirs. However, to understand the Armenian *Tehcir* and its consequences requires the examination of a more dispersed data.

The initial migration movements of Caucasians, of the mid-19th century, needs also a closer look. It is thought that the migration/refugee movements from the Caucasus to the Ottoman Empire took place in two waves, the first one between 1850-1876 and the second one after 1877 (also known as ‘93 *Harbi*’ in Turkish) (Berber, 2011, p. 20).³ In the first wave, a significant number of Caucasian migrants landed to Anatolia by sea, arriving to Istanbul or other Black Sea ports. Some other migrants used land transportation and reached Anatolia through Batumi and Kars. Central Black Sea region including Samsun and Ordu were among the localities in which they were located (Berber, 2011, p. 21). Records show that many other Caucasian migrants were also directed in the second wave included the arrival of those who had previously been settled in the Balkans to Anatolia along with the people who came from the Caucasus during the Ottoman-Russian War (Berber, 2011, p. 40). My oral history research showed that the Circassian settlements went beyond the region between Sinop and Terme in the central Black Sea region, despite their long-forgotten memory in the region, written documents show that Circassians lived in Döşemedibi in Ünye as well.

Today, the social transformation process has gained an unprecedented momentum on this large geography where we live, and the migration movements have picked up even more speed and forced people from different countries to look for different places to live for various reasons and made them willing or obliged to build themselves a future where they have settled. This situation, which has affected

³ ‘93 *Harbi*’ (the 93 War) refers to the 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russian War, during the reign of Abdulhamid II and Czar Aleksander II. It is remembered as such simply because it coincided with the year 1293 according to the Julian calendar. Fought both on the Balkan and the Caucasian Fronts, it ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire.

many countries to varying degrees including Turkey, makes it inevitable to reshape living spaces. The social diversification formed by individuals belonging to different cultures and social groups brings along new anxieties and hopes (Poyraz, 2020, p. 267).

1.3 Using a multi-faceted methodology

This thesis will draw on 3 different fields of study as its method: 1) Written sources from library and archival research, 2) Oral history interviews and 3) Material cultural relics as visual and ethnographic sources. One can observe that the studies that have been carried out up until now have generally addressed one or two groups, such as Turkish-Armenian or Turkish-Greek relations. The aim of this study is to offer a comparative look at the relations between non-Muslim (Armenian and Greek) and Muslim (Circassian, Georgian) communities, while also exploring the problems between the Armenian and Greek communities. While Armenian and Greek communities constituted most of the Ottoman Empire's Christian population, the Circassian and Georgian communities, constituted the most important part of the 'non-Turkish Muslim' population at the turn of the 20th century and after the Republic was founded.

In Turkey, university libraries such as Boğaziçi University, Bilkent University and Middle East Technical University, as well as ISAM-Islamic Research Center, IRCICA- Islamic History, Art and Culture Research Center and ANAMED-Anatolian Civilizations Research Center research libraries were used. The library research was also conducted abroad in university libraries of Haigazian University, American University of Beirut, Lebanese American University and University of

Chicago, as well as the SOAS University of London Library and the Calouste Gulbenkian Library within the Armenian Convent of St. James in Jerusalem.

The research also used sources from the Presidential State Archives in Istanbul, the archive work was carried out in private archives abroad such as the AGBU (Armenian General Benevolent Union), Nubar Library (Bibliothèque Nubar de l'UGAB) in Paris and the Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies (Archeio Tou Kentrou Mikrasiatikon Spoudon) in Athens.

Another important research center where research was conducted in Athens was the Committee for Pontian Studies (Epitropí Pontiakón Meletón). As a non-profit scientific society known for its support of genocide studies in Greece, it is concerned with the collection, study and publication of historical and cultural materials of Pontic Hellenism. The scientific journal *Archeion Pontou* (Pontus Archive) published by the Association remains the main source of information on relevant topics. The Museum of Pontic Hellenism is also located in the Center.

In order to investigate the memory of migration in and around Ünye from the late Ottoman period to the Republic era, the catalogues of the Prime Ministry Directorate of Private Secretariat Documents (1924-1949), Prime Ministry General Directorate of Public Relations Documents (1920-1951), The Joint Decrees [Chronological] (1923-1975), the General Directorate of Soil Settlement (1909-1967) and the Republican People's Party Documents (1923-1953) of the Presidential State Archives in Istanbul were also examined, as they contain separate catalogues providing important demographic data for the Ottoman and Republican periods.

The research also greatly benefited from the sources in libraries, archives and institutions which specialized in Armenian sources. These included the National Library of Armenia, the National Archives of Armenia, the Sarkis and Marie

Izmirlian Library of Yerevan State University, the AGBU Papazian Library in American University of Armenia, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography in Yerevan, the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund and the Library of Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Yerevan in a total of five visits to Armenia.

One should also mention the contribution of some private archives. Among the items discovered in these archives was a letter dated 1929 from Paris concerning the Armenians in Ordu which exhibited in “the Armenian Genocide Orphans’ Aram Bezikian” Museum in Lebanon and a notebook dated 1984 from Yerevan about the Armenians in Ünye. The Nubar Library in Paris and the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens, housed significant information about Ünye and its surroundings. They offered primary transcriptions of oral narratives provided by non-Muslims who migrated from the Black Sea region at the beginning of the 20th century. The collection at the Center for Asia Minor Studies which includes oral history interviews with Greeks who migrated to Greece from the Black Sea region both before and after the Population Exchange, is particularly noteworthy.

In pursuit of surviving narratives, the research aimed at reaching out several Armenians who lived in a dispersed way. Within the scope of this thesis, a total of 30 people were interviewed in different locations. 20 of these were conducted in Turkey and 10 abroad. The interviewees generally consist of women and men over the age of 60. Generally, people from Ünye’s notables and middle class were reached through snowball sampling. The findings from these interviews indicated that the memory of this region’s history is particularly powerful. The strong ties that residents of and around Ünye have with the town in which they were born and subsequently forced to

leave for various reasons continue to endure. This factor also significantly contributed to the content of the interviews.

This study therefore proposes to research the long-time silenced memory of the Armenian past in Ünye and its surroundings, in relation with other ethnic and religious communities. In doing so, it aims at questioning the reasons for this relative silence both in scholarly research as well as in the formulation of local identities.

1.4 Towards an oral history approach

As Arzu Öztürkmen and Joanna Bornat expressed, “Oral history is a historiographic ‘approach’ as much as a methodology. Its practice depends on interviewing people for their experiences and memories” (Öztürkmen and Bornat, 2009, p. 453). Oral history methodology consists of depth interviews, acknowledging the subjectivity of both the narrator and the researcher. Life-story is the main genre that oral historians focus in order to contextualize their own research questions within the shared narrative. It is important to refer at this point to the comprehensive literature regarding the accuracy or reliability of the phenomena in the theory and method of oral history (Ong, 1982; Bauman, 1986; Portelli, 1991; Hoffman, 1996; Lummis, 1998). As Alessandro Portelli maintains, oral history narratives provide us with more information about what they mean when they are told rather than about the events themselves. In Portelli’s words: “The first thing that makes oral history different, therefore, is that it tells us less about *events* than about their *meaning*” (Portelli, 1991, p. 67). In this context, the events have been addressed both with the help of the general framework provided by the written sources and also through the cross examination of the narratives. Oral history narratives also show us how memory is transferred from one generation to another over time.

As a new approach in collecting, preserving and interpreting the narratives of the past, oral history does not only provide information about the individuals' memories but also refers to their material cultures and the local knowledge regarding the past events and thereby may offer a historical ethnography of the communities. With the use of cassette recorders since the 1940s and the advent of newer digital technologies in time, the field of oral history has come to be commonly used by historians, folklorists, anthropologists, human geographers, sociologists, journalists, linguists and other social scientists making use of this interview method in their research. Nevertheless, oral historians prefer to pose open-ended questions that encourage people to tell what they think rather than what they want them to say. The ethical concerns are also a well-respected priority (Oral History Association. 2000). Founded in 1966, The Oral History Association in the United States pioneered in writing a guideline on the basic principles and best practices of oral history, first in 1968 to be revised in 1979. The guide included an 'Ethical Guidelines' section:

The regular reassessment of the values/principles and practices of oral history over the past fifty years has demonstrated a responsiveness of OHA to the paradigm shifts in oral history and in the various disciplines from which we draw insights. It has also helped to keep oral history practitioners sensitive to the impact and ethical implications of social and technological changes.⁴

The ethical concerns of the oral history guideline underscore the growing “awareness of the effects of race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity and culture on interviewing”; while also cautioning oral historians about “the impact that the oral history projects might have on the communities in which the interviews were conducted”.⁵

In his seminal book *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History*, American oral historian Michael Frisch offers a practical

⁴ See <https://oralhistory.org/principles-and-best-practices-revised-2018>

⁵ See <https://oralhistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/History-of-the-Evaluation-Guidelines.pdf>

assessment of what oral historians do, by emphasizing the concepts of “more history” and “anti-history”, arguing that most oral historians adopt one of these two approaches (1990). Arzu Öztürkmen and Joanna Bornat review Frisch’s approach as follows:

Oral historians are engaged in ‘more history’ when they are intent on revealing hitherto undocumented or unrecorded aspects of the past. So for example feminist oral historians in the early 1970s drew from oral and biographical sources to substantiate arguments about marginalized histories inaccessible through conventional documentary sources... This meant that understanding what was meant by the past shifted as feminists redrew the maps of responsibilities and power, challenging assumptions with accounts which used women’s words, women’s knowledge and women’s stories... ‘Anti-history’, Frisch argues, goes further, challenging established understandings of history by offering a ‘bypass to such obstacles, a short cut to a more direct, emotional sense of “the way it was.”. Accounts which bypass interpreters and speak from the heart are evident in the Italian oral historian, Luisa Passerini’s, exploration of working-class communities in Turin during the Fascist period (Öztürkmen and Bornat, 2009, p. 454).

Oral historians adopted the ‘more history’ approach to reach out historical data where written documentation disappeared or has never existed. In their article on the dilemma between oral history and oral sources, Polish Historians Marta Kurkowska-Budzan and Marcin Stasiak summarize this approach as follows:

In the “*more history*” approach, the measure of the value of oral information lies in its contribution to the development of our knowledge about the past – we receive “more history” and accumulate knowledge. In this case, oral history primarily has an epistemological dimension and represents the classical or modernist model of conducting historiography (Kurkowska-Budzan and Stasiak, 2020, p. 168).

Anti-history approach, on the other hand, invites oral historians to develop a critical perspective on the public presentation of history portrayed in oral sources. Oral history accounts are not about mere information, but also about a context with motivations and sometimes with assumptions. In that respect, it draws critical questions about the power and the discourse of the editors, film makers and broadcasters who pack historical information for the public (Ritchie, 1990).

Given this framework, one can assert that focusing on the past ethnic mobility in the Central Black Sea region and how this mobility is remembered today, definitely calls for both ‘more history’ and ‘anti-history’ approach. In order to reveal the relationship between the movement of populations (migration and forced displacements) and how it is remembered, the written documents in library and archival sources remain limited. The issue of ethnic memory has often been silenced during the nation-building processes. Therefore, how this memory has been loomed through the national historiography leads us towards an anti-history approach.

Oral history interviews also allow researchers to adopt a comparative and critical approach. The stories that will be collected through oral history methodology show us how all these communities with different political, cultural and historical backgrounds make sense of their own and others’ identities within the larger framework of their society. Using both written and oral sources will contribute to showing the effects of memory, environmental factors and the current conjuncture on the narrative. The oral history narratives that have been compiled provide information on historical phenomena, but also on how these phenomena are positioned in the memory and within what sort of a discourse they are narrated.

In the memories of the Greeks and Armenians who left Ünye and its surrounding areas and of the Georgians and Circassians who came to the same geography, the expressivity of identity differs. In other words, their sense of locality and the relationship they built with this localness can be articulated with different discourses. In this sense, the thesis provides a compilation of the narrated phenomena by examining both the archival and written material and providing a cross examination among the narratives. Besides, it also reveals how these narratives are

harbored in social memory by offering a discourse analysis of the narratives in question.

In her study of Tirebolu, Arzu Öztürkmen explores how the process of ethnic alienation and clash deeply affected and changed the multi-ethnic demography and material culture of this town (Öztürkmen, 2003; 2005; 2006). She finds out that the memory of this change is rather weak in both on the Greek and the Turkish side, as informants do not remember the details of the facts that caused the conflicts:

Both sides remember some individual facts as anecdotes—the burning of a church or the betrayal of a friend—but they can not recall how these individual events were connected to one another. In other words, there are many gaps between the causalities in the events that led to the breakdown between the two communities since the 1910s...The first-generation narratives of Greeks of Tirebolu, archived in the Center for Asia Minor Studies in the 1940s and 50s, are particularly informative in historically imagining the topography and the material culture of the town during its multi-ethnic times. The narrators gave detailed accounts about the location of the churches, shops, schools and administrative offices. The first-generation narrators also talked about the exile's particular date (16 November 1916) which is not a marked date for today's Tirebolites. Narratives collected from second generation Greek Tripolitians are informative about another undocumented aspect of their migrant past: their discrimination among other Pontic Greeks as being "ill-mannered" or "silly." On the Turkish side, the memory of the 1900s points to different phases of a more general regional history. This memory consists of references to the Armenian and Greek exile, the muhacirlik experience, the effects of the local militias and the official population exchange between Greece and Turkey in 1923. All these different phases of recent history are however remembered as one major conflict between Muslims and non-Muslims...Following Michael Frisch's framework, one can perhaps remember here that, as much as oral history may be a tool for "more history" or "anti-history," it primarily pursues the question of how communities assign meanings to what they reserve in their repertoire of memory, or in many cases how their silences can be interpreted. In other words, oral history takes the performance of the narrative as a fact and examines its significance in the present context in which it is produced (Öztürkmen, 2006, p. 104).

Öztürkmen's research also reminds how the words "Greeks" and "Armenians" may be used interchangeably, often being mixed with one another. Sometimes, the same stories are told with a character who can be either an Armenian

or Greek, shortly expressed as “*gavur*”, the infidel. The categories of “Turks” and “Muslims” are also mixed. She also calls attention on how second-hand narratives are often “retrospectively constructed stories, told within a nationalist framework with a century-long history of separated nation-states for both Greece and Turkey” (Öztürkmen, 2006, p. 105).

In terms of the ethnic clashes, the case of Ünye is even more complicated. The relationship between Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Circassians and Georgians at the turn of the 20th century brings a set of conflicts that developed through historical conjunctures. Oral history approach allows us to delve into the social and cultural issues overshadowed by the general political framework.

1.5 Reaching out the oral history data: A journey of multi-sited research

Before beginning an oral history project on Ünye, I had listened to many stories about the past from my own family. But the first oral history interviews which I listened were given to me by the local researcher Aynur Tan as video recordings. These interviews were conducted in Istanbul with Vahan and Margaret Ahbap in 2004 and with Alis İmran in 2005. While Vahan and Alis were native Armenians of Ünye, Margaret had come there as a young bride and lived there for long years. I was able to collect several narratives on a face-to-face basis between 2010-2025. I got access to some of my informants after my interview appeared in *Agos* newspaper on 28 October 2016. I reached out some informants with a snowball effect and a few totally by coincidence.

The interviews took place mainly in Ünye and Istanbul, but also in İzmir, Ankara, Samsun, Ordu, Terme and Fatsa. Because this period coincided with the Covid pandemic and sometimes due to other conjunctural situations, I had to conduct

some of the interviews online. In cases where some informants had reservations to be recorded or did not like the genre of a formal interview, I had to collect their narratives in the form of unstructured and unrecorded conversations. Some of the informants lived abroad and I often reached them out, using my conference budgets to travel in their location.⁶ These interviews took place in Jerusalem (2014), London (2015), Paris (2023, 2024), Beirut (2015, 2019), Vancouver (2024) and Montreal (2024).

My interviewees were mostly of Armenian origin but given the diversity of Ünye's demography at the turn of the 20th century, I also interviewed Turkish, Greek, Circassian and Georgian narrators who gave me valuable information about Ünye and its Armenian community. One should mention at this point about the different responses I received to my calls for interview. Because of the limited number of Armenians in today's Turkey, I often wanted to access to more than one family member. In many cases, if a family member had already talked to me, the others would reject my invitation. There were a number of people who preferred to talk but not be recorded. The content and scope of the interviews also varied. While some shared very original data, some others remained generally superficial. In one case, I met a scholar at a conference and learned that his father was from Ünye, but because of his distant attitude, I could not learn much. While there was a visible silence in the case of informants of Armenian origin, a strong nationalistic discourse prevailed among Turks, Greeks, Circassians and Georgians.

Approaching Armenians from Ünye was also a difficult process. When it comes to Armenians, Middle Eastern countries are inevitably among the places that should be visited. At the beginning of the civil war in Syria (December 2011), I went

⁶ In some of these conferences, I presented parts of my MA thesis, in others I found the opportunity to present the preliminary findings on my research on Ünye.

to Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, for touristic reasons. This was the first time when I found out about the Bourj Hammoud neighborhood, a place associated with its Armenian inhabitants and decided to come back to expand my research on Armenians from Central Black Sea. Thereafter, responding to call for papers at a variety of conferences on other themes, I had the opportunity to visit Lebanon five times in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022. During these research trips two acquaintances helped me greatly. One was Dr. Antranik Dakessian, the director of the Armenian Diaspora Research Center at Haigazian University, which is the first and only university of the Armenian diaspora outside of Armenia.

Thanks to Aras Ergüneş, a member of the Hrant Dink Foundation, I found the opportunity to meet my second acquaintance in Lebanon. This was an Istanbulite Armenian, Garo Aprahamian, who left Istanbul 50 years ago to settle in Beirut, an independent researcher and writer. In Beirut, I was particularly interested to find a trace from tailor Bedros and his family, who were among those sent from Ünye during the *Tehcir*. Following the footsteps of an article in *Canik*, a journal of regional and urban culture, I found out that he lived in Beirut. Aprahamian tried to help me to locate the daughter of Bedros the tailor from Ünye, but even though we visited the cemeteries, this search failed.

During my several visits to Beirut, I also had the opportunity to conduct research in the libraries of Haigazian University, American University of Beirut and Lebanese American University. Besides these universities which were my conference venues, I also tried to reach Mshak Press, the publisher of Hovagim Hovagimian's 951-page book *Badmutyun Haygagan Bondosi* [History of the Armenian Pontus], published in Beirut in 1967, but I learned that the owner of

Mshak Press, a small publishing house, had migrated to the United States during the civil war.

In one of my visits to Lebanon, I found the opportunity to visit “The Armenian Genocide Orphans’ Aram Bezikian Museum” in Byblos in 2017. The museum displayed a photograph of Samuel Antranikian, who was born in Ordu in 1912 and died in Beirut in 2005. It pictured him and other orphans from Antealias, near Beirut, fishing in the Fawwar River. The orphanage was founded by Catholicos Sahag II of Cilicia with the help of the Near East Relief organization. Apparently, Samuel was a reputed fisherman, selling the eels he caught in the Antelias market. In 1924, the orphans were baptized in the Fawwar River by the Sahag II. The photograph was donated by Ishkhan Antranikian.

Following my visit to the Museum, I tried to reach Ishkhan Samuel Antranikian, the son of Samuel Antranikian, whom I met with the help of Megerdich Kouyoumjian. Ishkhan Samuel Antranikian owned an advertising agency (*DPA Advertising Agency*). To my surprise, although the photograph marked him as from Ordu, he was from Ünye. I was able to interview with Samuel Antranikian at his workplace twice, one in June 2017 and the other in June 2019. In addition to *DPA Advertising Agency*, Antranikian, had also a tourism company called *Sunday Tours*, traveling frequently with his wife, because they do not have children. Previously, they had come to Turkey and organized tours in Western Armenia/Eastern Anatolia region. Due to family ties, he wanted to organize a tour to the Black Sea region as well, but for political situation and safety concerns in Turkey, he postponed his project. Although his father was from Ünye, his father hadn’t told him anything about Ünye.

Thanks to the conference “The Making of Jerusalem: Constructed Spaces and Historic Communities”, I also had a chance to go to Israel on 2-4 July 2014. My paper was on a whole different topic than Ünye, entitled “Representation of the Holy City and its communities in the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition”. Nevertheless, the conference was held at the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem. Compared to Beirut, Jerusalem is a city where Armenians are much more introverted and mostly live in a monastery compound, where the houses are very close to each other. On my first day in Jerusalem, I had the opportunity to interview Victor Azarya, a Jew from Istanbul who is the author of *The Armenian Quarter of Jerusalem: Urban Life Behind Monastery Walls* (1984). At a time when flights were canceled due to the Israeli attacks on Gaza, I crossed from Israel to Palestine and went to the Bethlehem Rebirth Church, which is located in the West Bank and is allowed to be visited by Armenians who are Israeli citizens because it is very important for Armenians. When I went to Israel for the second time (May 2018) for a conference, Kevork Hintlian, whom I met in Jerusalem, helped me to have a meeting with an Armenian woman, whose father was from Trabzon. After this meeting, Hintlian told me that he did not want to arrange such meetings anymore because he was getting affected by them. When I was in Jerusalem (2014 and 2018), I had the opportunity to work at the Calouste Gulbenkian Library within the Armenian Convent.

1.5.1 Oral history interviews with Ünye Armenians

As mentioned before, one of the earliest oral history narratives I heard about Ünye’s Armenians was Alis İmran, interviewed by Aynur Tan in 2005. This interview

revealed daily life and family relations in Ünye. When asked about the Armenian customs and traditions practiced in Ünye, Alis İmran's answer was as follows:

Of course, there is nothing the same, nothing different. In other words, the customs and traditions are always the same, my child, we are people of the same land (Alis İmran, January 2005, Istanbul).

Another question of Aynur Tan was as follows: "Ms. Alice, you know that it is a precipitate or something?" The answer from Alis İmran to this question is:

"Don't we know that we are Anatolian children. Sure.." (Alis İmran, January 2005, Istanbul). Among others, my meeting with Vahan and Margaret Ahbap was perhaps the most useful. Margaret Ahbap had already a previous interview with Aynur Tan in 2004, where I could observe her displaying a dominant character. During our interview, she also talked more than her husband. Ironically, although she was not a native of Ünye, because she had arrived at a young age as a bride, she had collected more stories and information about the past of the town. During the interviews, she often teased her husband for not researching her hometown and family history.

Obviously, as a new insider, she was more curious about Ünye than her husband over the years, although her initial impression was not so good. In her interview with Aynur Tan, she stated as follows:

I knew Ünye as a village. Of course, I was very sad that I was going to a village. Coming from Sivas, I was very sad when I saw houses at the top of the hills. We came from the Akkuş side. Before entering every town, I was asking if this was Ünye or elsewhere. When I finally saw Ünye, I liked it very much. I said it was good. Seeing the houses on the top of the hills, I had thought that we were going to live there. But I liked Ünye very much, we had very good years. We used to swim in the sea every summer (Vahan-Margaret Ahbap, April 2004, Istanbul).

In that interview, Margaret Ahbap also mentioned a trip to France:

When I went to France, I looked for Turkish neighbors, while walking in the streets. Because I couldn't speak to the French, I didn't know the language, I was looking at buildings' door bells to see a Turkish name. I was just walking in their house. Once I saw black beets planted in a garden and I was saying myself, okay, these are from the Black Sea. I also found a family from Fatsa,

I knocked their door and said, ‘I am not from here, I came from Turkey. Do you accept guests?’ They said, ‘Of course’ I liked it there as if I was in my hometown. They said, ‘Come again, auntie,’ and I visited them and met some other families as well (Vahan-Margaret Ahbap, April 2004, Istanbul).

In the meeting I held exactly four years after Aynur Tan, I saw that Vahan and Margaret Ahbap, more open than in their meeting with Tan. There may be two reasons for their willful contribution during our meeting. First, there is obviously a difference between the video and audio recordings. Second, our interview took place after the assassination of journalist Hrant Dink in 2007, and this event had stimulated the bitter memory of being an Armenian in Turkey. During our interview, I saw that the couple wanted to talk more about 1915. Margaret shared with me that she had heard from her friends in Ünye. “They said that they came from all the villages and filled there,” she stated, “and there were no native people left”. She also gave some information about Ünye’s lifestyle. I also had interviews with Artin Nubar Gülezryan on 27 May 2008, Abdullah Sarıkaya on 18 July 2009, Emine Sarıkaya on 19 September 2010, Nihat Dönmez on 20 September 2010, Minas Ahbap on 30 June 2011, Şükran Alptekin on 15 and 16 December 2011.

1.5.2 Oral history interviews with local historians from Ünye

In addition to the Armenians from Ünye, oral history interviews were also conducted with local historians from Ünye within the scope of this project. The first of these meetings was held in September 2010 with Aynur Tan, a local and oral historian from Ünye, during a project of which I was the local organizer. For the project titled *Black/North SEAS Xpedition Turkey: Expedition of Artists and Researchers to Turkey (Akçakoca-Ünye-Çamlıhemşin-Hopa)*, a total of 35 artists from various cities of Europe performed their performances in a total of four cities on the Black Sea

coast, including Ünye and I shared with them my presentation titled “Once Upon a Time in Ünye”, which tells about the past life in Ünye. During my stay in Ünye, I had an interview with Aynur Tan on 18 September 2010 at Sebile Hanım Mansion where she talked about the Black Sea in general and the Ünye women in particular.

Another historian interviewed within the scope of this project was Mahmut Ufuk Mistepe. I met Mistepe, whom I knew through the internet and Facebook, on 15 December 2011, when I was in Ankara, at the Turkish Grain Office. I was only able to record my interview with Mistepe, who did not like audio recordings due to workplace conditions, during lunch time when the workplace was quieter. Stating that he is an amateur researcher from Ünye, he first talked about his projects and researches about Ünye.

And the number of articles I have published so far is over 300 focused on Ünye. And I plan to publish them in the market as a book in the next 6 months, if I am lucky, under the name of *Ünye Articles*. I have a draft ready in my hand, I hope I will share them with the public. In 2010, I published Ünye songs and folk songs in a book. I chose to include the folklore of Ünye, the history of theater in Ünye and visual arts. It was the first study about Ünye. It worked out well. In addition, we have reinforced this by giving a concert in Ünye accompanied by an orchestra (Mahmut Ufuk Mistepe, 15 December 2011, Ankara).

Apart from the projects and research he continues to work on, he has included Arabic, Georgian, Armenian and Greek spellings of Ünye in addition to Turkish, but he got into trouble due to Armenian and Greek spellings.

It is true that I have encountered sometimes intentional, sometimes unintentional, biased inhibitions in my work. The most interesting thing was that a media organization in Germany directed people to bring Armenians and Greeks back to Ünye in a group I established on Facebook. However, this group was an open group. It was possible to see that his correspondence, messages, photographs and purpose did not have such a purpose in bringing about a reaction. While this was the case, the person was not convinced, he came to us. And because he came, we had to remove him from the group. He was of Ünyeli, he was of Grey Wolves origin, he followed the Grey Mafia. And eventually I started to feel uncomfortable. He made formal complaints to me at the ministerial level, at the level of the general directorate. He prepared and broadcast videos about me on Youtube and turned them into a program

on his own broadcasting channel and television channel and he also tried to make very insistent publications to disgrace, humiliate and neutralize me with four separate articles in his virtual newspaper. I tried to persuade him, but I couldn't. I unintentionally responded to his outbursts against me by using insulting-style sentences and in the end, I applied to the Public Informatics Prosecutor's Office and the Ankara Informatics Prosecutor's Office to file a criminal complaint with their evidence. Thankfully, I believe in justice, our Public Prosecutor's Office took our application into and conducted an investigation and revealed that person's Samsun connections. They confiscated their computers and issued an arrest warrant for that person. These are pleasing things, that is, exemplary events in terms of not getting away with what has been done (Mahmut Ufuk Mistepe, 15 December 2011, Ankara).

During my private meeting with Mahmut Ufuk Mistepe, he showed me that the reason why he did not participate in the activities of the History Foundation's local history studies project was that he did not believe that this project was sincere because it gained momentum with the Rockefeller Scholarship. According to him, the reason why the Rockefeller Foundation supports this project is that they want to be in a position where they can collect information from our country and file a lawsuit against our country with this information if they can get the genocide admitted. However, when I asked Fatma Kiroğlu, whom I met by chance only one day after this unrecorded meeting and who, like Aynur Tan, supports the History Foundation's local history studies project, about her thoughts on this issue, she did not support this claim and stated that she paid all her expenses for the events she participated in within the scope of this project (Fatma Kiroğlu, 16 December 2011, Ankara).

Following the publication of my interview in *Agos* on 28 October 2016, I received nearly twenty e-mails. The most interesting e-mail among these was the one that I received from Zerrin Oktay on the very next day. Zerrin Oktay was born in Ünye in 1961. She went to Switzerland in 1964 and lived there for ten years. She completed her work life amounting to more than twenty years in fuel sector. She

lives in Bodrum and has continued writing stories since her retirement in 2002. She wrote in her e-mail that she had just read the piece regarding my research in *Agos* and she was not Armenian, but she was from Ünye and she could share with me some of the details that her grandfather told her. In the previous years, she wrote down everything that she knew about her grandfather and wanted to publish it as a book; however, her family reacted to this idea very harshly and she had to destroy her work. Zerrin Oktay gathered together what her grandfather told her and sent the text to me on 30th October.

Nihat Dönmez, who worked as a tailor in Ünye for many years, told me that Armenians wear black clothes when they mourn for something (Unrecorded conversation in Ünye, 20 September 2010). On the other hand, my paternal grandmother used to say that the Armenian women living in Ünye would always wear black clothes (Emine Sarıkaya, Unrecorded conversation in Ünye, 19 September 2010).

The local and oral historian from Ünye, Aynur Tan had an interview with two Ünye Armenians living in Istanbul and the records of this interview were broadcasted on an oral history programme in the local channel of Ünye named *Hizmet TV*. Aynur Tan has also shared with me the interviews that she conducted with Vahan Ahbap and his wife Margaret Ahbap in April 2004 in Istanbul and the one she conducted with the grandson of tinsmith master Mıgırdıç, Alis İmran in January 2005 in Istanbul where she lives. After I listened to these interviews, I had the chance to have a talk with Vahan and Margaret Ahbap on 10 May 2008 in their house in Istanbul for five long hours; however, Vahan Ahbap's brother Minas Ahbap declined my request (Unrecorded conversation by telephone, 30 June 2011). In the same way, Alis İmran –a very close friend of my mother's aunt- did not accept my

request for an interview on the grounds that she already told everything she knew to Aynur Tan.

I made a presentation titled “Women, Gender and the First World War: Food Narratives” on Fethiye Çetin’s *My Grandmother* in a conference organized in Armenian Patriarchate of Moscow on 23-24 October 2015 under the name of “Genocide as a spiritual and moral crime against humanity”. I met Claude Mutaftian at this conference in Moscow. It turned out that her father Zareh Mutaftian was born in Ünye in 1907. I have not encountered anyone up until now except him who survived from Ünye in the aftermath of 1915. I have recently run across the trace of an Armenian from Ünye in a news article that I have read about “the People of Hemşin living in Maykop”. “Yeghishe Tahmazyan, whom we had a conversation with remembers, the history of her lineage from what her grandmother Sirbouhi told her. She told us that her grandparents migrated to a coastal town named Loo located in the Krasnodar region of Russia at the end of 1800s. His father was born there. His roots go back to the Ünye province of Trabzon city”.⁷

⁷ See <http://akunq.net/tr/?p=37341>



Figure 1. Photograph with Ayda Gülezyan-Gündemir in Paris

A dinner table in Paris filled with meals from Ünye at the house of Ayda Gülezyan-Gündemir. This photograph was taken in Paris in July 2012 during my visit to the granddaughter of Master Mıgırđıç, the daughter of Karekin Gülezyan and the sister of Berç and Aret Gülezyan: Ayda Gülezyan. The eldest daughter of Karekin Gülezyan lives in Munich. Photograph: Christine Gündemir (9 July 2012), Alfortville, Paris. When I made a call for the first Christmas after my visit to her, Ayda Gülezyan told me that Christmas did not mean much to them. The New Year dinner on 31 December is a celebration for them, but they feel alone since they have no one. She also told me that they wait for the summer vacations impatiently since all the family members come together at these times (Ayda Gülezyan-Gündemir, Unrecorded conversation by telephone, 5 January 2013).



Figure 2. Photograph with Arman Kazancioğlu's mother in Bozcaada

On 14 July 2016, I met Arman Kazancioğlu's mother in Bozcaada with the help of an Armenian friend in Istanbul. Although her mother was an Armenian from Ünye, she said that her family's account of Ünye was very limited. They learned that their house in Ünye was later used as the Military Service Branch. She said that in 1915, the men of the family lost their lives and the women of the family survived by knitting loincloths during the *Tehcir*.



Figure 3. Photograph with Theodosios Kyriakidis's mother in Thessaloniki

On 20 November 2016, in Thessaloniki, Theodosios Kyriakidis's mother came to me and wanted to meet me after my presentation on Samsun and the Greeks. The very polite Greek woman, whose mother is from Ünye, unfortunately did not know much except that her mother had come to Thessaloniki from Ünye with an exchange, but she said that she was very impressed by the old Ünye photos that I showed in my presentation.



Figure 4. Photograph of my 10-day trip to Abkhazia

Perhaps the most meaningful and special photograph of my 10-day trip to Abkhazia, was taken on 26 August 2022, in Sukhumi in our last day there, we found ourselves in the Sukhumi market to shop, we learn that the family of our sister Susanna, with whom we shopped by chance, is from Ordu. We are trying to understand each other in Armenian, Turkish, Russian and Abkhaz, she wanders from hand to foot, she can't decide what gift to give me to take to Turkey, then she can't hold back her tears and I try to calm her down with the help of my friend, maybe for the first time she meets someone from Ordu, whom her family has been longing for years.



Figure 5. Photograph with Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan in Vancouver

On 1 September 2024, we had a very enjoyable meeting in Vancouver for eight hours with Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, who was born in Ünye in 1942, when the subject was our hometown, the subject broached the subject, apart from what she served at home, she gave me a container full of Ünye's bun to eat on my way to Montreal the next day. After my interview published in *Agos*, his son contacted me, I asked him what I was curious about via e-mail and I had the opportunity to meet her face to face when I went to Canada in 2024.



Figure 6. Photograph with Mardiros Baygın in Montreal

On 7 September 2024, we met for the second time after coming to Montreal with Mardiros Baygın, who was born in Ünye in 1946, in Montreal and we decided to go to the Istanbul fisherman on a rainy Montreal day. Mr. Mardiros, who had not been to his hometown Ünye for 44 years, told me dozens of stories, such as how his father, tailor Levon Baygın, caught enough fish for a neighborhood in Ünye and how he distributed them to his neighbors. Since Baygın's grandmother and my great-grandfather's second wife, who was Armenian, were siblings, it was easier for me to communicate with him than the others.

1.6 Memories of local belonging: An interpretation of oral history narratives

The sense of belonging is a phenomenon directly related to the socialization processes of the individual and people and to the places they live in. In a sense, an individual ground for his/her own existence and lifestyle on the connections that s/he has formed during the socialization process. In other words, the roots that the individual forms by taking nourishment from different channels and sources keep him/her alive and bring an order to his/her relations with life (Poyraz, 2020, p. 9). The sense of belonging, which can be elaborated upon with different phenomena, will be first addressed through its connection with trauma and nostalgia by adopting an interdisciplinary approach and its effects on the narrative can be examined through the discipline of history, sociology and psychology. In different interviews that will be conducted as part of the project, the data that will be acquired with the awareness regarding the web of relations between these three emotions will be evaluated through the lens of the same awareness. It has been observed that some of the Greeks and Armenians, who left Turkey, sustained their relations with Turkey by generally coming to visit their hometowns during summer months. For the Greeks, the sense of belonging that they feel for their hometowns in Turkey are illustrated with these visits and the same thing can be observed in the Black Sea references that are included in the social media accounts of the new generations that were born and raised in Greece. A similar situation is also valid for the Armenians who were dispersed to different countries across the world. The fact that many Greeks and Armenians who were not born and raised in Turkey were born into a world where Turkish was also spoken brings along a complicated way of being.

1.6.1 The “language issue”: Speaking Turkish at home

Moreover, the fact that Turkish is mostly spoken at home with the parents and not outdoors can be associated with nostalgia and trauma. In a sense, speaking Turkish at home can be related with nostalgia while not speaking Turkish outdoors can be related with trauma. What we can say about sense of belonging on the basis of the limited number of interviews that have been conducted until now can be expected to expand with more comprehensive data as more interviews are conducted with people with regard to the relationship of sense of belonging with trauma and nostalgia within the scope of this project.

While the substantial part of the Greeks who left Black Sea region due to exile were placed in Greece with an agreement made between two states, the deported Armenians were dispersed across different geographies. The problems that many Greeks who left Turkey and were placed in different regions ran into in terms of language led them to have problems regarding their sense of belonging toward their new localities. Getting a foothold and preserving their own ethnic identities while forming a new sense of belonging is quite a complicated process for migrants (Poyraz, 2020, pp. 267-268).

As far as the language is concerned, the Armenians didn't have as many problems as the Greeks. Since Armenians are less visible in different countries across the world, they were able to speak their mother tongue more comfortably compared to others. Since Georgians and Circassians who came to the Black Sea from other Black Sea coastal regions, their adaptation process might have been easier than that of Greeks and Armenians; however, how they were received by the local people in the regions where they settled is one of the important issues that is researched within the scope of the project. While it is known that they also had problems in terms of

using their mother tongue, Georgians and Circassians, who tried to sustain their culture as different communities, also experienced problems within themselves.

