

**Planning, Development and Community:
Transformation of the *Gecekondu* Settlements in
Turkey**

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate changes in *gecekondu* (slum house) communities through exploring the lives of three generations of rural migrants in Turkey. It suggests that the dynamic relation between their strategies and development policies in Turkey has had a large impact on the urban landscape, urban reforms, welfare policies and urban social movements. I followed qualitative research methodology, and was extensively influenced by feminist theory. Participant observation, in-depth interviews and focus group methods were used flexibly to reflect the richness of *gecekondu* lives. The data includes 83 interviews, one focus group and my observations in Ege neighbourhood in Ankara. First-generation rural migrants largely relied on kin and family networks and established *gecekondu* communities which provided them with shelter against the insecurities of urban life and their exclusion from the mainstream. The mutual trust within *gecekondu* communities was a result of their solidarity and collective struggle to obtain title deeds and infrastructure services. The liberalization of the Turkish economy immediately after the coup d'état in 1980 brought in *Gecekondu* Amnesties which legalized the *gecekondus* built before 1985 and fragmented labour market, resulting in a fragmentation among them in terms of *gecekondu* ownership, types of jobs and the scope of their resources. Since their interests were no longer the same in the face of development policies, their solidarity decreased and collective strategies were replaced by individual tactics. The dissolving of the sense of community was most visible in the area of urban transformation projects, which were based on legal ownership of houses and social assistance, and created new tensions in the 2000s. The younger generation of *gecekondu* dwellers integrated into city life predominantly through education and employment opportunities in the city. They felt far more a part of the urban economy and considered community ties to be a constraint upon their integration. This study shows that this broke *gecekondu* people's ties, which were the basis of their existence.

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To all slum dwellers, who surprise the rest of the world with their amazingly creative survival strategies...

To the lovely memory of Güven Aydoğan, who always follows the wind and silently passed away one midnight in Ege...

Author's Declaration

This thesis is an original work.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research Question and Methodology

This dissertation considers changes in the position and role of the *gecekondu* (squatter housing) communities that emerged out of rural to urban migration in Turkey. The major research question concerns changes in the survival strategies of the migrants, and their role and self-perception vis-à-vis changes in development policies in Turkey. Moreover, the question of how their survival strategies have influenced development policies, particularly policies relating to the urban landscape, is asked. The establishing of *gecekondu* communities is one of the major survival strategies of rural migrants, and this study attempts to answer the question: what are the dynamics behind the establishing, development and integration processes of *gecekondus*?

The issues will be examined through the residents' own narratives about their life experiences and the ways in which they give meaning to city life and the associated politics. This research is based on the life story of one particular *gecekondu* community which appeared during the second half of the 1970s in Ege neighbourhood in Ankara, and attempts to investigate the emergence, development and integration processes of a *gecekondu* community. My research suggests that this process is clearly marked by the interaction between development policies and *gecekondu* dwellers' survival strategies; therefore this study will highlight the elements of this mutual relationship. The survival strategies of *gecekondu* dwellers significantly influenced their self-perception, which has changed since the first appearance of *gecekondu* communities during the 1950s. This study's major argument is that the *gecekondu* areas in Turkey are undergoing a period of transition due to increasing gentrification and the dissolution of *gecekondu* communities.

Migrants have always stood in a dialectical relationship with economic and social conditions. Their movements have caused significant changes in the economic conditions, cultural structure, social policies, labour market, state-society relations and social structure of both urban and rural areas and at the same time their lives have been sharply affected by these factors. Their activities will not be viewed as 'isolated and

subjective'; rather, their experiences will be located in "society and history embedded within a set of social relations which produce both the possibilities and limitations of that experience" (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1983: 425). Thus, the contemporary situation of *gecekondu* areas should be analyzed through a dialectical relationship between the actor and structure, *gecekondu* dwellers and social, economic and political structures. In this sense, migrants will be taken as the most important component and active agents in the migration process, in which they respond to changes at both the macro political economic level and the laws about *gecekondus*. At the same time, their responses also shape these two. However, since migrants, whose life stories are deeply affected by the systematic changes, are the real subjects, focusing primarily on their experiences is more relevant in order to gain a deeper understanding of this relationship.

I chose Ege district, a *gecekondu* area in Ankara, for the fieldwork, on the basis of previously conducted pilot fieldwork in Ege, Harman and Çinçin neighbourhoods in Ankara in 2010. In 2011, I undertook my fieldwork in Ege district, where I was able to find both first settlers and newcomers. This enabled me to discuss the emergence and development process of the *gecekondu* community in Ege as well as the process of dissolution of community ties and integration. I rented a local house and stayed there with my parents for three months (see photo 8). In 2012, I returned to Ankara for a month and made regular visits to Ege to hold more interviews and make further observations. In addition, I visited some of my interviewees in Ege in 2013 and I remained in contact with some of the participants via e-mails and phone calls.

I focus on the interactions of development policies, the *gecekondu* dwellers' survival strategies and the changes in *gecekondu* people's identity and community. My fieldwork suggests that mass migration was the first response of rural migrants to the government's development policies and this was followed by the building of *gecekondus* and the emergence of *gecekondu* communities. Initially, *gecekondu* dwellers had immediate needs and worked together in solidarity in order to survive city life. This solidarity was in all their interests since they initially had common needs such as obtaining formal title deeds and infrastructure facilities. They largely relied on kinship and family networks as well as mutual help among people of same neighbourhood. The fieldwork conducted for this study shows that the solidarity among *gecekondu* dwellers

dissolved when their socio-economic position changed due to the welfare policies and urban transformation plans of the 1990s and 2000s. At this point, they started to act individually as their new survival strategy.