1.6.2 Memories of settling: Adaptation to new localities

When we divide the different ethnic groups whose sense of geographical and linguistic belonging with their new places of resettlement have been briefly mentioned above into those who left and those who came, the differences and similarities in their memories can emerge more clearly and it can be seen that Armenians are differentiated from others in terms of the experiences they have undergone. Primarily, it is possible to analyze the trauma experienced by Greeks, Georgians and Circassians who left their homes in their hometowns and were resettled in houses previously abandoned by others in their new settlements in two stages. First, they underwent the trauma of leaving their own houses behind with their belongings. The second trauma was that they used the belongings of the former owners of the houses where they were resettled and perhaps, as a third layer that can be added to these, the anxiety they experienced about the possibility that the previous owners of the houses where they were resettled might one day return can be seen as a factor that might have negatively affected their sense of belonging.

This was not the case with Armenians, who rebuilt their own houses. This situation caused Armenians to have a relatively different experience from the problems of belonging experienced by Greeks, Georgians and Circassians who had issues with local elements. The Armenians tried to ensure their loyalty to each other through the associations they founded in different cities that they traveled to, and a similar situation was also observed among the Greeks. Georgians and Circassians

have important associations in the context of Turkey, including groups of Black Sea origin.

Some of those who left, with the pain of leaving their past, the lands of their ancestors and the order they had established individually through hard work, modest or wealthy, their homes, their beds, in fact their entire past, their memories, their connections with their roots and heading towards the unknown, imagined those who settled in their places as ‘looters/grabbers’ and thought that those who came found everything ready, took advantage of an established order and had property without any effort. In some places, however, it was only decades after their departure that they began to think about the fact that those who came and who were settled in their place carried in their hearts the same pain and sadness that the ones ‘who were sent away/left’ experienced. More precisely, the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the generations that were sent away, i.e. the generations that did not experience this trauma firsthand, were able to look at the events more objectively and from a certain distance and as a result of the internet and globalization, the stories of people from different nationalities who shared the same fate became more talked about and heard and they became cognizant of similar sufferings and were acquainted with the fact that not all of the people who used the properties of their ancestors had a ‘looter/grabber’ mentality. In fact, recognizing that behind the planned *Tehcir* and the subsequent extortion there is a group of people who are viewed as the executors of this event, but who are actually the ‘victims’ of a similar policy that brought about these events; understanding why similar catastrophes and scenarios are experienced in different geographies, without focusing solely on one’s own pain, is perhaps the greatest weapon we have at our disposal to prevent the repetition of these misfortunes and crimes.

In the context of the Armenians, I can say that, within decades, we have seen that only describing what happened and continuously accusing someone for that has contributed only minimally to the recognition and acceptance of the catastrophic event because those who came, who were also deported from the lands of their ancestors, shied away from supporting this discourse fearing that the order they once again established by overcoming a myriad of material and moral difficulties, lands they recently embraced as their home and their property would be again taken away from them.

However, those who ‘came’ knew as well as the ones who were ‘sent away’ the full reality and if they had been able to give voice to the voices of those who ‘left’, many issues that have become a deadlock today could have been resolved much earlier. In the hope that future generations will be able to achieve this, I believe that explaining at every opportunity that these sufferings do not belong only to those who have been ‘sent away’ is the strongest and most promising solution we have today.

CHAPTER 2

IN PURSUIT OF A MULTI-SITED SENSE OF BELONGING:

A LITERATURE REVIEW

To be from Ünye (*Ünyeli*) is an identity that requires a close look at the historical and ethnographic dimensions of local identity. This is also related to a multi-sited sense of belonging. The concept of multi-sited ethnography was coined by anthropologist George Marcus, who underscored how the sense of local belonging has changed. With the impact of globalization, localities need to be explored in their continuities. Anthropologist Michael M.J. Fischer calls attention to the cross-cultural position of the ethnographer:

A reading of ethnographies as the juxtaposition of two or more cultural traditions and paying attention both in reading and in constructing ethnographies to the ways in which the juxtaposition of cultural traditions works on both the conscious and unconscious levels (Fischer, 1986, p. 200).

As Arzu Öztürkmen states in her research on Tirebolu:

An ethnographer of memory, dealing with narratives of local knowledge of past communities...explores spatial continuities as much as these transferences... moving between narratives and relics, one questions how one triggers the other. Discontinuities in the topography and material culture in Tirebolu undoubtedly raise curiosity about the local knowledge of past ethnic communities...A survey of material culture is therefore an inevitable component of memory research, in that it displays what has been historically neglected, destroyed or preserved, transferred and exhibited in a particular community. One should remember here that, as much as the surviving architectural relics, objects and their trans-generational transmission also give us an idea about the paradoxical value systems communities develop about one another over time (Öztürkmen, 2006, pp. 99-100).

The search for the sense of belonging to Ünye involves the deconstruction of the notion of 'place', the study of nationalism, along with local and oral history. In the first place, one should remember that the study of 'locality' has become a more complex issue as the boundaries of any place were challenged by modernity, where

forced displacements and migration for better lives caused a much rapid movement of populations. Local attachment is often seen as the basis of the sense of belonging.

In his book *The Fate of Place*, Edward S. Casey examines the concept of 'place' with its full semantic range, encompassing notions like 'space', 'region', 'zone' and 'boundary' and suggests a close bond between 'placement' and 'identity' (1998). Anthropologist George Marcus suggested long ago a "multi-sited ethnography" for any locality one focuses on. With the mobility and circulation in the world system, he argued that the way we define the local has ultimately changed. Now, like ethnographers, historians too need to explore localities in their continuities (1995).

The historical interest in localities and local identities has been an important aspect of nationalism studies that grew in the 1980s. The works of Benedict Anderson (1983), Ernest Gellner (1983), Anthony Smith (1983) and Eric Hobsbawm (1990) explored the relation of nationalism and the ethnic communities. In the 1990s, Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (1992), Arjun Appadurai (1995) and Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (1996) conducted research on the concept of 'locality' in relation to 'nationalism' and 'globalism'. The concept of locality has also been explored through the lens of oral narratives, which dwell on the significance of local perceptions concerning historical events. As evidenced by the works of Larry Danielson (1980), Henry Glassie (1982), Alessandro Portelli (1991), Carol Kammen (1995), oral history represents a particularly fruitful research method in the context of local history.

Given this framework, to situate the local history of Ünye within a larger framework, one needs to overview the general corpus of work produced in Black Sea studies. This comprises a range of scholarship produced both in Turkey and abroad.

2.1 Exploring the international publications on the Black Sea

As the imperial force of their time, the Byzantine, Ottoman and Russian Empires, ascribed a central role to the Black Sea in the context of their strategic objectives and interests. Nevertheless, the role of this sea in the historical trajectory of these empires remains understudied (Keçeci, 2019). Pontic Catholic Armenian Priest Minas Bzhshkian (1777-1851), who is also known as a traveling ethnographer and musicologist, wrote important books on the history and geography of the Black Sea and gave valuable information on Pontic Greeks and Armenians.⁸

In modern times, certain scholars have written on particular places of the Black Sea. One should mention the works of Heath W. Lowry (1981, 2009), Ildikó Bellér-Hann and Chris Hann (2001, 2003), Michael E. Meeker (2002, 2005) and Sylvia Wing Önder (2007, 2011). These authors adopt a Turkey-specific perspective and focus on the Eastern Black Sea region of Turkey. Neal Ascherson (1996, 2001) and Charles King (2004, 2008) were among the first writers to examine the Black Sea as a particular region/geography from a scholarly perspective in the social sciences. The area surrounding the Black Sea is notable for its diversity of ethnic backgrounds, religious traditions, cultural practices and historical traditions.⁹ The archaeology of the Black Sea region has long been a neglected area due to its distinctive geographical characteristics. Lately, new excavations and studies have been introduced by Russian, Georgian, Ukrainian, Romanian and Bulgarian

⁸ Although his works were written as early as 1819, Bzhshkian was first translated into Turkish in 1969.

⁹ Prior to the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), the region was under the governance of the USSR and the Republic of Turkey. With the dissolution of the USSR, numerous countries in the region gained independence. Currently the region is under the control of several countries, including Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine, Russia, Georgia and the state of Abkhazia, which has not been properly recognized internationally.

archaeologists.¹⁰ Compared to Aegean and Central Anatolian heritage, the archeological research in Turkish Black Sea region has remained a limited.

2.2 National publications on the central Black Sea

The majority of the national studies on the Black Sea tend to focus more on the Eastern part of the region (Eray Biber, 2020). Turkish research on the Central Black Sea generally consists of archive based historical analysis and personal memory. Among many others one may cite Turgut Çeviker's *Çarşamba Kitabı* (1992) as a pioneering work which focuses on the sites and characters of the town, using oral history and photographs as a local history. There is an important literature which places greater emphasis on the historical development of urban settlements, including Feridun M. Emecen's *Doğu Karadeniz'de İki Kıyı Kasabasının Tarihi: Bulancak-Piraziz* (2005), Ayhan Yüksel's *Doğu Karadeniz Araştırmaları* (2005), Ünsal Bekdemir's *Karadeniz Kıyı Kentleri: (Samsun Hopa Arası)* (2007) and Sezai Balcı's *Giresun Rumları ve Gayrimüslim Bir Belediye Başkanı: Kaptan Yorgi Konstantinidi Paşa* (2012). Similarly, İlhan Ekinci's *Halk, Ayan ve Devlet: Tanzimat Devri Ordu Kazası* (2016) and İbrahim Serbestoğlu's *Tanzimat, Teftiş ve Canik Sancağında Modernization* (2019) are two notable works based on state archives. One can also mention Arzu Öztürkmen's oral history research on the memory of social life, gender and ethnic conflicts (2003, 2005, 2006). Last but not least, one should also mention Ali Rıza Çelik ve Rıza Duran's work *ABEŞ (Şerefiye) Bölgesi; Tarih, Kültür, Etnisite: Boşnaklar, Ermeniler, Kürtler, Pontos-Rumlar, Türkler* (2019), which gives

¹⁰ See Tsetschladze (2005) on Black Sea archaeology and Ivanova's (2013, 2019) book on the same topic. Compared to Aegean and Central Anatolian heritage, the archeological research in Turkish Black Sea region has remained a limited. See Akgül and Demirel, 2018. There have been some excavations in Samsun, Ordu and Giresun. See Dönmez, 2008; Atabeyoğlu, Beyli and Argan, 2017; İltar and Temür, 2018.

a landscape of the movement of population around the Şerefiye village near Sivas. Showing the displacement of Pontic Greeks and Armenians, along with the Bosnian and Caucasian refugees, the book shows the complexity of this experience in detail.

Several studies also focused on the non-Turkish communities residing in the Central Black Sea region, including mainly the experiences of the Greek and Circassian communities in the region. Mert Kaya's work *Müslümanlaş(tırıl)mış Rumlar: Bir Bellek Anlatısı* (2018), traces the narratives of the Orthodox Greeks who were forced to migrate between 1919 and 1925 but who remained in Anatolia and gradually converted to Islam or were forced to do so. The book also revisits the narratives concerning the Greeks residing in Bafra, Samsun and Trabzon. In Elbruz Aksoy's book titled *Benim Adım 1864: Çerkes Hikayeleri* (2018), covering the same geographical area, we find a number of Circassian narratives from Samsun and its surrounding region. These narratives concern the Circassians who were dispersed across the Ottoman territories following the *Tehcir* of 1864. Ulaş Sunata's *Hafızam Çerkesçe: Çerkesler Çerkesliği Anlatıyor* (2020) also includes Circassian narratives from Samsun and the surrounding areas (Çorum, Sivas and Tokat). However, there are currently no similar studies on Georgians living in the region. In Ârif İsmet Bey's *Gürcü Köyleri* (1894), presumably a memoir of a trip he made to visit his Georgian mother's relatives, the author mentions the Georgian villages situated in the vicinity of Samsun, as well as the Circassian and Turkmen villages he saw along the way. Paul J. Magnarella (1979, 1997) and Veysel Şahin (2018) have also conducted studies on the Georgian presence in different regions.

There has been a corpus of academic theses written on the Black Sea Region as well. Some of these theses have also been published as books and address the cultural history of the Black Sea region, its socio-economic and political history and

the non-Muslims living in the region (Özcan 2003, 2007; Pala 2006; Eray Biber 2006, 2013, 2016; Özdiş 2008; Dıġıroġlu 2011; Saġlam 2013; Tosun 2013, 2018; Batman 2013, 2016; Kaya 2014; Karakılıç Daġdelen 2015; Öztürk 2017; Şendeniz 2020). Furthermore, Nilüfer Taşkın's research, also situated within the same geographical area and was originally presented in her master's thesis titled *Bir İsyân Şarkısı Değil!: Lazlar, Kimlik, Müzik* (2016), focuses on music as a key component of material culture. It explores the interrelationship between music and ethnicity, culture and identity within Rize region. In this work, Taşkın employs a critical approach to examine the concept of modern Laz identity, placing it within the broader context of the politics of difference, cultural performances and contemporary identity politics in Turkey. The book presents a comprehensive overview of the multifaceted dimensions of Laz identity, encompassing identity theory, nationalism, music, multiculturalism, economic politics and the theory of performance.

2.3 Publications about Armenians and Greeks of the Black Sea region

There are limited sources regarding the Armenians in Black Sea region. Two Armenian books that were written in diaspora still wait to be translated into Turkish and other languages (Karayan, 1980, pp. 89-96). The first of these two books is Oton Hekimian's 143-pages long *Samsoni Hayutyân Dıkhur Pajini 1915-1918-i Medz Yeğernin* [The Tragic Fate of the Armenians of Samson during the Great Massacre of 1915-1918], which was published in Paris in 1961. The second one is Hovagim Hovagimian's 951-pages long *Badmutyûn Haygagan Bondosi* [History of the Armenian Pontus], which was published in Beirut in 1967. Barunak Torlakyan's *Hamşenahayeri Azgagrutyune* [Ethnography of Armenians of Hemşin/Hamşen] (1981) was published by the Academy of Sciences of the Socialist Soviet Republic of

Armenia as part of the series Armenian Ethnography and Folklore Writings and Research. It provides detailed information about the Black Sea Armenians for each village. Additionally, Bedros Donabedian's *Tzayn Darabelots* [The Cry of the Tormented] (1922) includes the testimonies of Armenians who lived in the same region even though the number of these testimonies is limited. Besides, *Armenian Pontus: The Trebizond – Black Sea Communities* (2009), which includes the proceedings of the international conference, titled "The Armenian Communities of the Black Sea-Pontus Region" that was held in 4-5 May 2002 in University of California, USA and which was edited by Richard G. Hovannisian, provides significant information regarding the Armenian history of the area and offers guidance for new researches.¹¹

Tuğrul Özcan who examines the Armenian incidents in Tokat, Niksar, Amasya and Merzifon in the city of Sivas in Central Black Sea and Trabzon, Samsun, Bayburt and Gümüşhane in the city of Trabzon in Eastern Black Sea in his book titled *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Orta ve Doğu Karadeniz’de Meydana Gelen Ermeni Olayları* which mentions that many academic works have been written on Armenian question both in Turkish and in various other languages. However, the number of works and articles that address especially Black Sea Region are quite few in number. This could be attributed to the fact that the Armenian incidents mostly took place in Eastern Anatolia. The fact that these incidents took place in Eastern Anatolia in a more violent manner dimmed their impact on Black Sea region (Özcan, 2007, p. 9). As Özcan underlines the goal of the Armenian activities in Central and Eastern Black Sea region differs from the Armenians' activities in other regions of Anatolia. Here, there is no structuring around a claim for motherland or land

¹¹ It is also possible to glean some information from the following works: Charanis, 1963; Redgate, 2000; Herzig and Kurkchiyan, 2005.

demand. What took place here in terms of the cycle of activities was a search for an ideal that was dependent on Central and Eastern Anatolia. In parallel to this search, committee members sometimes, especially when the taxes were collected, provoked the villagers against the government and in this way hoped to mobilize them (Özcan, 2007, p. 54).

In her book *Istanbul'dan Anadolu'ya Rumların Yemek Kültürü*, Sula Bozis elucidates that the Greeks who migrated from Istanbul to Greece or any other place in the world have preserved the same culinary traditions to the present day (2020, p. 9). Bozis provides a classification of the main dishes in accordance with the books referenced in the bibliography of the aforementioned text and as a result of the interviews conducted within the framework of the oral history study with the Greek community living in the Black Sea until 1923, when the Treaty of Lausanne was signed (pp. 423-430). For the Central Black Sea region, Bozis employs Xenophone Akoğlu's *Laografika Kotioron* [Folklore of Ordu] (1939), which is also a significant source of information about the Greeks in the region. In her work *The Holocaust of the Pontiac Greeks: Still An Open Wound* (2016), Theodora Ioannidou shares the testimonies of Greek residents of Ünye.

The final three volumes of the five-volume study, all of which were compiled and prepared using the interviews from the oral history collection of the Archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies in Athens, include the records from the Black Sea region. One volume encompasses the inland regions of the Black Sea, while the other volume contains the interviews conducted in the coastal regions of the Black Sea.¹² The texts selected from the two volumes dedicated to Anatolia have been compiled

¹² See for the quoted volume, *The Exodus – Volume V. Testimonies from the western littoral of Pontos and Paphlagonia*, Athens, 2016.

by Herkül Milas and published under the title *Göç: Rumlar'ın Anadolu'dan Mecburi Ayrılışı (1919-1923)* (2001).

2.4 Oral history research in the Black Sea region

Given the traumatic aspect of the displacement, the narratives of the Black Sea Armenian communities remained silent for long decades, only to emerge as memories either published as memoirs or collected as oral history. Earlier works published in other languages were often translated belatedly. At times, the language barrier made certain works disguised until new research began.¹³

In fact, the field of oral history has been introduced to Turkish social sciences in the early 1990s, where the works of scholars like Arzu Öztürkmen and Leyla Neyzi have been pivotal in framing the general history, theory and methodology of this new area of study (Öztürkmen 2001, 2009, 2011, 2019; Neyzi 2004, 2004, 2010, 2011). The research on ethnic conflict first emerged, in fact, during the late 1980s, where Donald and Norma Miller collected the 1915 survivors' narratives (1986) and Renée Hirschon published the stories of the 1924 Population Exchange refugees (1989).¹⁴ Fethiye Çetin's works on the memory of Armenian converts had an important impact on further search for family histories. Her books *Anneannem* (2004) and *Torunlar* (with Ayşe Gül Altınay, 2009) have been a turning point in the surfacing of many more narratives about Armenians who could survive through conversion (Altınay and Çetin, 2009, 2011; Altınay and Türkyılmaz, 2011). Since the early 2010s, Hrant Dink Foundation's "The Sounds of Silence" oral history project

¹³ See for instance Tatiana Milliex, *Mines Tripoleos*, Athens, 1970, a book on the refugees from Tirebolu to Athens, collected for the Center of Asia Minor Studies. The book has not yet been published in English or Turkish.

¹⁴ One should also mention the work of Nadire Mater who published for the first time the controversial narratives of the Turkish soldiers combatting in the Southeast (1999, 2005).

compiled a series of narratives from Diyarbakır (2012-2013), Ankara (2013-2015), İzmit (2015-2016), Kayseri (2018) and Sivas (2021).

The oral history research which particularly focused on the Black Sea came out in the 1990s.¹⁵ Two important memoirs of the Pontic Greek writer Yorgo Andreadis were translated in Turkish in the early 1990s (1992, 1993), followed by other works on Greeks who converted to Islam (1997, 1998, 1999, 2007). Another Pontic Greek memoir, *Not Even My Name*, came by Thea Halo, who gave one of the best historical ethnographies of the region, through the life story of her own mother (2000). During the early 2000s, Arzu Öztürkmen published several articles on the on everyday life, gender and ethnic conflicts in Tirebolu (2003, 2005, 2006). In the case of Central Black Sea Armenians, I have personally collected and published studies on the cultural memory of the converted Armenian in Ünye and its surroundings (Sarıkaya, 2015; 2016; 2016).

Finally, one should also underscore memoirs published particularly on the Central Black Sea. A series of accounts about Central Black Sea Armenians have appeared in several books and articles. Meline Toumani, in her book *There Was and There Was Not*, offers for instance, Hingeni Evrensel's story who was born in Ordu (2014). Similarly, in her book *The Armenians in Modern Turkey*, Talin Suciyan published the accounts of Civan and Hayguhi Cakır, both born in Ordu and now living in Montreal (2016). Another such narrative belongs to Kevork Hintlian from Jerusalem, who published a tragic oral history article on survival during the *Tehcir* in the Black Sea (2015, pp. 27-35). Similarly, writer İbrahim Dizman from Ordu published *Adı Başka Acı Başka*, an oral history research on coppersmith Harut Artun,

¹⁵ The language barrier made certain works disguised until new research began. See for instance Tatiana Milliex, *Mines Tripoleos*, Athens, 1970, an account of refugees from Tirebolu to Athens, collected for the Center of Asia Minor Studies.

as one of the last Armenians who is still living in Ordu (2016). One can also mention the collection of narratives, *Anadolu'nun Son Çılgıkları: Karadeniz Ermenileri*, by Murat Ezer (2025) and *100 Yıl...Gerçek Hikâyeler, 1915-2015*, by Lilit Gasparyan (2014) who shared certain narratives on Central Black Sea. James L. Barton's (comp.) *"Turkish Atrocities": Statements of American Missionaries on the Destruction of Christian Communities in Ottoman Turkey, 1915-1917* (1998) and Leyla Neyzi and Hranush Kharatyan-Araqelyan's (eds.) *Speaking to One Another: Personal Memories of the Past in Armenia and Turkey* (2010) also includes the story of Armenians from Ordu as well as Trabzon. On the other hand, Israël Setrak Tahmazyan's *Gavur: Autobiographie d'un Arménien ayant survécu au génocide* (2006), Halil Erhan's books *1915'ten 1980'e Karadeniz: Ermeniler, Eşkiyalar, İnsanlar, Yaşamlar* (2015) and *Karadeniz'den Bir Ermeni Yetimi: Baybahanlı Nubar* (2017) and Sosi Antikacıoğlu's *Geçmişimden Sesler ve Renkler* (2018) includes the story of Armenians from Ünye as well as Samsun. One can also mention director and cinematographer Berke Baş who contributed to *Torunlar* with a particular article situating her grandmother Nahide Kaptan's (1904-1993) story of conversion within the general history of Ordu. Baş also produced two films in 2009, *Nahide'nin Türküsü* (Nahide's Song) on Armenians of Ordu and in 2010, *Beton Park* (Concrete Park) on the youth of Ordu.¹⁶

¹⁶ See also Özel, 2024.

CHAPTER 3

SITUATING PEOPLE OF ÜNYE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS IN A HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Some academics have the view that the Black Sea is part of the broader Mediterranean geography. Eyüp Özveren mentions that certain definitions of the Mediterranean region also include the Black Sea (Özveren, 2006, p. 17). More recently, Mustafa Aydın, argues that the Black Sea and Mediterranean geographies have been geopolitically united since 2015 due to the changes in the Eastern Mediterranean region with the Syrian War and Russia's move from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean (Aydın, 2020, p. 24). While the Black Sea was an inland sea of the Ottoman Empire until the second half of the 18th century, it became an area of competition between Tsarist Russia and the Ottoman Empire starting from the 19th century. During the Cold War, it was the dividing line between the two blocks. In 1990, a new era in the history of the Black Sea began, with more intense political, economic and cultural relations established between the nations bordering the Black Sea than at any time in the last two centuries. A significant portion of Turkey's export and import activities involve Russia, Ukraine, Balkan countries and Caucasus. Academic collaborations such as Balkan Universities Association and Caucasus Universities Association have emerged. At Turkey's initiative, Black Sea Economic Cooperation was established on 25 June 1992.

Samsun (the ancient city of Amisos), located on the southern coast of the Black Sea and serving as a natural shelter in the Central Black Sea region, was founded as a colony of Milesians from Sinope. It was the port city for the provinces of Amasya, Tokat, Yozgat, Kayseri and Sivas. In describing the prosperity in the

Samsun region, geographer Strabo (c. 64/63 BC-AD 24) from Amasya stated that ‘Not once did hunger prevail in these lands’ (Strabon, 1987).

Before the establishment of the Republic of Turkey, Ünye was connected to Samsun which was seen as the largest economic center in the Black Sea region. It held a significant position throughout history as an important connecting point between Central Anatolia and the Black Sea regions with its fertile lands and natural harbor (Mortan and Atalay, 2019, p. 59).¹⁷ Located between Samsun and Ordu in the Central Black Sea Region, Ünye, was one of the developed towns of the area with a population of over one hundred thousand in 2024.¹⁸ Prior to *Tehcir* of Armenians in 1915 and Population Exchange in 1924, Ünye was, as was the whole Black Sea coast then, heavily populated with Armenians and Greeks.

3.1 The impact of the Ottoman-Russian War on central Black Sea towns

The large part of the migrations to Anatolia, particularly in the second half of the 19th century took place in Caucasus as a consequence of the Ottoman-Russian War. The communities that came through these migrations became one of the significant factors that played a role in the ethnic, cultural and political developments of Anatolian geography. After the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78 that resulted in the loss of a vast territory in the Balkans and the Caucasus, a large number of Georgian immigrants from Batum-Çürüksu (then under Ottoman rule) took refuge in Trabzon and moved further to settle in the Ordu-Ünye-Samsun region. Similarly, Circassian communities fled the war, migrating and settling between Ordu and Samsun,

¹⁷ The Amasian geographer Strabo (c. 64/63 BC–AD 24), depicting the city of Samsun serving as the port city for the provinces of Amasya, Tokat, Yozgat, Kayseri and Sivas, wrote, “Not once did hunger prevail in these lands,” in describing the prosperity of the Samsun region (Strabon, op. cit.).

¹⁸ “Ünye İlçe Yatırım Ortamı Raporu 2024”, Trabzon: DOKA-Doğu Karadeniz Kalkınma Ajansı/Eastern Black Sea Development Agency, 2024:
https://www.doka.org.tr/dosyalar/page_108/attachment/unye-ilce-yatirim-ortami-raporu.pdf

especially in the region of Ünye, Terme and Çarşamba. This has been the cause of initial migration of Greeks and Armenians of Central Black Sea origins. Their population displacement region had therefore begun prior to the *Tehcir* of 1915 and the Population Exchange of 1924. Ünye and its surroundings became therefore a space of encounter with incoming migrants and the native residents, starting a new experience for all parts. Muslim migrants who tried to resettle in this new region, faced confrontations and conflicts with the native Muslims and non-Muslims. Some of the Caucasian migrant groups were armed, causing frequently fights with the local Muslim villagers along with the landed gentry. This is when another wave of migration began in the Central Black Sea, where Greek and Armenian landlords who lived both in the cities and rural areas left the Ottoman lands, to move particularly to Greece and Russia (Özel, 2011, pp. 107-123). Oktay Özel gave a review of this period as follows:

The oral information from third generation Georgian immigrants tells that their grandparents came to the central Black Sea town of Ordu and the surrounding districts of Fatsa and Ünye during the years following the ‘93 Harbi’. Their story of the first arrival of the immigrants is as follows: after their land of origin was ceded to Russia, Muslim Georgians of the Batum-Çürüksu region were encouraged by the Ottoman authorities to migrate to Anatolia. As the new Russian administration of the region also exerted pressure on the Muslim inhabitants of the region, most of the Muslim families decided to leave their land to settle in Anatolia under Ottoman rule. The Ottoman administration had a plan to direct these migrants to the area between Adapazarı and Bursa. However, the group in this study, closely connected to an influential local leader, Çürüksulu Ali Pasha (Ali Pasha of Çürüksu), is said to have suffered from sickness during the difficult sea voyage. When the three ships of the convoy reached the shores of Ordu, the migrants threatened the captains, demanding to land and settle in Ordu. This demand was forwarded to Istanbul. Eventually, after some three days of negotiation, the migrant families were given permission to land at Ordu. Thus, according to the story, their coming to the region was not a result of the original plan of the Ottoman government; it was purely accidental.

Aside from the city centers such as Samsun, Bafra, Çarşamba, Ünye and Fatsa in the region, rural areas were also populated with Greeks and Armenians.

There were forty-three churches in Samsun and its villages. There were 1361 male students and 344 female students amounting to a total of 1705 students in twenty-seven Armenian schools. They received education from a total of fifty-nine teachers, forty-four men, fifteen women.¹⁹ There had been earlier migrations from eastern Black Sea towns as well (Hovagimian, 1967 and Torlakyan, 1981). Almost all the villages around Ünye, four boroughs in the vicinity of Terme and twenty residential areas in the district of Çarşamba were built by refugees who came from Hemşin and Sevked (Kalkandere) at the beginning of 18th century. In fact, the migration of Armenians living in the Hemşin began by the early 1720s and continued until the end of the 19th century. While most of the Greeks living in the same region converted to Islam, Armenians who did not accept Islam migrated to nearby places, especially in the Central Black Sea region. Although the Islamization policies of the Ottoman Empire were the first reason for these migration waves, it is known that the second reason is the difficulty of living conditions (Simonian, 2006). The records show that in 1914, there were forty-nine churches and seventy-four educational institutions in the area where 3254 students were enrolled; in the district of Ünye there were 7700 Armenians (1130 households), fourteen churches and twenty-one educational institutions (Kévorkian and Paboudjian, 1992, pp. 196-197; Safrastyan, 1966, pp. 41-47).

3.2 The stance of non-Muslim population in Ünye and its surroundings in the 19th century

It is important to mention an economic pressure in the town of Ünye at the turn of the 20th century. Since the ancient times, Ünye (Oinoe) has been known as a town

¹⁹ For a preliminary study regarding the Armenian churches and schools within the boundaries of Turkish Republic prior to 1915, see Mildanoğlu, 2011.

famous for its iron mines, spread beyond a bay in the shape of a crescent. However, once a source for wealth, the slipways became outmoded in time when the steamboats appeared in the modern era. Therefore, the residents of Ünye most of whom were sailors and carpenters had to migrate in the second half of the 19th century. Based on the work of Hovagim Hovagimian (1967), one understands that a population of seven hundred Armenians stayed and got settled around Surp Minas Church. Their research also informs us that in 1914, the nearby Mesrobian School had one hundred seventy-five students, giving education to both girls and boys. People living in the upcountry Armenian villages (Ozan, Yağmurcan, Eyrubeyle, Tekedam, Düztarlan, Khaçdur, Yusufklar, Seylen, Gözderen and Manasdere) were making a living through masonry, weaving, hazelnut and tobacco agriculture (Hovagimian, 1967, pp. 717-720; Kévorkian and Paboudjian, 1992, p. 202; Köker, 2005, pp. 181-182; 2013, pp. 250-251).

In Hovagimian's book titled *Badmutyun Haygagan Bondosi* [History of the Armenian Pontus], it is stated that Armenians in Ünye, though fewer in number than the Greeks or Turks, were economically wealthy and had an important role in the sphere of commerce especially with the hinterland. Again, from Hovagimian's work, we learn that villagers in Ünye were in a good condition in terms of education; there were eleven teachers working in eleven schools along with eight churches and eight priests in the beginnings of 1890s (1967, pp. 717-720). In Ioannis Kalfoğlu's book titled *Küçük Asya Kitasının Tarihi Coğrafyası* [The Historical Geography of the Continent Asia Minor], it is declared that Ünye, which was located ten kilometers east of Çarşamba, was called 'Oinoi' in the past and half of the population, amounting to three thousand, was Greek Orthodox. "They manage good schools and under the governance of Niksar Archbishop. The Archbishop of Niksar generally

dwells here. There are black stone mines around it. 83 villages are under the governance of Ünye and 34 villages are under the governance of Karakuş [Akkuş], a village of Ünye” (2013, p. 130). The information that Hovagimian and Kalfoglu convey shows that the Christians that were living in Ünye were really good in educational field. The rural Armenians of the town were engaged in trade and certain crafts such as weaving, leatherworking and shoemaking; while the Greeks, who were, to a large extent, living in the urban areas, were engaged in fishing and various branches of crafts. Though not as many as Armenians and Greeks in number, a Jewish population also lived in the town. Jews, who were engaged in trade in Ünye, left the town leaving their name to the name of a marketplace that is called ‘Yahudi Düzlüğü’ (literally *Jewish Plain*) now.

As Taner Akçam emphasized, religious conversion was presented as an option to Armenians in order to stay where they were in the beginning of the 1915 Armenian *Tehcir*. It was even forced upon people in some regions. The reports by German and American consulates were full of voluntary and forced conversion cases. For example, the German Consul Kuckoff was sending news on the 4th of July 1915 stating that “all villages around Samsun have been made Muslim and likewise the villages in Ünye were Islamized too”.²⁰ United States consul in Samsun deploys the following statements in the report that he wrote with regard to religious conversions around the same date (July 10th, 1915): “Until now about 150 families have been converted to Islamism and the rest has been sent to the Interior. In Samsun, there were about 5,000 Armenians who have been transferred in very bad conditions, that is, that lacking carriages, women and children parted from the head

²⁰ PA-AA/R14086, Samsun’s consul Kuckoff’s report dated July 4th, 1915. Addition to the report of July 16th, 1915 from Ambassador of Germany Wangenheim to Prime Minister Bethmann Hollweg. Quoted by Akçam, 2008, p. 295.

of the family were put on carts. In a word it was terrible. The Mutessarif said that even the converted persons will not be able to stay here and will have to go to Trebizond, Kerrasounds, Merzifoun, Baffra, Fatza, etc. The Turks work very hard at the conversion. A great part of the persons who have gone are now willing to follow the example of the 150 families converted; but it seems that it is too late now and that they refuse to bring them back here, even though they embrace Islamism”.²¹ On the 7th of July, German Ambassador Wangenheim said that “Armenians in Trabzon have converted to Islam in masses in order to escape *Tehcir* and save their properties”.²² We learn from one of Rahmi Çiçek’s studies that 160 Armenian families within the Armenian population who did not want to be subjected to the relocation law made attempts on governmental level in Istanbul. They demanded exemption regarding the relocation procedures on account of their applications demonstrating that they accepted Islam and they had never been insubordinate against the Ottoman state up until then. The relocation procedure of the abovementioned 160 families was thereby stopped with the consent of the government.²³

The report of Athens Pontus Central Committee dated December 1st 1921 tells the tragic events that were undergone in ‘Pontus Ünye’ as follows:

After the complete destruction of the prospering city of Baffra the Turks continue their work of ravage. On the month of September in 1921, the bands of Mustafa Kemal have massacred all the male population of Oinoé. The smalle quantity of the men who had been able, to escape this slaughter took refuge on the mountains where they will surely die on account of the persecution, the cold and the lack of food. The Turk gendarms set fire to the forest in order to oblige them to leave the dens where they are hidden. This massacre organized by the official outhorities having been carried out

²¹ From Samsun’s consul William Peter to Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, LC/HM (Sr.)/Reel 7/619, quoted by Sarafian, 2004, pp. 62-63. For more detailed information, see Kévorkian, 2006, pp. 606-618; 2011, pp. 486-493, 930-931.

²² PA-AA/R14086. The report dated July 7th, 1915 from Ambassador Wangenheim to Prime Minister Bethmann Hollweg; quoted by Akçam, op. cit., pp. 295-296. Some studies examining the disorder that is experienced in many areas of Anatolia from different angles and under the light of different studies are as follows: Dündar, 2013; Türkyılmaz, 2009; Bloxham, 2005; Gingeras, 2009; Deringil, 2012; Doumanis, 2013.

²³ *B.O.A.*, DH.İD, 1934/144982; Also *B.O.A.*, DH. EUM. 2 Şb. 61-A, quoted by Çiçek, 2014, p. 38.

Mustafa Kemal ordered the *Tehcir* of the remaining boys and women. The women knowing well the fate which was waiting them: dishonour, outrage and violation accompanied by the death, preferred like the virgins of Kerassunde, those poor victims of the famous ruffian Osman Agha, to suicide. So, pressing to their bosom their boys and their younger brothers climbed on a rock near the seashore and threw themselves in the abyss (Papadopoulus, 2013, p. 206).

In Ordu, of which Ünye is a district now, the Armenian population was, at least, as large as the one in Samsun in the past; hence it was possible for an Armenian to be elected as the mayor.²⁴ Right before the *Tehcir* of Armenians, Mardiros Şirinyan was the mayor of Ordu in 1913 and 1914; he had to lay down his office when the First World War broke out. After the *Tehcir* of 1915, there was not even a single Armenian left in the city; however, the records of the Armenian Church in Ordu during the Republican period show that 135 families later returned to Ordu. This information is also confirmed in the inspector report dated December 5th, 1940 that refers to an Armenian community of 500 people in the city:

In the vicinity of the province there have not been detected any overt or covert regionalist, internationalist or separatist movements or those who possibly have negative opinions and feelings toward our Party. There is neither a case of report or complaint in this regard. There are only about five hundred Armenians in the province, all residing in the center. They are engaged in trivial trades and crafts. There is not any complaint of their behavior. However, the presence of a small minority in Ordu is not appreciated.²⁵

A Member of Parliament from Kayseri, Hilmi Kılıç who was the author of the report, concluded that “the existence of this small minority in Ordu was not good”

²⁴ Up until 1915, Armenians had been represented as majority in Municipal Council of Ordu. For an interview with Harutyun Artun, who still lives in Ordu, on the Armenians of Ordu, see İnce and Uygun, 2008; Küpçük, 2014. For further information on the Armenians from Ordu: Kotcholosian Hovannisian, 2009. See also, Baş, 2009.

²⁵ BBA-CA 490.01.612.127.06. The original text of the quoted passages: “Vilâyet dahilinde gizli veya aşıkâr, sınıfcı, zümreci, mıntıkacı veya beynelmilelci fikir cereyanları veya partimize karşı menfi fikir ve duygu taşıyanlara tesadüf edilmemiş ve bu yolda müracaat ve şikâyet vakı olmamıştır. Vilâyet dahilinde yalnız merkezde beş yüz kadar Ermeni vardır. Ufak tefek ticaret işlerle ve bazı sanatlarla meşgul olmaktadır. Bunların halen menfi his ve hareketleri hakkında bir şikâyet yoktur. Ancak ufak bir ekalliyetin Ordu’da bulunması hoş görülmemektedir”.

even though he acceded to the fact that this group did nothing bad to complain about. When this report was written, some Greek families who were exempted from the Population Exchange due to the fact that they were Protestants were still living in Ordu. Haris Etçi, the son of Butcher Mihail who belonged to one of those families, crowned his sports career with football after athleticism, converted to Islam on his own accord to be able to play in 'Karagücü' team that was a part of Turkish Armed Forces and changed his name to Halis. The star of the football team Galatasaray, which became the champion of the league in 1949, Etçi then changed his name back to Haris to be able to go to Greece (Dizman, 2013).

After just six months from the report of Hilmi Kılıç, Dr. Nuri Özkaya, Giresun party chief, complained about Jewish families that immigrated from Thrace and Istanbul to Giresun in a letter he wrote to the Office of R.P.P. Secretary General on June 2nd, 1941:

As a result of the voluntary evacuation carried out in certain areas, a few Jewish families from Thrace and Istanbul have arrived here. It was understood that they came under the auspices of guests to their relatives who work here as clerks in a foreign establishment. Among the members of this group of 10 or 15 people, some individuals whether men or women, carry Turkish and Muslim names which came as a surprise in the neighborhood. One of them who was at the draft age, after submitting a falsified document demanded transfer procedures with all the family members from Thrace. This insolent person by trying to deceive the government was trying to be free of the military obligation. Thanks to the foresight of the officials his deception was realized and the necessary action was taken at once. However, with this situation the national identity documents they possessed called attention to the fact that they had changed their own names with Turkish and Muslim names by a court order. What is even stranger is that, while these people have relatives here with names such as Ester, Yako, Mois, their newly arrived siblings and close relatives carry names such as Münevver, Aykut, Sevim and the like. In this way it is sadly observed that the noble Turkish names are used for such insidious and rapacious purposes, thus leading to vile gossiping and ridicule. What attitude should we adopt toward those who have managed to find a legal way to exchange their name with our own by way of a court order? The purpose, reason and meaning for these individuals in changing their names by such means is obvious. If we allow this to happen our social constitution [will suffer] and especially as times passes, their children's civil register will give the appearance that they are real Turks, because their

parents will have had Turkish names, which in my humble opinion from the perspective of our national future is an objectionable and worrisome situation. The point is that names can be changed if a cogent reason is presented to the court. Perhaps they obtained such a court order in this way. Hereby I present my opinions regarding the inconveniences in the application of the legal articles concerning the said occasions to your highest regards with my deepest respect.²⁶

As Howard Eissenstat has also pointed out, the issue that Özkaya was specifically interested in was the fact that Jewish people changed their names and took, in his own words, “Turkish and Muslim” names. Even though he accepted the fact that this was not against the laws, he was concerned that their children would also take Turkish names and it would be not possible to tell them apart from “real Turks” no matter what would be done. We see here the existence of racist thinking that deals with issues such as the mixing of populations and whether it will be possible to recognize whom the “real Turks” are. The deployment of race in such a way is essentially different from the Turkish History Thesis’ unifying race discourse.

²⁶ BBA-CA 490.01.611.120.06. The original text of the quoted passages: “Bazı bölgelerde yapılmakta olan ihtiyarî tahliye dolayısıyla buraya Trakya ve Istanbuldan birkaç musevi ailesi gelmiştir. Bunların burada ecnebi bir müessesede memuriyetle çalışan akrabaları nezdine misafir olarak geldikleri anlaşılmıştır. 10-15 kişilik bu kafil efradının kadın olsun erkek olsun Türk ve müsliman isimleri taşıdıkları muhitte hayretle karşılanmıştır. Bunlardan askerlik çağında olan birisi muharref bir vesika ibraz ederek bütün aile efradiyle Trakyadan buraya nakil muamelesine teşebbüs etmiştir. Bu küstah, sözde hükümeti iğfal ederek askerlikten kurtulmağa çalışıyordu. Memurların basireti sayesinde hilyesinin farkına varılmış ve derhal gereği yapılmıştır. Ancak, bu münasebetle bunların ellerindeki nüfus cüzdanlarında kendi isimlerinin mahkeme kararıyla Türk ve müsliman isimleriyle değiştirildiği nazarı dikkati celbetmiştir. Daha garibi bunların buradaki akrabaları faraza, Ester, Yako, Mois iken yeni gelen kardeşleri ve yakın akrabaları Münevver, Aykut, Sevim ve mümasili isimler taşımalarıdır. Bu suretle mübeccel Türk adının kim bilir ne gibi hasis emel ve ihtiraslara âlet olduğu ve bu yüzden sefil dedikodular ve istihzalar da vesile teşkil ettiği teessürle görülmektedir. Nasılsa kanunî bir yol bularak mahkeme kararı almak suretiyle isimlerini adlarımızla değiştirenlere acaba biz nasıl bir nazarla bakmalıyız? Bu şahısların bu suretle isim değiştirmelerindeki sebep, mâna ve maksat âşikârdır. Buna müsaade edildiği takdirde içtimâî bünyemiz ve bilhassa zaman geçince çocuklarının nüfus kayıtları zamanında anne ve babalarının vaktiyle Türk ismi almış olmaları itibariyle hakikî bir Türk’müş gibi sicilde görüleceklerdir ki istikbalimiz noktasından düşünülürse benidenize mahzur ve endişe verici bir vaziyet doğurur. Gerçi mahkemede muhik bir sebep gösterildiği takdirde isimler değiştirilebilir. Belki bunlar da bu şekilde mahkemeden karar almışlardır. İşbu kanunî maddenin tatbik sıralarındaki bu kabil mahzurları nazarı itibara alarak işi hassasiyetle yüksek takdirlerinize arzeder, derin saygılarımı sunarım”.

Aside from the rhetoric of the state, it manifests the degree to which non-Muslims are seen as “native strangers” (Eissenstat, 2005, p. 253; 2007, p. 52).²⁷

In the booklet titled “Memâlik-i Osmaniye’nin 1330 Senesi Nüfus İstatistiki” [The Population Statistics of Ottoman Lands for the Year 1914], a publication of Ottoman Census Bureau of Ministry of Internal Affairs and whose reliability is based on the fact that it was published in 1920 when Istanbul was occupied by English and French forces, it can be seen that the Greek population (54.970) of Samsun alone was larger than its Muslim population (44.992) (Sakin, 2010, pp. 195, 203, 270).²⁸

Today, Samsun is still one of the most important centers of commerce and transportation on the Black Sea coast. In the beginning of the 19th century, the city was overshadowed by Trabzon; however, by the end of the century it became the main port town of Central Anatolia and the Canik district of which it was the center and Samsun began to surpass Trabzon in terms of its export volume. Two significant indicators for the buoyancy and growth of commercial life that was experienced in Samsun were the growing population and the number of ships that came and went. The population of the city, which amounted to 4 thousand in 1830s, rose to 25 thousand in 1912. At the beginning of the 20th century, Samsun led the way in the number of steamboats that arrived to the ports in Trabzon city. According to the British Consulate reports, 616 steamboats arrived to Samsun in 1900 while 487 steamboats arrived to Trabzon in the same year. The Trabzon city yearbook of 1904 indicates that a total of 626 steamboats stopped by Samsun port, 405 steamboats stopped by Giresun port and 382 steamboats stopped by Trabzon.

²⁷ For more detailed information, see Eissenstat, 2007. For an example study on the demands and practices with regard to changing names and surnames in Turkey, see Massicard, 2012; 2013.

²⁸ In the first edition of the book in 2008, the demographic information of Armenians and Greeks were jumbled up due to a typographical error. This error was rectified in the last edition in 2010.

However, with the Population Exchange of 1924, approximately 1.200.000 Orthodox Greeks had to migrate to Greece from Anatolia while 500.000 Muslim Turks had to migrate to Turkey from Greece. The number of the exchanged population that was resettled in various cities between the years 1923-27 could be attained through the data that was gathered in 1927 when the very first population census was taken in the Republican era. The majority of the Muslim population that arrived after the Exchange was from rural areas and engaged in husbandry while almost 70% of the Greeks who had to leave Anatolia were from an education section of the society including among them craftsmen, businessmen, traders who lived both in cities and towns. As in the Anatolian Geography as a whole, this change brought along a great transformation in the economic and social life of Samsun and its neighboring environment where the Greek population outweighed Muslim population and economically caused the loss of a huge potential as well. ²⁹

²⁹ For a detailed survey of the Greek-Turkish population exchange, see Ari, 1995. For an oral history research on the Greek experiences of the population exchange, see Hirschon, 1989. For another oral history research on the Greek and Turkish experiences of the population exchange, see Yalçın, 2005. Yalçın's other books are about Armenian experiences in Turkey published by the same publisher: 2006, 2006, 2008. Gender-differentiation in the narration of folktales is the focus of Patricia Fann Bouteneff's article entitled "Persecution and Perfidy Women's and Men's Worldviews in Pontic Greek Folktales". In stories collected after the mass resettlement of Pontic Greeks following the tragic population exchange between Greece and Turkey, narrators nostalgically reflected on their homeland, community life and the challenges posed by exile. Bouteneff highlights these tales' poignant expression of a self-identity that defied the official, undifferentiated definition of Greekness; she shows that, given Pontic Greeks' cultural isolation both before and after relocation, folktales remained an important medium for negotiating gender relations and registering differences between men's and women's life experiences. Bouteneff, 2007, pp. 45-72; 2009, pp. 45-77.

CHAPTER 4

INTERPRETING NARRATIVES: ORAL HISTORY AND PUBLISHED MEMOIRS

Memories of past communities in and around Ünye have long been silent, both in the context of scholarly research and in the formation of local identities. To understand the social life, the sense of belonging and the challenges of ethnic conflicts and displacement, individual narratives offer a profound source. Written memoirs and oral history interviews are such sources, which shed a light on the chaotic social experience of the turn of the 20th century and its aftermath during the Republican era.

The narratives compiled within the scope of this thesis benefited from such sources as published and privately archived memoirs, recorded and unrecorded oral history narratives. The main issues from these sources were centered upon migration and ethnic identities. In his work on demography and forced displacement, eminent social scientist İlhan Tekeli points out that the issue of forced migration is often related to states' conjunctural decision-making, to the building of a post-war peacetime and to avoiding the consequences of natural disasters (Tekeli, 2008, p. 141). It is observed that all these have caused the migration movements of different ethnic groups in the Black Sea region.

On the other hand, ethnic identity has been a sensitive issue in Turkey since the transition from the multi-cultural Ottoman Empire to Modern Turkey as a new nation-state. The Armenian population has been most affected during this transition, primarily by the *Tehcir*, the traumatic forced displacement, but also by conversion and later by ethnic discrimination. Like in many other regions, small groups of Armenians who remained in the Black Sea had to revise their own identity, either by

changing their religion and converting to Islam, or to move to bigger cities or abroad. Leaving behind their “Armenian identity”, they had an access to a “citizen” status in the new Republican order. Folklorist Sylvia Wing Önder aptly underlines how the Black Sea Coast has historically been a mixed area where diverse ethnic groups co-habited for centuries. She states: “Most people today automatically call themselves Turks, although they accept the humorous (and incorrect) stereotypical reference to all Black Sea dwellers as ‘Laz’ and make light of their own mixed blood” (Önder, 2007, p. 253). In fact, what is called the Black Sea people consists of Greek, Armenian, Circassian, Georgian and Turkish descent.³⁰ Anthropologist Michael E. Meeker comments on the ethnic diversity of the region as follows:

The role of non-Turkic peoples in the social history of the Muslim population in the eastern Black Sea region was undisputed. The problem was that none of these non-Turkic groups could be considered to have been a preponderant influence throughout the coastal districts. The Muslim population in this part of Turkey was formed relatively recently out of many different ethnic groups, including peoples of Turkic, Lazi, Kurdish, Greek and Armenian background. The influence of each of these ethnic groups varied in different parts of the region, from valley to valley as well as from the lower to the upper parts of a single valley (Meeker, 2002, pp. 29-30).³¹

My own family genealogy is a case in point. My paternal grandmother Emine was from the Circassians who came to Çarşamba from Russia during the migration wave from the Caucasus in the 19th century. My maternal grandmother Aysel was from the Georgians who migrated to Ünye. My Turkish great grandfather’s second wife was an Armenian lady called Mari, who took the name Zeliha after getting married in the year 1915.

³⁰ For the migration history of the region see Ekinci, 2006; Saylan, 2013; Özel, 2011.

³¹ Quoted by Önder, op. cit., pp. 253-254. See also, Bakirezer and Demirer, 2009; Biryol, 2012; 2014.

4.1 Meeting surviving Armenians of Ünye in Turkey and abroad

Based on the records of the Armenian Church in Ordu, we know that 135 Armenian families made their way back to Ordu after the *Tehcir*.³² When I began my research in the 2000s, only three families were mentioned whose surviving members lived in and out of Ünye. One of them was Minas Ahbap (b.1924), one of the four sons of Tailor Maksut Ahbap, who was living in Istanbul. Levon Baygın, another Armenian who was a tailor in Ünye, has two sons and one daughter who lived in Canada.

Tinsmith Mıgırdıç Gülezryan, a member of another Armenian family who lived in Ünye during the Republican period, had no children alive. Most of his grandchildren are scattered in various cities of Europe and America. Only two brothers who are the grandsons of Mıgırdıç Gülezryan, are living in Turkey; Berç Gülezryan currently live in Istanbul and Aret Gülezryan currently live in Ünye. Although these three Armenian families who lived in Ünye had often good relationships with Turkish people, they left the city because of various social and political problems such as the military coups in 1960, 1971 and 1980.

My encounters with other Armenians of Central Black Sea region consisted of different experiences in different sites. My first encounter with Armenians outside Turkey was during my visit in Lebanon in December 2011. I met a group of Armenian women in public transportation on my way back from Byblos to Beirut. They teased me and my friend in Turkish, asking to be part in the photograph that we were trying to take. Upon getting off the minibus, these Armenian ladies invited us to their house for coffee. They told us that they were descendants of Armenians who fled from Adana, Maraş, Antep and Urfa in 1915. Their grandfathers and grandmothers continued to speak Turkish in Beirut, still watching *dizis*, the Turkish

³² BBA-CA 490.01.612.127.06.

TV series. When I learned that they had never been in Turkey, I asked them whether they considered coming to Turkey. Their answer was negative again, showing how the memory of the past was strong and held them back from visiting Turkey.

The preliminary findings from these interviews indicate that the memory of this region's history is particularly powerful. The strong ties that residents of and around Ünye have with the town in which they were born and subsequently forced to leave for various reasons continue to endure. This factor also significantly contributed to the content of the interviews.

4.2 Written memoirs from central Black Sea Armenians

Besides oral history narratives, this thesis also used archived material of personal lives. One of them was a letter dated 1929 from Paris, which concerned the Armenians in Ordu.³³ Similarly, a notebook dated 1984 at the Linguistics Institute in Armenia included information about the Armenians in Ünye.³⁴ The notes in this notebook concerned an individual of Armenian descent who was born in the village of Primorskoye in the Gudauta region in 1937. The father of the individual who spoke with a Black Sea dialect migrated from Ünye region in 1924. His father was born in Balluğ, a village in Ünye region, in 1898. This collection was recorded in Abkhazia in 1984. As a researcher, Haykanush Mesropyan notes, numerous linguists and ethnographers during the Soviet era in Armenia conducted extensive interviews with local individuals from diverse Armenian-speaking communities, documenting their knowledge of various Armenian dialects. Given that the recording from Ünye was designated as “number 252”, it can be inferred that there are at least 251 similar

³³ This letter is exhibited in the ‘Armenian Genocide Orphans’ section in the Aram Bezikian Museum in Lebanon.

³⁴ The notebook written in Armenian handwriting was accessed with the assistance of Haykanush Mesropyan in Armenia and partially translated with the help of Ani Sarukhanyan in Turkey.

recordings at the Linguistics Institute in Armenia. Additionally, the notebook about Ünye concludes with a brief story written in Hemşini. This story, regarded as a vital element in the preservation of oral traditions, was transcribed using the Turkish alphabet and subsequently translated into Turkish.

Alongside these archived materials, the research also used published memoirs. One such source was a memoir written by İrfan Işık (2007), a retired teacher from Ünye, shedding light on the Muslim-Armenian relationship in Ünye. His narrative concludes with a romantic twist:

The friendship of my family with the Armenians was an ordinary matter for Ünye. Because the common attitude of people toward Armenians was similar to my family's attitude. They were rigid only about marriage issues. They did not give their daughters to Muslims neither did they marry Muslim girls. Now it has changed. (...) Despite all these, there was also intimacy between Muslim and Armenian youth. After 1957, the number of students in the secondary school of Ünye rose significantly. The staff teachers could not deal with this increased number of students. The school administration was filling this void of subject-teaching positions with elementary school teachers. I and my friend Yusuf Taslı were appointed in the secondary school in the same manner.

While I was entering into the teachers' room after a break, I saw Yusuf laughing in tears. He explained the reason thus: The girls and boys were sitting separately in the desks which were arranged before the teacher's table. He realized that one of the boys was looking so carefully at the girls' side. 'I was going back and forth between the desks and examining his behavior discreetly. At a certain moment I realized that a butterfly-like piece of paper was flying to the girls' side. Suddenly turning aside, I snatched the paper in the air. Before the class opening bell rang, he took the paper out of his pocket and read it aloud to us.

Purple violet in the garden
You gave me white plague
Either you become Muslim Anayit
Or I'll go Armenian

That day we laughed out loud in the teachers' room and decided to forget the event and never talk about it again.

Furthermore, the oral history interviews conducted for the project present valuable insights into the ethnic origins of the people, in addition to the particulars of

their daily lives. Some of the interviewees demonstrated familiarity with the concept of oral history. In this regard, we should mention the local researcher-writer and producer Aynur Tan who also contributed to documented memoirs, through her books and her oral history interviews for Oney Flash FM from 2015 to today. These interviews gave a general information about the daily life and familial relations of the women in Ünye. Her own life and family history also contained valuable insights into the issues of migration and ethnic origins. She provided the following account of how her family came to settle in the Black Sea region:

We are from the Black Sea region. To clarify, the roots of our family are located in the Black Sea region of Turkey. Our actual ancestral homeland is in the Caucasus region. My grandparents are from that region. They immigrated to this country at a relatively young age. The experiences they endured during this period were recounted to each other on occasion and they were often sorrowful. As a consequence of my father's profession as a state officer, our family resided in Anatolia. During the summer months when we went there, I developed a keen interest in their lives (Aynur Tan, 18 September 2010, Ünye).

Aynur Tan, who developed an early interest in history, articulated that she was more inclined to listen to the accounts of her elders than to play with her peers, who occasionally invited her to join their activities. She stated:

While listening to them, I also constructed hypothetical scenarios in my mind based on their accounts. It was something like that: The women were forced to leave their beautiful homeland and endure great hardships on their journey. But why? Men also suffered, but women, as mothers, also lost their children. I tried to understand the plight of women who had lost their children while I was safe and happy to be listening to what my mother and grandmother were telling (Aynur Tan, 18 September 2010, Ünye).

Tan's narrative represents a significant case study in the history of emotions. Her interest in history prompted her to pursue a career as a history teacher and to engage with the activities of the History Foundation's local history studies project:

They helped us greatly. Furthermore, in all our endeavors, we strove to safeguard the cultural diversity that surrounded us and to pass it down to future generations. What were our activities? Our activities included

attendance at conferences and the undertaking of oral history studies. In 1998, I started to conduct oral history studies. At that time, I was not yet acquainted with the History Foundation. I believe this to be the case and I have observed that the History Foundation attached considerable importance to these works and we continued at a greater pace. I am unsure of the precise number. These works were carried out over a period of 12 years, resulting in the collection of over 500 interviews. However, it was not possible to transcribe these interviews (Aynur Tan, 18 September 2010, Ünye).

Tan asserts that she acquired knowledge about the socio-economic and cultural history of the Black Sea region through these oral history accounts. During this period, she said that she experienced initial resistance from her family and environment, who expressed unease and even derision. However, this attitude changed over time. She subsequently observed a shift in their approach. People began to show a growing appreciation for her work and engagement with this subject matter.

Some of the other interviewees recall specific memories from the period of ethnic conflict that broke out at the turn of the 20th century. Among these, Zerrin Oktay, a retired writer born in 1961 in Ünye, provided significant insights into her grandfather's experiences during the interview. Although Oktay was a little child at the time, her recollections of her childhood in Ünye demonstrate the intergenerational aspect of the family secrets.

I once found a book called *History of Turkish Bandits* (that's how I remember its name). Actually, I never owned that book, but it was in our family physician's bookshelf and I used to take it and read it whenever I went there. The book began with the narrative about Hekimoğlu. Afterwards, it talked about my grandfather. In other words, according to that book, my grandfather is considered the second greatest bandit of the country. Unfortunately, I couldn't find any trace of that book on the internet... When I was five, I had no idea that my grandfather was a frightening bandit. I knew him as a poor old man who lived on the lowest stony floor of our three-story wooden family house, in a tiny room wedged between the cow barn and the chicken coop. He was not allowed to go upstairs. My grandmother condemned him to solitude. He must have been so suffocated by this isolation that this prompted him to confide in me, a young child and share his innermost thoughts. We stayed in that house for almost two weeks and I visited my grandfather every day. I was

actually living in a sort of isolation as well. No one else other than my grandfather took me seriously (Zerrin Oktay, 30 October 2016, Istanbul).

4.3 Oral history interviews: Collecting dispersed memories of past lives

Using archive and library research one can reach out the quantitative demographic analyses. But how and why there is more of a silence regarding the ethnic past experiences need to be further researched through oral history.

As mentioned earlier, my research began as a pursuit of a long-time silenced memory in my family in 2007 and continued sporadically over the years. Between 2007-2025, I was able to conduct interviews with 30 people who had Turkish, Armenian, Greek, Jewish, Circassian and Georgian origins. The interview locations varied, including big cities like Istanbul, Ankara, Izmir, Samsun and Ordu, as well as smaller settlements like Bozcaada, Bodrum, Ünye, Terme and Fatsa. I was also able to pursue other interview opportunities abroad. 10 such interviews were conducted in a variety of locations, including Yerevan, Beirut, Jerusalem, Athens, Katerini, Thessaloniki, Paris, Vancouver, Montreal, London and New York, with individuals of Armenian, Greek and Jewish backgrounds.

My research revealed that the recounted narratives are told through emotional discourses, which may point out to the relative positioning of the Armenian identity vis-à-vis the other non-Muslim communities and the prevailing and rising nationalism in the region. The Black Sea region experienced the post-war era in an enhanced trauma of local militia (mainly that of Topal Osman). The fact that the War of Independence began and developed from that region may also have a further impact on how the memory and the local identities were constructed in the upcoming years. Childhood memories have been extremely important in inquiring the construction of new local identities. As expressed before, my research question has developed as a follow-up of my initial inquiries within my family and community in

Ünye. These were narratives, which included trauma stories of separation from their childhood. They were recounted from Muslim members of the communities as well, showing how emotional history continued to stand at the center of local identity.

Ethnic identity has been a sensitive issue in Turkey since the rise of nationalist movements in the Ottoman Empire and later in the establishment of the Turkish Republic. As a result of the forced displacements and the effects of war, Armenians which used to be the most crowded non-Muslim population in the empire sharply decreased considerably during the founding years of the republic.³⁵

The fact that the few Armenians who remained in the region moved away from openly living their own identity for various reasons and that the Armenians, who had to change their religion in order to survive, were pushed to completely ignore their “Armenian identity”, led to the elimination of differences that would harm the “homogeneous” citizen understanding of the new republic over time.

My Armenian great grandmother made it possible for herself and her family to stay in the region by marrying my great grandfather and becoming a Muslim. She was an exception in that she was a lucky woman who was never pressured by her Muslim husband for her original religious conviction despite the conversion. Unfortunately, we don’t know very much in detail about the nature of such conversations if we don’t have our family secrets. I hope women like my grandmother could and did practice their pre-conversion faith (Hadjian, 2018, 2024).

Based on my personal experience, I can say that the presence of a different ethnic and religious origin in the family history, which has been ignored or covered over for decades, leads to a significant vulnerability in one’s identity construction and sense of belonging. For these reasons, I believe that the way for individuals who

³⁵ For the ethnic debates on the foundation of Turkish nation-state, see Üstel, 1997; Gökay and Aybak, 2016; Uzer, 2016.

are pushed into various contradictions in the construction of self-identity to get out of this mess is to develop a more inclusive citizenship awareness. I believe that individuals who have the opportunity to learn about the social and cultural heritage of their ancestors and internalize these old identities, no matter how different their current identity definitions are, can take more solid and safe steps both for themselves and for future generations.



CHAPTER 5

EMERGING THEMES IN THE NARRATIVES OF BEING AN ARMENIAN IN ÜNYE

When we explore the published and oral history interviews, narratives reveal certain common themes. These include intercommunal relations, discrimination, conversion, orphanage memory among many other details. Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan recalled how small the Armenian community was in Ünye. She also links their departure to big cities to the limited opportunities of the town:

We were three households. Ahbap family, Gülezryan Hosepyan family, Baygın family. Majority of those who remained from the exile went to Istanbul. Greeks also left during the population exchange. My aunt was married to a Greek. Since Hristo was literate at the time of the exchange, he wrote a list of the Greeks there and was put on the ferry. But he decided to stay on the ferry instead of returning to Ünye. He went to Thessaloniki. When her husband didn't come home in the evening, my aunt understood that he had also left. My aunt decided to go to Thessaloniki with her daughter Ağavni, Olga, who was 2.5 years old at the time and left Ünye (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver).

Hosepyan remembers how her father didn't allow her to leave Ünye to study at high school. For her this was one of the reasons why they left Ünye: "The reason why we left Ünye was the lack of schools and Armenian community. There was no school, no future as a woman and no Armenian community to start a family. We had no choice but to leave Ünye" (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver).

Many narratives offer detailed accounts of the historical ethnography of the town's daily life. They include descriptions of family ties, farming practices and memories of storytelling. Zerrin Oktay from Ünye, who now resides in Bodrum, recalls her grandfather's relation with her. Apparently, her grandfather Arapoğlu

Ahmet (Kutlu) confessed her that he was a “bandit” during his youth, which was probably related to ethnic conflicts. From her childhood memory, she remembers the details of his home and practices:

The cows were not the only animals to frequent the garden. The property also included a goose pen next to the side wall of the house and a chicken enclosure adjacent to my grandfather’s room. A tin stove was placed in the center of his room. He taught me how to roast hazelnuts with tongs. Subsequently, he taught me how to chop buttermilk. Cornbread pieces were added into the buttermilk mixture. Whenever I went there, he would proceed to chop buttermilk in a bowl, then hand it to me and make me to sit by the window. I consumed the buttermilk, which I found to be somewhat unappealing and listened to what my grandfather told me. He recounted a plethora of memories, including his years as a bandit, the death sentence he was issued as a soldier, the methods of evading military service and the customs of Armenian villages. I was only able to understand a small portion of what he told, yet he spoke with such a nice tone of voice, as if he were singing a song. While I was listening to him, I would get sleepy. Upon seeing that I was about to fall asleep, he would take the bowl from my hand and drape a blanket over me (Zerrin Oktay, 30 October 2016, Istanbul).

As mentioned before, historian Micheal Frisch underscores two approaches to oral history as ‘more history’ and ‘anti-history’. In that perspective, the case of Ünye offers narratives including information as both ‘more history’ and ‘anti-history’.

During the oral history research about Ünye, some themes came out as common experiences associated with the *Tehcir*, conversion, discrimination, intermarriage or orphanage. Like in many oral history narratives, they include a variety of paradoxical views, unexpected details or evaluation of certain decisions taken in past times.

Although all had a strong sense of belonging to Ünye, many also lived miles away from their native lands.

5.1 Stories of anti-history: On *Tehcir*, conversion, orphans, bullying

5.1.1 The memory of *Tehcir*: The good, the bad and the ugly

The memory of *Tehcir* is preserved in different ways across generations. The stories had been collected for the Center for Asia Minor Studies over a decade between 1956-1966, by Christos Samouilidis (1956), Alexis Ioakeimidis (1957), Sophia Dondolinou-Goraniti (1963-1964) and Eleni Gazi (1966). These were interviews with the first generation of Greek survivors, who narrated the second wave of the *Tehcir* in 1916 and later in 1921. These are unique narratives which bring light to Pontic guerilla movements in the Black Sea mountains. Given the vast Muslim Georgian and Circassian migration to the region, one can also understand that many informants call all Muslim communities as “Turks”. This is a matter Arzu Öztürkmen has also found out in her research on the ethnic memory of Tirebolu, where local residents resumed the clashes as between the *gavur* and the local Muslim community, without distinguishing whether they were Greeks or Armenians (Öztürkmen, 2006). The *Tehcir* memory of surviving Armenians also vary. Some prefer to start with stories of good neighbourly help during the *Tehcir*, some give a bitter journey of survival and settling abroad.

In her book *Geçmişimden Sesler ve Renkler* (Sounds and Colors from My Past), Sosi Antikacıoğlu gives an account of the traumatic experience that her grandparents lived during the *Tehcir* and its aftermath (2018). Sosi’s grandfather Yervant Aginyan was a cloth merchant doing business with Manchester, where the number of Armenian merchants was rather high in the 1870s, even having their own church. Although he was successful in his business, earning good money. Speaking a native English, he dreamed to settle in Anatolia. He was originally from Sivas, but he preferred to settle in Samsun, then a rich commercial port city and having a large Armenian community. In 1907, Yervant married Zabel, the well-educated daughter of the Turabian family, from Kayseri. They were both modern and progressive young

Armenians, who had a large library, a beautiful house where they gave banquets. As a homebound husband, Yervant spoiled her wife with jewelry. In Sosi Antikacıoğlu's words, her "grandmother's jewels became legendary among Samsun Armenians." By 1915, the Aginian family had three children. Sosi's father Ara was a promising boy, and his sisters were growing up without any problems, but the political environment was frightening, first after the massacres of Abdul Hamid, then the Adana massacres of 1909. They trusted their gold and jewellery to an Italian friend, keeping some for their own.

In those days, a few foreign ships were anchored off the coast of Samsun to pick up the Armenians who could reach them and take them to Istanbul. Since Armenians were forbidden to go from one place to another, many people who could not escape in any other way tried to save their lives by reaching those ships. Boatmen carrying customers who wanted to go to the ships appeared around. However, the truth that people only learned later was that the boatmen took their customers on the boats and then when they set sail, they robbed these people, who had all their valuables with them, in places that could not be seen from the beach and threw them into the sea. Countless people died off the coast of Samsun in this way.³⁶

When the massacres began, Yervant was brutally killed and Zabel found herself on the road during the *Tehcir*. Realizing that the gold that my grandfather handed over to her would not be left with her, Zabel swallowed a few of them before she set off. With her three children and Gülünya, a family helper, who was born into her hands, she walked alongside of the old priest Fr. Melkon, all the way from Samsun to Syria. Sosi Antikacıoğlu reports how her grandmother rubbed feces on her head to prevent rape or kidnapping. People would eat herbs, roots and fruits on the roads and drink the water when they could find it. The weather was very hot, and

³⁶ Sosi Antikacıoğlu mentions in her book a story about her friend Ayla Gürsoy, also from the Black Sea. Ayla's grandfather had an Armenian friend in Samsun, who wanted reach one of these ships. Ayla's grandfather did not trust the boatmen waiting on the beach and he made sure to find a trusted one so that his friend's family arrive safely on the ship and then in Istanbul. Two years later, when Ayla's family moves to Istanbul, the two families find each other again and continue their friendship from where they left off.

many got sick from the herbs, dirty water and dehydration. The outbreak of diphtheria was inevitable. Zabel lost her two daughters to diarrhea. Her journey ended at a camp in Der Zor, a desert town in southern Syria. Apparently, they traveled for a long time, until Ara, now Zabel's only child, caught the diarrhea as well. Throwing herself in front of a jeep conducted by a German officer, Zabel asked for water in French showing her empty water container: "Two of my children died of thirst and the third is about to die. Give me some water!" It turned out that the shabby pot that came from her dowry was antique and the German officer was also interested in antiques:

The fact that Zabel had such a vessel in her hand and that she could speak French, must have impressed the officer, who did something that German officers had never done and gave my father clean water to drink. Then, when he sees that he is almost dead despite the water, he takes them all in his jeep. As a result, my grandmother, my father, Fr. Melkon, who carried him on his back and the veteran Gülünya got into the jeep of the German officer and continued on their way. "I think we were the only ones who survived that caravan," my father used to say (p. 29).

The oral history narratives from the Center for Asia Minor Studies also give detailed narratives of the *Tehcir*. Their narratives show that the process of forced displacement took place in three different periods. The first of these was the Armenian *Tehcir* of 1915, followed by the deportation of Greeks in 1916. After the settlement of local battles, those who had returned to their own towns, were also forced to leave. In fact, there had been a broad scholarship on the Black Sea region during the 1915 onwards from a Turkish nationalist narrative. The oral history narratives from the Center for Asia Minor Studies offer indeed a valuable story of how Greeks took an action in this war and fought in their own way. The testimony of Chrysostomos Kyriakidis tells a story of how Greeks took help from Greece and Russia:

First, they exiled the Armenians. That happened during the *seferberlik*, in 1915.[...] Armenians who had escaped and hidden in the mountains came to our village. They entered the village and held a defence. At that time the Russians had arrived in Trabzon. Russian ships came to Terme and to Akçay and shouted for the people to board the steamers and go to Trabzon. [...] From Greece weapons had been sent to Trabzon [...] There were 97 lads then who had arms to stir turmoil in Turkey. They landed at Terme, burned, looted. [...] Then some left on the Russian steamers and others plundered the town. In the villages the people returned. They had been afraid and had hidden. And the Turks were afraid and left their own villages. In groups they came to settle in the Greek villages of Terme. They also came to Tsangeris and stayed for some time. Turkish troops arrived as well; they began the war from Tsangeris. The Pontic fighters opened fire. The Turks entered Tsangeris to seize Panikas Efendi. They took him and moved out toward Kerí. As soon as they reached Kerí they engaged in battle. The fight lasted from morning until evening. We had our headquarters at Aiantis. The Turks brought up a cannon to strike. The battle was fought at close quarters around the village. The guerrillas were defeated; they had no strength yet. The Turkish army scattered them. The Turks entered the village of Kerí. What they did cannot be told. I will tell you only one thing. Whether they found a girl or a woman, they spared none. They put Panikas Efendi and the other aghas they had rounded up to the sword and killed them. Those men had promised to give gold liras, yet the soldiers killed them. These things I tell you happened in 1916. When this took place, they sent the villagers into exile. I too went into exile.

From thereon, the account of Chrysostomos Kyriakidis is a story of separation and reunion. As he found himself with his two brothers exiled as far as Yazoumbele, near Trabzon. His mother, who was taken by another *sevkiyat*, went farther and did not return. Apparently, they took them to Sivas, Erzincan, Niksar and Kızılırmak. When the boys return to their town, they began searching for their father, who by then was hidden with others in the mountains. They hardly survived moving around and working for daily wages for the Turks. They saved some money to be able to leave. The story comes to an end with a reunion:

Before we went into exile, we had set a tree as a sign so we could meet. It was a felled beech. We had said we would break a branch and place it on the beach. That would be the signal that we were alive. My brothers and I went to the beach; we found no sign. We said, "Father has left and gone to Russia."... I had a dream and it seemed that it was my father Kosmas, telling us to go seek him and we would find him. We left at once and went to the tree we had as a sign. In the meantime, my father wrote to a Circassian friend in Iskiai, asking him to look for his children. The Circassian sent word and made

inquiries in Terme, in Savakioi, in Sembesi and they told him that we had left. In the meantime, we were stealing cattle in order to live and we were in the mountains. We saw some buffalo tracks, followed the tracks straight and reached a hut. On a tree fifteen rifles were hanging. My father came out of the hut. As soon as he saw us—and we saw him—we all wept. We had arrived sick; they fed us honey and butter; we were high in the mountains, and we recovered. My father learned that our mother was at Kızılırmak and sent one to bring her back.

The family lived on the run for three or four years in the mountains, trying to arm themselves. Kyriakidis' narrative ends with a heroic description of the battle they experienced, when Turkish troops came down from Ankara. The blockade lasted almost for a month, before they finally reached Greece.