1.2 What is a *Gecekondu*?

“Squatter and uncontrolled settlements appear under a variety of names reflecting the local culture and the specific circumstances of their establishment” (Karpas 1976: 11), such as *favela* in Brazil, *barrios* in Mexico, *bustee* in Bangladesh, *bidonville* in Algeria, *chawls* in Bombay and *gecekondu* in Turkey. *Gecekondu* literally means ‘built overnight’, and refers to poor-quality houses built by migrants, mostly on public land in large cities without planning permission. In this sense, the name reflects the spontaneity of the squatter houses. *Gecekondu* can refer to individual squatter houses, illegal housing or a squatter area in Turkish; however, in this thesis, the term denotes squatter houses in order to avoid possible confusion. *Gecekondus* first appeared in the large cities of İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir in the 1930s and spread to other cities during the following decades. These houses first entered the agenda of public and political debate in the 1940s and were denoted by their publicly recognized name, *gecekondu*, in *Gecekondu* Law no. 775 in 1966.

Although *gecekondu* areas have similarities with squatter and slum areas all over the world in their lack of basic services, unhealthy living conditions and illegal and inadequate building structures (see UN Human Settlements Programme 2003), there are also a variety of differences among them. There are many differences between *gecekondu* areas and slum areas in developed countries in terms of population density, the ratio of house owners to tenants, the level of temporality of residents, their aspirations about being a part of and visible in cities and their upward mobility (Keleş 2010:481-484, Zürcher 2004: 269-270). On the other hand, when they are compared to squatter areas in developing countries¹, it can be argued that *gecekondu* areas can be classified as transition areas rather than squatter areas. In the context of these differences, in Turkey *gecekondu* areas are not densely populated and only a few people

¹ See UN Human Settlements Programme (2003) Chap. 3 and Davis, M. (2007), Chap.2.

live in each small house (see Mahmud and Duyar-Kienast 2001). They are not people without hope in the sense that they are a part of both city life and the political and economic system. Because of these important differences, in order to be specific about what is being discussed, rather than the notion of slums or squatters, the term *gecekondu* will be used throughout this study.

*Gecekondu*s were built by the pioneer rural migrants who came to the cities as a result of rapid urbanization and changes in the government's development strategy. In the absence of affordable housing, they occupied and demarcated the available land, which mostly belonged to the state, as early as the 1930s. While the pioneer rural migrants formed the nucleus of the *gecekondu* neighbourhoods, large *gecekondu* communities first appeared in the 1950s when the first wave of mass migration took place. By the time of the second wave of mass migration in the 1980s, there was no available land remaining for occupation in existing *gecekondu* areas and the newcomers searched for new areas on the outskirts of the city to build houses. This resulted in increasing numbers of *gecekondu* areas.

During the developmentalist period between the 1950s and the 1980s, migration to urban areas and *gecekondu* communities were mostly dealt with in the framework of industrialization, the housing problem, development and urbanization both in academia and at the policy-making level. Field surveys and empirical research, which mostly underlined the deprived physical space, lack of infrastructure and the inadequacy of social services and equipment, dominated. A number of studies and pieces of research undertaken by the Turkish Statistical Institute, the Ministry of Health and Welfare and academics (Karpaz 1976, Kıray 1970, Öğretmen 1957, Yasa 1966, Yavuz et al. 1978, Abadan 1963) can serve as examples of these approaches. During this period, the common tendency among researchers was to aim for an understanding of the reasons for internal migration, and they mostly relied on the idea that, if the reason was properly understood, the migration could be prevented (Yıldırımaz 2010:399). The overlapping concerns of the academic and public approaches were shaped by a modernist-elitist perspective in which the *gecekondu*s were considered to be backward, rural and inferior spaces that should be erased immediately. This reflected the discomfort felt by the elite about the presence of *gecekondu* dwellers, whom they

considered to be a threat to modernity, while “some proposals went as far as suggesting restricting access to large cities, or granting visas for entering İstanbul and Ankara” (Demirtaş 2009: 75).

Attempts at preventing migration failed and *gecekondu* residents consolidated their permanence, especially with the second wave of mass migration during the 1980s. This was mostly why discussion about the prevention of migration gradually disappeared, and had vanished altogether by the 1980s. While *gecekondus* first appeared as spontaneous and irregular housing built by rural migrants for their own use, in due course the social and physical context of *gecekondus* changed. By the second half of the 1980s, when the new development policy was based on integration with global markets and liberalization of the national economy, most of the *gecekondus* were transformed into multi-floor apartment blocks on the build-sell (*yap-sat*) model. This was based on increased development rights at the parcel level to build apartment blocks on individual parcels of land. Therefore, the term *gecekondu* lagged behind in describing the spontaneous, low-income housing that was built to shelter rural incomers, and *gecekondus* lost their “innocence” for the public at large during the 1980s. This change is reflected in the studies on *gecekondus* as well as the urban policies and the way in which politicians addressed *gecekondu* communities. The concept of “illegal construction” increasingly replaces the term *gecekondu* in academic approaches, in order to reflect all aspects of the phenomenon (Akbulut and Başlık 2010:26). Starting in the 1980s, as Demirtaş and Şen suggest, a serious rupture emerged between the academic discourse and public debate; academic works focused on developing an in-depth approach to migrants’ lives while the term *gecekondu* retained its pejorative and exclusionary connotation in public debate and the media (2006:90). The academic literature increasingly referenced urban poverty, social exclusion and marginalization during the 1990s, when the extensive poverty could no longer remain untouched by the politicians (see Erdoğan and Bora 2007, Buğra 2007, Altınyelken 2009, Erman 2001, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2002, Özyeğin 2001, Eroğlu 2011, Keyder 1987, Çınar 1993, Dedeoğlu 2008, Özyeğin 2002, Buğra 1998, Çelik 2010, Buğra 2007, Murakami 2011). The gentrification process of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods started in the 1990s and accelerated during the 2000s so a great deal of current research on *gecekondu*

communities takes place within the framework of urban transformation and urban movements against gentrification (see Güzey 2009, Turan 2007, Dinçer 2011, Aslan 2010, Wedel 2001). This work is very different from existing literature on the subject because, although it uses existing material, it develops it across three generations and considers the dynamics of change during this period.

1.3 Outline of the Thesis

This thesis will start with a historical discussion of the dynamics of internal migration and of the development process of *gecekondu* communities. Since migration is not an isolated issue, internal migration will not be the focus for its own sake, but will be detailed in order to understand the foundation of *gecekondu* communities. Considering the fact that the movements of people have always been strongly related to the movements of capital and commodities (Castles and Miller 2003:77), migration will be taken both as a cause and a consequence of a series of changes in rural and urban population composition, economic strategies and the labour market. To contextualize this study, a historical account of development policies, policies on urban planning and *gecekondu* dwellers and their responses to these policies will be provided. The heterogeneity of *gecekondu* settlers will not be overlooked; rather, the different effects of migration will be discussed through an exploration of differences between migrants. In this context, *gecekondu* dwellers will be categorized based on the period during which they arrived in Ankara, their gender and whether or not they were born or brought up in Ankara.

The dynamics of the building of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods and communities will be examined in terms of the history of Ege. A brief discussion of *gecekondu* dwellers' lives in rural areas before their migration reveals the reasons for migration and the hidden dynamics of solidarity networks within the *gecekondu* communities. This will be followed by an account of the faith, ethnicity and diverse locations of origin of Ege people in order to disentangle the political identities and left-wing-leaning character of some *gecekondu* communities. The history of building *gecekondus* in Ege not only provides a deeper understanding of the construction process of migrant communities but

also shows that the community is built up through solidarity, which is a result of common needs, problems and expectations.

The possible dynamics of *gecekondu* identity will be unpacked step by step from the point at which the residents arrived in cities in relation to the socio-economic and political atmosphere of Turkey. It will be suggested that, since it was a chain migration, initial networks were based on place of origin. First comers found jobs and *gecekondus* and learnt about opportunities in the city through their *hemşeri* (fellow-countrymen), so these networks were the primary base on which their identity was built. There was a relatively powerful left-wing movement during the 1970s and this movement's emphasis on '*halk*' (the people) and the working class built a bridge between the identities of rural migrants and the urban working class. At this point, *gecekondu* people combined their working-class features with their rural backgrounds. However, during the physical production of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods, rural migrants' social relations were denser with the people in their neighbourhood with whom they had common problems and with whom they collectively struggled to resolve those problems. Their neighbourhood provided them with a residence-based informal economy in which people helped one another and mutual trust was deployed for the purpose of information and work exchange. This resulted in breaching the boundaries of political polarization, faith and ethnic differences. This informal economy was their main tool for survival in the cities. Therefore, social relations within their community became a dominant element in determining their identity.

The increase in the number of *gecekondu* dwellers during the 1980s with the second wave of mass migration also increased the *gecekondu* people's negotiating power with politicians. The legalization process is important in terms of understanding *gecekondu* ownership and the relation between politicians and *gecekondu* dwellers. Their determination to obtain legal title deeds was combined with the policies of rapid liberalization that began immediately after the coup d'état in 1980, which saw a series of *Gecekondu* Amnesties being passed in the 1980s that legalized the *gecekondus* built before 1985. The *gecekondus* of second-wave migrants were not legalized since the last amnesty did not cover the *gecekondus* built after 1985. This created a major division between *gecekondu* dwellers in terms of ownership of their homes. In Ege, this

separation did not become the determining element in local people's solidarity and sense of community until the Ege Urban Transformation Project, which was based on property ownership, started in 2001. This thesis will include a detailed discussion of this project, which is gentrifying Ege and transforming the *gecekondu* in the area into multi-floor luxury buildings in which mostly middle-class people live. It will be suggested that this transformation process creates confusion in the people's self-perception. Since the legal title deed owners benefit from this project and are given one or more flats, they start to feel as though they belong to the middle class even though their regular income, main consumption practices and position in the labour market have not changed. On the other hand, due to the future cost of maintaining these buildings, their desire to provide homes for their children, the low level of incomes and significant cultural and class differences with their future neighbours, most of Ege's people cannot live in these luxury apartments. Not all the people possess formal title deeds for their *gecekondu* since some of them were built after the last *Gecekondu* Amnesty that legalized the existing *gecekondu* had passed. This study will discuss the dispossessed's struggle for the amelioration of their neighbourhood and their fight against the demolition of their *gecekondu*. Local people have different interests in the face of the urban transformation process depending on their *gecekondu* ownership status and people with formal title deeds do not collaborate with the dispossessed in their struggle against the demolition of their houses. It will be suggested that during the urban transformation project the disparities in terms of legal ownership of *gecekondu* divided the local people and this gradually dissolved the sense of community in Ege.

Urban reforms are not the only reason for the breakdown of social cohesion in *gecekondu* areas. Through the case of Ege, elements of the collapse of social cohesion, such as an increase in crime, the individualization of society and the weakening of the left-wing movement and of the sense of community will be discussed. Since these are not specific to Ege district alone, these discussions will include changes in the state structure generated by the implementation of neoliberal policies during the 1980s and the intensification of these policies throughout the 1990s and 2000s, the political pressure resulting from the military intervention in 1980, and social assistance programmes. It will be suggested that decreasing formal employment opportunities for

the younger generation, the gradual breakdown of the community, and the younger generation's higher expectations generated by their familiarity with the urbanites have pushed many young *gecekond* men into illegal activities and the gangs through which they attempt to become empowered and develop a new sense of belonging. Moreover, my fieldwork in Ege, as well as the pilot study in other districts, shows that the dissolving of social cohesion is mentioned as the cause of a sense of insecurity by *gecekond* people.

The results of my fieldwork suggest that the duration of their residence in urban areas affects the lifestyles, values and living conditions of *gecekond* dwellers. Increasing levels of education among younger generations and women's participation in paid employment, which are among the main pillars of the transition to modernity, are among the most visible changes in *gecekond* neighbourhoods. The longer rural migrants stay in the city, the better the educational attainments of their children compared to migrants of previous generations, although they do not always have the same opportunities as their urban peers. Working in paid employment was not common amongst the first-generation women due to their low level of income, absence of education, skills and knowledge about the city, as well as community values that did not permit women to work outside the home. Over decades, younger women gradually acquired more education and skills and the values of the community changed in favour of women's employment. Moreover, decreasing incomes amongst the working class due to the neoliberal policies of the 1980s made women's employment necessary for *gecekond* households to survive. This study will discuss the dynamics of women's participation in paid employment and the younger generations' greater opportunities in higher education as well as the conflicts created by these issues between the generations.