The narrative of Georgios Charalampidis gives a rare account of the *Tehcir*, in a rather awkward framework. He traces back the clashes to the wave of forced conversion for all the Armenians in Ünye in 1914. Although many submitted to the will of Turkish authorities to save their lives, that did not save them from the *Tehcir*. The mayor had also ordered that each Greek village to secure as the village, a person with no current military obligations. Georgios Charalampidis was already in the Ottoman army from 1912 to 1914, the *muhtar* appointed him as the gendarme. Georgios found himself, together with some other Turkish gendarmes, escorting the Armenians of Ünye and its surroundings to Samsun: "There they told them, supposedly, that they would take them to Sivas to live and that from there others would be brought to their districts... We marched on foot for two weeks until Niksar". Witnessing the atrocities of this coarse journey, he was deeply shaken. Upon his return to his village in Ünye, he immediately resigned. From 1916 onwards, Georgios stated, Greeks were targeted as well. Witnessing his own father and other neighbors' being killed, he fled to the mountains with other villagers and stayed there on the run until 1921:

We became about a thousand guerrillas. Our leaders kept in contact with guerrillas of other districts, in Samsun and elsewhere. High up, there was a forested mountain with almost virgin woods. In its center there was a large cave that could hold two thousand people. There, beginning in the summer, we collected all kinds of food from raids on Turkish villages. Twice we also robbed the postal convoy and took all the money. During the summer, while the weather was good, we operated against Turkish villages, even in other districts. Our mission was to kill Turks wherever we found them—since they would do the same to us if they captured us— to live as well as we could so as to keep our strength, to gather information on the movements and strength of Turkish groups, to store food for the winter and to secure weapons. Fortunately, we had Turkish friends to whom we gave money and they bought rifles, cartridges and whatever other war materiel we needed. Thus, nothing was lacking to us. Our Turkish friends behaved as friends out of necessity, for they knew what awaited them if they did not serve us. In winter, when everything was covered with snow, we shut ourselves in the cave and ate the provisions we had gathered in summer. Naturally we also had our women and children with us, who helped us somewhat. Thus, we passed four winters and five summers. During that time, we suffered considerable losses from disease, deaths in battle and captures. We could not have done otherwise, for if we had stayed in our villages we might have shared the fate of the Armenians.

Georgios Charalampidis concludes his narrative with their gradual escape from the mountain of the Black Sea. Apparently, the atmosphere around Trabzon had somewhat calmed around 1921. There were ships departing for Greece and Russia, carrying Greeks who wanted to leave. “Those who were still alive moved gradually from mountain to mountain toward Trabzon” Georgios stated. They benefitted from the treaty the Russians had made with the Turkish authorities, embarking in disguise to the Russian ships. He concludes his story as follows:

Thus, occurred the exodus of Ünye. No mass exodus took place. Through the guerrilla method it happened; for that reason, we had many losses and became scattered. And in Russia we thinned out greatly. I was left alone and in 1940 I managed to come to Greece with my family. I do not know what became of the others (pp. 316-317).

A story of *amele taburu* is shared by Giannis Soumelidis. During the First World War, he escaped from an *amele taburu* with some of his friends. They all became sick, out of hunger and eating grass roots. They were soon caught by the Turkish soldiers, who brought them to a Turkish village. Seeing them almost “half-

dead” from the journey and the peasants took pity on them and gave them meat and recover. There, they learned that their own villagers had been sent into exile and most of them were lost. Giannis too had lost his mother, his wife and their babies. His two younger brothers had been adopted by Turks, and they were converted. On their way to Ünye, Turkish soldiers caught and exiled them to Niksar, where he saw that his little cousin had also converted:

After a while I returned from exile to our region, but I did not enter my village...One Turkish village we went to was called Kitaeresi. We stayed there four or five months. We worked in the fields and lived. Afterwards we went back to the mountains.

Like Georgios Charalampidis, Giannis Soumelidis also joined the guerrilla groups. He narrates how they came down from the mountain and burned villages and took on one thousand five hundred Turks who were in the town and on the surrounding mountains. Seventeen guerillas led by Manousaridis of Kerí. He remembers how Manousaridis reminded them the risks of the operation to set Limandere on fire, with tins of kerosene and pine-torch wood to set the houses on fire. He gives a detailed description of the “operation”:

Manousaridis said: “You will set fire to the principal houses where the Turks are. You will not shoot, you will only shout, so the Turks lose their wits.” We began to shout. The Turks were bewildered. They cried out, “Ne var?” (“What’s there?”). We heard a noise from afar and said, “The men are gone, the men are killed.” Meanwhile the houses where the Turks were burst into flames. Splinters were flying everywhere; the house had become a sieve. The uproar was great. The Turks threw away their weapons and ran toward the mountain. We were eighty-four guns and the Turks were many. They must have been up to two thousand. In the pass toward Mount Evliá the uproar was tremendous. There the Turks were running to save themselves...We captured plenty of ammunition and food...Above at Derebaşı some seven hundred people were gathered. They saw the fire in Limandere.

Giannis’ narratives continue with more clashes and killings, where Manousaris and his team managed to find more guns. At the end the Greek militia retreated to the mountains (pp. 320-322).

One other *Tehcir* story belonged to Charalambos Alexiadis, who could escape the first *Tehcir* with three women and escaped to the mountains. There, there were already men as guerrillas. Those who had stayed in the villages were taken to the interior lands with convoys, in a series of “*sefkiedes*” (*sevkiyat*). Charalambos recalls the process as follows:

Our own people from Ünye were sent to Tekiyaz, a Turkish town that also housed Greek families. From Tekiyaz they were taken to Tokat, to Sivas, to Aleppo. On the road they suffered greatly. If you raised your voice—*bang*—they killed you. How many did not perish from hunger and thirst! They marched past rivers yet were forbidden to drink... Those who survived as far as Tokat returned alive. But those who went beyond Tokat reached Aleppo and, through the French, eventually came here to Greece. The others went back to the homeland in 1917. The second deportation occurred around 1920, during the Greek war. Very few from our villages were taken in that and few survived. Of our family of sixteen, only my wife, a nephew and I remained. Most who had come back from the first *Tehcir* joined the guerrillas to avoid the second, leaving few to endure the next round.

Charalambos was fifteen years old back then, yet he had already fought from 1915 to 1917. In 1917, he boarded Russian warships and sailed to Trabzon, then under Russian occupation. When the Russians withdrew after the Bolshevik Revolution, they had left by Russian ship for Sukhumi. After the Armistice of Mudros, they returned to their homeland unarmed. But when Greece entered the war in 1919, they again took to the mountains with the veteran guerrillas. Led by Captain Savigiannis of the Ünye district, they remained in the mountains fighting the Turks until 1923. “We awaited the autonomy of Pontus, encouraged by Greek propaganda”, stated Charalambos. In fact, a mission from Greece had arrived in Samsun to revive the guerrilla movement. Apparently, back then, many of the Greek villages were self-governed and free. Charalambos also stated the turning point of the big clash in Limandere as follows:

A thousand Turks advanced to attack us at Limandere. They demanded a delegation; we sent one and declared our decision not to surrender. We burned our own villages to show our resolve. Then our leader ordered us to

dispose of the little children—either abandon them in Turkish villages or kill them ourselves—so they would not hinder our movements. This was carried out within a single day! That same night we attacked Limandere and captured the village. We surrounded them; they fell off a cliff and were killed. They abandoned their provisions and ammunition and fled; the Turks were gone, their officers naked. Afterwards we burned the village, forcing the Turks into their first capitulation with us. After the capitulation, we moved about freely, grew over-confident, even visited Turkish villages—until one day they treacherously killed our three leaders. The Turks then brought in reinforcements. In March 1923 we left Turkey. We hired a Turkish motorboat for 2,500 liras and 114 of us embarked, ninety-five armed men from Ünye district. We sailed to Theodosia in Russia; it was Easter 1923. From there we went to Sevastopol, where they clothed us and thence to Constanța, Romania. There we were looked after and we surrendered our weapons. As civilians aboard the same boat, we passed Constantinople and arrived at Piraeus. We stayed seventeen days in Neo Faliro, then went on to Thessaloniki. Finally, we assembled here, in the village of Nea Ünye, Kastoria (pp. 323-325).

The testimony of Nikolaos Trapezalidis from Limandere exemplifies what happened after Turkish troops took over the region. Following the big clash, the remaining Greeks of the village were escorted down first to Miltz (the port of the Terme district) and then to Terme, where they were imprisoned. They were denied bread, but some obtained permission to see a doctor. While they were taken to Çarşamba, Sarigiannis' guerillas tried cut the road to free them, but they failed. In Çarşamba they were jailed again, to be taken to Samsun the following day. "In Samsun every village had become a prison" Trapezalidis stated. A total of ten to twelve thousand people were confined. Some Greeks in Samsun tried to help them with food and money. When a new order came to move, the wealthy prisoners of Samsun divided their money among others so they could hide it for them. Nikolaos Trapezalidis told the rest of his journey as follows:

I remember it was the Month of Cherries—June. At daybreak we rose slowly. In a building there they stripped the people naked... They undressed everyone; whatever money you had, the Turks ordered, "Put it down." We villagers replied, "The money was given to us by the rich men of Samsun." "Aferim—well done," said one Turk to me. He let me keep five *paganotes* and took the rest... They stripped us. In the courtyard below, they slaughtered the people. Five minutes more and they would have slaughtered us as well. A bugle sounded from afar. A medical officer entered

and read an order: “Up to now, whatever has happened, has happened. From this point on, if even one more person is lost, we too are lost.” ... After the order they moved us to Havza. When we assembled, we heard of Kemal and applauded, shouting, “Long live Kemal!”.

What Nikolaos Trapezalidis remembered was most probably the time when the Havza declaration was announced by Mustafa Kemal, who stayed there between 25 May- 12 June 1919. The declaration is known to be the first to call for a war of independence, stating the necessity of establishing national organizations and a new order of military and civilian administrators. The importance of the narratives collected by the Center for Asia Minor Studies comes from the fact that they reflect on the first hand the Pontic rebellions in the region. While there is a large literature for the Pontic activities in Turkish sources (Kocaoğlu, 2012; Sezer, 2021), Greek narratives are offering another perspective of the same events.

The period between 1921 to 1922 had been marked by several battles between Greek and Turkish Independence troops led by Mustafa Kemal. According to Nikolaos Trapezalidis, when they finally reached Sivas, a Turkish officer told them, “Pray to God that the *gavur* retreats, otherwise all of you will be slaughtered.” Finally, they scattered them to villages. Nikolaos was sent to a Kurdish village, where they were well treated and protected:

We stayed one winter; in summer we prepared to leave. Meanwhile my wife and mother-in-law were in the mountains. I decided to dress as a *hodja* and return. I bought the clothes and dressed as a *hodja*. For forty-eight days I walked to reach our region. I joined the guerrillas for a while. After the captains were killed, I left and went to Samsun, where I stayed until the Exchange order arrived. A committee registered us and a ship, the Archipelago, came and took us away. That was in 1924.

The testimony of Kyriaki Tsartsampalidou of Melpochlou tells us another story of the second *Tehcir* in 1921. Her story is also a powerful account of what a Greek woman experienced during the chaotic times:

We stayed a month in Ünye. Before leaving we decided to go to church and even took Communion; we did not know what lay ahead of us. In Ünye they put us into barracks... then they moved us on, entering our names in a register. I had two children with me. My husband was a soldier and I had no idea where he was. One child fell ill and I did not know what to do. A woman suggested we take the child out of the barracks and leave it in Ünye, for not everyone had yet departed. But the Turks had counted us... At last, I managed it and left the child behind, not knowing whether I would ever see it again. Until New Year's Day we marched, the gendarmes close behind; after that they released us. We walked barefoot, we walked hungry—what are Christ's sufferings compared with ours! When we reached Van they left us. We wandered the streets begging for a piece of bread, while the men went back to the villages to build whatever walls they could. The place where we stayed was called Artits. We remained there begging for years; that is how we survived. One day an order came: wherever the Greeks were, they were to gather in one village, for they would leave for Greece. Within a week they prepared our papers; they also demanded money, but we gave none. Gendarmes escorted us to Erzurum and from Erzurum we came to Trabzon, where we stayed a month. Then a ship arrived and took us on board, packed with refugees—four thousand from Trabzon and five thousand from Samsun. I no longer recall the vessel's name. It brought us to Thessaloniki. There they housed us in barracks, bathed us and bandaged our wounds; we had grievous sores and did not realize they were caused by starvation... Afterwards they moved us to Harmankioi. From Harmankioi we reached Kozani... and finally to Pylori. Here we came, here we stayed and here we shall die. I met my husband again in Thessaloniki; he had found the child in Ünye and brought it with him. My other baby I lost on the *Tehcir*—there it died. At least one was spared. Such are our sufferings (Collected by Sophia Dondolion-Goranitou, 20 May 1965, p. 328).

Charalambos Iliadis from Boğmalık recounts how his whole family escaped to the mountains when the first *Tehcir* struck nearby villages in 1916. He stated the draft-dodgers who had been slipping away into the hills, when the Armenian persecutions erupted, formed the guerrilla bands. Many families followed and those who were deported were driven through Niksar to Tokat and from there to Sivas, suffering from disease and hunger. Only half of them could return in 1918.

Charalambos Iliadis' story gives another perspective, as his family could reach Trabzon, then under Russian control and received clothes, food and work.

Nevertheless, when the Russians withdrew, in January 1918, they too left for Russia: "Most of us reached Novorossiysk by the end of that year. Early in 1919 two Greek

ships arrived...They asked: 'Where do you wish to go, Greece or Turkey? If you choose Turkey, we will even arm you.' We answered "Turkey," and were issued weapons." Yet when the ship reached Ünye harbor, Turkish officials did not allow them to disembark, claiming that they would cause unrest. The ship then went to Samsun, but Charalambos' father refused to leave and insisted to go back to Ünye. Their ship was a war ship and when they returned to Ünye, swinging the guns toward the town, the officials came back and let them ashore on the condition that they would remain quiet. Charalambos recalls that they bought more weapons in the market and gave an account of how their lives changed afterwards:

If you paid, you could find arms of every sort. We all went up to our villages. Few people were left there, as most had perished in the *Tehcir*. Barely a year passed before we were back in the mountains. In those years a person named Stylianos Kosmidis, known in Turkish as İstıl Ağa was already active. We also had Turkish friends and before the second *Tehcir* in 1921 they warned us that trouble was coming and that we should take precautions. Half the village again withdrew to the hills; those who remained were deported to the interior as far as Harput and Malatya. We stayed in the mountains until 1923. Our leader was Karapanagiot, with my father alongside him. We descended upon Turkish villages to seize food and many Turks quietly gave us provisions themselves. We had faithful Turkish friends who kept us informed of everything...

In the spring of 1923 news came that the Greeks should leave for Russia. The first group left in May 1923, with a Turkish motorboat. But trust was delicate issue, as there was the belief that they could be killed on the road. Apparently, the Turkish boatman left his child with the second group, as a pledge to guarantee that he would not harm them. With hardships on the sea, they finally reached Constanta, where the Greek consulate housed and fed them. Throwing their weapons into the sea off Constanța, they arrived at Piraeus. Charalambos Iliadis and his family left with the second party in the autumn of 1923, again in a Turkish *kaiki*, weapons in hand. They too landed in Constanța, met the Greek consul and surrendered their arms. Their group was sent by train to Thessaloniki. In 1924, about fifteen families settled in

Agia Kyriaki; others went to Nea Ünye in Kastoria and others to Neo Petritsi outside Serres. The first group who landed at Piraeus and were kept for a short time in the shanties of Neo Faliro and joined them in Agia Kyriaki. In Charalambos Iliadis' words, "Of all who were deported, the handful who survived reached Greece by various routes—some from Aleppo, others via a second passage through Samsun" (Collected by Eleni Gazi, 4 June 1966, pp. 333-337).

The testimony of Theofilos Papadopoulos from Derebaşı depicts the time of the crossing roads of the "*seferberlik* era" in 1916, where Ottoman authorities deported Greeks from their villages, while Muslims (they called them Laz Turks) of Eastern Black Sea towns migrated to the western coasts, fleeing from the Russians who captured Trabzon. Some of these migrants were settled in the village of Theofilos. On the other hand, Theofilos' family were deported, passing through Turkish and Circassian villages, finally to arrive in Yahyali, a Circassian village:

During the months we stayed in Yahyali—less than a year—my grandfather and I once went back to our village and entered our house. The Turkish householder was away; only his wife was there. My grandfather asked who now owned the house and she wanted to know who had been the former owner, for there were boundary disputes with the neighbours. My grandfather told the Turks: "The house in which you live was hospitable; whoever came found care. May it be the same for you now." Indeed, any of our people who passed were welcomed there. When they raised us for *Tehcir*—it must have been late April to late May, I recall people hoeing their fields—they took all the villages of Ünye together. First, they brought us to Ünye, then to Tokat, Amasya and Zile. People died on the road from hardship... I deserted at Zile. From our own household, which was numerous, only five returned to the village—about ten per cent from each home survived. My father escaped *Tehcir*; the Turks killed him shortly before we were taken, together with two or three youths from our village... The deportees remained away until the war ended; those who lived came back. We deserters returned earlier. By then the Laz Turks had returned back to their own homelands... The Circassian in Yahyali had kept two of our cows and our bedding; his name was Tsein Hodja, one of my father's customers. During the first guerrilla phase the Circassians had saved my father and helped him escape. Why they could not save him later I do not understand... Life in the village lasted a year or two. Then the guerrillas under Sarigiannis revived and a second *Tehcir* struck our area... We spent three years in the mountains, building huts and living there. Most, however, stayed in the village and were deported as far as Diyarbakır;

from there, I think, they returned to Trabzon and eventually reached Greece, but they never came back to the village.

Theofilos Papadopoulos's narrative follows that of Charalambos Iliadis, to take a motorboat owned by a Turk. His story included also leaving his child as a pledge. In his narrative Theofilos tells them about their journey in a more detailed way, as a heroic story of fear, courage and coincidences:

At midnight we sighted a ship's light and feared a Turkish vessel; those with weapons prepared to fight. We stood, hearts in our mouths, waiting. The light receded and courage returned; in twenty-four hours we were opposite the hills of Sevastopol. "Do not fear," the captain said, "we are within Russia's borders" ...but we refused even to hear of Russia, having learned how the first party lost their arms there. We raised our weapons and the Turkish owner, who had noticed nothing till then, was terrified. Soon the engine failed; a mechanic repaired it but warned it would run only three or four hours and so it did. Adrift with only sky above and sea below, we roasted under the sun. Toward evening a storm rose and pushed the boat. We feared we might be driven back to Turkey. The captain reassured us: "This wind will take us to Russia or Romania, not Turkey." We had a compass borrowed from a Greek in Ünye. The wind carried us to unknown waters. The captain sent two sailors ashore in a dinghy and they returned saying we were at Danube's shores.

With the help of some local Greeks, the group reached Constanța and after a ten-day-stay there, they took a train to Thessaloniki. "At the station we received a rousing welcome," Theofilos remembered, "there was not room to drop a pin." They finally chose to settle in Peponia (Collected by Sophia Dondolion-Goranitou, 27 December 1963, pp. 338-341).

Chrysoúla Pozidou from Kızılağaç were among those who could fled to the mountains in 1916, to later escape to Russia. Apparently, a few leaders contacted the Russians in Trabzon for help the Russian vessels reached the coast and lay between Ünye and Terme, below their village. Following the arranged plan, once they heard three flares fired, they descended from the mountains to the sea and boarded the ships at night:

The guerrillas took up positions here and there while we advanced...On reaching the shore the men waded into the water, lifted the women and children and set them in the boats; eight people drowned that night. It was autumn when we abandoned our hills for Russia. About a thousand of us had gathered, drawn from all the villages of Ünye.

Russians disembarked them in Trabzon, housing them for twelve days. Those who had money continued to Russia. The Revolution had already broken out and the Russians were evacuating Trabzon. Chrysoúla's family proceeded to Sukhumi, where they had relatives. After a year and a half in Russia, then returned to Turkey. Nevertheless, some Turks had settled in their village, cultivating their fields. Soon, they were deported once more, marching to Diyarbakır and Harput. Chrysoúla remembers how she survived:

On the road the convoy contained not only people from Ünye but from Samsun, Bafra, everywhere. People died—many were poisoned and perished. We kept knives to cut wild greens along the way. Between Sivas and Tokat we were given bread only once. I survived because I had a cart and oxen with me. When the Turks came to seize the animals I refused, saying they could kill me first. My husband was in the Ottoman army, so they let me keep them. With that cart I earned money—one person was ill and needed it, another had goods to load—and on those earnings my children and I lived.

Chrysoúla remembers being robbed by some bandits before they reached Harput. She also recalls how four or five mounted Americans and Englishmen rode up just outside of Harput and “scattered coins among the crowd as one scatter seed.” She was pregnant, with two small children, when they lodged them in Armenian villages. Most Armenians had been killed, but a few survived by converting. She remembers how the Americans brought wagonloads of firewood, food, canned provisions and even blankets. Nevertheless, she stated “We were like prisoners, housed in churches and large courtyards.” After staying in the village of *Soursouri* for nine months, they were taken back to Diyarbakır for *Tehcir*, crossing a mountain in winter wind and snow. From there they walked fifteen days to Aleppo:

We reached a river marking the frontier between Turkey and the French zone. Turkish gendarmes escorted us village to village, handing us over one to another, killing any who fell behind. At the river five or six people lagged—there were priests among them—and it was snowing. When this was heard, ten *Konyalides* returned, fetched them and ferried them across. We all crossed in boats; once over, we were free. They put us on a railway train and we marched no more. In Aleppo a committee found a large building for the orphans and housed women and men separately. For fifteen days they fed and clothed us. Then they transferred us to Beirut, a day's journey; I gave birth meanwhile and had an infant. Such crowds assembled in Beirut that loading the ship took two days, assisted by troops.

While the first generation of Greek survivors gave open narratives of the *Tehcir*, one of the main type of stories regarding the Armenian memory consisted of the “good neighborly relations” when the topic of *Tehcir* came out. Some of these memories started with an account of ‘harmonious co-habitation’. I listened one such narrative from Artin Nubar Gülezian who told me a story that he had heard from his family. In 1915, an Armenian woman, Ağavni,³⁷ who was living in Ünye at the time, was protected by her Muslim neighbors since she was too old and all alone. The neighbors did not let Ağavni, who was living alone, be deported. They hid her in a well in the garden of one of their houses for a month, they brought her food in secret. Ağavni, who was saved from death in this way, had lingering headaches that were never alleviated. After having lived with these headaches for quite a while, she finally passed away. Upon her death, some people wanted to bury her in accordance with Muslim traditions since there was not a priest in Ünye back then. However, the Armenians who came back from the *Tehcir* brought a priest from Samsun in haste and managed to bury her as a Christian.

Vahan Ahbap shared a similar story which happened probably in the early 1920s, including both “the good and the bad” from Turkish people:

Artin was a relative of Master Leon. There was also Şükrü Bey, from Trabzon. They used to work together as hazelnut merchants. But these Haji

³⁷ Ağavni means pigeon.

Seyits were envious of other merchants and so on. One day they went to the theater. They drank, they said ‘there is nothing more to see, let’s get up and go.’ Just as they were leaving, a woman appeared on the stage with the Turkish flag. “Wow *gavur*,” people shouted at him, ‘he didn’t adopt the Turkish flag, he got up and left.’ At that time, the court would be held immediately. Of course, Artin was surprised and frightened. There was a lawyer named Şahinbaş. “They will convict you, give me your case,” he said. He went to the court and said “If I see the Turkish flag in the hands of a whore on stage, I would leave that place immediately myself”. So, they acquitted him. But Artin then left first for Istanbul, then for Egypt, where he worked as a broadcloth merchant. From there, he went to America and died there (Vahan Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

The contemporary stories of the *Tehcir* have a discourse of their own. As narratives told a century later, they focused more on the afterlife of the *Tehcir*, telling us events that alienated the surviving Armenian population to leave Ünye behind. Like Artin, what happened to Mardiros is a case in point. Mardiros was a very intelligent young man, who graduated from METU in Ankara and chose to come back to Ünye, to be useful in his hometown. Vahan Ahbap tells his story as follows:

He first built a house for his mother, next to Aunt Adrine’s house, opposite that middle school. He drew a very nice plan in the garden and constructed it. He also worked on his own. Then he opened his own office. This kid was going to work as an architect and an engineer. He had already constructed a lot of buildings in Fatsa. He had built a factory and so on. When he opened his office, people saw a framed picture of Atatürk on a desk and confronted him ‘Wow, why didn’t he hang his picture on the wall?’ the framed picture was indeed belonging to the former owners, the Ürerler family, who had emptied the office and left Atatürk’s picture behind. Wow they complained. Then Mardiros did not stay in Ünye, because of this. Later, he went to America, he took his family as well; he said you should come here, and Mari went and Gazar went and they took their mother with them. Their mother lived for a long time and of course Aunt Paylin died later.

There are also stories of why and how some Armenians have survived the *Tehcir* in Ünye. Vahan Ahbap’s own father Maksud Usta was an authoritarian and disciplined man. He survived the *Tehcir*, because he had opened a well-working tailor shop in Batumi when the *Tehcir* happened. He used to sleep in the shop and recalled Russian customers as very nice people, who tipped him well. Finally, one

day, someone said, “I saw Vahan, your brother, he is alive.” So, he came to Ünye, but found out that they killed his brother in prison. Nevertheless, he settled back here, marrying Vahan’s mother. Another story is shared by Margaret Ahbap, the wife of Vahan Ahbap, who was originally from Sivas but lived in Ünye as a young bride:

Zehra’s mother was Armenian. Her father was a jeweler and the family was emigrating. A man who was a goldsmith, a jeweler, one of the richest people in Ünye said, ‘Give me your daughter and I will bring her you back.’ They gave the girl to this man. He was going to take her as a bride for his son, but later he kept her for himself. He was a relative of Grandma Ağavni. Grandma Ağavni was a very old woman who lived alone. She too wanted her family’s land. The vineyard, the garden, the field. She took it to court. For years, the court continued, she tried to convince them saying “my father died, he was buried in a mosque, his grave was there, so I am a Muslim too”. They didn’t give anything. She died in a very troubled state and her neighbors took her gold and so on (Margaret Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

Artin Nubar Gülezian, born in 1928 narrated an appalling story of survival, hiding in a well, to escape from the authorities during the *Tehcir*. The story is about an Armenian woman by the name of Ağavni lived alone. She was known in Ünye by her headache, probably migraine crises, which made her moan. But during the war years, she suffered a lot and even lived in a well for a month:

They used to throw bread to her and she would eat it there. She was a woman on her own and used to make *peştemals* in Ünye. On Wednesdays, she used to go to Ünye and sell them at the Ünye market. But she was a smart woman, a struggling woman and had a beautiful house. She would say, “*Ben mezara, evim mezata*” (I go to the grave, then my house to the auction). She was also my mother’s best friend.

The narratives on the afterlife of *Tehcir* are also full of stories of losing family members, remarriages, or adopting children. Nubar himself is the child of a second marriage. Apparently, his mother Surpie was once married to Agop and had a son Melidos. His father had a former wife who fell ill and died during the war years. They had four children. The eldest is Hasib, the second is Merses, the third is

Selekere and the fourth is Varsuhi. I know their graves in our graveyard. Only one survived (Artin Nubar Gülezryan, 27 May 2008, Istanbul).

5.1.2 Converting to Islam as a means of survival

My oral history research also revealed several narratives about conversion during or after the *Tehcir*. Unfortunately, we do not know very much in detail about the nature of such conversions unless families reveal their secrets. Here one should mention the books of Fethiye Çetin about diverse conversion stories from around Anatolia. Some stories have also been published on Black Sea survivals through conversion. In that regard, the interviews that I have collected focus directly on Ünye and its surroundings. One such story came from my own family, regarding the story of my great grandmother Mari. To be able to stay in Ünye, Mari married my maternal great grandfather Ali Küçükoglu and become a Muslim. However, she was an exception in that she could keep up her belief, as her husband never pressured her to practice Islamic rules. I hope women like my grandmother could and did practice their pre-conversion faith.

Today, one of the Ünye's local assets is 'Ünye's bun' (*Ünye çöreği/lokumu*), a kind of cookie prepared with sugar, egg, oil and yoghurt. However, very few people would know that it is related to converted Armenian women. In fact, Armenians living in Ünye used to bake this cookie for Easter. It is also called '*bayram lokumu*' since it is served to people especially during Ramadan and Sacrifice feasts. This pie (bun) was able to survive till today thanks to the Armenian women who became Muslims to save their lives and stay in their homelands. In this context, one can refer also to the bun that Fethiye Çetin mentions in her biographical study *My Grandmother: An Armenian-Turkish Memoir*. During a conversation with a

friend, Çetin points out to the ritualistic similarities between the bun and Ünye's

'*bayram lokumu*' as a 'kinship' between those two pastries:

Do you know, when I was little, I came with my grandmother to your house. Your grandmother had made a '*çörek*'. We stayed for a while and after we'd eaten the '*çörek*', went to visit Auntie Seher, Şašo İbrahim's wife and Auntie Tadımlı. I noticed that in every house we visited that day, we were offered the same '*çörek*'. And the '*çöreks*' in the other houses were sweet braided breads, just like yours and decorated with eggs and dried cherry powder and fennel seeds, just like yours. Of course, I wanted each treat to be different, so I was disappointed when we kept getting offered the same '*çörek*', but my grandmother ate a slice of '*çörek*' at each house we visited and drank a glass of tea. It was only years later that I realised what all these houses we visited had in common. Auntie Seher, Şašo İbrahim's wife, was Armenian: Auntie Tadımlı was a Muslim convert, like your grandmother (Çetin, 2012, pp. 101-102).

Today the presence of Armenians and Greeks in Ünye consists of a few houses and churches. After the population exchange, the Greek population of Ünye was reduced to zero. Following the *Tehcir*, three Armenian families came to the city, but they also left Ünye in time. It is important that the buns that were baked by Armenians of Ünye for Easter still lives as part of Ünye's cuisine and culture. As articulated by Fethiye Çetin, women who became or made to become Muslims, even though they keep it as a secret from their children and grandchildren, used to enliven a tradition among themselves and did not forget the holy days (Çetin, 2012, p. 102). These buns were only prepared for bairams in houses and then baked in the ovens of the neighborhood. At present, it is a touristically and commercially important piece of pastry that is sold in bakeries and confectioners and enjoyed by visitors of Ünye (Sarıkaya, 2015).

Margaret Ahbap and Vahan Ahbap shared several stories regarding the conversion. In one case, Minas's son Maksud married a Muslim physician girl, they had met in medical school. The family worked hard to separate them. But they could not prevent him to marry yet another Muslim woman:

Maksud is a little light; he must have promised that it would be okay. But the woman would always put the Qur'an under his head. To become a Muslim. This did not happen; it just did not happen. That is why they got divorced. Then she married a Muslim again. He has a daughter. She has a daughter, but her mother did not let her see her grandfather, mother or grandmother. So that Armenianness cannot be instilled. Maksud is also a bit passive (Vahan-Margaret Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

Failed love marriage story is indeed an important sub-genre in Ünye's collective memory. Artin Nubar Gülezian, recalls one such story of intermarriage. His friend Vahan's daughter married a Muslim. She married once, then broke up and never married again with someone else. "They were hard-working people", he said, "They would pass by our house and I would look at them, I was small. At noon, they would take turns taking food every day with a campaign bowl, a basket and they would work until 10-11 o'clock at night. They were four siblings. When they started getting married, they began to fall apart. The outsiders entered and they began to disperse" (Artin Nubar Gülezian, 27 May 2008, Istanbul).

Margaret Ahbap remembers how Armenian families were taking precautions for their girls not to be brides to Muslim household. "We used to go to Ünye, Samsun, Ordu. but we didn't go to Sivas," she stated. "We grew up mostly closed. My father was afraid that someone from the Turks would ask our hand or something... Ünye was freer" (Margaret Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

Margaret also detailed a bitter story of an intermarriage, a story of discriminating the convert. She recalled an old woman from the Köklük village who used to come to visit them in Ünye. Her parents were Armenian, but she had become a Muslim after her marriage. Her husband was dead. Margaret remembered how her daughter-in-law used to treat her very badly and her son even beating his own mother. Once, he had choked her and she ran to us and cried. Apparently, he was harassing her for not practicing Muslim duties:

He is doing evil to the woman by saying that you do not pray and perform ablution. He would come and cry to me, he would come every Wednesday, it was Sunday. I would give her milk, I would give her yogurt, I would give her rice if she needed and she would take it. She would be delighted. She was a poor woman. Her son did not take care of her. After that, she died. I mean, I have witnessed all of this. Just because she was an Armenian girl, her own children were doing evil (Margaret Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

She also remembered another evil story from Sivas, her homeland, where a woman who was married to a Turk received regularly some money coming from America. These were her uncle's children who would help this old woman. Margaret remembers:

My grandfather used to write letters in Armenian and asked money when this woman needed. They would take the money from the woman, their brides would eat it and they would call the woman *gavur*. She would say, "Excuse me, I tied a dog to one side, a dog tied to the other side; I go there, one bites, I go here, this one bites," she would say. She would cry and share her burdens with my mother. She would bring money from America and feed them. She had become a Muslim, gave birth to many children. If you saw her as a *gavur*, why did you take her in the first place? Why do you torture the woman? She used to come and cry to my mother (Margaret Ahbap, 10 May 2008, Istanbul).

In an early interview she gave to Aynur Tan, Margaret Ahbap shared a more positive intermarriage story. She mentions the sister of an Armenian pharmacist in Fatsa by the name of Aznif. Aznif had become a Muslim, praying and performing ablution. Her neighbors loved her very much; she was a good woman. Their sons lived in America. One of them turned out to be an architect engineer and the other was a tailor (Margaret Ahbap, April 2004, Istanbul). These narratives detail the aftermath of the *Tehcir* and the emotional hardships of the survivors.

5.1.3 Stories related to orphans

The issue of conversion is also revealed in the stories of adopted orphans during the *Tehcir*, a matter which might have been silenced for generations. In the last decades

several studies were published on the experience of women and children during the *Tehcir* in 1915 from different angles (Ritter and Sivaslian, 2012; Marchand and Perrier, 2013; Sarafian, 2001; Rowe, 2011; Watenpaugh, 2010, 2013; Ekmekçioğlu, 2013, 2014; Maksudyan, 2014, 2019). In the case of Ünye, the narratives pointed out to a variety of situations that were experienced. Some Armenian women and children who were left behind or trusted to Muslim families in 1915 were later found by their spouses or families, who wanted to take them to their new places where they settled. Nevertheless, in certain situations, Armenian women who remarried with Muslim men refused to go back to their former husbands, even though their husbands accepted them. For those who lost the trace of their former family members, the hope to locate them continued for long years. It is still possible to see the announcements of people looking for their families and relatives in the weekly-published Armenian newspaper *Agos* printed in Istanbul. Several Armenian children were also left behind during this era. It is a known fact that most of the Armenian families who wanted to protect their children from an unknown, long and challenging journey, clandestinely trusted their small children to certain Muslim families or neighbors with the intention of coming and taking them back at one point. However, the families of these children never managed to come and take their children back. These children were raised as Muslims in the Turkish cultural environment (Karaduman, 2010, pp. 58-59). During my oral history research in Ünye, I was also able to collect some other stories regarding the Armenian orphans. Apparently, there were many such children who were raised in this way, including cases in my own extended family and in some of the families that I know.

According to a local myth, an Armenian woman comes to Ünye many years after the *Tehcir*. She finds her daughter Arpi, whom she left when she was 5 years

old, talks to her in Armenian and wants to take her to France. However, the girl called Arpi was married off to a Muslim man and had children. She refuses to go to France with her mother. The mother in tears kisses her daughter and grandchildren and bids farewell to old neighbors and Ünye, then leaves on a vessel waiting in the harbor. After three months, a letter comes from Paris. It says that the old woman passed away incessantly repeating the name of her daughter (Karaduman, 2010, pp. 88-89).

Other similar stories are also told among the people of Ünye. Some of these are published in local magazines. There is however a general silence regarding the children and grandchildren of Armenians who were left in the town during the *Tehcir*. Many such survivors refuse to talk about their mothers or grandmothers, but a few narratives published about them give us an idea of their experience. Two such narratives were published in the local magazine *Canik: Yöre ve Kent Kültürü Dergisi*. The first one belongs to a grandchild of an Armenian who was adopted by a Muslim family in Ünye:

When she was alone, my grandmother used to forget herself sometimes and mused by murmuring Armenian songs. When I asked her ‘What are you singing, granny?’ she said ‘when I was a little kid, my mother taught me this song. We used to have a two-story house within a garden. My mother and father left with my two brothers. They told me to wait. They were supposed to come back and take me with them, but they never did. This song is my mother’s. I sing this song when I miss them a lot. She was explaining this in tears (Karaduman, 2010, pp. 88-89).

The second narrative published in *Canik: Yöre ve Kent Kültürü Dergisi* tells about the tragic story of two twin sisters, namely Magdalena and Angelena:

Bedros the tailor and his family were also among the people to be deported from Ünye during the deportation of Armenians. They were notified to depart on the ferry the next day. Their twin daughters, Magdalena and Angelena, were sick and running a fever. It was a cold winter day. The following day, Angelena was even worse. They left her to their Turkish neighbors with the intention of coming back and taking her with them. For many years, no one came. After eighty years, a very old woman knocked on a door in

Yalıkahvesi. The woman who knocked on the door asked to the woman who opened the door in Armenian: ‘Are you Angelena?’ The woman opening the door faltered and held on to the door so as not to fall. When she recovered herself, she let the old woman in and closed the door. The old woman was Magdalena, one of the twins who left the city eighty years ago. Angelena was left in Ünye, since her health rendered her unfit for the journey. Over the years no one came to take her back. So, she was raised by a Turkish family, became a Muslim, married off, had children and grandchildren and erased the past from her memory (Karaduman, 2010, p. 19).

In his interview with Aynur Tan in 2004 Vahan Ahbap reminds how Turkish and Georgian families took Armenian children and raised them with in their own families. In fact, his father was once informed that a child from Tekkiraz village had come to work in a restaurant. He said that he was the son of Sarkis, the cook. Vahan’s father knew that he had a sister in France. He placed the boy to work in the bakery in Ünye: “He worked in Ünye and we used to call him brother. After that, my father sent him to Istanbul, at his own expense. He stayed in Istanbul for years and could not come back again (Vahan Ahbap, April 2004, Istanbul). During their conversation, Aynur Tan also stated that Armenian families left some of their kids behind, if they have 4-5 children. In some cases, a single child could be left, so that they do not perish on the road. Aynur Tan stated: “I also know that my grandmothers had a girl and a son, they told their neighbors to leave them, raised them, married them and then they married them.” Vahan Ahbap’s response is meaningful: “But most of them have also changed their names. The names of the ones in Fatsa are different, the ones in Ünye are different. That’s what it says on the population papers” (Vahan Ahbap, April 2004, Istanbul).

5.1.4 Narratives of bullying

Historical researchers from Ünye express in various web sites and some publications that the three Armenian families who lived in Ünye during the Republican period

were usually in good terms with the Turkish people. However, the interviews that I have conducted with Armenians from Ünye have revealed that this was not always the case. For the surviving Armenians of Ünye, the issue of education was often related to a memory of bullying and discrimination. I had the opportunity to hear a school narrative during my interview with Artin Nubar Gülezryan, a member of the three Armenian families who lived in Ünye during the Republican period (Artin Nubar Gülezryan, 27 May 2008, Istanbul).³⁸ In the interview, Gülezryan told me that he attended Ünye Anafarta Primary School and he was a very successful student. However, since he was an Armenian, he was ostracized by his peers. He could no longer put up with his friends' throwing stones at him and cursing behind his back. His parents decided to send him to Istanbul to complete his education and he never returned to Ünye again. Naively, I told him that I attended the same primary school and children were always looking for reasons to make fun of their friends. I myself was made fun of because I stuttered. He had a bitter response, commenting "Being a stutterer is not as bad as being an Armenian in Turkey".

Similarly, Bercuhi Temir, with whom I had an interview in Istanbul, is originally from Sivas and settled in Ünye after her sister Margaret married Vahan Ahbap. Bercuhi completed her high school education there. In the Republican period, Armenians who lived in Anatolia were often informed about each other. Kinship relations were built among Armenians from different regions through marriage. Also, Armenian children were often sent to bigger cities to live with their relatives for educational purposes. Berhuci Temir told me that she was forced to go to Ünye for education and went through very difficult times there. She also mentioned that she

³⁸ The interview took place before his death on the 10th of January in 2010 at the age of 82.

was distressed and unhappy for being frequently called an ‘gavur’ meaning ‘infidel’.

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Other narratives detail different experiences on the discrimination issue. One belongs to Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan who was born in Ünye in 1942 and lived there until she was twenty years old. She completed her primary and secondary education there. When I asked her whether she experienced any kind of bullying among friends, she told me that her friends treated her well. Her problem was more related to her teachers’ behavior; she stated: “My friends were nice to me, but every time a new teacher came to school, s/he would look up to see who Anayit Gülezryan was” (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver). Another story appeared in an interview in *Kaypakkaya Partizan*, an internet news site on 28 October 2016. In this interview, Garbis Altınoğlu, an Armenian from Amasya made the following statement regarding this situation:

An Armenian individual, especially in Anatolia, is subjected to an education process at an early age in which they learn from their Muslim neighbors that they are the ‘other’ or they are ‘different’ than them. This exclusion mechanism has somehow directed the Armenian youth and intellectuals to feel closer to the leftist movement.⁴⁰

When I talked to my uncle Abdullah Sarıkaya, he gave another detail regarding this issue. He said that the Armenian kids in Ünye would directly go to their homes after school and did not play on the street (Unrecorded conversation in Istanbul, 18 July 2009).

Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan recalls memories of good neighborly relations along with many swears they did not deserve: “Auntie Emine would ask about our

³⁹ Beruhi Temir, unrecorded conversations in Istanbul. I met Beruhi Temir through a bookseller I knew in Beyoğlu. Soon after I found out that she was “the most beautiful girl of the Ünye High School” that my uncle told me many years ago.

⁴⁰ See www.kaypakkayahaber.com/kose-yazisi/garbis-agparik-ile-reportaj The site is unfortunately inaccessible from Turkey.

red egg holiday (Easter). They didn't show any negative reactions. There was no church anyway, so we were by ourselves during the holidays. Those who knew accepted us" (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver). She also recalls those who "did not know them":

'*Gavur*', 'Daughter of an Armenian' were labels that were used in a way similar to a slur. People got used to using them, maybe they didn't want to be bad or disrespectful. Oksan's great grandmother was a very good friend of our family but the words "*gavur*" and "Armenian" were always on her lips. We were a minority, so we had to take it in stride (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver).

Hosepyan also remembers how Elmas, the late wife of her brother Gayzak, got very angry to be called a '*gavur*'. Whenever she used to hear that term, she took refuge in their citizenship right and reacted by saying: "Gayzak did his military service! You cannot say I am a *gavur*!" She also added "But these were exceptions. When we grew up in Ünye, we were measured and careful" (Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan, 1 September 2024, Vancouver).

In his interview on 27 May 2008, in Istanbul, Artin Nubar Gülezryan shared a similar bitter memory. Although he was top of his class, he could not escape bullying:

You know, the reason I came here is because I was valedictorian in fifth grade, but kids my age would run after me on the street shouting "*gavur, gavur*". If I chase and beat them, they will go to their father and complain. And that's why I ran away (Artin Nubar Gülezryan, 27 May 2008, Istanbul).

Nevertheless, Artin also states that he never heard of the term "minority" in Ünye, but only when he came to Istanbul:

I heard the word minority here and whoever calls me a minority, I will tear off their feet like this. Why should I be a minority? My grandfather has been here, way before. Why should I be a minority? No, why should I? I employ people and pay taxes. What do you want from me? (Artin Nubar Gülezryan, 27 May 2008, Istanbul).

Artin Nubar Gülezyan also complained about the fact that their names are perceived as the “others”. “I called an insurance agent two years ago,” he stated. “She asks me ‘who’s calling,’ on the phone, I say Artin. ‘What?’, I say ‘Artin again’. Which one will you deal with?”

5.2 Narratives of more history: Remembering the diversity of communities in Ünye

Since the 1980s, the communal diversity in Ottoman society has been an important research area of the Ottoman Studies. Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis’s early work *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire* was published in 1982. Michael Herzfeld’s *Ours Once More: Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* and Richard G. Hovannisian’s *The Republic of Armenia: From Versailles to London* were published the same year. Many others followed by the 1990s, including the works of Taner Akçam, Rıfat Bali and Vangelis Kechriotis among many others. This literature covered mostly the general framework of the non-Muslim ethnic communities at the eve of or during the nationalist movements. As for the Muslim communities who were displaced of their homelands and settled to the Ottoman Empire, their history has been approached as a “migration” history. Given this framework, Ünye has been a hub of all this diversity, where Turks, Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Circassians and Georgians were placed and displaced at the turn of the 20th century. Published, archived and collected oral testimonies about this memory, give us a detailed review of this period, offering what Micheal Frisch called “more history.” In their work on the dynamics between oral history and oral sources, Marta Kurkowska-Budzan and Marcin Stasiak approach the concept of “*more history*”, not only as a means to reach “unwritten” or “undocumented” data, but also as a means to measure the value of oral information in its contribution to the

development of our knowledge about the past (Kurkowska-Budzan and Stasiak, 2020, p. 168). The traffic of communal relations during the late 19th and early 20th century in Ünye illustrates the need to detail the so-far written historiography of the town with a “more history” approach.

5.2.1 Past and present narratives from surviving Greeks of Ünye

The archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies offers us a series of narratives which focuses on the Greek population of the town and also gives a through description of Ünye’s location as a natural harbor. Ünye used to be a sub-district (*kaymakamlık*), which initially belonged to Trabzon and later to Ordu. Ecclesiastically, it belonged to the Metropolis of Niksar in Tokat to be later transferred to Ordu in 1911. The archives state that the Greek population consisted of 4,000 people who were mostly natives, but also including migrants from Gümüşhane. The town possessed two large churches and two schools for boys and girls besides them. The town became a major port that eased commercial links with inner lands. While many local Greeks worked in trade, shipping, shipbuilding and fishing, others pursued agriculture of hemp and hazelnuts. The archive notes state that Greek craftsmen included potters, bakers and the like often migrated for work to nearby cities, chiefly Ordu, Samsun or even to Russia. After the Greco-Turkish Population Exchange (1923), the inhabitants of Ünye resettled mainly in Athens, Thessaloniki, Katerini and Kavala.

The archives contain several narratives from Ünye migrants to modern Greece, where each life-story gives us an understanding of different experiences. In their narratives, Smaragdi Tsivelekidou, Father Ilias Eleftheriadis, Georgios Charalampidis, Giannis Soumelidis and Charalambos Alexiadis detailed their

departure from Ünye in different ways. The interviews were collected by Christos Samouilidis in 1956, Alexis Ioakeimidis in 1957, Sophia Dondolinou-Goraniti, in 1963 and 1964 and Eleni Gazi, in 1966.

Smaragdi Tsivelekidou, born in Ünye in 1873 reports the hardships she lived after her father died. She never went to school and worked at the loom with her mother. Married at the age of 14 to a mason, she had eleven children. Smaragdi remembers how they moved to Samsun, experienced *seferberlik* ⁴¹ and survived the years of the Independence War. Apparently, her eldest son who was once in the Ottoman army, joined the Pontic guerrilla activities, transferring arms from Russia. The rest of family could hide in Samsun because they were not much known by the local people. She reports that the Ottoman officials seized and prisoned her younger son. Smaragdi could save her son thanks to the help of a Turkish woman, Kadriye Hanım, who empathized with her pain. They finally moved to Greece, first at Nafplion, later to Athens in 1924. She recalls her displacement as “No one cared for us”. Their new neighborhood was all fields, where they had to start a new life by building a shack for themselves.

Father Ilias Eleftheriadis recalls leaving Ünye for Greece in April 1923 with a Russian ship that had fled from the Bolshevik Revolution and bought by a Turkish businessman, Kadir Bey. The boat carried a French flag; it was coming from Trabzon to Samsun. Apparently, there was a plot to rob the Greek passengers at the Gerze strait. The boat had three Russian and a Turkish captain and Russian boatswains. Nevertheless, the plot got exposed in Samsun port. Ilias Eleftheriadis gives an amazing story how things evolved afterwards, with the help of an American manager of a tobacco factory in Samsun, the Russian captain and some assertive passengers.

⁴¹ The temporary migration of mainly Muslim communities from eastern Black Sea to the western towns, escaping Russian occupation of Trabzon in 1916.

Finally, as a group, they took over the Turkish owner and captain and reached the Istanbul port. There they had to wait for fifty-four days on the ship, surviving with the help of the Patriarchate and shopping with baskets from caiques which came alongside the ship. He remembers their departure from Ottoman seashores with an image of the turning all red:

Then we boarded a ship called *Okeanos of Andros*. We reached Karaburnu on 16 August 1923. When we reached Çanakkale, the sea turned red from the fezzes. All the men threw their fezzes into the sea. The English who saw it laughed...

The narrative of Panagiotis Lambridis and Miltiadis Spyridis gives a portrayal of the chaotic times of the post-WWI period. They recall the local terror of Turkish militia during 1916 and the hardship of the Ottoman labour battalions (*Amele Taburları*). The term was associated with the disarmament Ottoman Greek and Armenian soldiers during World War I and of Ottoman Greeks before and during the Turkish War of Independence. They stated:

In 1916 executions took place in Ünye. It was the time when the *amele taburu* Ottoman labour battalions were formed and our soldiers escaped. Of our people they hanged three. The fugitives were Yarenis Nikolaos, Kaparozis Georgios and a Gavriil, the one we called Mastrolazaros. His nickname was Patakos. This Gavriil was a brave lad. He had also come to Greece and fought in the Balkan Wars. They hanged no others of our people. In those years they hanged Turkish and Armenian deserters as well. They set their heads on poles and carried them around the town. [...] Only once did they carry out an exile from Ünye, in 1921. They gathered only the men; from the women they took three or four. They took my own mother, because they were searching for us who were hiding. They asked my mother where her children were and she said, "I don't know." Because she would not betray, they took her into exile. Thus, they took the other women too. My mother went as far as Malatya, Diyarbakır, down south. There American relief helped her return to Samsun. My brother went to Samsun and brought her back to Ünye (pp. 308-309).

Panagiotis Lambridis and Miltiadis Spyridis also stated that most Greeks left Ünye first in 1923, "voluntarily". Apparently, many left before the Lausanne Treaty of Exchange of Population, signing a declaration that they would have no claim to

the property they left. In fact, they also traveled to Greece at their own expense.

Some ill and elderly stayed. This was the beginning of a new era, as Muslim refugees began to come and settle in Ünye. The archived narrative of Panagiotis Lambridis detailed the process as follows:

I was in the mountains sick and could not depart. Meanwhile the *muhacir* Turks from Greece had arrived. These refugees came from Kailaria in Kozani and from the villages of Xanthi. We suffered greatly at first with them. Wherever they found us, they threw stones to kill us. Later they became friends with us. Most of our houses were empty and they went in and stayed. When the Turkish refugees arrived and we began to suffer, we sent word to Samsun that we wished to leave. In Samsun there was the Exchange Commission... they notified us to create an Auxiliary Exchange Committee. A three-member committee was then formed, of Ioannis Samourkasis, Tselepoglou Nikolaos and me. I became the secretary and wrote the compensation declarations. My recognition as secretary of the Auxiliary Committee had come from Ordu, from the Turkish authorities and so no one harmed me. The Exchange Commission of Samsun notified Greece and a Greek ship arrived. It was called "*Euxeinos, Piraeus*." We left Ünye on 6 August 1924. The Turks who knew us were saddened. We left Ünye on Wednesday and on Thursday we reached Samsun. In Samsun the remaining Greeks boarded, who were mostly guerrillas of that district. We left Samsun on Thursday and on Monday we were at Agios Georgios quarantine. We stayed in quarantine fifteen days. Many fell ill and died. They were about to bury one man alive so that he would not bring cholera to the others. [...] From Agios Georgios they put us on another ship called "*Anjuoleta*." 2400 people boarded it. With that ship we sailed round the Peloponnese because it could not pass the Isthmus. We entered the strait of Lefkada and reached Igoumenitsa. There they placed us in the olive groves to sit. Floods came. We suffered greatly. We decided to leave and come to Piraeus. We from Ünye were urban people and could not live in the villages. It was the month of September when we paid the fares and came to Piraeus. What we paid to come from Ünye to Piraeus we paid again to go from Igoumenitsa to Piraeus. [...]

The narratives preserved at the Center for Asia Minor Studies belonged to the first generation of Greek migrants from the Ottoman lands. They were interviews collected by Greek interviewers; therefore, censorship was not necessary. During my research, I was also able to conduct interviews with some Greeks of Black Sea origin in Greece and the United States, including Theodosios Kyriakidis (from Ünye, now living in Thessaloniki), Thomas Alexiadis (from Samsun, now living in a Greek

village), Paris Papageorgiou (from Fatsa, now living in Katerini) and Magdaline Kouthouridou-Mikeli (from Fatsa, now living in Boston). They were done with the second or third generation of Greeks from Ünye, here or abroad. In that regard, one can assume that they were given in a more contained environment.

The interviews conducted with members of the Ünye's Greek community were not recorded at the request of the interviewees. Among others, Charalampos Gappas from Thessaloniki and Dora Ioannidou from Athens provided photographic documentation. Among my interviewees, Paris Papageorgiou was the most fluent in Turkish. Papageorgiou's parents were members of a Protestant family in Fatsa and were among those who departed from the region as part of the population exchange. Despite the claim that the exchange included solely the Orthodox Greeks and excluded the Protestant communities, evidence suggests that the Protestants, who felt unsafe, also left their homelands alongside the Orthodox, also departed from the Black Sea region during the exchange. Papageorgiou's family was also among them. Although they had previously led a comfortable life in Fatsa as Protestants, they migrated to Katerini in Greece and continued to work as bakers, a profession inherited from their ancestors. Paris Papageorgiou attributes his proficiency in Turkish to the influence of his grandmother, who exposed him to the language from an early age. Apparently, Paris had developed a keen interest in his family's history since his childhood. Upon leaving school, he would often visit the bakery to spend time with his grandmother and inquire about the Turkish equivalents of words he was curious about and then would take notes in his notebook. He explained that his desire to learn and speak Turkish remained a lifelong pursuit.

5.2.2 On the Jewish population of Ünye

While the Jewish population was not as substantial as that of the Armenians and Greeks, there was also Jewish communities in the Central Black Sea region. The scholarship regarding the Jewish communities in the Black Sea usually focus on the Krymchaks as an ethnic and religious group (Arbel and Magal, 1992; Banek, 2014; Çavuş; 2019). There was also a small Jewish community who were engaged in commercial activities in Ünye and left their name to the marketplace, which is currently known as ‘Yahudi Düzlüğü’ (literally *Jewish Plain*). As part of this thesis, I was able to conduct only one in-depth interview with Kaan Bük Baruh, a young member of a Jewish family with ancestral roots in Fatsa. As the only oral source I could find, the interview was very valuable as it was the only data I could reach about the Jewish presence in the region. In that regard, this interview can be categorized as a valuable “more history” data, but also need to be carefully analyzed on the basis of its reliability and validity. In his seminal article “What Makes Oral History Different”, Alessandro Portelli argued that oral history has a different credibility with no adherence to fact but departure from it. In other words, there are no “false” oral sources, as “wrong” statements can still be psychologically “true” (Portelli, 1991). Faulty memory exists for written documents as well, as most of them are written later than the event. Even if it is one single interview, “memory is not a passive depository of facts but an active process of creation meanings (Portelli, 1991). Based on three sets of oral history interviews with one single person, Alice M. Hoffman examined the reliability and validity of oral history interviews. The interviews suggested that the memories had high reliability but perhaps less validity (Hoffman, 1996; Lummis, 1998).

Although his family was originally from Fatsa, Kaan Bük Baruh was indeed born in 2002 in the Konak district of Izmir. He had spent his childhood with his maternal relatives in a happy and genuine family environment. He stated that his family was strongly attached to their cultural heritage, which he was exposed to from an early age. Apparently, the family had to adopt different surnames to sustain their settlement in Turkey:

My parents are from the village of Göller, formerly known as Mağdala. It was a part of Fatsa district then, but it is now a part of Çatalpınar district of Ordu. All the elders of the village say that their ancestry is from Thessaloniki. In the maternal lineage, it is important to enter into matrimony with someone from Mağdala. All marriages took place in Mağdala. My father's family has been a resident of in Izmir for approximately 70 years. My grandfather migrated from Feodosia, Crimea to Caucasus in the 18th century and subsequently he was relocated to Hopa from Batumi in the 1920s. He then went to Izmir from Hopa in 1946. Pursuant to the Turkification policies, my grandparents, who migrated as five families, adopted the surname Kutucu, which means 'sacred' in Karaite. Following the implementation of property taxation, the family once again assumed their surname in Crimea, Baruh, which was the Hebrew equivalent of 'sacred'. My paternal grandmother is the daughter of a Sephardic family who migrated to Istanbul during the 1930s from Albania (Avlona). The surnames of the aforementioned individuals were Attias and Kohen (Kaan Bük Baruh, 19 September 2023, İzmir).

The family of Kaan Bük Baruh's mother initially settled in Ünye and subsequently relocated to Fatsa and Mağdala. A review of the records of the Thessaloniki Jewish Community reveals that his mother's ancestors were among those exiled for their affiliation with the Sabbatean movement.

They were among the Sabbatean families who were exiled to the Central Black Sea region from Thessaloniki. It has been suggested that my mother's ancestry was in Taragona, Spain and they subsequently migrated to Thessaloniki. I know that when they migrated to the region, there were only residents in Saca Gavur Village (currently Sayaca) in the Çatalpınar region, with the other settlement belonging to my ancestors (Kaan Bük Baruh, 19 September 2023, İzmir).

Kaan Bük Baruh, who said that he lived only in the village of Mağdala in Fatsa, spent certain periods of his childhood there. It seems that like many other non-Muslims he too remembers how their own community was “alienated”:

We always had relatives in the houses and villages in which we lived. The presence of kinship ties made the social relations very sincere. Despite their aloofness towards the surrounding villages, they were very sincere amongst themselves. Particularly in Fatsa, they established their own settlements on specific streets. On the entire Fatsa Rıza Dizdaroğlu street, people from Mağdala lived. A village community has existed for approximately four centuries in a state of relative isolation from external influences. The majority of my mother’s family has converted to Islam over the past three to four generations. Therefore, although there were special days brought by Islam in my family, the traditions of the Jewish faith, such as circumcision, Saturday candle lighting, the requirement that the person to be married must be from Mağdala, the practice of cutting the collar of the clothes after a deceased person, abstaining from visiting graves on Saturday and eating animals that were bloodless and purified from blood, were observed in the home and in the village. The village in which I lived was always perceived differently by the inhabitants of Fatsa. Those who held negative sentiments towards our community in Fatsa would tease us by telling this story: “Someone from Göllerli and a snake was thrown into a well together. The snake then said, There is someone from Göllerli here. Get me out” (Kaan Bük Baruh, 19 September 2023, İzmir).

Kaan Bük Baruh’s account also provides insights about two different ethnic groups. He particularly points out to Alevi and Georgian communities who lived – almost in isolation– next to their village:

The Alevi Kızılbaş settlement of Akkaya village and its castle were located above our village. Even though Akkaya people didn’t get along well with their Sunni neighbors, they maintained cordial relations with our families. There was minimal contact between the Georgian and Turkish populations in the villages; however, there were instances of interaction in Fatsa. As a result of the negative effects of modern technology and the insufficient educational opportunities for young people in the village, it can be stated that the younger generations possess limited knowledge about Alevis and Georgians. While our ancestors were more sociable with external groups, they demonstrated less social interaction within their own communities. Those who revert to Judaism are not regarded favourably, especially after the establishment of the Republic. In general, children from families who had converted to Judaism had difficulties in having good relationships with their peers from other families. Such issues led these people to emigrate. The Oseos in Istanbul are one of these families. People of Mağdala are very good at trade. Göller may be the wealthiest village in Fatsa. In the construction and industrial sectors,

they pay attention to work with Georgian partners, but of course they prioritize their own villagers (Kaan Bük Baruh, 19 September 2023, İzmir).

Kaan Bük Baruh told that the Jewish population of Fatsa were departed for two primary reasons. The primary motivation was financial, while the secondary was religious. The desire to reside in an advanced urban center where greater economic opportunities could be secured was the primary motivation. With regard to the second reason, two families who wished to revert to Judaism embarked on a journey to Istanbul and Israel.

5.2.3 Remembering the other Muslims of Ünye: Memories about the Circassian and Georgian communities

In her work on migration to and from Ünye, Burcu Kara points out to the rise of Circassian and Georgian population in Ünye during the 19th century (2021). However small, Ünye was one of the active port cities of the Black Sea. As such, it has always been affected by migration movements from the inner and eastern parts of Anatolia to the coast and the West. Ünye port hosted Ottoman officials who carried out important tasks in determining the places of settlement of the arrivals, their transportation, the needs of the incoming people, the determination and distribution of the lands to be given, the struggle with the diseases and health services and maintaining the public order (Kara, 2021, pp. 50-51).

The movement of populations had in fact begun after the Tanzimat reforms, which brought new regulations of citizenship rights but also tax obligations for the non-Muslim communities. Many Greeks and Armenian began to search for better lives in Russia, some changing their nationalities. Burcu Kara documents several such cases and others where Ottoman officials tried to prevent the loss of native populations from the Black Sea region (Kara, 2021, pp. 58-61). The migration of

Muslims, however, started with Russia's annexation of Crimea in 1792. Before and after the Ottoman-Russian war of 1877-78, there happened several waves of migration to the Ottoman lands. Tatars from Crimea, Circassian and Dagestani people from the Caucasus moved to Anatolia via the Black Sea shores. Muslim Laz and Georgian people living in Batumi had also to migrate to the Ottoman lands.

Ünye received its share from these waves of migration. First, Circassians from the Merşat Tribe directly came to Ünye in 1863 (Kara, 2021, pp. 51-52). By 1914, Georgian Muslim communities also began migrating to Ünye from Batumi. One other important migration that affected Ünye was the Lausanne Population Exchange Treaty. The moving of populations had caused a number of problems along the Black Sea coast in general, but with important effects in Ünye as well. My thesis research revealed both published and collected oral history narratives about the Circassian and Georgian refugees.

5.2.3.1 On the memory of Circassians

Based on the documents in Ottoman State Archives, Burcu Kara states that 911 Circassians from the Merşat Tribe came to Ünye in 1863. In one document, one can see the bill for the catering of needy Circassian migrants in Ünye District. In a promissory note prepared by Abdullah Efendi, one can see that the document was signed by the *ulama* of the Merşat tribe, the tribal chiefs and the officer of the migrants. One common problem was that some migrants wanted to be replaced to another location, where they had family members. The state generally arranged the settling by distributing the tribes in different places. Ten of the migrants who settled in Ünye in 1866 were replaced for instance in Biga. Kara also underscored the fact

that what was called as the “Circassian migration” in Ünye encompassed indeed Kabartay, Abkhaz or Crimean migrants as well (Kara, 2021, pp. 60-61).

In her article on Circassian and Chechnian migration, Emine Eser used oral history to document their experience of displacement. On 25 April 2019, she interviewed Tamer Kaplan, who stated that “exile stories” were muted by the elderly who protect the new generations from anger, rage and revenge. He shared with Eser a story that he had listened from his grandfather as follows:

Due to the pressure of Russia, ships were kept off the Black Sea. They were not to be allowed in. On the other hand, Russian warships were giving firing orders. Boats full of people were sunk in this way. Presumably, the governor of Samsun or Trabzon was illegally sending food and water to these ships. Fishermen said ‘ We bring food and water, but there is a disease, people are broken by the disease.’ The governor says ‘ So let’s save what we can with boats.’ He carries out this process illegally, with people he trusts, with a few boats. The boats are approaching, the old people in the front, the women and children behind them and finally three or five young people take off their shoes while getting on the boats. The governor asks them the reason for taking off the shoes. One of the old people says ‘This is not just a piece of land, this is the land of the caliph, this is the land of the Ottomans.’ We are not genetically Turkish, but we owe to this land more than the Turks. Because our grandfathers came to this land barefoot, they opened their table to us, opened their homes and became a home for us. It is a cherished and precious geography for us (Eser, 2019, p. 599).

Cemal Uysal, a former parliamentarian, explored the district of Döşemedibi, known by its Circassian population. He focuses on the ‘Adygea’ tribe who is known as the most populous tribe of the Circassian people in the region. The Adyghe people who were also divided into tribes within themselves left their homelands from the ports of Taman, Tuapse, Anapa, Tsemmez, Sochi, Adler, Sukhumi, Poti, Batumi and other ports in the Caucasus and disembarked at the ports of Trabzon, Samsun, Ünye, Sinop, Istanbul, Varna, Burgas and Constanța of the Ottoman Empire. A report of the Russian consul in Trabzon to General Katraçef, who was in charge of the

deportations stated: “Among the 110,000 people around Samsun, an average of 200 people die every day.”⁴²

Tamer Uysal, a local of Ünye and the principal of the Ünye İmam Hatip Highschool, examined the use of their original language among the people of Ünye in a local magazine. He underscores that today, the Circassian originated population, who live in the villages of Döşemedibi and Cevizdere in Ünye have lost to a great extent, their language skills and old traditions. Referring to a study that Burhan Hanhan carried out in 1937 in Döşemedibi, he reminds that the Circassian community spoke Circassian among themselves, as much as they spoke Turkish. Although seventy years has passed since they came from the Caucasus, it seems that the first generation kept their tradition back then.⁴³ The situation changed however in the 1940s. Döşemedibi Circassians, for instance, whose presence in Ünye is recognized in written sources, began to adopt Turkish. The use of Circassian language has started to decrease and disappear as early as, when Circassians like my grandmother Emine Sarıkaya married Turks and could no longer speak their mother tongue. In the interview she gave me on 1 January 2012, she said:

When we were children and before we were married, we spoke Circassian, Turkish... It was our mother tongue. My brother used to warn us, above us was Giresun, Büyükliman, whatever, workers from the villages on this side always came to Sancaklı in boats... Workers always came to work the fields, to pick corn. My brother would immediately call Mahir and me and say, “guys, look, you don’t speak Circassian around them. It’s a pity, it’s a pity, they’ll take it upon themselves, it’ll be a sin.’ We didn’t utter a single word in their presence, we were so cautious. However, they knew that it was a Circassian village, that there were Circassians coming... There were no Turks in the village. But those who came also knew and still did not let us talk. They would think that we were saying something about them, it would be a

⁴² Cemal Uysal, “Ünye’ye Çerkes Göçü, 21 Mayıs 1864: Bir Adige yerleşim yeri Ünye Döşemedibi Köyü”, *Ünye Kent Gazetesi*, 17 November 2020: <https://www.unyekent.com/haber/unye-ye-cherkes-gocu-21-mayis-1864-bir-adige-yerlesim-yeri-unye-dosemedibi-koyu-16859.html>

⁴³ Tamer Uysal, “Çerkezler dillerini ve geleneklerini kayıp mı ediyorlar?”, *Ünye Kent Gazetesi*, 18 January 2019: <https://www.unyekent.com/haber/tamer-uysal-cherkezler-dillerini-ve-geleneklerini-kayip-mi-ediyorlar-3793.html> (The quote is taken from İsmail Berkok (1958) *Tarihte Kafkasya*, İstanbul Matbaası, p. 529)

pity. They would say it was a shame, a sin. We never spoke. My aunt, Mahir and I, we never spoke a word. We didn't speak among one another. We also knew Turkish. We knew them both, I mean both Turkish and Circassian. But we mostly spoke Circassian among us. But when I came to Ünye after getting married, there was no one with whom I could speak Circassian. I came to a Turkish house. There was no one who spoke Circassian. With whom could I have talked? But my brother Adil told me frequently. He said that I should teach Circassian to the children coming to the house, that it would be good. How could I have done that? Was I supposed to sit down and tell the children this is this and that is that? It wouldn't work and I couldn't teach them. How could I have? It was not like there was a school and they would take a lesson for an hour. It wasn't like that and they didn't, couldn't learn it. Let alone teaching them, I didn't even focus on it, I didn't even ask them to learn the language. That's how it is (Emine Sarıkaya, 1 January 2012, Istanbul).

When I asked my father Özcan Sarıkaya whether he knew any Circassian, his answer was negative. He was 80 years old and was the eldest child in his family, so I would expect that he would remember some Circassian. We do not know why Emine Sarıkaya did not teach Circassian to her children, even though her Turkish husband side told her to do so. Even though they are Muslims, she must have felt unease “the other” of her new community.

5.2.3.2 On the memory of Georgians

As Oktay Özel informs us, the migration of Muslim Georgians in Turkey began after the Ottoman–Russian war of 1877–78 (also known as ‘93 *Harbi*). Accordingly, Ottoman government settled the Georgian migrants in the central Black Sea region, mainly in the area between Ordu and Samsun.⁴⁴ They were first hosted by native Muslim families and then moved to lands which were allocated land for their permanent settlement. This process was experienced in different ways, depending on

⁴⁴ Local researcher Murat Şahin mentions that Georgians from Ünye had also come from Acara and Macahle. Murat Şahin, “Ünyeli Gürcüler”, 1 March 2003: <https://www.chveneburi.net/tarih-cografya/unyeli-gurculer-murat-sahin-h557.html>

how the incoming Georgians behaved or were treated and leading to new migrant villages emerge in the region (Özel, 2010, pp. 477-496). Özel states:

The oral information from third generation Georgian immigrants tells that their grandparents came to the central Black Sea town of Ordu and the surrounding districts of Fatsa and Ünye during the years following the '93 Harbi'. Their story of the first arrival of the immigrants is as follows: after their land of origin was ceded to Russia, Muslim Georgians of the Batum-Çürüksu region was encouraged by the Ottoman authorities to migrate to Anatolia. As the new Russian administration of the region also exerted pressure on the Muslim inhabitants of the region, most of the Muslim families decided to leave their land to settle in Anatolia under Ottoman rule.

Oktaý Özel also underscores the arrival of Çürüksulu Ali Paşa, a rich and prominent figure of the Çürüksu region in Batumi. Ali Paşa, would become in the upcoming years the "*fahri iskan memuru*," the official responsible for settling the Georgian migrants. Based on the Ottoman and British sources, Özel reminds us that during a period of 1879 and 1881, around two thousand families settled in Ordu area. He states:

Ottoman administration attempted to organize the process directly by issuing detailed regulations concerning the settlement of refugees; it established an institutional body, generally called Commission for the Settlement of Immigrants, *Iskan-ı Muhacirin Komisyonu* ... the Commission appear to have appointed Çürüksulu Ali Pasha as the Commissioner for the settlement of the Georgian immigrants. This naturally gave a greater degree of freedom to the Georgians who had already proved to be extremely difficult for any local authorities to keep under control. Although the details of the initial stages of the settlement process are not known, numerous cases of stories told by descendants of the immigrants in the region indicate that the process took the form of a quite independent search by the immigrants themselves for suitable land, rather than systematic assignment of plots of land designated by the government. Ali Pasha's appointment as Commissioner obviously facilitated the settlement process following such a pattern... While the Pasha's manipulative skills and opportunistic mind took him to personal fortune, it is equally arguable that his fellow immigrants, the Georgians, largely owed their successful hold on and survival in the region of Ordu to their Pasha's vigorous political manoeuvres in pursuing his goals at all cost while also protecting his men against the odds (Özel, 2010, p. 481).

Özel also mentions that some Circassian, Greek or Armenian groups were also involved in banditry, disguising themselves in Georgian costumes.

One major problem in the process of settlement was the fact that the state allocated land and houses to the refugees, that caused territorial conflicts with the native population. One other issue was related to the incoming Georgian population, often associated with banditry. Burcu Kara details this fact with a petition signed by fifty-five Muslim and non-Muslims in July 1887. The document stated that incidents such as murder, fires, rape, extortion, seizing property, kidnapping or demanding (Kara, 2021, p. 118). Another document dated 1895, detailed that Georgian bandits residing in Ünye district repeatedly robbed passers-by, raided houses in the highlands and committed the crimes of extortion and murder (Kara, 2021, p. 97). Oktay Özel reminds us that these bandits took their power from the prestige of their community leader Çürüksulu Ali Paşa, who had made great services in the settlement of Georgian refugees and gained the acclaim of Ottoman officials. When Ali Paşa was expelled from the region between 1890 and 1900, the strained social relations turned into further clashes and attacks by both sides (Özel, 2003, pp. 95-144).

Esat Aktaş and Hakan Yaşar who examined the public order issue in Ordu at the turn of the 20th century called attention the effects of the troubled period of transportation and settlement for the Georgian migrants who came after the 93 War. Many suffered from drought and hunger; some died of diseases. In an environment where there was no public order, some were engaged in banditry incidents (Aktaş and Yaşar, 2017, p. 5). It seems that they soon harassed the local population, forcing especially the Greek and Armenians to migrate out of the Ottoman lands, mainly to Russia. Georgians were among the important participants of this migration, although not the first. In his work on co-habitation in this period, Oktay Özel also confirms the difficulties to maintain public order among the natives and the migrants in the region of Central Black Sea (Özel, 2011).