I started this thesis by thinking about the historical process of *gecekond* building and went into my fieldwork to discover what my research questions should be. In this sense, this study is based on grounded theory. My research questions, as well as the main themes discussed in this study, emerged out of my open-ended interviews and daily discussions and conversations during the fieldwork. As a researcher, I tried to function as a mirror to reflect what *gecekond* residents think about who they were and who they are now. In order to be able to reflect the dynamic and flexible nature of

gecekond dwellers, I preferred to use multiple methods in a flexible manner. My gender and class position created some barriers in contacting local men, but thanks to my parents' presence during my fieldwork I was able to gain access to them. On the other hand, I would not have been able to meet female *gecekond* dwellers if I had not been a woman.

2. Methodology: How to Engage with *Gecekondu* Areas and Residents

2.1 Introduction

This study seeks to understand the changes in status of *gecekondu* dwellers through their own narratives. I propose to deal with the following questions: (1) How do *gecekondu* people perceive their current position and the changes that have occurred in it? (2) How do macro-level policies influence internal migration and *gecekondu* people's lives? (3) What strategies do *gecekondu* people use in responding to the changes in development policies? (4) What are the dynamics in the process of *gecekondu* communities' emergence, development and integration?

Before conducting my field research, I viewed *gecekondu* people as a homogeneous group who could easily be classified as poor, oppressed and passive victims of capitalism. So, until my fieldwork, my approach had mostly been affected by what I read in newspapers and watched on TV, which represented *gecekondu* dwellers as a homogeneous category of people who "illegally occupy state owned lands" and engage in illegal activities such as drug dealing, robbery and so on. But I should say that I was not entirely convinced by what I gleaned from the media; I strongly believed that *gecekondu* dwellers had no other option than to occupy any available land and that they might be engaging in criminal activities due to a lack of resources. Moreover, I was aware that the news reports about *gecekondu*s were not always objective and that it was common to hear that *varoşes* are full of criminals at a time of urban transformation in order to justify the displacement of *gecekondu* people in the eyes of the public at large. Although I took the side of *gecekondu* residents in their struggle for housing, my approach was too naïve and short-sighted to understand the diversity of *gecekondu* dwellers or how their survival strategies could be vitally important in understanding development policies in Turkey.

Before starting the field research, I focused on the available literature on *gecekondu*s in Turkey and slums and squatter settlements in other countries. Previous work on *gecekondu* areas in Turkey has mostly dealt with residents' political participation, criminality, urban regeneration, welfare policies, unemployment, level of

education and poverty in these areas and the government's policies on *gecekondu*. Although these issues are closely linked to the emergence, development and integration of *gecekondu* communities, there is a clear gap as there has been very little research focusing on these issues throughout the lifespan of a *gecekondu* community. In this thesis, I have attempted to outline the mutual relationship between macro-level policies and the survival strategies of *gecekondu* dwellers that enable them to be a community through the life story of one *gecekondu* neighbourhood. This strategy also enabled me to develop a holistic approach towards the issues discussed around the *gecekondu*, such as urban transformation projects, poverty, unemployment, women's employment and levels of education.

I thought that listening to the life stories of people in *gecekondu* districts, talking with them and seeing their living conditions and neighbourhoods might help me to get closer to my thesis topic and reveal more about the dynamics of the lives of *gecekondu* dwellers. I thought that the notions of what to look for would come in part from what I learnt from the data (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:160). Therefore, a fieldwork study was inevitably important to investigate the lifespan of a *gecekondu* community. I chose Ankara, the capital and second largest city in Turkey, for my research. When I reviewed the literature on *gecekondu*s and migration studies, I realized that there is a cluster of studies about the *gecekondu* regions in İstanbul; in fact, there is almost no district in İstanbul about which there is no study. Although the number of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods is larger in İstanbul, I chose Ankara since it was at the core of the new modern Turkish Republic's plan to impose a western lifestyle and it became the capital city in 1923. The appearance of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods as early as the 1940s conflicts with the modernist claims of the Turkish Republic. Existing studies about the *gecekondu* areas of Ankara are mostly about housing problems, legal procedures relating to *gecekondu*s, social policies and the participation of residents in politics. Therefore, I suggest that exploring the *gecekondu* areas of Ankara through the narratives of *gecekondu* dwellers and the life story of a *gecekondu* neighbourhood might be a useful contribution. After a pilot study, I conducted pilot fieldwork in Ege neighbourhood, where the first settlers were contactable as well as the younger generation.

I largely depended on feminist methodology because I like its flexibility in terms of the use of a variety of research methods, its emphasis on the power relations between researcher and researched and the ethical considerations about the role of the researcher. This is also an interpretative study in terms of understanding the perceptions of *gecekondu* dwellers and how they are perceived by the public at large, academics and policy makers. Therefore, I decided it would be helpful to read news about them in order to understand the ways in which they have been represented in the mainstream media, which is very important in shaping public opinion. Between June and August 2011, I visited the National Library of Turkey in Ankara and scanned newspapers in order to decide which ones I should focus on. I chose *Cumhuriyet*, which is famous for supporting orthodox Kemalist ideology, *Hürriyet*, which is a high-circulation newspaper with a strong nationalist slant, and *Sabah*, which is quite popular, has an increasingly conservative perspective and is close to the political party in government. I chose these three because they are among the most popular daily newspapers and have different political orientations, which would allow me to become informed about how the problems of *gecekondu*s and their residents are represented in the media. I scanned the available volumes from 1950, when the first rural migrants appeared in Ankara, until today.