There are also oral historical data regarding the experience of the Georgian migrants in Ünye. Local researcher Murat Şahin mentions that Georgians from Ünye had also come from Acara and Macahle.⁴⁵ Accordingly, the Georgians who came to Ünye when they first came could not stay there for long. They settled higher due to malaria. The Georgians of Macahle are the highest settlers among the Georgians who emigrate. They sought a climate similar to where they came from. Georgians from Adjara settled relatively low, while those from Batumi settled closer to the coast. Quoting from a 90 years old first settler, Şahin delivers a story reflecting the historical ethnography:

When the Russians entered Batumi, Kibar Agha left with 30 households. 15 tents were set up in a place called Düztepe, which is at the back of today's Ekincik village. Greeks also lived in the region. On Sunday, the Greek priest came down from Meliktepe with a group of 10 students and held a service in the church in Ekincik. He also distributed boiled eggs dyed in various colors to the children. Kibar Agha went to the village of Nurettin for Friday prayers. An argument broke out with the villagers there at the mosque. How can you leave your children alone and come here to pray with your men? The next Friday, he went to prayer in Kibaraga, Kabadirye (Dizdar). When he saw the same reaction there, he decided to build a mosque in Ekincik, where the current mosque is. Of course, at the same time, a madrasa was built because Müderris Mevlüt Efendi would have students study there...The Georgians from Batumi and its environs and the locals there loved him very much.⁴⁶

During my research, I was able to collect oral history narratives among my own family members. In an interview I had collected from Şükran Alptekin on 15 and 16 December 2011 in Ankara, I was able to hear a family story. Alptekin's paternal grandfather had escaped during the war and come to Ünye. She had no information about how they came. Coming from Jivaneze and Cığindi, the family settled in Çatalpınar, in the place given by the state:

When they came to Ünye, the town was very chaotic and poor. When somebody died, the corpse would be waited so that sheets from a house

⁴⁵ Murat Şahin, "Ünyeli Gürcüler", 1 March 2003: <https://www.chveneburi.net/tarih-cografya/unyeli-gurculer-murat-sahin-h557.html>

⁴⁶ Murat Şahin, "Ünyeli Gürcüler", 1 March 2003: <https://www.chveneburi.net/tarih-cografya/unyeli-gurculer-murat-sahin-h557.html>

would be found and washed and be buried. My grandfather was the child of a very rich family; he was the eldest son. His father had some gold; he wrapped it around his body with a bag under his dressed it. ‘Mehmet’, said, ‘You run away, we will come after you, we will find each other.’ The young boy was left alone when the border closed after him. But he thought of the gold, made best of it and bought property. He bought a lot of land, he invested, he did drapery... My uncle was a very kind, very noble gentleman who became the district governor of Ünye. He was living a very luxurious life.

Apparently, a cadaster officer who envied the success of this Georgian settler, complained about the governor, when he saw that he took an illegal initiative and paid the salary to the civil servants in advance. After a jailtime, he had to continue his life as a petition writer. Şükran Alptekin also underscored how their manners and language differed from other Georgian settlers coming from rural areas. “When I asked my mother why our family speaks differently, she used to say that we came from Batumi and they came from the villages, thus they spoke rudely.” Although they used to speak Georgian fluently, they would prefer talking in Turkish.

One of our family members of Georgian origin shared with me a taped *sohbet* (conversation) about the past experiences. There, they talked about the inhospitable behavior of the natives, like cutting the water for instance, so that the migrants would not settle in their village. Losing family members was an inevitable matter, which caused remarriages. Children’s death or forced marriage were also common. Many people got offended at one another, because of land or other property issues. They too recalled class issues among the Georgian themselves, namely the ones from Çürüksu, Macahel and Acere. Muazzez Civanbay stated that people from Çürüksu were well mannered but not hard working, while those from Acere worked a bit better. According to her, those from Macahel were very ill mannered but very hardworking people. Although the elderly spoke Georgian language fluently, the younger generation questioned them on why they did not teach it to them. Muazzez Civanbay also mentioned the hardships of women experienced: The food was always

stored in a chest. The bride had to ask its key from the mother-in-law, to take the candy to serve the guest... You had to hold a towel for your father-in-law, after he washed hands in a basin.”



CHAPTER 6

LEARNING THROUGH MATERIAL CULTURE: LANDSCAPE, RELICS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

As Elke Hartmann (2019, p. 217), a German scholar with Armenian origin, indicates in her research focusing on the importance of visual sources in the social history of the Ottoman Empire, the family portraits and photographic depictions of the town and village life in the Ottoman provinces had a greater potential extending beyond their worth as an example of what we learn from texts. When these visual sources are employed, especially in microhistory research, they can renew our knowledge and inspire our research. She also states as follows:

Looking at *what* was depicted in the photographs, we can see a variety of topics and motives, which can be categorized under the notion of ‘portrait’ in the broadest sense. One important field is, figuratively, the portraiture of landscapes and cities and general views of various cities of the Ottoman provinces were frequent motives on postcards (pp. 111-112).⁴⁷

⁴⁷ See also Morton and Edwards, 2009; Edwards, 2001, 2012; Low, 2022.

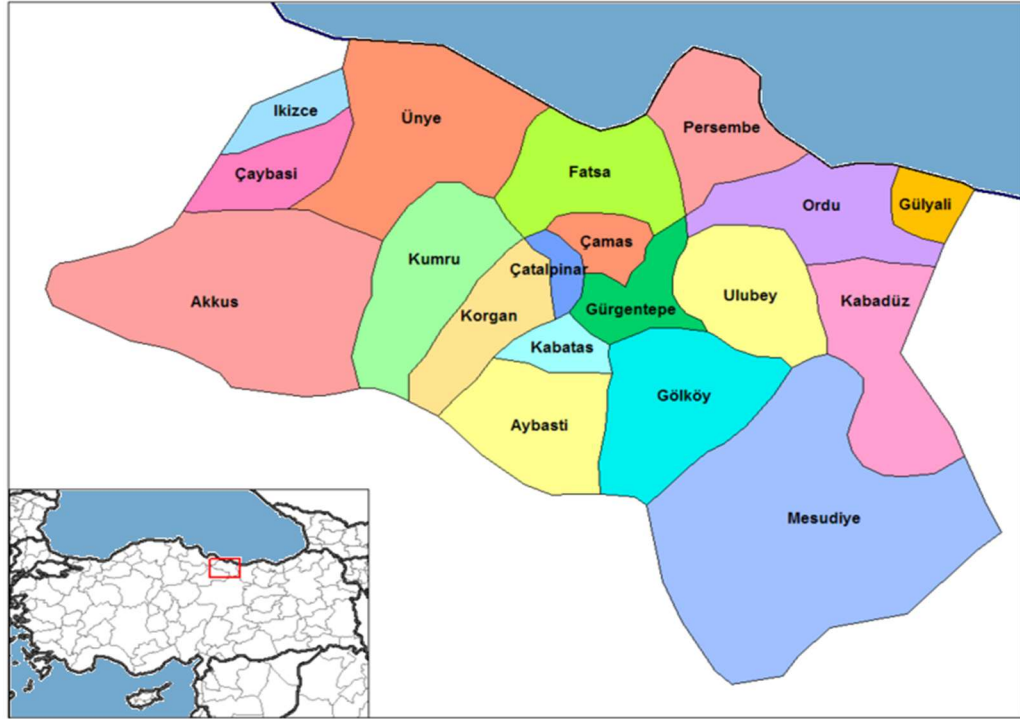


Figure 7. Location of Ünye within Turkey

6.1 Images of landscapes and people

The district center of Ünye has similar characteristics to the current Ordu city center and is located on a bay that forms a wide crescent. The Tabakhane stream passing through the district divides the city into two. Due to its geographical structure, the city is not suitable for rail transportation. Before the Black Sea Coastal Highway was built, sea transportation was used, but this was later replaced by land transportation after 1950s.

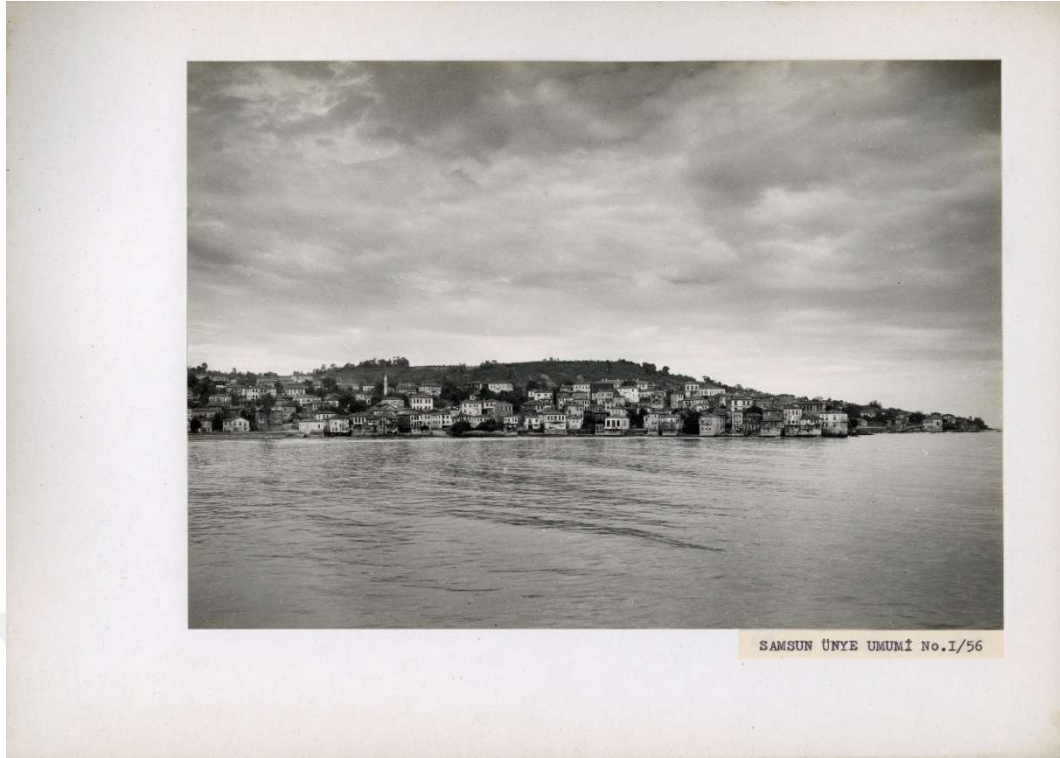


Figure 8. Ünye, a general view: Salt Research

In some private archives such as Salt, it has been possible to access some photographs of Ünye that have not been seen anywhere before.⁴⁸ In my interview with Aynur Tan in Ünye on 18 September 2010, she stated as follows:

For me, Fatsa was like my parents' village and Kaf Mount in the stories which my mom told me. The lands lying behind Kaf Mount... Because you reach there by crossing the mountains and very nice, smiling people live there. They live in houses with a different architecture. For example, in my father's village the life is filled with rich orchards among higher frame houses, unpaved roads and mountains as green as grass. I found answers of my questions in the conversations held during the harvest time. To illustrate, why did my grandparents live at such a high place? I was because when they moved to that area, people immigrated to higher places because of mosquitos whose number rose due to the rivers and malaria. It was so difficult to reach that area that there were jeeps. Transportation was possible by those jeeps and local people used to go to the bazaars once a week. I say 'bazaars' because; although it was years and years ago, the women used to carry the weight of that small scale economy on their shoulders. It was quite interesting for me.

⁴⁸ See <https://archives.saltresearch.org/handle/123456789/210735>

Margaret Ahbap, who came to Ünye from Sivas as a bride, expresses her thoughts (from my interview with her in Istanbul on 10 May 2008) about Ünye as follows:

Well, I lived there for 20 years. Our hometown is Sivas. Sivas is a very beautiful country, but its people are a little behind. I'm from Sivas, but I didn't hide it. They call Sivas the Paris of Anatolia. They came from all the villages and filled there and there were no locals left. Also, if tourists go or something, they look at it strangely there. But the people of Ünye are more civilized. They don't look at them with a more open, wild eye, that is, with a bad eye, so I see Ünye as a more civilized part of Istanbul. I thought Ünye was a village at first. I thought it was a village. So sad. We are heading towards Akkuş, is Ünye here, is Ünye here? I was saying oh yes, the houses on the top of the mountains one by one. I was worried about what I was going to do here, I was getting lost. Then, as I got into Ünye, I liked the bazaar. Of course, we got used to it over time. Our friends were very good. I was born in Sivas, for example, I grew up in Sivas, but of course one has to distinguish between the people of the place and the life of Ünye and the people there. We had very nice neighborhoods there as well, but it was not like Ünye, Ünye was a beautiful country, it did not look like Istanbul, it had a sea, it had everything. Also, it is a village, we didn't go out of the house much.

In Aynur Tan's interview with Margaret Ahbap in 2004, Aynur Tan asks, "Today, we are together with a fellow citizen from Ünye who immigrated from Ünye and settled in Istanbul. You came to Ünye from Sivas, what did you think about Ünye?" Margaret Ahbap answers as follows:

I knew Ünye as a village, of course I was very sad, come to the villages. I'm leaving. Coming to the village from Sivas. I thought it was a village, but I was very sad when I saw houses at the top of the hills. We came from the Akkuş side. Before entering every city, I was asking if this is Ünye or here. When I finally saw Ünye, I liked it very much. I said it was good. I thought the houses on those hills were the houses at the top of the hills, I was very sad. We thought we were going to sit there, but I liked Ünye very much, we had very good years. We used to swim in the sea every summer. We would go on the motel side. We used to enter in Uzunkum and we used to enter in Çamlık here you are. The kids used to take the little one away. In the past, we used to go on foot, we used to get off from Çakırtepe. Recently, the bus came out and we started to commute by bus.

6.1.1 Landscape in the postcards

Postcards undoubtedly have an important place in local history research. Although postcards give us a general view of the city under study, when we examine Ünye

specifically, the variety of postcards is not as high compared to other cities of the Black Sea region such as Ordu and Samsun. These postcards, which are mostly found in private archives today, were taken by the city's Greek photographers Leonidas Evgheniadis and Theodoros Prussaefs.



Figure 9. A postcard of Ünye: Michel Paboudjian Collection

In this photograph from the early 20th century the neighborhoods where Armenians and Greeks lived could be seen.

6.1.2 Landscape photographs from the Center for Asia Minor Studies

There are quite a number of photographs at the Center for Asia Minor Studies. The photographs from Ünye donated by Sofia Dondolinou-Goraniti offer important visual information on the historical ethnography of the city at the turn of the century. The Center for Asia Minor Studies has published the narratives and photographs from the Black Sea collection on the Greeks in and around Ünye in a three-volume book collection edited by the Center. The general landscape photographs in this collection illustrate the urban development of Ünye in the early 20th century, contextualized by

the city's architectural features and its port. The photographs illustrate a variety of architectural styles, with large stone buildings and wooden mansions, as well as an active port.

The population of Ünye was recorded by the Center for Asia Minor Studies to be approximately 15,000. Of the total population, 4,000 were of Greek ethnicity and 1,000 were Armenian. A striking aspect of the records at this center is the observation that the Greek language spoken by the Greek population of Ünye bears resemblance to the standard Greek language, diverging from the Pontic dialect spoken in surrounding villages. It can be ascertained from the available documentation that there were two big churches and educational establishments in the coastal region of Ünye where Greeks lived. Given its geographical position, Ünye became an important port, facilitating commercial communication with the inland region of Pontus. Consequently, many Greeks living in the region made a living through trade, shipping, shipbuilding and fishing. However, the inhabitants also engaged in agricultural activities, particularly the production of hemp, which was the most renowned product of the region at the time. During the preceding years of the Population Exchange, the cultivation of hazelnuts also constituted a lucrative business. The historical records indicate that numerous craftspeople, including potters and bakers, regularly traveled to neighboring cities such as Samsun and Ordu, as well as to Russia. Additionally, it is evident that the Greek population that was displaced as a result of the Population Exchange resettled in various cities, including Athens, Thessaloniki, Katerini and Kavala.



Figure 10. Oinoe/Uniye. View of the city: Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive



Figure 11. Oinoe/Uniye the city. View from the sea: Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive



Figure 12. Oinoe/Ünye the city. View from the sea: Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive

6.1.3 Neighborhoods and historical Lieux De Memoir

The main places of interest in Ünye, which is actually a small town, are its pier, beach and government square. Armenians and Greeks living in Ünye resided in an area extending from the place known today as Yalı to Çakırtepe. Some old Ünye houses still exist in this settlement and restoration work has been started in recent years. Old Ünye architecture bears traces of Ottoman culture on one hand and Greek culture on the other. While Greek architecture is dominant in the Yalı settlement, Ottoman architecture is observed in Kadılar Yokuşu where the Turks live. Two-story, wooden and stone-based buildings located in a large courtyard definitely have a roof.

In my interview with Aynur Tan in Ünye on 18 September 2010, she states the following about the neighborly relations between Muslims and non-Muslims in Ünye;

I would like to give an example; when it was required to send Armenian community from these lands, mayor of this area asked families to hide many artisans for them to teach their merits to us. People from Ünye always talk about this. For example, they say that Armenians are quite successful at bakery, they cook cakes and pastry, they learnt how to make marmalade from them and refreshments culture. They also say that they respect each other's religious practices and rituals a lot. For instance, while Muslims were fasting, Armenians and Greeks didn't eat anything outside. What's more, although they lived in separate neighborhoods, they visited each other. They were affected by each other's religion and culture. They used to watch each other's funerals. For example, my mother-in-law and her family used to live in a house in the neighborhood, Orta Yılmazlar Neighborhood where once there was the big church and there is Central Secondary School today. In the month of Ramadan, they used to perform Tarawih prayer and required worship was performed during Tarawih prayer, at Qadr Night and at mosques. My mother-in-law told me: We used to see their Greek neighbor in front of the mosque when we were leaving the mosque after Tarawih prayer. Especially during Islamic memorial services and at Qadr Night, we saw her crying. Later, she confessed that she had been so affected by our religion that she became Muslim but couldn't confess it to her own sect. They respect each other's religion very much and there is no pressure about it. There is no rule, and they live together happily and like each other.

As mentioned before, Ünye had a Jewish population as well, a matter we know today only by the name they left to the marketplace called 'Yahudi Düzlüğü' (literally *Jewish Plain*) today.

Muslim and non-Muslim communities in Ünye were living in clustered neighborhoods. The Greeks lived mostly in the coastal areas of the city because they were engaged in fishing, while the Armenians, who were engaged in trade, had closer relations with the Turks because they lived closer to the city center where the Turks were living.

In Aynur Tan's interview with Margaret Ahbap in 2004, Aynur Tan asks, "Did you miss Ünye when you came here?" Margaret Ahbap answers, "Absolutely. I always miss it. Life here is more difficult than there. I want to see Ünye a lot. But if I see our houses dismantled, I will be very sad, I will be very sad that they have changed a lot. That's why I don't really want to come". During the interview Margaret told that,

When we went, the houses were wooden buildings, the tops were tiles, I liked them so much that the two-story, three-story houses were like living rooms underneath. Houses with bay windows. Maybe they were Greek buildings, they were Armenian buildings. Christians are more artistic people. Here, too, the most beautiful homes belong to Christians. They made it from the Armenians and the Greeks. I like old-style houses very much, bay window houses, wooden houses. Now those places have changed, there are concrete buildings everywhere. Its former beauty is gone.



Figure 13. Ünye houses: Salt Research



Figure 14. Ünye houses: Salt Research

The photographs from the family album of Dora Iannidou, whom I reached during the research period and who still lives in Athens, date from the period of the migration that took place after 1950. In addition to the photographs, Dora Ioannidou provided the following information regarding the family collection:

My great-grandmother and grandfather resided in Ünye. My great-grandfather's name was Christos Dmitriadis and he had a shop right on the coastline where he was selling wine and nuts. The first Greek to come from that region was my uncle, Chrysostomos (a typical name in Ünye) in 1953. The seashore was called kagiades. My family lived close to the graveyard and church, near the dormitory of the Mother Mary. My great-grandfather passed away in 1917 in exile. I can tell you that Chrysostomos departed Ünye at the age of 14 and those the other two children compelled him to sign a document attesting to the transfer of ownership of the house to them.



Figure 15. Dora Iannidou's family house of her grandparents in Ünye: Dora Iannidou Collection

Dora Iannidou's uncle Chrysostomos Dmitriadis who visits Ünye in 1953, he was 14 years old when he left Ünye and two other boys pushed him to write on a paper that their house owned to them.



Figure 16. Chrysostomos Dmitriadis in Ünye in 1953: Dora Iannidou Collection



Figure 17. The Armenian and Greek neighborhoods of Ünye, 1954

The houses that belonged to Armenians and Greeks that were still used then has been completely destroyed now with the construction of Black Sea Coastal Highway in 1950s (The house with the number 74 was purchased by my grandfather from a Greek fisherman who left the city with his family prior to Population Exchange). The children of this Greek fisherman came to Ünye in a summer month in 1950s and wanted to see the house; however, since they arrived during the hazelnut season no one answered their knocking on the door. They asked the neighbors about the then current owner of the house. We can acquire information with regard to the way this scenery looked like a hundred years ago from the written impressions of Murad Efendi (1836-1881) who was in Ünye in 1854:

On land, it is surrounded by mountains that are covered by thick forests, houses ornamented by flowers, in pretty good shape fruit and vegetable gardens. Only in the Greek neighborhood that is established on the rocky side of the coast reaching partly to the sea, one cannot see this odorous vegetation; there houses are like passengers leaning on one another in a roller coaster. This neighborhood has a morbid and feeble appearance. The darker shade of grey is dominant on a dun colored background. At the center, there is a church which sometimes smells of incense, the parson's house sometimes smelling wine and a dark tavern that always smells like vinegar (Murad Efendi, 2007, pp. 157-158; 1877, pp. 174-175).



Figure 18. Oinoe/Uniye. View of the city; the Greek neighborhoods are on the right: Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive



Figure 19. Oinoe/Uniye. View of the city: Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive

In this photograph where all the Greek neighborhoods of the city are seen, the church bell tower can also be seen.



Figure 20. The Central Square of Ünye in the 1940s

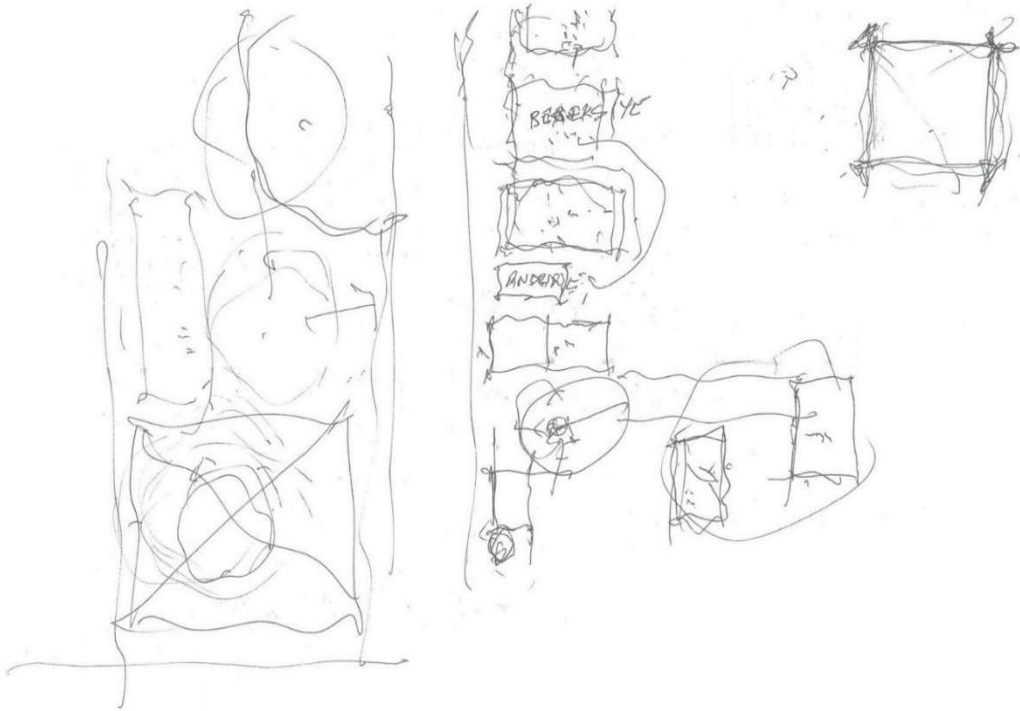


Figure 21. Mardiros Baygın's sketch

Mardiros Baygın, whom I met in Montreal, Canada, drew a sketch of the neighborhood where his house is located in his hometown of Ünye, which he has not been to for about 50 years

6.1.4 People and their places

6.1.4.1 Relics of past communities: churches and cemeteries

One of the most important traces of the memory of ancient communities are church relics and cemeteries. One of the biggest shortcomings of the Armenians living in Ünye during the Republican period was the lack of a church where they could worship. In my interview with Margaret Ahbap in Istanbul on 10 May 2008, she had this to say on the matter: “We had a church there, but then they turned it into a wedding hall. We don’t fast much about our religious stuff. The old people may have kept it, but not the young ones. But we were doing our holidays, for example, we were painting eggs during the egg festival, our neighbors would know about it, we would give it to them, we would distribute it to our neighbors. We had a holiday on New Year’s Eve. They knew, too. They were coming to celebrate with us. We were going to their holidays. I was painting the eggs the same way I had seen them from my mother. With onion peel.”

During the Republican period, the lack of a church was a problem for Armenians living in Anatolia, as it was for Armenians living in Ünye and Ordu. Harutyun Artun says the following on this subject; “The priest is determined to carry out his duty. Christening, Sunday mass, feast are maintained at homes. The tradition of blessing flour, salt and sugar at new year in accordance with Gregorian Armenians’ tradition continues. The priest performs this tradition by going to every Armenian household. And the christenings are carried out at homes as well. On Sundays, people gather in the sitting rooms of large houses” (Dizman, 2016, p. 131).



Figure 22. The Greek and Armenian neighborhoods of Ünye, 1955: Dora Iannidou Collection

On the upper left corner, the secondary school that was built upon the ground of the demolished Greek Church and the nearby cemetery can be seen. In the same way, the church in Ordu, which had a priest in charge of his church and congregation, was decided to be demolished upon the desire of Bekir Sami Baran, the governor of Ordu; however, the church was unflinching, so it was not possible to demolish it entirely. The author of this article did not know that this secondary school was built on the grounds of a demolished church and the nearby cemetery while he was studying there between the years 1990-1993. It should not be hard to imagine his bewilderment upon discovering this reality later. The students from earlier years who studied at the same secondary school say that they saw pieces of bones in the walls of the school.



Figure 23. The Greek Church in Ünye is seen before it was demolished

The location of the old Armenian cemetery in Ünye cannot be determined precisely because of the apartment buildings that have been built on it; it is said that there are still graves in the empty spaces between the settlements, but information about their whereabouts is kept secret from treasure hunters.

Until recently, there was a private Armenian cemetery in Ünye. The cemetery in Çakırtepe district of Ünye, where 13 Armenians are buried, is in a miserable state. The heirs of the land, which has gained value with the construction of summer houses in the area, have requested that the cemetery be emptied. The bones that could be collected from the cemetery were transferred to two cemeteries allocated from the Muslim cemetery in the Çakırtepe district. The Armenians I wanted to talk to about this issue did not want to talk because they were very upset.



Figure 24. Private Armenian Cemetery in Ünye: Photograph by Cafer Sarıkaya, 20 September 2010



Figure 25. Ünye's Armenian community at a funeral: Vahan-Margaret Ahbap Collection



Figure 26. An Armenian Funeral Ceremony in Ünye: Vahan-Margaret Ahbap Collection

6.1.4.2 Schools of the Past

According to the Ottoman population census of 1914, a total of 28.576 Armenians including 261 Catholic and 1.257 Protestant used to live in Canik district that was made up of Samsun, Bafra, Ünye, Fatsa, Çarşamba and Terme townships. An important port and a center of business, Samsun had a population of approximately 11.000 people, more than 3.000 of which were comprised of Armenians. Armenian traders handled the large portion of the tobacco, cotton and lumber export at the port. Surp Nigoğayos Church and Nersesyan School were located in what was called Armenian neighborhood. The Episcopacy, which was operating under Istanbul patriarchate, was also here. There was also an Armenian Theatre near the school. The American Protestant Missioners and French Kapusen Priest had a church in the city as well. The Catholics has two schools, one of which was a nursery school managed

by French nuns. Two issues of the magazine called *Tibrots* (School) were published in Samsun in 1914.

Today, there are no school buildings in which the Greeks and Armenians who lived in Ünye received education. As mentioned in previous chapters, the Armenians had Mesrobian School where girls and boys received education together and which had one hundred seventy-five students in 1914.

In a photograph from the Center for Asia Minor Studies, we can see the students and staff of Ünye Municipal School (1910-1911)



Figure 27. Photograph from the Center for Asia Minor Studies Archive

A photograph of the Ünye Girls' School was sent by Charalampos Gappas, a resident of Thessaloniki, to Cafer Sarıkaya. The image was originally part of the album belonging to Gappas's aunt, Chrysyla Makridu. Gappas stated that his grandmother, Evanthia Petridu, is the third person from the right in the photograph, second from the front.



Figure 28. Photograph from Christos Dmitriadis Collection

6.1.4.3 Family Albums

The thesis drew upon family archives as well. The examination of family archives allows us to gain insight into the material culture, passed down and safeguarded from one generation to the next. With the rise in literacy during the Late Ottoman period, there was a concomitant increase in the number of diaries, letters and memoirs. Besides, the photographs, postcards and postcard photographs amassed during the Republican era constitute the visual and ethnographic resources employed in historiography.

An important achievement of this thesis will be bringing together the oral histories of the past communities including particularly the Turks, Armenians, Greeks, Circassians and Georgians who lived in Ünye and its surrounding area and visual sources by also making use of the institutional and individual photography collections/archives. In this regard, it is of importance that one of the four professional photography studios in the Black Sea region during the Ottoman Empire period was located in Ünye. The other photography studios were located in Samsun, Giresun and Trabzon, all of which were cities larger than Ünye.

6.1.4.3.1 Images from Armenian family albums

The records of the Armenian Church in Ordu, mention 135 Armenian families who were able to return to Ordu after the *Tehcir*.⁴⁹ During my research, I could only reach three families, who were living in different places. These included Minas Ahbap in Istanbul. Levon Baygın, had two sons and one daughter who lived in Canada. Most of the Mıgırdıç Gülezryan's grandchildren were scattered in various cities of Europe and America. Only Berç and Aret Gülezryan currently lived in Ünye. They shared with me some photographs from their family albums which give a visual memory for us to imagine the Armenian families in Ünye during the Republican era.

⁴⁹ BBA-CA 490.01.612.127.06.



Figure 29. Murat Gülezryan with his children and their friends on the beach in Ünye: Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan Collection



Figure 30. The last representatives of Ünye's Armenian community, Gülezryan and Ahab families, are on a picnic in 1977: Vahan-Margaret Ahab Collection

In my interviews with Vincent Seisiyan, who lived in Ünye for a short time, in Paris (3 December 2021, 23 May 2024) and Istanbul (12 February and 4 March 2022), he stated that with the widespread use of social media today, the relations of Armenians who lived in Ünye with the city have resumed, but the reason for these relations is related to longing for their youth rather than longing for Ünye (Boym, 2001; 2009). During my research I also came across a similar case in my interview with Daniel Kurkcu in London (16 September 2013/8 January 2014/18 June 2015).

Finally, one should also remember again the story of Ağavni, who survived thanks to her Muslim neighbors hiding her in a well. The photograph below shows the traces of the trauma she lived in 1915, which stayed in the form of severe headaches.



Figure 31. Ağavni at the window of her house in Ünye: Mardiros Baygın Collection

Another photograph was shared by Bercuhi Temir, whom I interviewed in Istanbul. Bercuhi settled in Ünye after her sister Margaret married Vahan Ahbap. Bercuhi had no choice but to go to Ünye for her education near her sister. She still resented to be frequently called '*gavur*'.



Figure 32. Vahan-Margaret Ahbap with their children and Bercuhi Temir: Vahan-Margaret Ahbap Collection

(Margaret Ahbap, Vahan Ahbap, Bercuhi Temir, Hacı Kevork Ahbap, Elbis Ahbap)



Figure 33. Anayit Gülezryan with her family: Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan Collection

(Anayit Gülezryan-Hosepyan, Aznif Gülezryan-Durmaz; Zıvart Açıkgöz-Gülezryan, Gayzak Gülezryan, Murat Gülezryan, Alis Gülezryan-İmran)



Figure 34. Anayit Gülezryan with her two sisters and one brother: Anayit Gülezryan Hosepyan Collection

(Alis Gülezryan-İmran, Aznif Gülezryan-Durmaz, Anayit Gülezryan-Hosepyan, Gayzak Gülezryan)



Figure 35. Adrine Hekimoğlu, Hacı's wife, Adrine's mother, Hacı Küçüköğlu:
Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 36. Mardiros Baygın's mother Paylon, sister Mari with a Greek couple who
visits Ünye: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 37. Mardiros Baygın's Family with Kevork Öksüzyan who is son of his paternal aunt: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 38. Mardiros Baygın, Ahmet Sırmabıyık, Arman Gümüšoğlu: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 39. Mardiros Baygın, Levon Baygın, Kevork Öksüzyan, Gazar Baygın: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 40. Mardiros Baygın's father Levon with a Turkish friend in Ünye: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 41. Mardiros Baygın's father Levon in Ünye: Mardiros Baygın Collection



Figure 42. Mardiros Baygın's with his family: Mardiros Baygın Collection

(Gazar Baygın, Paylon Baygın, Levon Baygın, Adrine Hekimoğlu, Mardiros Baygın, Levon Baygın's mother, Mari Baygın-Gümüsoğlu)



Figure 43. Adrine Hekimoğlu with Mardiros Baygín's mother Paylon: Mardiros Baygín Collection



Figure 44. Mardiros Baygin with his mother Paylon and paternal aunt: Mardiros Baygin Collection

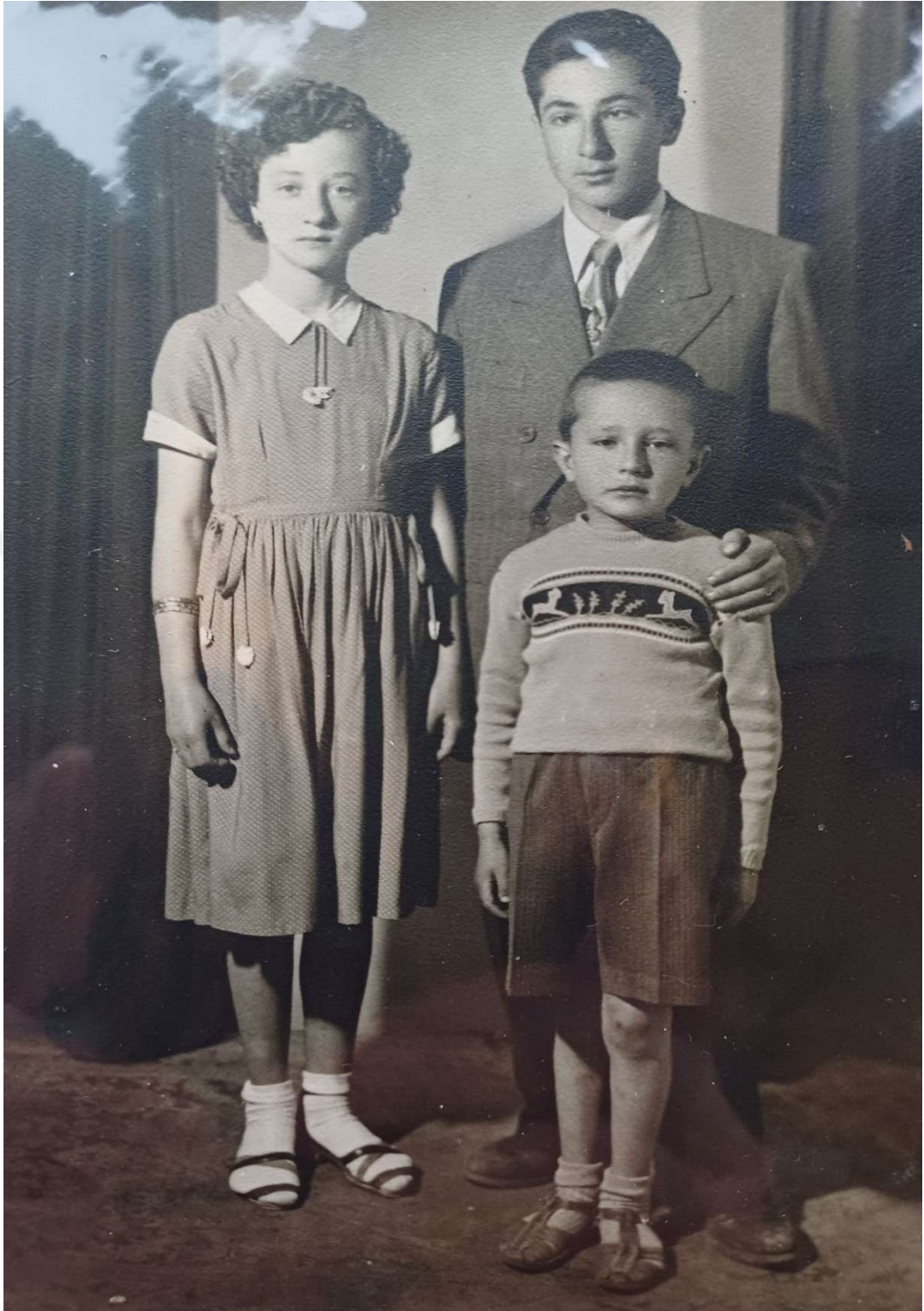


Figure 45. Mardiros Baygin with his sister Mari and brother Gazar: Mardiros Baygin Collection

6.1.4.3.2 Circassians and Georgians



Figure 46. Cafer Sarıkaya's Circassian side of the family, Ünye, 1955: Cafer Sarıkaya Family Collection

(First row: (left to right) Cevat Sarıkaya, Ali Abdurrahman Sarıkaya, Abdullah Sarıkaya, Özcan Sarıkaya; Second row: (left to right) Ergün Kıranlı, Cafer Sarıkaya, Kevser Yiyener, Servet Öztürk, Emine Sarıkaya, Erdoğan Sarıkaya)



Figure 47. Cafer Sarıkaya's Georgian side of the family, Ünye, 1970s: Cafer Sarıkaya Family Collection

(First row: (left to right) Cemalettin Şimşek, Sebahattin Şimşek, Alaatin Şimşek, Suriye Şimşek, Hadiye Şimşek, Zehra Civanbay, Müzeyyen Civanbay; Second row: (left to right) Muazzez Civanbay, Necmettin Küçüköğlu, Hatice Küçüköğlu, Aysel Emine Küçüköğlu, Güzin Küçüköğlu, Şükran Alptekin, Haluk Civanbay, Huriye Şimşek, Hasan Şimşek, Rabia Alparslan)

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the development and remembrance of migratory mobility in the Central Black Sea region, with a particular focus on Ünye and its surrounding areas during the second half of the 19th century. This period saw significant social changes occurring simultaneously with the political mobility driven by migratory movements that originated in the Ottoman Empire.