2.2 Being a Female Researcher

According to Flick (2007: ix), the position of the researcher is an important part of the research process, “either in terms of their own personal presence as researchers, or in terms of their experiences in the field and with the reflexivity they bring to the role” in qualitative research. Moreover, research does not take place in isolation (Clough and Nutbrown 2002:10) and the researcher does not live in a social vacuum, s/he brings her/his preconceptions and values into the research and the interpretation of data (Walsham 1995:376), therefore “all the research is ideological” (Letherby 2003: 5). Our questions, positions and the ways in which we conduct our research all determine and change the research (Clough and Nutbrown 2002:10, Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:47-67,). In this sense, accounts of ‘others’ reveal a great deal more about the writer

than the people about whom the author writes (Kitzinger and Wilkinson 1996:17-18). So, feminists prefer to make their positionality visible and revealing this positionality increases the reliability of a piece of social research.

Before starting my PhD, I had lived in Ankara for three years. Therefore, I knew the city and I had the networks and ability to travel to *gecekondu* districts in order to find people. I am a native speaker of Turkish, so I was able to communicate with the *gecekondu* people. Moreover, I lived in Turkey for the whole of my life before coming to the UK for my PhD, so I am familiar with the cultural norms that a researcher must be aware of in interacting with *gecekondu* people. Therefore, it could be suggested that I was able to manage this fieldwork since I was equipped with the required language skills and knowledge about the country and the people in Turkey. However, my gender, middle-class background, use of language and education all created some challenges during the fieldwork.

Despite the fact that we all spoke Turkish, it did not take long to realize that, in fact, we were speaking different languages. Our vocabularies and accents were quite different from one another. During my time in the *gecekondu* districts, I felt that our language was the most distinctive and obvious feature that drew a significant line between me and the *gecekondu* dwellers. The other problem in terms of language was that, although I spoke in Turkish to Ege people, I had to write in English. I am not a native speaker of English and only started to live in an English-speaking country at the age of 26, therefore it was quite hard for me to reflect the colourful life and diversity of *gecekondu* people in English, which sounds to me very formal due to the fact that I spoke it only on formal occasions before moving to the UK. Considering the fact that language is “one of many elements that allow us to make sense of things, of ourselves” (Spivak 2004: 369), it was not just a matter of difficulty in translating the words. Since any language is closely interlinked with its culture (Gal and Irvine 1995), and in some ways reflects it, this difficulty is about a translation from one culture to another. I used both direct translations and the adaptation method. If the narrative does not have culturally specific references and is based on parallel categories/concepts, I translated word by word. However, the word order and syntax is completely different in Turkish and English, which are not languages of the same family, and therefore I had to change the word

order. When using this method it is possible that “the cultural embeddedness and mediating function of language is overlooked” (Maclean 2007: 787), and this reduces the readability of the text (Birbili 2000). If the narratives convey an incomprehensible message to the English-speaking audience and refer to culturally specific social settings, as suggested by Vinay and Darbelent, I had to “create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent” (2004: 135). Under such circumstances, like many other researchers, I run the risk of misrepresenting the conversations and underestimating different perspectives and priorities. For example, when my participants talked about bribery they mostly used the phrase “to see someone” (*görmek*) which is a slang term for bribery. However, I had to translate it merely as “to bribe”. Furthermore, in some cases, I needed to combine these translation methods by borrowing the original version of some concepts and explaining them and giving the socio-historical background of the meaning. Even the use of all these approaches could not entirely eliminate the loss in translation, but they did minimize this loss. Moreover, the participants’ accents could not be reflected in the translation of their words into English. So, the reader is not able to understand the difference between the participants’ Turkish and literary Turkish. As a researcher, I am accountable for the understandings (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:102) that I produce.

Gecekondu neighbourhoods were not areas that non-locals visited regularly. So, they were not very familiar with non-locals and easily recognized who was local and who was not. Since I was an educated, professional woman who lives alone and studies in the UK, I was an outsider to the *gecekondu* community from their point of view. I was quite careful with my clothes and appearance during my visits to the *gecekondu* areas. I wore modest clothes, which were mostly loose, long-sleeved shirts and baggy, dark-coloured trousers. I abstained from sustaining my stranger position and seeking the attention of the residents. I did not wear makeup. I did not wear accessories or fashionable clothes and high heels, which might seem ‘arrogant’. In fact, I did not dress too differently from my usual style. In daily life, I do not wear formal or fashionable clothes, high heels or makeup. So, I did not pretend to be a person that I was not, what I did was to try to eliminate the basic factors that might create more barriers between my

respondents and myself and, as Letherby (2003:110) discusses, my aim was not to access the best data but to allow both myself and my respondents to feel comfortable.

Considering the patriarchal formation of this society and the high rates of violence against women, living alone in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood that I did not know well would create worries about my own security and these worries would be the biggest obstacles in making contact with local people. Besides, a woman who is a stranger living alone in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood to carry out research would be awkward for the local people and they might feel uncomfortable. Living with my parents both decreased my worries about security and normalized my existence in Ege. Since I was part of a family, we were invited for evening teas and breakfast by the other families and we could invite them to our home for similar reasons (see photo 1, 2, 3 and 4). It was a big opportunity for me to develop my relations with the local people away from our interviews.

Contacting local men without an intermediary was not so easy. Unless my father was with me, inviting a male person to my *gecekondu* for an interview could have been misinterpreted. Yet, it is not unusual for feminist scholars researching in highly patriarchal societies to gain entry into privileged, male-only areas through the connections of their male family members (Gupta 1979). My father, who is a very sociable person, made friends with local men, went shopping with them and visited the local coffee house and local market regularly (see photo 10). The coffee house was the main public place where many local men gathered daily (see photo 5). It was exclusive to men, so as a female researcher it was nearly impossible for me to gain access on my own. During the initial days of the fieldwork my father went there several times to spend time with the men there. Because of his age and being a retired teacher, the local men called him either *hocam* (my teacher) or *abi* (older brother) as a sign of respect. After a week, he talked about me to the owner of the coffee house, Osman, and politely asked him to help me in my research and the owner accepted. My gender was a kind of asset in the sense that I was harmless to the local men because I could not be a threat to the honour of local women. Osman told me that:

Sister you know, if you were a man, I would question you if you passed through our mahalle. Because you might look at our

sisters and wives. But since you were a girl, we accepted you easily.

On the other hand, my gender, education and class background created obstacles in my relations with local men. Men in the coffee house were uneasy about my presence, as one of them explained to me that they could not swear as they usually did since I was there. They tried to be very careful and respectful, for example, every time before I went to the toilet they asked the waitresses to clean it. My outsider position and education could have aroused suspicion amongst the men in the local coffee shop where they usually gambled and smoked marihuana. However, since I was the daughter of an old retired teacher whom they knew, the local men accepted me there as an honorary man.

In Ege, all the men, even the older ones, called me *Abla* (older sister). In Turkish culture, especially in more traditional areas, it is not culturally welcomed for a man to call an unrelated woman only by her name. According to the age of a woman, men use words such as *anne* (mother), *yenge* (sister-in-law), *bacı* (younger sister), *abla* (older sister) and all these words denote a familial bond. In this way, men indirectly show that they do not consider the woman to whom they speak to be a sexual being. Being addressed as Burcu *Abla* indicated both distance and closeness between me and the local men. It was a sign of distance since the use of *abla* does not refer to my age but to my hierarchical position. However, I was not called *Hanım* (Mrs/Miss/Ms), which is used among traditional communities for an unknown woman who is educated or middle class, in the way that they addressed female teachers at the local primary school as X *Hanım*. So, *Abla* was a sign of closeness since they were not calling me Burcu *Hanım*, although I am educated and middle class. This was mostly because I lived there and all the men knew my father, therefore I was one step closer to them than other urbanite, middle-class, educated women. For me it would be culturally unacceptable to call men only by their name, except those who were obviously younger than me. My mother called the young men *oğlum* (my son), but I was culturally too young to address someone as *oğlum* except the kids. I had to address adult men either as *Abi* (older brother), *Amca* (uncle) or *Bey* (Mr), otherwise it would have been a sign of being too close and would have been misinterpreted. I did not choose to call any of them “*bey*” since this was too formal for the social setting of Ege. I addressed the men, except those who were obviously younger

than me, as *Abi* (older brother) and I said *Amca* (uncle) to those who were around or older than my father's age, which was 60.

Male researchers may have difficulties in accessing to the world of women if "there is a strong division between the sexes" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995:93). I would not have gained any access to the local women if I had not been a woman since the local women spent most of their time either in their homes or at neighbours' houses. When I was introduced to them, either by the *muhtars* (the governor of a *mahalle*) or by their neighbours, they invited me to their houses. So I interviewed all the women either at their own or at their neighbours' houses.

Teenage girls called me *abla*, and I only used their names. I called older women, depending on their age, *abla* or *teyze* (aunt). However, most of the local women, even those who were much older than me, preferred to call me Burcu *Hanım*, meaning Mrs/Ms/Miss. While I aimed to minimize hierarchy, being "*Hanım*" clearly indicated a hierarchy between me and the Ege women since "*Hanım*" is used to superiors (Braun 1988:22). Sometimes I asked them not to call me *Hanım*. To older ladies I said: "Aunt, I am one of your daughters, please only say my name," and to the women around my age I said: "We are friends now, no need for *Hanım*." However, the women were not comfortable calling me Burcu and I thought this request might be another pressure placed on them and that this might deepen the hierarchy between us. Therefore, I stopped requesting them to call me just by my name. Rather, I tried to spend more time with them, and gave them a hand in my visits and, in spite of their insistence, I tried not to behave as a guest when I was in their homes. For example, when I was visiting, I helped them when they were serving tea, washing the dishes and so on. And, in due time, the women with whom I spent more time started to call me only "Burcu" and for me this was a sign of the first step towards establishing more equal relations.

The local women discovered that I could be helpful and useful to them. For example, women who put much effort into their kids' education but did not have enough resources to provide them with additional help asked me to help their kids with their homework. Some weeks after I moved into Ege, I started to visit different households to help with children's homework. After every session, the women prepared a wide range of food to serve me. I was so embarrassed because the women worked hard to thank me

with their food and there was no way to stop them. Moreover, if I requested them not to prepare anything for me, it might be understood that I was looking down on their food. So, I stopped asking them not to prepare food. Moreover, I could be useful in empowering them in terms of power relations within their family. Sometimes local women asked me to say things that they could not say to their husbands and sons. Since I was educated and not *cahil* (ignorant), which was how they put it, their husbands or teenage sons would listen to me. Actually, these women were challenging the men's authority through challenging the gender hierarchy by using the hierarchy based on education and class. In fact, I was hesitant about accepting these requests, because I was not a member of their families and therefore my attempts would be those of an outsider and my interference might exacerbate the power relations against the women. However, when women desperately asked for help, it was impossible for me to reject their requests.

All of the interviewees, when I visited their houses, behaved towards me as if I was a 'guest' rather than a researcher; and tried to make me feel comfortable. The local women gave me presents such as a scarf or *patiks* (a kind of handmade female sock), which is common, especially among families with a rural background. These presents might be considered a signal of being perceived as an ordinary girl rather than an urbanite expert researcher with a university degree. In this sense, I think that we succeeded in eliminating some of the traditional hierarchy between researchers and researched. Although this did not change my outsider position, at least I was perceived as a woman whose life expectations and plans were similar to those of the daughters of the women who gave me these presents. It seemed that my female interviewees and I could interact on the basis of being women. However, since there were other factors, such as our age, skin colour, class, ethnicity and accent, which were all likely to have an effect on how we were seen by respondents being a woman was not in itself enough to be perceived as an insider. On the other hand, "it is not necessarily the case that matching interviewers with interviewees in terms of race, class, age and gender" (Kelly, Burton and Regan 1994: 35) will be beneficial, and in any case this kind of matching might be very difficult and rare (Mellor 2007:59-60). Moreover, the researcher and the

researched might interpret differences and similarities quite differently from each other (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:113-115).