In this context, the findings vividly demonstrate the geographical and temporal mobility of the migration movements in question. In light of these observations, the migration movements in the Central Black Sea region from the late Ottoman period to the Republic can be seen to have taken place as follows: (1) The migration of the Circassians, which began in the 1850s, gained momentum following the Crimean War of 1853-1856 and lasted from 1864 to 1876; (2) the migration of Georgians, who arrived after the Ottoman-Russian War of 1877-1878 (known as the War of 93), continued with intensity until 1908 and at a reduced rate until 1922; (3) The migration of Armenians, the majority of whom were forced to leave as a result of the *Tehcir* of 1915, which lasted until 1924; and (4) the resettlement of Muslim migrants from Greece in areas where the Greek population was entirely displaced as a consequence of the Population Exchange of 1924.

The thesis also endeavors to offer a novel perspective on historical works on the Black Sea, particularly in regard to the methodology and scope of the research. In this context, the 19th-century history of the region has been analyzed collectively and comparatively by focusing on the examination of the written sources of the studies conducted in this field, including both national and international publications.

Additionally, data on the social history of this process have been collected through oral sources. In the context of the written literature review, the publications of non-Muslims in the Black Sea region have also been compiled. In addition to written sources, including the ones in libraries and archives, the research methodology of the project included oral history interviews focusing on migration, ethnic identity and local belonging. In this context, the memories of the Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities were gathered. Interviews were conducted to investigate linguistic, traditional and spatial adaptation issues associated with the concept of local belonging. Lastly, the accumulations of material culture containing visual and ethnographic materials were also taken into consideration. In this context, in addition to family albums (such as a photograph from Ünye Girls' School), the photographs from institutional archives (such as a photograph showing the students and staff of the Ünye Municipal School, found in the archive of the Center for Asia Minor Studies) were also used.

The findings yielded by the research methods employed in the project showed that the region experienced different migratory movements during the Late Ottoman period and the early Republican era. Both domestic and external factors were identified as contributors to the population displacement in the region. The demographic profile of the region underwent a notable transformation with the arrival of Crimean and Circassian migrants and the subsequent departure of Armenians and Greeks. The migratory movements from Caucasia to the Ottoman lands occurred in two distinct waves, the first between 1850 and 1876 and the second following the war of 1877 ('93 War). In the first wave, a considerable proportion of the Caucasian migrants were scattered across Anatolia by sea via Black Sea ports and Istanbul. The remainder were relocated by land through Batumi and Kars. They were

also resettled in the Central Black Sea region, including the provinces of Samsun and Ordu. The second wave included people who came from Caucasia and those who had previously been resettled in the Balkans coming to Anatolia. One of the primary objectives of this project is to identify and examine the changes that occurred in the socio-economic landscape of the region following the migration movements. In this regard, the project extends beyond a mere examination of the history of the Eastern Black Sea region to encompass an investigation of the ethnic memory of the geographical location between Samsun and Ordu, with Ünye as the central focus.

The thesis' investigation into ethnic memory, based on written and oral sources, has also revealed that local populations recount this memory in an abstract manner, using the terms 'those who left' and 'those who came.' Analysis of these abstractions offer valuable insights into the history of emotions. In the narratives of 'those who left,' which largely include Greeks, Armenians and Jews, it has been observed that these individuals internalized the localness that their elders felt for the lands that they left behind, despite having no personal experience of these lands. In this context, they expressed the pain of leaving the modest or affluent order that the first generation had established with their own efforts—including their homes, gardens, belongings and their entire past and connection with their roots—and of moving towards an unknown destination. Those who were resettled in their places were regarded as 'usurpers,' and it was perceived that the 'those who came' found everything ready, a well-established order and the chance to possess property without much effort. However, it was also observed that some of 'those who left' later recognized that the pain and sadness they had experienced were also experienced by 'those who came.' The project findings also demonstrate that the generations who did not experience the trauma of forced migration directly differed in their attitudes

as the generations changed. The accounts of those who were the first to leave in central Asia Minor indicate that, despite the traumatic experiences they underwent, they retain a strong attachment to their places of origin and recall their social relationships clearly. Nevertheless, the subsequent generation has minimal recollection of these locales, apart from certain culinary traditions or other cultural practices. Having been socialized within a novel national identity, they are more likely to pass on strong stories of anger than the stories they heard from their elders (Öztürkmen, 2006). In the course of the project, it was also observed that the third and last generation of those who left were able to look at the events experienced by their grandparents from a certain distance. This may be attributed to the fact that, as a consequence of the rise of the internet and globalization, the narratives of individuals from different countries who have gone through similar experiences have become more widely disseminated and discussed. Some of the interviewees of the last generation avoided to make sweeping generalizations, asserting that they were subjected to similar policies on both sides. However, while those who immigrated are aware of the experiences of those who remained, they also expressed apprehension that the new order they had established as a result of overcoming numerous material and spiritual challenges, along with the land and property they had recently adopted as their home, might be taken from them.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION SAMPLE IN ENGLISH, AYNUR TAN, 18 SEPTEMBER 2010, ÜNYE (SEBİLE HANIM MANSION)

Part 1: I'm Aynur Tan. I'm from Fatsa, I was born in Istanbul and lives in Ünye. I completed my primary and secondary education in Anatolia. I went to a high school in Fatsa and graduated from a university in Samsun. My major degree was in history. I became a teacher of social sciences. To speak honestly, it was not my choice. I would like to be a journalist, political scientist or architecture but later I started to do all these jobs a little and to work in these fields. We are from the Black Sea region. To clarify, the roots of our family are located in the Black Sea region of Turkey. Our actual ancestral homeland is in the Caucasus region. My grandparents are from that region. They immigrated to this country at a relatively young age. The experiences they endured during this period were recounted to each other on occasion and they were often sorrowful. As a consequence of my father's profession as a state officer, our family resided in Anatolia. During the summer months when we went there, I developed a keen interest in their lives. For me, Fatsa was like my parents' village and Kaf Mount in the stories which my mom told me. The lands lying behind Kaf Mount... Because you reach there by crossing the mountains and very nice, smiling people live there. They live in houses with a different architecture. For example, in my father's village the life is filled with rich orchards among higher frame houses, unpaved roads and mountains as green as grass. I found answers of my questions in the conversations held during the harvest time. To illustrate, why did my grandparents live at such a high place? I was because when they moved to that area, people immigrated to higher places because of mosquitos whose number rose due to

the rivers and malaria. It was so difficult to reach that area that there were jeeps. Transportation was possible by those jeeps and local people used to go to the bazaars once a week. I say 'bazaars' because; although it was years and years ago, the women used to carry the weight of that small scale economy on their shoulders. It was quite interesting for me. My mom didn't use to work, and I observed that my grandmother worked a lot as all other local women. They had so many things to do that they just used to sleep. Apart from that, they used to deal with the household's food, beverage, house-cleaning and cost of living... In other words, they had a really difficult life. During those difficult lives of them, whenever they had a break, they used to tell stories about other women who lived long ago and had much more difficulty.

From time to time, my friends of the same age used to invite me to their games. No never, the stories told by elder people were more interesting for me. While listening to them, I also constructed hypothetical scenarios in my mind based on their accounts. It was something like that: The women were forced to leave their beautiful homeland and endure great hardships on their journey. But why? Men also suffered, but women, as mothers, also lost their children. I tried to understand the plight of women who had lost their children while I was safe and happy to be listening to what my mother and grandmother were telling. It was not possible for me to measure this agony. I used to feel sad and touched a lot. Why did they emigrate? Naturally, I learnt the reason behind its years and years later. They used to miss the lands from which they had emigrated, and they were happy on the lands which they lived. Despite the agony they suffered, they were very happy, smiling and healthy people. They used to crack jokes among themselves, and they often used to make fun with each other. The most interesting thing for me was co-op working. Every single

thing used to be performed through cooperation. Nobody used to say that his work was over. They used to help others, and, in this way, a collective life was experienced in the village. I used to observe this mostly during the harvest time. During that time tons of nuts were gleaned and people used to shell those nuts with their hands till midnight. Now this process is carried out by machines but during those times the conversations held were indefinable. What's more people use to eat fruits and have tea. After that they used to go on shelling nuts.

Today we observe global warming intensively in the Black Sea Region. In those times, this region used to be quite rainy, and it was rather difficult to dry the gleaned nuts. When it was rainy, they used to run about together but mostly it was women who worked a lot. Women also used to deal with animals. To give an example, my grandmother used to attract my attention a lot. She used to carry the weight of whole household on her shoulders. Milk, butter, cheese, yogurt... What's more, she used to have a marvelous garden. In that garden she used to grow fruits and vegetables. There were fruit trees. Moreover, she used to glean corn in the corn field, collect feeding stuff for winter and take care of the animals. It was also necessary to carry water and to clean houses. They used to carry water in copper jugs. Then I was surprised why men didn't carry water at least. I don't remember that my grandfather did anything. He used to go to bazaar, and he was too strict as all other men. Thereafter, they used to have dinner with oil lamp, sit by the fireside and those women used to serve everybody till time to sleep. My grandmothers, my aunts, all of them... What was incomprehensible for me was the maturity, quietness and they were quite resigned to this situation. I grasped the reason behind it later... I don't remember any occurrence when they objected or complained about their

troubles. What's more, all the time they were hopeful. In addition to all these things, they were responsible for care of the children, their clothes and sewing them.

In general, men used to be responsible for making money and in that time, there was no job to make money. They only used to sell nut and despite all their efforts it was men who had all the money in their pockets. They used to visit their relatives in far places for some conversation. Again, during those visits, women and their children used to play leading role. I didn't observe that men were very sensitive about those visits. Wedding ceremonies were also quite important, like funerals. Those occasions were very important. However, I used to think that women run about a lot. For example, women used to cook wedding dinners, wash thousands of dishes with the water which was carried again by women. Moreover, women's periods, puerperality and their pregnancies were no different than a secret. They used to cook extraordinarily delicious and healthy dishes. I define them as healthy because Black Sea is a region where vegetables grow easily. What's more, walnuts were used as a spice and flavoring. In other words, vegetable and meat dishes without any oil but with walnut... All dishes were very delicious, and they were cooked on fire. Like the furnace behind me, there were caldrons and jugs. Women were also responsible for setting fire to that furnace and collecting firewood. In brief, I used to observe that women worked night and day. Then what happened? Later technology came into their lives, and everything was much easier for women, but they still worked from morning to evening. In other words, in my memory women worked all the time. On the other hand, my grandfathers and uncles were in the bazaar. However, in the following years new job opportunities appeared for men.

In the society, there was no business life for women till my generation, and they didn't have such a demand. They had nothing to do with politics and other jobs.

They didn't know anything about this, what's more touching; they didn't get any education. In my mom's generation, most of the women didn't even complete the elementary school or never went to school. They learnt how to read and write later. I was quite surprised whenever my grandmother said, "write a letter for me to your uncle in Germany, write whatever I tell you". For me, it wasn't possible not to know how to read and write. How could it be possible not to be able to write? I couldn't grasp it. My grandmother's mother didn't speak any Turkish. Although we gathered a lot, we couldn't communicate with each other as I couldn't speak Georgian and likewise, she couldn't speak Turkish. She couldn't learn any Turkish, but my grandmothers used to speak both Georgian and Turkish very well. However, the conversations at home were in Georgian. When we had time off, I was quite surprised at how they spoke. It was interesting for me, but I couldn't grasp why they used such a language and didn't speak Turkish. When I asked the same question to them, they used to tell me it was their own language. What about Turkish? They told me they had learned Turkish when they had moved to Turkey. I was surprised at this. Later I understood them. Of course, I grasped the reasons behind it, and it was a quite challenging question for me in that time. Whenever I asked this question to my father, insistently he told me "Actually I want you to learn Georgian; even I want you not to forget this language. Because it's not discrimination, language is a very important advantage. Speaking a language always helps you. Thanks to my Georgian, I had many advantages. I also want you to speak it". I speak Georgian a little but generations coming after me don't speak Georgian. Previously Georgian families were quite strict about marriages among Georgian people. Especially when it comes to their daughters... They would never let their daughters marry a man of any other race, but they would let their sons marry a girl from other sects. Their strict

attitude towards this issue ensured that both language and culture were also maintained. As far as I remember, the culture of 50-45 years ago was almost same and adopted exactly. They cook the same dishes. Of course, the dishes I cook are not as delicious as my grandmother's dishes. Her rule of thumb is effective on this. Also, today we are using artificial ingredients, and it affects the taste a lot. Yes, after observing all these things, I have tried to reflect them on my works, and I still try to do the same thing. Additionally, while cooking, I try to apply what I observed in the daily lives of my grandmothers, my mom and my aunts.

When a baby is born, he inherits the genes of his parents and definitely these genes were inherited from his grandparents. What's more, he acquires a lot of things from what he has seen. He starts to adopt these characteristics even without realizing it. All of these are quite precious to me. To maintain it, I also teach them to my children, and I really see myself as a real Black Sea woman. I regard myself as an extension of them. Most probably, I have acquired my working habits by observing them. I really think that humankind should work. In my opinion, everybody should keep his end up in the best possible way.

Later my grandmothers passed away and many values also passed away with them. I learnt very valuable information that will be used in daily life from them. For example, my grandmother used to respect people very much. She used to stand up even when her son-in-law came. We used to tell her "Grandma, why bother? He's younger than you" and she used to say "No my daughter, don't say so. When somebody comes in if I stand up, what will I lose". I can't forget and express the respect which my grandmothers felt for their daughters-in-law and sons-in-law and all the women were like that. This was like a relatively secret agreement among them.

They used to try to be attentive to what they wore, but they didn't have such a financial possibility. At wedding ceremonies, they generally used to care about it. Although the wedding ceremonies were full of fun, I used to observe that women were a little shy. Their biggest entertainment was the conversations which they had among themselves and preparations for winter, for Ramadan and new babies. I really feel much happier as I have observed all these things and grown up among many aunts, uncles and grandparents. We've acquired and learnt so many things without even realizing and observing them. I know that Black Sea women have experienced the same thing on this same latitude. I know that they carry the burden of both household and their families. Also, I know that they do this not financially but physically by working up a sweat. Has it decreased gradually? No. Like modern women, Black Sea women have also started to take their places in the society, and we can see very good examples of it in almost every field. They are very successful. There are really very good results. Beauty of their dishes, their taste, cleanliness of their houses, human relations... Throughout Anatolia, human relations are very nice and warm, but in my opinion, they are a little bit warmer, more attentive and nicer.

Black Sea women, in other words old women, how could they keep up with today's world? In a sense, today what is the connection between me and my aunts? What is the difference between us? When we look at them, we can say that they have kept up with today's world with great ambition, desire and success. They have adopted all kinds of innovations; they have adapted to every single thing. Including their clothes, they have changed everything without pushing the patterns too hard. For example, years ago while women used to wear headscarf, coat and clothes that cover their legs, my aunts started to wear pants. From time to time, they didn't wear any headscarves and sometimes they were more self-confident and started to

participate in some activities. For example, they started to make money by selling the dishes which they cooked at home. They started to make fancy works not for themselves but for making money. For business purposes, they sewed clothes, and they even woven rugs. They even wattled baskets and added their own creativity to them. They produced grape molasses and cheese. They started to cook everything which once they used to cook for their families to sell them and make money and they became quite successful at it. The more they gained, the more self-confidence they became. Their only problem was lack of education. Many local women in Black Sea Region express the same thing. I suppose that the hard geographical conditions hindered families from sending their daughters to school. Almost none of them have received any education. Although schools were opened in villages, only boys went to schools while women and girls weren't sent to schools. However, they managed to achieve lots of things despite this lack and I think they closed the gap very quickly thanks to their genes and intelligence. They have also started to make use of technology. For example, they are using machines and cars at work. They use all household appliances. In the past at homes there used to be sewing machines and women used to sew their children's clothes themselves. Today people buy ready-made clothing and use all household appliances successfully. They are still very hardworking and productive. They have kept up with modern society. However, that generation still lacks education. I can say that their biggest problem is their desire to educate their children, especially their daughters. In this direction, they make a lot of effort not only for girls but also for the education of all children. I'm a teacher. I work at a private teaching institution and a school. I experience the intensive effort made by mothers and through their works Black Sea women are also globalizing. They use the internet and cars. They are open to all modern innovations and quite

self-confident. We observe this best at the festivals. So many women eagerly exhibit their works and get in return for this great effort. In the society women are carrying out many things more attentively and nicely than men. At least cleanliness and beauty at restaurants, meticulousness observed at working places... Nowadays men also accept this situation.

Part 2: I have always wanted to do something by combining the observations I've made and information I've acquired during my education life so far. I told you about my interest in architecture. This interest of mine has directed me to work oriented at maintaining the old houses and bringing them in today's world. Moreover, I would like to do something to maintain old cultures and to make new generations love them. At History Foundation, I have found the necessary working environment for all of these. I have met History Foundation coincidentally and I have gladly participated in local history projects. They helped us greatly. Furthermore, in all our endeavors, we strove to safeguard the cultural diversity that surrounded us and to pass it down to future generations. What were our activities? Our activities included attendance at conferences and the undertaking of oral history studies. In 1998, I started to conduct oral history studies. At that time, I was not yet acquainted with the History Foundation. I believe this to be the case and I have observed that the History Foundation attached considerable importance to these works and we continued at a greater pace. I am unsure of the precise number. These works were carried out over a period of 12 years, resulting in the collection of over 500 interviews. However, it was not possible to transcribe these interviews. Later our local TV channel helped me, and we had to give a break due to certain problems at our local television. We will go on working on them; at least they'll put on paper.

However, during my studies, I met nice people, acquired a lot of information about early cultures and shared this information with people from Ünye and TV audiences. We have shared all of it, the only thing to do is to put them on paper. In the meantime, we have carried this work in Ünye and Black Sea Region to Samsun, Ordu and Fatsa. We have also carried it to Istanbul and observed that thanks to these studies we could measure a 100-year period of communal living in Black Sea Region. We can think outside the box and see very important details between the lines. What are these details? To put it briefly and shallowly, it's hard to access interior parts of Black Sea Region but thanks to marine transportation it has opened up to the world. It also has this wealth, and I suppose that all port cities are like this. Turkey, Ünye sets a very good example. They are active ports of the last 100 years, of the 20th century, 19th century and this dynamism has brought about both economic and ethnic-cultural wealth. In other words, people have immigrated to this area all the time by ships. Ottoman Empire used ports and their hinterlands more within the framework of its settlement policy. In this way; in Ünye, Black Sea, Fatsa and Ordu Turks, Circassian immigrants from Caucasus Mountains, population coming from the Balkans, all Balkan people and all other people from Central Anatolia have lived together. Among these people, Armenians and Greeks take an important place. Because we can say that Armenians and Greeks were here apart from these immigrations and there are so many similarities and interaction between these cultures. They have learnt so many things from each other and lived together peacefully. However later they had some problems because of the policies adopted by nations and organizations, but these problems weren't reflected on people. The community has tried to stay out of these problems. In Ünye we have observed so many beautiful anecdotes, short stories, occurrences which move people and talk

about the beauty of human sincerity. I would like to give an example; when it was required to send Armenian community from these lands, mayor of this area asked families to hide many artisans for them to teach their merits to us. People from Ünye always talk about this. For example, they say that Armenians are quite successful at bakery, they cook cakes and pastry, they learnt how to make marmalade from them and refreshments culture. They also say that they respect each other's religious practices and rituals a lot. For instance, while Muslims were fasting, Armenians and Greeks didn't eat anything outside. What's more, although they lived in separate neighborhoods, they visited each other. They were affected by each other's religion and culture. They used to watch each other's funerals. For example, my mother-in-law and her family used to live in a house in the neighborhood, Orta Yılmazlar Neighborhood where once there was the big church and there is Central Secondary School today. In the month of Ramadan, they used to perform Tarawih prayer and required worship was performed during Tarawih prayer, at Qadr Night and at mosques. My mother-in-law told me: We used to see their Greek neighbor in front on the mosque when we were leaving the mosque after Tarawih prayer. Especially during Islamic memorial services and at Qadr Night, we saw her crying. Later, she confessed that she had been so affected by our religion that she became Muslim but couldn't confess it to her own sect. They respect each other's religion very much and there is no pressure about it. There is no rule, and they live together happily and like each other.

Greeks and Armenians have a different language, they speak in their own languages among themselves but when it comes to communicating with Turks they speak Turkish. Moreover, at trade life, there are Greeks and Armenians. There are Armenian tailors who have Muslim customers. They have no problem with the other

community's people. So far, I have had so many interviews, and nobody has told me about the problems among them. For example, when they had to leave these lands due to the population exchange; they left this region in tears. For example, Greeks who went to Greece carried as much stuff as possible. As they needed money and gold, they hide them under yogurt. When I heard this, I was surprised and found it quite wise. There are so many nice and interesting occurrences among them. There are unforgettable friendships. My husband's grandfather helped them while they were immigrating. While they were leaving, Turkish people both worried and help them.

Among other things, the most touching one is families who had to leave their children behind while they were immigrating. They entrusted their children to Turkish families but couldn't come back to get them. Those children were grown up by those families. Some of them knew that they were left behind and some of them couldn't even learn this fact. However, almost all of them have become Muslim.

Aren't there any touching stories, injustice and practices which disturb people?

Maybe, there are. As I couldn't talk with Armenians and Greeks and make interviews with these communities, I'm not sure. But when I visited a few Armenians families, they gladly accepted me although they didn't know me at all. They also told me that they were shy. I also said that I felt uneasy. I wasn't sure of with whom I would encounter, what they would say, whether they would react or not, how they would perceive my questions, whether they would get my sincerity... When we gathered with these feelings, we made a nice and warm interview. All the time, they said: "We have no problem with Turkish people and lands. We are also struggling to make a living. Without doubt, we are still feeling the pains of what happened". When they taught their own cultures to Turks and Muslims, they also wanted to emphasize the

things which they taught. When I told them about Turkish people saying that they learnt how to make marmalade, liquor, cakes and delight; they seemed quite happy. I suppose that during a certain period, following the War of Independence, some people tried to create a prejudice. However, this wasn't reflected on the community. Only some churches were knocked over. Today still students who studies in the same school and neighbors who lived in the same neighborhood miss each other. They still feel sorry that they left these lands. I have observed great good faith and love in both sides. So many people expressed that they were moved a lot when they saw their old neighbors, school mates when they saw them among my interviews and they wanted to contact them again. These comments pleased us a lot.

I am a retired history teacher; of course, I would like to put all my work and experience to good use. I still go on workings, but part by part. For example, I have a ready cookbook. However, in contradistinction to what I have done so far, it's a pretty free cookbook. In it, it keeps even some stories about dishes. Moreover, there are stories which I've compiled from these stories and touched me a lot. There are scenarios compiled from them. I tried hard to include my students in this project, and I even violated the regulations. To illustrate it, when it wasn't included in the regulations, I gave homework on Ünye. Firstly, it got reactions but later I saw that the same thing was applied at almost all schools. Here we've learnt so many things and reached very deep information. I want to compile all of them as a book, but I don't want to rush about it. As there are so many photos, the expenses increase but at the end it will be completed.

What's more while teaching to the new generations firstly my family and acquaintances watched me on twitter. There were some people who sneered at my efforts but later I saw that people adopted it and all of them appreciated it. Even

sometimes I blush because of these admirations and think that it's more than I deserve. Among other things, my family and children liked this subject a lot and together with their friends they told me that they loved history. My daughter also aims to carry out research on it and transform my scenarios into movies. With this aim in mind, she also directed her education accordingly. I think that from now on they won't get lost, and they will be shared widely. I'm so happy to tell you about this. Happily, I have carried out such studies and I'm sharing these studies with other people. I'm very glad to share them with you.



APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION SAMPLE IN TURKISH, AYNUR TAN, 18 SEPTEMBER 2010, ÜNYE (SEBİLE HANIM MANSION)

Part 1: İsmim Aynur Tan. Fatsalıyım, İstanbul'da doğdum, Ünye'de yaşıyorum. İlk ve orta öğrenimimi Anadolu'da tamamladım, lise eğitimi Fatsa'da. Yükseköğrenim Samsun'da. Tarih okudum. Sosyal bilgiler öğretmenisi oldum. Bu, tercihim değildi aslında gazeteci, siyaset bilimci veya mimar olmak isterdim ama daha sonra hayatım içerisinde bunlardan biraz biraz yapmaya, bu alanlarda çalışmaya başladım.

Karadenizliyiz. Yani Türkiye'nin Karadeniz Bölgesinde kökenlerimiz var. Daha doğrusu Kafkas kökenliyiz. Anneannem, babaannem Kafkaslardan. Onlar çok küçükken göç edip gelmişler. Ve gelirken, onlar göç edip gelirken yaşananlar zaman zaman birbirlerine anlattıkları acıklı öykülerdi. Babam memur olduğu için, biz Anadolu'da yaşadık. Yaz aylarında izne geldiğimizde, onların hayatları benim çok ilgimi çekti. Ben Fatsa'yı, annemin veya babamın köylerini, annemin bana anlattığı masallardaki Kaf Dağı kabul ederdim. Kaf Dağının arkasındaki ülkeler... Çünkü dağları aşip gidiyorsunuz ve orada çok güzel, güler yüzlü insanlar yaşıyor, farklı mimariye sahip evlerde yaşıyorlar. Örneğin babamın köyü çok daha yüksek, ahşap evler, toprak yollar ve yemyeşil dağların içerisinde meyve bahçeleri zenginlikle dolu bir yaşam.. Zaman zaman, özellikle fındık zamanı harman başında yapılan sohbetlerde pek çok soruma cevap bulurdum. Örneğin niçin, niçin benim dedemler, babaannemler bu kadar yüksek ve uzak bir yerdeler? Bunu geldikleri zaman ırmaklardan çoğalan sivrisinekler ve sıtma hastalığı nedeniyle o dönemde insanların, daha doğrusu göç ederek gelen insanların yüksekleri tercih ettiklerini öğrenirdim. Ulaşılması o kadar zordu ki jipler vardı. O jipler aracılığıyla ulaşım sağlanır, haftada

bir gün de pazarlara inilirdi. Pazarlar diyorum, yıllar öncesi olmasına rağmen, o minik ekonomik alanların yükünü kadınlar taşırdı. Bu benim çok ilgimi çekerti. Benim annem çalışmazdı ama babaannemin çok çalıştığını görürdüm ve diğeri bütün kadınlar çok çalışırdı. O kadar çok işleri vardı ki, sadece uyurlardı onun haricinde evin yiyeceğı, içeceğı, temizliğı, geçimi.. yani çok zor hayatları vardı. O zor hayatlarda mola verdikleri zaman yaptıkları sohbetlerde geçmişten anlatılan öykülerdeki kadınların çok daha zorluk yaşadıklarını dinlerdim.

Zaman zaman yaşıttım arkadaşlarım beni oyunlarına çağırırlardı, yok hayır, bu büyüklerin anlattıkları daha çok ilgimi çekerti ve onları dinlerken kafamda da anlatılanların senaryolarını yazardım. Senaryo şöyleydi: Uzak, çok güzel bir ülkeden göçmek zorunda kalmışlardı ve bu göç esnasında kadınlar çok acı çekmişlerdi. Niye? Erkekler de acı çekiyorlardı ama kadınlar bir yandan ana, çocuklarını kaybediyorlardı. Bu, annemin yanında, büyükannemin yanında öykü dinlerken onların gölgesi şemsiyesi altında yaşıyor olmanın mutluluğı içersinde evladını kaybeden kadınları anlamaya çalışırdım. Bu acıyı ölçüp biçemezdim, çok üzüldüm, çok etkilenirdim. Niye göç etmişlerdi? Tabi bunu yıllar sonra öğreniyorum. Ve göç ettikleri toprakları özlerlerdi ama yaşadıkları toprakta da mutluydular. Bakın bütün bu acılara rağmen çok mutlu, güler yüzlü, sağlıklı insanlardı. Aralarında sık sık şakalar yaparlardı, birbirlerine takılırlardı ve en çok da imece usulü ilgimi çekerti. Her şey yardımlaşarak yapılırdı. Benim işim bitti denmezdi. Diğeri işine yardım edilir, böylece köyde ortaklaşa bir yaşam gerçekleşirdi. Bunu en çok da fındık harmanlarında gözlemlerdim. Fındık toplanır, düşünün bir köyün tonlarca fındığı toplanır, harmanlarda insanlar sırayla o fındıkları gece yarısına kadar el ile ayıklarlardı. Şimdi bu işlem makinelerle yapılıyor ama o harmanlarda, o fındık

başındaki harman başındaki sohbetler, anlatmakla bitmez ayrıca meyveler yenir, çaylar içilir, yeniden imece usulüyle fındık ayıklanmaya devam edilirdi.

Küresel ısınmayı bugün fark ediyoruz Karadeniz Bölgesi'nde yoğun olarak, o dönemlerde Karadeniz çok daha yağışlıydı, fındık bir türlü kurutulamazdı. Yağmur yağdığı zaman yine birlikte koşuşurlardı ama yine de en çok kadınlar koştururdu. Hayvanlarıyla da kadınlar ilgilenirdi. Örneğin, babaannem çok ilgimi çekerdi. Bütün evin yeme içme yükü onun sırtındaydı, süt, tereyağı, peynir, yoğurt.. Ayrıca şahane bir bahçesi vardı. O bahçede sebzeler yetiştirir ve meyve ağaçları vardı, meyveler yetiştirirdi. Ayrıca mısır bahçesinde mısırları toplar, kış için hayvanlarına alaf biriktirir, ayrıca hayvanların bakımını yapardı. Bir de su gelecek, evin temizlikleri yapılacak güğümlerle -bakır güğümlerle- sular taşınırdı. O zaman şaşırırdım, niçin, en azından sutaşıma işini niçin erkekler yapmaz? Hayır, erkekler o işi de yapmazlardı. Hiçbir iş yaptığını hatırlamıyorum dedemin, çarşıya gider ve gelirlerdi. Ve çok otoriter idi ve erkeklerin hepsi öyleydi. Sonra akşamları gaz lambasının altında yemekler yenir, ocak başında oturulur ve yatana kadar o kadınlar herkese hizmet ederlerdi. Anneannemde de babaannemde de yengelerimde de hepsinde, benim anlayamadığım çözemediğim, fakat daha sonra anladığım bir olgunluk, bir suskunluk ve bir kabullenmişlik vardı. Hiçbir şeye itiraz ettiklerini, bu zor yaşamlarından dert yandıklarını hatırlamıyorum. Hiç dert yandıklarını hatırlamıyorum. Ayrıca, hep umut içersindeydiler. Ayrıca yine çocukların bakımı, çocukların üstü başı giyimleri, onların dikilmesi ayarlanması hep onların sorumluluğuydu.

Genellikle erkekler para kazanmak sorumluluğunu taşırlar, o dönemde para kazanılacak iş güç de yoktu. Sadece fındık satılır, bütün emeklerine rağmen fındığın parası da erkeklerin cebinde olurdu. Ayrıca, uzak uzak yerlere akraba sohbetlerine

gidilirdi, akraba ziyaretlerine. Yine bu ziyaretlerde başroller kadınlarındı, çocuklarıyla beraber. Erkeklerin bu ziyaretlere çok duyarlı olduğunu görmezdim. Ayrıca yine düğünler çok önemliydi, cenazeler çok önemliydi. Çok çok önemliydi bunlar. Fakat yine kadınların koşuşturduğunu düşünürüm, hatırlıyorum. Örneğin düğün yemeklerini kadınlar yapar, binlerce tabak binlerce bulaşık kadınlar tarafından yıkanır, yine kadınların taşıdığı sularla.. ayrıca kadınların hastalıkları, kadınların lohusalıkları, hamilelikleri aralarında adeta birer sırımsı gibi konuşulurdu. Bunun yanı sıra olağanüstü güzel ve sağlıklı yemekler yapılırdı. Sağlıklı diyorum, Karadeniz Bölgesi sebzenin kolay yetiştiği bir bölge. Ayrıca, baharat olarak, tatlandırıcı olarak ceviz kullanılırdı. Yani yağ kullanılmayan, ceviz kullanılan sebze yemekleri veya et yemekleri. Bütün yemekler çok lezzetliydi. Ve ocak ateşinde pişerdi. Şu arkamdaki ocak gibi, aynı buradaki gibi kazan ve güğümler bulunurdu. O ocağın yakılması da kadınların işiydi, o ocağı yakacak odunları toplamak da kadınların işiydi. Velhasıl, kadınların durmadan çalıştıklarını gözlemlerdim. Sonra ne oldu? Sonra hayatlara teknoloji girmeye başladı. Kadınların işleri daha da kolaylaştı. Ama yine sabahtan akşama kadar çalışmaları bitmedi, çalışmalar yine sürdü. Yani hep kadınları çalışırken hatırlıyorum beyleri de genellikle yani dedemleri, amcalarımı, dayılarımı çarşıda hatırlıyorum. Ama daha sonraki yıllarda yavaş yavaş iş alanları açıldı, erkekler çarşıda.

Kadınların, benim kuşağıma gelene kadar çalışma hayatı yoktu, toplum içersinde. Ve böyle bir talepleri de yoktu. Siyasetle veyahut da hayatın diğer işleriyle de ilgileri yoktu. Bu konuda bilgileri, en acıklısı eğitimleri yoktu. Annem kuşağında olanların pek çoğu okula yarım yamalak gitmişti veya gitmemişti. Okuma yazmayı sonradan zorla öğrenmişlerdi. Ve en çok da babaannemin “mektup yaz, hadi kızım bana Almanya’daki amcana otur da bir mektup yaz, söylediklerimi yaz” demesine

şşıırırdım. Ama insan nasıl okuma yazma bilmezdi? Nasıl yazamazdı? Bunu anlayamazdım. Bırakın bundan ötesini babaannemin annesi Türkçe bilmezdi. Ve o kadar çok bir araya gelmemize rağmen ben Gürcüce konuşamadığım için, o da Türkçe konuşamadığı için hiçbir zaman iletişimimiz olmadı. O Türkçe öğrenememişti. Ama babaannem, anneannem çok iyi Gürcüce bilirler, ayrıca Türkçe de konuşturlardı. Fakat evdeki sohbetler hep Gürcüce olurdu. Yıllık izinlerimize geldiğimizde ben bu konuşma şekli karşısında çok şşıırırdım. Hem ilgimi çeker, hem de anlayamaz niçin onlar böyle bir dil kullanıyor, niçin Türkçe konuşmuyorlar, diye merak ederdim. Kendilerine sorduğumda da bizim dilimiz bu, derlerdi. Ee, Türkçe? Türkçeyi Türkiye’ye gelince burada öğrendik, derlerdi. Ve ben bu durum karşısında çok şşıırırdım. Bunu daha sonra tabi ki çözdüm. Tabi ki nedenlerini çok daha iyi anladım fakat o dönemde gerçekten kafamı çok kurcalayan bir soruydu. Babama sorduğumda bu konuyu ısrarla “aslında ben sizin de Gürcüce öğrenmenizi istiyorum, hatta unutmamanızı istiyorum, çünkü hiç asla ayrımcılık değil bu, dil çok önemli bir kazançtır dil bilmek her zaman fayda sağlar. Ben işte Gürcüce biliyor olmamın sayesinde çok avantaj yaşadım. Sizlerin de bilmesini isterim” derdi. Ben biraz biliyorum. Ama benden sonraki kuşaklar hiç bilmiyor. Önceden Gürcü aileler çocuklarını Gürcü ailelerle evlendirmek konusunda çok katıydılar. Özellikle kız alıp vermede, kız vermezler asla ama alırlardı, diğer cemaatlerden. Bu konunun bu kadar titizlikle korunuyor olması, dilin, kültürün de korunmasını sağladı. O yüz yıl önce, benim hatırladığım, 50-45 yıl önceki kültür bugüne hemen hemen aynen geldi, aynen uygulanır. Aynı yemekler yapılır. Tabi benim yaptığım yemek, babaannemin yaptığı yemeğin lezzetinde değil. Bunda onun el ölçüsü, el kararı da etkili, bugünkü malzemelerin suni maddelerle karışmış olması da etkili. Evet, ben bütün bunları gözlemledikten sonra, birtakım çalışmalarımda yansıtmaya çalıştım ve hala da

yansıtıyorum. Ayrıca yemek yapılırken, günlük yařantıda, babaannemden, anneannemden, annemden ve yengelerimden gördüklerimi de uygulamaya çalışıyorum.

İnsan bir bebek doğduğunda anne ve babasından genleri alır, mutlaka bu genler büyükanne, büyükbabadan da edinilmiştir. Ve gördükleriyle de çok şey kazanır insan. Kendisi bile farkında olmaz, fakat daha sonra bunlara sahip çıkmaya çalışır. Bütün bunların hepsi benim için çok değerli. Devam etmesi için çocuklarıma da öğretiyorum. Ve ben gerçekten kendimi bir tam Karadeniz kadını olarak düşünüyorum, onların bir uzantısı olarak görüyorum. Ve herhalde çalışma alışkanlığı onları hep görmemden geçti, gerçekten insanoğlunun çalışması gerektiğini düşünüyorum. Herkesin, üstüne düşen görevi en iyi şekilde yapmaları gerektiğini düşünüyorum.

Babaannem ve anneannem daha sonra kaybettik pek çok insan felsefesini de, günlük hayatta kullanılacak çok değerli bilgileri de onlardan öğrendim. Örneğin babaannemin, anneannemin insanlara saygısı inanılmazdı. Babaannem damadı gelince bile ayağa kalkardı. “Babaanne, ne gerek var” derdik, “ne gerek var, o senden küçük”, “Hayır, kızım öyle söylemeyin, içeri giren bir insan, ne olur ben ayağa kalkarsam, ne kaybederim” derdi. Anneannemin damatlarına, gelinlerine karşı saygısını sevgisini, babaannemin... unutamam... anlatamam... Ve kadınların hepsi böyleydi. Bu, göreceli olarak aralarında gizli bir anlaşma gibiydi.

Giyimlerine özen göstermeye çalışırlardı ama böyle bir maddi imkânları yoktu. Düğünlerde genellikle buna özen gösterirlerdi. Düğünler çok eğlenceli olmasına rağmen, kadınların biraz daha çekingen olduklarını görürdüm. En büyük eğlenceleri ise kendi aralarında yaptıkları sohbetlerdi. Ve evlerde yapılan kış hazırlıkları, Ramazan hazırlıkları, işte lohusa, bebek hazırlıklarıydı. Bütün bunları

gözlemliyor olmak, bir sürü yenge, bir sürü amca, dayı ve babaanne, anneanne, büyükanne, aynı evde yaşayan bu insanlar arasında yetişiyor olmak gerçekten beni bugün daha çok sevindiriyor. Farkında olmadan çok şeyler kazanmışız, çok şeyler öğrenmişiz, onları gözlemlemişiz. Karadeniz kadınının bu aynı enlemde hemen hemen aynı şeyleri yaşadığını biliyorum. Evin, ailenin yükünü taşıdıklarını biliyorum. Ama maddi anlamda değil, manevi anlamda çalışarak fiziksel olarak bu yükü taşıdıklarını biliyorum. Giderek bu azaldı mı? Hayır. Karadeniz kadını tüm günün kadınları gibi günlük hayatta bu kez toplum içersindeki işlerde yerini almaya başladı ve hemen hemen her alanda bunun örnekleri var, çok güzel örnekleri var. Çok başarılılar. Gerçekten çok iyi sonuçlar var ortada. Yemeklerdeki güzellik, lezzet, evlerin temizliği, insan ilişkileri... Anadolu'nun tamamında insan ilişkileri çok güzel çok sıcak ama ben Karadeniz'de bir derece daha daha sıcak, daha özenli ve daha güzel olduğunu düşünüyorum.

Karadeniz kadını, yani eski kadınlar, bugüne nasıl uydular? Yani bugün yengelerimle benim aramdaki bağ nedir, fark nedir, onlara baktığımız zaman da şöyle söyleyebiliriz, büyük bir hırs, büyük bir istek ve büyük bir başarıyla uyum sağladılar. Her şeyi ama her türlü yeniliği kabullendiler, her şeye uydular. Kılık kıyafetlerinde dahi çok fazla kalıpları zorlamadan değişiklikler yaptılar. Örneğin yıllar önce kadınların giysisi başörtü, manto, mutlaka bacaklar kapalı şekilde iken hiçbir kadın pantolon giyinmezken yengelerim, yıllar sonra hemen hemen hepsi pantolon giyindiler. Zaman zaman başlarını açtılar ve zaman zaman da kendilerine güvenleri daha çok arttı, toplum içersinde bazı faaliyetlerde rol almaya başladılar. Mesela evde yaptıkları yemekleri satarak para kazanmaya başladılar. Mesela yaptıkları el işleri kendileri için değil, para kazanmak amacıyla yapmaya başladılar. Dikişlerini diktiler dışarıya, hatta kilim dokudular. Hatta birtakım sepetler ördüler,

kendi yaratıcılıklarını bunlara kattılar. Pekmez yaptılar, peynir yaptılar. Ailelerini beslemek için yaptıkları bütün yemekle ilgili çalışmaları dışarıya satıp para kazanmaya başladılar bunda da çok başarılı oldular. Para kazandıkça kendilerine güvenleri arttı. Sadece dertleri yeterli eğitimlerinin olmadığı idi. Bunu pek çok kadın Karadeniz’de dile getiriyor. Öyle zannediyorum ki, coğrafyanın zorlu olması özellikle kız çocuklarının okula gönderilmesini engellemiş. Çünkü neredeyse tamamı eğitim almamışlar. Köylerde okullar açıldığı halde erkek çocuklar okullara gönderilmiş, kadınlar, kız çocuklar gönderilmemiş. Fakat hala onlar o eksikle bugüne geldiler ve ben öyle zannediyorum genlerinden getirdikleri zekâyla açıklarını, topluma uyma açığını çok çabuk kapattılar. Bugün herhangi bir sorun yaşamıyorlar. Teknolojiyi kullanmaya da başladılar, örneğin işte makineler, örneğin otomobiller kullanıyorlar. Örneğin evdeki bütün makineli araçları kullanıyorlar. Önceden işte dikiş makinaları vardı bütün evlerde, giysilerini, her kadın kendisi dikerdi çocuklarının. Bugün hazır alınıyor ve evlerdeki bütün makineleri başarıyla kullanıyorlar. Hala çok çalışkanlar, hala çok üretkenler ama topluma da uyum sağladılar. Fakat o kuşağın eğitimsiz hali bugün de devam ediyor. Fakat çocuklarını, özellikle de kız çocuklarını okutmak yönünde istekleri, yoğun istekleri en önemli sorunları diyebilirim. Bu yönde çok büyük çaba sarf ediyorlar. Sadece kız çocukları değil, çocuklarının eğitimi konusunda. Ben öğretmenim, dershanede ve okulda çalışıyorum. Annelerin yoğun çabasını bizzat yaşıyorum. Ve Karadeniz kadını artık dışarıya da açılıyor yaptığı çalışmalarla. İnternet de kullanıyor, otomobil de kullanıyor, günün bütün değişimlerine açık ve kendine özgüveni oldukça güzel. Bunun en güzel örneğini festivallerde yaşıyoruz. Bütün kadınlar, o kadar çok kadın ürettiğini yaptığı çalışmayı istekle sergiliyor ki, bunun karşılığını da aldığında görüyoruz ki kadınlar toplum içersinde belki de beylerin ihmal ettiği çok şeyi çok

daha güzel ve özenle yapıyor. En azından işte restoranlardaki temizlik güzellik, en azından iş yerlerindeki titizlik.. artık bu durumu beyler de kabul ediyor.

Part 2: Çocukluğumdan beri yaptığım gözlemleri eğitim hayatımda aldığım bilgilerle de birleştirerek sürekli bir şeyler yapmak istedim. Mimariye ilgim var demiştim. Bu ilgim, eski evlerin korunması ve onların günümüze kazandırılması yönünde çalışmalara sevk etti beni. Ayrıca yine eski kültürlerin kaybolmaması, gençlere sevdirmesi yönünde de bir şeyler yapmak isterdim. Bütün bunların hepsini Tarih Vakfı'nda çalışma ortamı buldum. Büyük bir tesadüf sonucu tanıştık Tarih Vakfı'yla. Ve Tarih Vakfı'nın yerel tarih çalışmaları projesi içerisinde memnuniyetle yer aldım. Onlar da bize çok yardımcı oldular. Biz de tüm çalışmalarda çevremizde gördüğümüz kültür zenginliklerini hem korumak, hem de gelecek nesillere aktarmak için çalışmalar yaptık. Neler yaptık? Genellikle konferanslara katıldık, sözlü tarih çalışmaları yaptık. 1998 yılında sözlü tarih çalışmasına başladım ben. O zaman henüz Tarih Vakfı'yla tanışmamıştım. Öyle zannediyorum.. ve bu çalışmalarımın Tarih Vakfı'nda çok önemsendiğini gördüm, daha büyük hızla devam ettik. Tam sayısını bilemiyorum, 12 yıl bu çalışmaları yaptık ve belki 500'den fazla röportajım var. Fakat maalesef bu röportajları, bu çalışmaları yazıya dökemedik. Daha sonra yerel televizyonumuz bana yardımcıydı, yerel televizyondaki birtakım sorunlar nedeniyle şimdilik bu çalışmamız kalmış durumda. Bu çalışmamız devam edecek, en azından yazıya dökülecek. Ama bu çalışmam esnasında tabii ki çok güzel insanlar tanıdım geçmiş kültür hakkında çok bilgi edindim ve bunları da hep Ünyelilerle, televizyon izleyicileriyle paylaştım. Tamamını paylaştık sadece yazıya dökülmesi kısmı kaldı. Ve bu esnada Ünye'de Karadeniz Bölgesinde ki bu çalışmamızı, Samsun, Ordu, Fatsa'ya da taşıdık. Ayrıca İstanbul'a da taşıdık ve gördük ki bu

alışmalarımız sayesinde Karadeniz Bölgesi'nin toplumsal yaşamının 100 yılını ölçebiliyoruz. Böyle bir çerçeve içersinden bakabiliyoruz ve satır aralarında çok büyük ayrıntılar görüyoruz. Neler bunlar? Kabataslak, çok yüzeysel söz edecek olursam şöyle: Karadeniz Bölgesi iç kesime ulaşımı zor fakat deniz ulaşımı nedeniyle bırakın İstanbul'u, tüm dünyaya açılmış. Ve bunun zenginliğini de taşıyor ve bütün liman şehirleri böyledir zannediyorum, Türkiye, Ünye bunun çok güzel bir örneği. 100 yılın, 20. yüzyılın, 19. yüzyılın, 20. yüzyılın, hareketli limanları ve bu hareketlilik burada hem ekonomik zenginlik hem de etnik kültürel zenginlik sağlamış. Yani buraya sürekli gemiler aracılığıyla göçler gelmiş. Osmanlı Devleti kendi toprakları içersinde iskân politikasında limanları ve onların hinterlandını daha çok kullanmış. Böylece Ünye'de, Karadeniz'de, Fatsa'da, Ordu'da Türk nüfus, Kafkaslardan gelen Çerkez göçmen nüfus, Balkanlardan getirilen nüfus mübadelesiyle, muhacir denilen tüm Balkan nüfusları ve İç Anadolu'dan gelen diğer nüfuslar bir arada yaşamışlar. Bu nüfuslar içersinde Ermeni ve Rumlar da önemli yer tutuyor. Çünkü Ermeni ve Rumların bu göçler dışında burada bulunduklarını söyleyebiliriz. Ve kültürde o kadar çok benzerlikler, o kadar çok birbirinden etkilenme, birbirinden bir şeyler öğrenme var ki, insanların huzur içersinde yaşamları, fakat daha sonra ülke politikaları nedeniyle ülkelerin uyguladıkları, bazen de derneklerin o savaşlar sırasında uyguladıkları politikalar nedeniyle sorunlar yaşanmış ama bu sorunlar halka inmemiş veya halk bu sorunların dışında kalmaya çalışmış. Ünye'de Ermeni halk ile Türkler yani Türk nüfus arasında çok güzel anekdotlar, minik öyküler -yani insanı duygulandıran, insan samimiyetini güzelliğini anlatan olaylar- tespit ettik. Örnek vermek isterim size, mübadeleyle Ermenilerin buradan gönderilmesi gerektiğinde bu bölgenin belediye başkanı, pek çok ustayı ailelerden saklamalarını istemiş. Gitmesinler, meziyetlerini bizlere de öğretsinler

diye. Ünyeliler bunları her zaman söylerler. Örneğin onların fırınlarda çok başarılı olduklarını, pastalar börekler yaptıklarını, reçel yapmayı onlardan öğrendiklerini, yeme içme kültürü o dönemde daha çok kadınlar, evler arasında. Ve birbirlerinin dini uygulamalarına, dini ritüellere çok saygı gösterdiklerini söylerler. Örneğin, Türkler, Müslüman nüfus daha doğrusu Müslüman nüfus oruçlu iken Ermeni ve Rum nüfus da ortalıkta yemek yemezlermiş. Ayrıca yine o dönemlerde mahalleleri ayrı ama birbirleriyle görüşürler. Örneğin, birbirlerinin dinlerinden, kültürlerinden de etkilenirlermiş, birbirlerinin cenazelerini izlerler.. Örneğin kayınvalidemler büyük kilisenin olduğu, bugün Merkez Ortaokulu olan mahallede, Orta Yılmazlar Mahallesinde büyük bir evde oturuyorlar imiş. Ve komşuları da Rum ve Ermeniler. Ramazan ayında Teravih namazı kılınır, Teravih namazında da Kadir Gecelerinde işte camide gereken ibadetler yapılır. Kayınvalidem kendisi söylemişti. Her Ramazan gecesinde Teravih'den çıkarken Rum komşumuzu caminin dibinde görürdük. Hele de mevlütler okunurken, Kadir Gecelerinde ağladığını görürdük. Dinimizden, okunanlardan, yapılanlardan o kadar çok etkilenirdi ki daha sonra kendisi Müslüman olduğunu ama bunu cemaatine söyleyemediğini de itiraf etmiş yani birbirlerinin dinlerine çok çok saygılılar. Ve bunun için herhangi bir baskı yok. Herhangi bir kural yok, bir arada çok mutlu yaşıyorlar birbirlerini seviyorlar.

Rumların ve Ermenilerin ayrı bir dilleri var bunları kendi aralarında kullanıyorlar ama Türk komşularıyla mutlaka Türkçe konuşarak anlaşıyorlar ayrıca yine ticaret hayatında Rum ve Ermeniler var. Ermeni terziler var. Müslüman müşterileri var. Aralarında hiç sorun yok. O kadar çok röportaj yaptım, o kadar çok görüşme yaptım, aramızda da şöyle şöyle sorun oldu diye bir şey yok. Örneğin, mübadeleyle buradan gitmek zorunda kaldıklarında ağlayarak gittiklerini anlatırlar. Örneğin, Yunanistan'a giden Rumlar gemilere taşıyabildikleri kadar eşyalarını

götürmüşler, hatta işte, para altın götürmeleri gerekli, çok şaşırmıştım, çok zekice bulmuştum, yoğurdun altına saklayıp üstüne yoğurt mayalayıp götürdük, demişlerdi. Çok güzel, çok, nasıl diyeyim, ilginç olaylar var aralarında. Unutamadıkları dostluklar var. Eşimin dedesinin göç ediyorlarken onlara yaptıkları yardımlar var, yani ayrılırken hem üzüyorlar hem de birbirlerine yardımcı oluyorlar.

Bu arada en acıklısı çocuklarını dahi gelip almak üzere emanet bırakmak zorunda kalanlar var. Gelip alabilmişler mi, hayır. O çocuklar zaman içerisinde o aileler tarafından yetiştirilmiş. Kimisi, kaldıklarını bilmişler, kimisi bilmemişler, kimisi de bilinmesini istememişler. Ama hemen hemen hepsi Müslüman olmuşlar. Acıklı öyküler yok mu, haksızlık yok mu, insanları rahatsız eden uygulamalar yok mu? Var belki ama ben Ermeni ve Rum nüfusla çok fazla görüşemediğim için, röportaj yapamadığım için bilemiyorum. Fakat birkaç Ermeni aileyle görüşmeye gittiğimde ki beni hiç tanımadıkları halde, severek kabul ettiler. Ayrıca çekindiklerini de söylediler. Ben de tedirgin olduğumu söyledim, çekinmek değil de, kimle karşılaşacağım, ne diyecekler, tepki gösterecekler mi, sorularımı nasıl algılayacaklar, benim samimiyetimi anlayacaklar mı.. bu duygularla bir araya geldiğimizde sıcacık bir röportaj yaptık. Ve söyledikleri hep şuydu: “Bizim Türk milletiyle, Türk topraklarıyla hiçbir derdimiz yok. Biz de geçim derdindeyiz, biz de yaşam derdindeyiz. Ama olup bitenler mutlaka yaşananlar içimizde sızılar da var, yok değil” dediler. Ve kendi kültürlerini Türklere, Müslüman nüfusa öğrettiklerinde, öğrettikleri şeyleri de vurgulamak istediler. Ben de buradaki insanların anlattığı onlardan öğrendikleri, örneğin reçel yapmayı, likör yapmayı, örneğin işte birtakım pastaları yapmayı, lokum yapmayı onlardan öğrendiklerini söylediklerini belirttiğimde, bu duruma da çok memnun oldular. Bugün, bir dönem, herhalde öyle zannediyorum, Kurtuluş Savaşı sonrası bir önyargı oluşturulmuş, oluşturulmaya

alıřılmış. Fakat bu halka yansımadan, sadece bazı kiliselerin yıkılması řeklinde kalmış. Bugün hala aynı okulda okuyan öğrenciler, aynı mahallede oturan komřular birbirlerini hasretle anıyorlar. Onların buradan kalkıp gitmiş olmalarına hala üzüılıyorlar. Ben iki tarafın halkında da çok iyi niyetler, çok büyük sevgiler hissettim. Hatta o kadar çok insan eski komřularını, okul arkadaşlarını röportajlarımda gördüklerinde çok duygulandıklarını, çok memnun olduklarını, onlara yeniden ulaşmak istediklerini belirttiler. Bunlar da bizi çok mutlu etti.

alışmalarım, şöyle ben tarih öğretmeniydim, emekli oldum, bütün bu çalışmalarımı, birikimlerimi tabii ki değerlendirmek istiyorum ama hala çalışmaya devam ediyorum artık bölümler halinde, örneğın çok hazır bir yemek kitabım var. Ama bu yapılanların aksine, hiçbir kalıbı olmayan çok özgür bir yemek kitabı. İçinde yemekle ilgili öyküler bile olan.. Ayrıca bütün bu dinlediğimiz öykülerden oluşturduğum, işte çok çok etkilendiğim olaylar var, insanı “aa” dedirten olaylar var. Onlardan derlediğimiz senaryolar var. Öğrencilerimi de bu olayın içine katmaya çok çalıştım, bununla ilgili çok uğraştım hatta yönetmeliklere bile karşı geldim. Örneğın hiç yönetmelikte yokken, Ünye’yle ilgili ödevler verdim. Bu önce tepki çekti, daha sonra ise bunun bugün hemen hemen tüm okullarda, tüm öğrencilere uygulandığını görüyorum. Ve burada da çok şeyler öğrendik, çok derin bilgilere ulaştık. Hepsini toparlayıp işte yazıya dökülmüş bir kitap olarak düzenlemeyi istiyorum ama bu konuda acele etmek istemiyorum, ayrıca bol fotoğraflı olması da masraflı olmasına neden oluyor, ama sonunda olacak bitecek.

Ayrıca gine gençlere öğretirken, bütün ben bunlarla uğraşırken önce ailem ve çevrem beni tedirginlikle izlerdi, dudak bükenler de vardı ama daha sonra insanların bu konuyu çok çok benimsediklerini gördüm, hepsi takdir ettiler. Hatta bazen bu takdirlerden utanıyorum, hak etmediğimden fazla takdir aldığımı düşünüyorum. Ve

bu arada ailem de, çocuklarım da bu konuyu çok sevdiler, arkadaşlarıyla birlikte, hatta arkadaşları programları izlediklerinde tarihi sevdiklerini söylediler. Ve kızım da bu konuda araştırmalar yapıp, benim senaryolarımı, o yaşanmış öyküleri film yapmak amacıyla. Ve bu amaçla eğitimini de o yöne taşıdı. Bundan sonra da bütün bunların kaybolmayacağını, hatta çok daha geniş kitlelerle paylaşılacağını düşünüyorum. Şu anda sizlere bunları anlatıyor olmaktan da çok mutluyum. İşte sizler de aracılığıyla da iyi ki böyle çalışmalar yapmışım, diğer insanlarla paylaşıyorum, paylaşmaktan da çok mutlu oluyorum.



APPENDIX C
SELECTED DOCUMENTS

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

ORDU :

C.H.P.Giresun Bölgesi Müfettişi
Kayseri Mebusu. A.Hilmi Kalış.50118
5.12/940 tarih sayı 24 I inci tef-
tiş raporu.

Büro: III

Vilâyet dahilinde gizli veya aşikâr sınıfcı zümreci, mıntakacı veya beynelmilelci fikir cereyanları veya partimize karşı menfi fikir ve duygu taşıyanlara tesadüf edilmemiş ve bu yolda müracaat ve şikâyet vaki olmamıştır. Vilâyet dahilinde yalnız merkezde 500 kadar ermeni vardır. Ufak tefek ticaret işleriyle ve bazı sanatlarla meşgul olmaktadır. Bunların halen menfihis ve hareketleri hakkında bir şikâyet yoktur. Ancak ufak bir ekalliyetin Orduda bulunması hoş görülme-
mektedir.

12

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ

CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

C. H. P.

vilâyet İdare Heyeti Reisliği

GİRESUN

Sayı

230

Giresun - 2.6.941

C. H. P. Genel Sekreterliği

C.H.P. Yüksek Genel Sekreterliğine

File No

59631

13 Haziran 1941

Eldi:

ANKARA

Bazı bölgelerde yapılmakta olan ihtiyarî tahliye dolayısıyla bura-
ya Trakya ve İstanbul'dan bir kaç musevi ailesi gelmiştir. Bunların burada ecne-
bi bir müessesede memuriyetle çalışan akrabaları nezdine misafir olarak geldik-
leri anlaşılmıştır.

10-15 kişilik bu kabile efradının kadın olsun erkek olsun Türk ve
müsliman isimleri taşıdıkları muhitte hayretle karşılanmıştır. Bunlardan asker-
lik çağında olan birisi muharref bir vesika ibraz ederek bütün aile efradiyle
Trakya'dan buraya nakil muamelesine teşebbüs etmiştir. Bu küstah, sözde hükümeti
iğfal ederek askerlikten kurtulmağa çalışıyordu. Memurların basireti sayesinde
hiylesinin farkına varılmış ve derhal gereği yapılmıştır.

Ancak; bu münasebetle bunların ellerindeki nüfus cüzdanlarında kendi
isimlerinin mahkeme kararıyla Türk ve müsliman isimleriyle değiştirildiği naza-
rı dikkati celbetmiştir.

Daha garibi bunların buradaki akrabaları faraza, Ester, Yako, Mois
iken yeni gelen kardeşleri ve yakın akrabaları Münevver, Aykut, Sevim ve müma-
sili isimler taşımalarıdır. Bu suretle mübeccel Türk adının kim bilir ne gibi
hasis emel ve ihtiraslara âlet olduğu ve bu yüzden sefil dedikodular ve istih-
zalar da vesile teşkil ettiği teessürle görülmektedir.

Nasılse kanunî bir yol bularak mahkeme kararı almak suretiyle isim-
lerini adlarımızla değiştirenlere acaba biz nasıl bir nazarla bakmalıyız? Bu
şahısların bu suretle isim değiştirmelerindeki sebep, mâna ve maksat âşikârdır.
Buna müsaade edildiği takdirde içtimâî bünyemiz ve bilhassa zaman geçince ço-
cuklarının nüfus kayıtları zamanında anne ve babalarının vaktiyle Türk ismi al-

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Vilâyet İdare Heyeti Reisliği

GİRESUN

Sayı:

sayıfe: 2

Giresun -

miş olmaları itibariyle hakikî bir Türk'müş gibi sicil-de görüleceklerdir ki istikbalimiz noktasından düşünülürse bendenizce mahzurlu ve endişe verici bir vaziyet doğurur.

Genç mahkemede muhik bir sebep gösterildiği takdirde isimler değiştirilebilir. Belki bunlar da bu şekilde mahkemeden karar almışlardır. İşbu kanunî maddenin tatbik sıralarındaki bu kabil mahzurları nazarı itibara alarak işi hassasiyetle yüksek takdirlerinize arzeder, derin saygılarımı sunarım.

C.H.P.

Vilâyet idare heyeti reisi

Dr. Nuri Özkaya

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G. S. III

13.6.41

[Signature]

Oluyeye

30 Haziran 1941

S. A. Özkaya

Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVLERİ
Ordu Vilayeti mntakasında bulunan
Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü
muhtedilere mahsus listedir. (Mülhakata dahil)

S.NO.	Fig. NO.	Adı soy adı	Eski adı	Saba adı	Doğumu
1	4	Ahmet Dağasan	Ohanes	Karabet	323
2	10	A.Hamdi Evrensel	Agop	Boğus	296
3	83	Ahmet Koseoğlu		Kalasda	324
4	79	Ali Demir		Artin	327
5	96	Ayşe	Hanan	Kavarak	326
6	92	Ayşe Altıntaş		Kıfork	
7	68	Ali Ergen	Ermez	Haymad	325
8	33	Ali Çam	Ohanos	Ohannes	319
9	26	Ayşe Çayır		Abdullah	318
10	27	Ayhan Kürkçü	Haykanus	Faik	931
11	04	Ahmet Demirel	Royata	Fusa	321
12	76	Aziz Yılmaz	Istipan	Akup	312
13	74	Ali Kibar	Artin	Agup	
14	9	A.Hamdi Işbil	Artin	Haçık	323
15	8	A.Sami Sümer	Süren	Avak	312
16	80	Ayşe Bacın	Sinorik	Ohannis	332
17	43	Abdullah	Sekaen	Haçık	325
18	51	Ali Yılmaz	Artin	Aliran	314
19	98	Ali Lögüz	Yabık	Karabet	
20	97	Ali Demir	Ortan	Artin	327
21	66	Binnaz	Banga	Bartina	316
22	15	Cemal Kansu	Karabet	Artin	306
23	24	Cemil Bayındırlı	Kazakos	Apkar	323
24	89	Cafer Öztürk		Yanık	
25	70	Celal Kırbas	Ufan	Ali İhsan	333
26	93	Dursun	Ohanis	Nigan	329
27	17	Fatma Can	Avropi	Kayma	312
28	102	Feride Unsal	Vartanus	Ohanis	316
29	36	Feride Taş	Piruz	Orakil	319
30	52	Fatma Kasta	Marta	Hacı Girat	317
31	29	Fatma Kara		Kirkor	325
32	22	Faik Kürkçü	Hak	Hirof	320
33	25	Gülizar Kara	Martan	Kirler	323
34	53	Gülizar Demircan	Vartanus	Kalos	320
35	59	Gülizar Işık	Bartama	Bağolu	315
36	2	Hasan Avcioğlu	Haçık	Haçık	
37	14	Hatice Kırançı	Siranoc	Kıfork	323
38	28	Hasan Uzunoğlu	Arşak	Nikokos	327
39	90	Hüseyin Bulak		Abdullah	324
40	19	Hasret Ankin	Melken	Kabrıl	322
41	87	Havva Yıldırım	Anne	Kazer	302
42	69	Havva Akagündüz		Armanik	326
43	71	Hüseyin Şahin	Kalost	Lowik	313
44	39	Hasan Kesioğlu		Kirav	322
45	30	Hamsi Durulan	Orden	Mehmet	327
46	12	İrfan Bilgili	Hosnik	Sirof	337
47	99	İbrahim Duymaksan		Abdullah	326
48	34	İbrahim Öyanık	Hamparsun	Husip	337
49	95	Mahmud	Karabet	Davanis	935
50	9	Leman Oge	Repika	Ohannes	312
51	64	Lütfiye		Mustafa	321
52	55	Lütfiye Kaya	Mühan		603/242
53	7	Murat Lütfi	Karakin	Avak	299
54	32	Mesut Yaman	Akel	Arakil	329
55	50	Mehmet Yılmaz	Atak	Artin	312

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S.NO.	Flş NO.	Adı Soy adı	Eski adı	Baba adı	Doğumu
26	49	Mustafa	Serkis	Hacı	325
27	48	Mustafa	Serkis	Hacı	325
28	52	Makbule Kırkcı	Pirap	Artin	328
29	38	Murat İrki		Yusus	326
30	67	Mehmet Eski		Abdullah	329
31	62	Mehmet Çatinkaya	Mupan	Parsik	327
32	61	Mehmet Çhan	Çikan	Kirkor	321
33	100	Murat Yılmaz	Maydirus	Ohan	327
34	92	Mahmut	Hacı	Çhanis	330
35	45	Macide	Nabal	Makas	316
36	13	Mehmet Zengin	Artin	Kirkur	320
37	21	Mustafa	Markos	Kirkur	320
38	1	Nahide Kaptan	Kanus	Dikran	320
39	11	Nezaket Mart	Varsenik	Papil	1297
40	41	Nazire Kara	Meryem	Korilor	310
41	40	Niyazi Tas	Dimitri	Kani	311
42	57	Nuriye Gül	Meryem	Çiğnek	332
43	54	Nuriye İnkse	Manşurye	Artun	309
44	85	Nuryem Avcı		Artun	318
45	35	Nazim Tas	Rufail	Dovit	315
46	65	Osman		Abdullah	317
47	20	Omer Canlı	Samuel	Setmak	329
48	13	Sabri Çakmak	Misak	Agop	329
49	91	Sabri		Agop	329
50	94	Saniye	Marta	Çhanis	936
51	73	Salih Kırbaç	Agop	Kirkur	315
52	72	Saniye Yıldırım	Çavdaroglu	Yatvart	323
53	5	Şehriban Çentur	Meryem	Mardiros	319
54	31	Şevket Alp	Ordudak	Herup	327
55	40	Şeker Kara		Andiriyos	323
56	58	Şaziye Sönmez	Şonlu	Agop	310
57	103	Şeker Lönğüz	Eva	Serkis	329
58	48	Tevfik	Girap	Hacı	320
59	101	İbrahim Duymaksan			326
60	6	Zaik Kırımlı	Zakik	Karabit	328
61	23	Zeki Muhtar	Nesres	Murat	331
62	81	Zeliha Batarızaoğlu	Zeytar	Sahak	328
63	56	Zarife Aydın	Zaytar	Maloğlu	314
64	63	Zekiye		Abdullah	329
65	44	Zekiye	Meryem	Kirkur	
66	46	Zeliha	Anne	Serkis	282
67	37	Zekiye Çam	Marto	naçnik	324
68	86	Zeynep Öztürk		naçik	320

Yukarıda hüviyetleri yazılı bulunan ermeni muhtedilerinin umumî harpte tehciire tabi tutulan ermenilerin çocukları olup terk edilen ve en fazla Gürcü muhacirleri tarafından himaye ve büyütülen ermenilerdendir. Bunların ihtida etmelerinde ekseri samimiyet görülmediği ermeni cemaati ile vaki temas ve münasebetlerinden anlaşılmaktadır. Memleket için bunlardan menfaat beklemek zait bir keyfiyettir.

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Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

Ordu Vilâyeti dahilinde(mülhakatı ile)
bulunan ermenilerin kaydına gösterir listedir.

Sıra NO.	Adı ve soy adı	Babasının adı	Karısı	oğlu	kızı	oturduğu yer
1	Armanak	Hosrof				Tagbası M.
2	Nisan Anasal	Artin	I	I	I	Zaferi mil.
3	Ohan					Harami kö.
4	Misak					Kuyulu Kö.
5	Kirkur					" "
6	Akil		I	I		Bolaman
7	Ohannes	Nisan	I			Taşoluk Kö.
8	Serkis	Araakil				" "
9	Haik	Haçik				Gemrik kö.
10	Iranik	Karabet				" "
11	Paris	Haçik				" "
12	Vahtık	Serkis				" "
13	Marta					Taşoluk kö.
14	Marta	Aapril				" "
15	Lüvesir	Ohannes				Kirezliman
16	Sahak	Ohan	1	3		Zaferi mil.
17	Vartuhi	Kiork			I	Zaferi Mil.
18	Vahan	Hambarson	I	3	I	" "
19	Serkis	Haçik				" "
20	Kirkur Kurtbuğan	Akop	I	I	3	" "
21	Artin Çitci	Antiranik	1	3	I	" "
22	Keohi	Antiranik				" "
23	Pisamsem	Hambarson				" "
24	Keork	Artin				" "
25	Iva	Artin			1	" "
26	Avadis	Artin	I	2	3	" "
27	Serkis	Karabet	1	2	I	" "
28	Zarmin	Haçik				" "
29	Maydiros Yayla	Sahak	I	2	I	" "
30	Yatvart	Nisan	I	I	I	" "
31	Aznif	Avak			2	" "
32	Zabel	Akop				Düz mah.
33	Kiğrok	Akop				" "
34	Peruz	Nersis		1	I	Zaferi mil.
35	Ağot	Hambarson	1		I	" "
36	Nuvart	Sahak				" "

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Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü

(2)

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

Sıra NO.	Adı ve soy adı	Babasının adı	Karısı Adet	oğlu Adet	kızı Adet	oturduğu yer
37	Arsak Ciroğlu	Akup				Zaferi Mil.
38	Masis	Haçik Keork	1			" "
39	Hatunik	Haçik				" "
40	Sanduk	Haçik				Selimiye M.
41	Süren	Kazar	I			" "
42	Araksı	Abraham		I	I	Zaferi Mil.
43	Vartan Çakıryan	Haçik	1	3		" "
44	Ohancan	Ovakin	I	I	I	" "
45	Sahak	Karabet	I	I	I	" "
46	Leon	Askıhan	I		4	" "
47	Karnik Arman	Kirkor	I	3	I	" "
48	Eronik	Akop		1	2	" "
49	Akop	Arsin	I	I		" "
50	Karakin	Bediros	1	3	2	" "
51	Mannik	Apkor		1	2	" "
52	Puzant Hekimoğlu	Abraham				" "
53	Atam Hekimoğlu	"				" "
54	Papken	"				" "
55	Misak	Ohanis	1	1	1	" "
56	Akop	Artin			1	" "
57	Kiork	Mardiros	I	2	I	" "
58	Kalost	Melka n	I	I		" "
59	Agavni	Akup	I		I	Düz mah.
60	Haçik	Artin	1	I		Zaferi Mil.
61	Mihran	Ropen	I			" "
62	Antiranik	Ohanis	1			" "
63	Vartan	Ohanis	I	2		" "
64	Migirdiç Toraman	Atam	1	I	I	" "
65	Leon	Minas	1	I	2	Nizamettin
66	Apkar Sercan	Mardiros	1	I	2	Zaferi Mil.
67	Nobar	Artin	I	2	2	" "
68	Migirdiç	Orakin	1	I	2	" "
69	Yervant Bertliyan	Avadis	1	I	I	" "
70	Meryem	Arakin		I		" "
71	Onnik Çavdar	Mihran	1			" "
72	Migirdiç Daniş	Keork	I	2	I	" "
73	Süren	Mihran	1			" "
74	Süren	Vartan	1	3	1	" "
75	Haramuş Çilcioğlu	Davil				" "

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Devlet Arşivleri Genel Müdürlüğü

(3)

DEVLET ARŞİVLERİ GENEL MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
CUMHURİYET ARŞİVİ

Sıra	Adı ve soy adı	Babasının adı	Karısı	oğlu	kızı	oturduğu yer
76	Melik	Kirkur	I			Zaferi mil.
77	Dikran	Ağya	I	3	I	" "
78	Mihvan Karakin	Mihvan	I			" "
79	Arşalos	Kiork			I	" "
80	Serkis	Nişan	I	I		" "
81	Manper	Kiork	I			Ünyede
82	Serkis	Avadis	I			" "
83	İstifan	Kirkur	I	I	2	" "
84	Mikirdiç	Ohannes	I	2	5	" "
85	Mutafyon Direko	Kirkur			I	" "
86	Kiork	Kalost				" "
87	Makut	Minas	I	4		" "
88	Minas	Ağya	I	I	I	" "
89	Gazar	Arakel	I	I	I	" "
90	Artin	İgohos	I		I	" "
91	Agop	Kirkur	I			" "
92	Karabet	Arakel	I			Paşada
93	Çeriyos	Serkis			I	" "
94	Anna	Ohanis	0	I		" "
95	Zail	Asator	I	I	I	" "
96	Agop	Kirap	I	I		" "
97	Dirohi	Karabet	0	I	I	" "
98	Nazlı	Torus				" "
99	Zivart	Hambarson				" "
100	Haykuhi	Artin			2	" "
101	Hayik Aradar	Karnik				" "
102	Mannik	Mikail		2		" "
103	Karabet	Melidos	I		2	" "
104	Meryam	Fagos			2	" "
105	Karakin	Kirkor	I		3	" "
106	Zartar	Haçik				" "
107	Arasi	Markar		I		" "
108	Elbis	Sunyon		I	I	" "
109	Artin	Ohanis	I	I	I	" "
110	Peruze	Atam		I		" "
111	Manok	Yogus			2	" "
112	Nişan	Agop	I	2	2	" "
113	Araksi	Kostantin				" "
114	Hayik	Müştüf	I	I	I	" "

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Vakfı Yurt Yayınları. This article firstly published in *Toplum ve Bilim*, 50, 1990, 49-71: In English; Involuntary Displacement and the Problem of Resettlement in Turkey from Ottoman Empire to the Present. In S. Shami (Ed.), *Population Displacement and Resettlement: Development and Conflict in the Middle East* (pp. 202-227). New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1994.

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