2.3 Pilot Work

In Ankara there are seven districts, and in each district there are *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. The prominent districts in terms of number of *gecekondu* areas are Mamak, in which most of the areas are comprised of *gecekondu*s, and Altındağ, which is the 25th largest megalum in the world (Davis 2007:28). I visited two *gecekondu mahallesi* (the smallest unit of administration, it also means district or neighbourhood) (Harman *Mahallesi* and Ege *Mahallesi*) in Mamak and one (ÇinÇin *Mahallesi*) in Altındağ.

Çin Çin *Mahallesi*, in which mostly Gypsy and some Kurdish people live, has a very bad reputation in Ankara in terms of crimes such as prostitution, drug-dealing, burglary and pick-pocketing. However, during my visit I did not experience any of these problems. In order to reach the people of this region, I visited a primary school there, since one of my friends knew the manager of the school. But the teachers and pupils were on their summer holidays, so the manager failed to make any connections for me. Then, I visited the *mahalle* several times during the summer of 2011. My primary aim was not to focus on narratives about criminals, and since the reputation of ÇinÇin might have prevented me from examining other social dynamics, I decided not to choose Çinçin for my main fieldwork.

Harman *Mahallesi* is one of the oldest *gecekondu* districts in Mamak and for this reason it is more integrated with the city centre than other *gecekondu* districts. Due to the urban reforms, most of the *gecekondu*s had already been transformed into multi-floor apartment blocks. I have an uncle who used to live in Mamak and he knew the *muhtar* of Harman *Mahallesi*. He kindly asked the *muhtar* to help me and I visited him in his office and introduced myself as a researcher who was studying the lives of *gecekondu* people. He was eager to help me. He asked me to come again the next day in order to be introduced to the inhabitants of this *mahalle*. The next day I went there with a friend who had a car because the neighbourhood was quite hilly and walking was

tiring. Since it would have been rude to ask the *muhtar* to walk all round the *mahalle*, I felt that it was a good idea to have a car with me. We made a quick visit and he took me to some houses and introduced me to some families. While introducing me, he said: “This lady comes from the university and would like to talk to you about your problems.” I took the phone numbers of the people and started to visit their houses.

I visited Ege *Mahallesi* with the same friend, who had a friend in common with the *muhtar* of this district, Ali, who was Kurdish-Alevi. Before visiting the *muhtar* at his office(see photo 6-7), we knew that he was a left-wing activist. I explained my aim, introduced myself, and told him that I intended to visit some houses then he took me to the houses of local people. He was quite helpful and appreciated my work and said that he was familiar with research on *gecekondus* since other researchers from the universities had been there before. When we visited his office, it was general election time and there were many people going in and out to pick up their election registration papers. The *muhtar* introduced me to the people who came and I took their phone numbers and also arranged an interview with one of them for the following day.

In Harman *Mahallesi*, I conducted eight interviews and in Ege *Mahallesi* I interviewed six people for my fieldwork. Out of fourteen interviewees, eleven were female. Of the three men, one was the *muhtar* of Harman *Mahallesi*. I interviewed him at his office. The second was the manager of a small local grocery store in Ege *Mahallesi* and we met at his shop. The other male respondent was a retired worker in Ege *Mahallesi*. I interviewed him at his home and all the interviews with women took place in either their own or their neighbours’ houses.

In my pilot work, there were two interviewees of Kurdish origin, but since they had a very good command of Turkish I did not ask them in which language they would like to be interviewed. This was because I did not even recognize that they were Kurdish until they told me. It should be said that it is almost impossible for a researcher to differentiate the physical appearance of Turkish and Kurdish people from each other. The only criterion might be the accent. However, many Kurdish people, especially the educated ones, speak Turkish without any accent. On the other hand, Turkish people from cities and villages with a high population of Kurdish people are likely to speak Turkish with a distinctive Kurdish accent. It is even more confusing that Kurdish is not

the first language of some people of Kurdish origin, since some parents prefer not to speak to their children in Kurdish in order to avoid any difficulties that they might face because of their language. I arranged a Kurdish translator in Ankara just in case, but I did not come across any people of Kurdish origin who wanted to be interviewed in Kurdish. One of my interviewees in Harman *Mahallesi* was a native speaker of Greek. She spoke Turkish with a Black Sea accent but this seemed to be natural because she came to Ankara from the Black Sea region. I did not recognize that Turkish was not her mother tongue until her husband entered the room and asked his wife something in Greek. Then she told me: “We are not Greek, we are Muslim; however, the Greek people left their language with us when they went back to their home.” Since it was not very likely that I would come across local people whose native language was Greek in Ege, where most of the inhabitants were from Central Anatolia, I did not arrange an interpreter for Greek.

Although it was Ramadan during my pilot fieldwork, even the Sunni² families, who mostly fasted, served tea and fruit to me when I visited them. I was not fasting, but unless they asked me whether I was or not, I did not say so. However, they told me that they supposed that while working on hot summer days, fasting might be too hard, so they guessed that I was not fasting. I thought that they might have guessed it since I was perceived as an ‘urbanite’ because of my educational level, profession and the place that I study. Since urbanites were perceived as not fasting, they guessed that I was not fasting either. If I was in a Sunni household, I initially rejected any kind of offer, but they insisted. Since it would be very rude – and rejection might be understood as meaning that I did not like their food and looked down on their offerings – I accepted. If I was in an Alevi household, who usually do not fast, I did not refuse their offer of food and drink because they were eating and drinking with me as well. It was relatively easy to understand whether a person was Alevi rather than Kurdish or Turkish. In most of the Alevi houses, a portrait of Ali³ was prominent, and there was often less separation

² Sunnism refers to orthodoxy in Islam whereas Alevism is heterodoxy in the historical context of Turkey. See Chapter 4.

³ His full name is Ali ibn Abi Ṭalib, he was the son-in-law and cousin of prophet Mohammed. Prophet Mohammed and Ali are the most important figures in Alevi belief.

between men and women based on the utilization of rooms in the house. Moreover, Alevi women in Turkey do not usually cover their heads.

I chose to concentrate on Ege *Mahallesi* in Mamak. It was formally established in 1974 and the community developed throughout the 1980s and 1990s due to the second wave of migration. At the beginning of the 2000s, mainly because of the urban transformation projects, the neighbourhood underwent a huge change, the population changed and the sense of community started to dissolve. Some of the first settlers still lived in Ege and both first and second generation migrants as well as the *gecekondu* generation were available in Ege. Therefore, it was possible to talk about the emergence, development and decline of the community in Ege. Moreover, the narratives of different generations of migrants would enable me to understand changes in the self-perception of *gecekondu* dwellers. Besides, compared to other districts, it was easier to find more contacts and to conduct the research because of the connections that I made during my pilot field research.

2.4 Questions Highlighted by the Pilot Work

In the process of doing the pilot fieldwork, I encountered several challenges that I had not anticipated. Through my pilot work, I discovered that reaching informants through gatekeepers (in my case, the *muhtars*) can be of great help but that this strategy also has some drawbacks. Researchers might run the risk of relying too much on the gatekeepers rather than trying to grasp the social reality “through the eyes of members of the social setting” (Bryman 2001: 298). Moreover, the gatekeeper might consider some individuals ‘unsuitable’ and others ‘suitable’ according to his/her own set of values and orientate the researcher according to this subjective and personal scale. Clearly, this might prevent the researcher from examining the research site properly. In my pilot field study, the *muhtar* of Harman *Mahallesi* told me that he would introduce me to households that were quite ‘reliable and trustworthy’. He added that there was a variety of household in his *mahalle* but since he wanted to prevent me from coming to any harm, he promised to be very careful about choosing the respondents. When he told me this, I neither challenged him nor asked him to introduce me to any of the

households that he found ‘unsuitable’ or ‘dangerous’. Rather, after being introduced to the households picked by him, I hung around the *mahalle* and tried to speak to other people, especially the women who used the outside of their houses as a gathering point. In addition, I asked the initial respondents to introduce me to their neighbours and friends. However, during my pilot fieldwork study, since I did not live in these neighbourhoods (Ege, Harman and Çinçin) at that time, *muhtars* were the gatekeepers and I was not able to see many people other than those to whom I was introduced by the *muhtars*. Since this might reduce the heterogeneity of my interviewees, for the main fieldwork in Ege I did not relate to people mainly through a gatekeeper.

Before my pilot study, I planned to conduct semi-structured interviews and focus groups during my fieldwork. I prepared a list of concepts such as urban regeneration, poverty, social welfare, urbanites and so on. During the interviews in my pilot fieldwork, I did not have pre-arranged questions but tried to lead the conversation around to the concepts that I had listed beforehand. However, *gecekondu* dwellers were too heterogeneous to fix our conversations into a list of concepts. So, for the main fieldwork, I decided to be more flexible in interviews and to allow the participants to come up with new concepts and issues regarding their lifestyle. Therefore, I planned to “focus on generation rather than the testing of theory” (Kitzinger 1994: 108), and “allow the relevant theory to emerge from the data... [and]... describe the life as it is” (Letherby 2003: 66-7).

During my pilot fieldwork I became convinced that it was almost impossible to design my encounters as being either an in-depth interview or a focus group. Most of the sessions had elements of both and the methods merged into one another. When I visited *gecekondu*s, there was always more than one family member present or guests dropped in during the interview without invitation. While I was interviewing local men in public areas such as the coffee shop and mini market, other men who saw us usually stopped and began to be a part of the interview. In such cases, it was not possible to ask people other than the respondent to leave or ask the respondent to go to another place for the interview. Rather, I explained my aim to the newcomers and asked for their consent to include them in the interview. They were quite content with this situation since they felt they had many things to say. It was not always possible to keep all the people in the

same room from the beginning to the end of the interview. Some left the room for a while in order to pray, answer the phone, open the door, cook, prepare tea etc. So in most cases, my interviews naturally turned into informal group discussions. Using spontaneous group discussions is not only functional and suitable for researching *gecekondü* dwellers, it is also invaluable both for grounded theory in the sense of ensuring that “priority is given to the respondents’ hierarchy of importance, their language and concepts, their frameworks for understanding the world” (Kitzinger 1994: 208), and for feminist methodology in terms of generating interactions between participants and the possibility of consciousness raising, both for participants and the researcher (Montell 1999:44). In this sense, it can be suggested that, in group work, power is more diffused compared to in-depth interviews and this is useful “for knowledge to be collectively constructed and for empowerment” (Pini 2002: 341-2). It is highly likely that participants in group work will challenge each other and therefore they need to be able to support their arguments. Since, as a researcher, I was not expected to challenge or support any interviewee’s argument during an interview, informal focus groups enabled participants to defend and deepen their arguments when they were challenged by other participants. Group work is also useful in “encouraging open conversation about embarrassing subjects” (Kitzinger 1994:116), which it might be rude for me to broach. For example, during one of the informal focus groups with a woman, two of her daughters and their neighbours, the mother was talking about her marriage and migration to the city. But I felt that there was something she had abstained from mentioning, since she did not mention any details about the place of her wedding and she was not looking into my eyes as she normally did during the interview. It was certain that I could not ask whether she was concealing something or not. Meanwhile, her daughters, who were in their twenties, were giggling. At the end, the mother also started to smile and said: “OK, I eloped with my husband” and her daughters said: “Oh, finally you confessed it; we were looking forward to it!”

In brief, due to the difficulties of sticking to one form of interviewing method, I concluded that it would be sensible for my main field research not to restrict the methods either to focus groups or in-depth interviews; rather, it would be helpful to conduct a series of conversations, as had been the case in my pilot fieldwork.

Considering the flexible nature of *gecekondu* people's lifestyle, using a variety of research methods flexibly would enable me to reflect their lifestyles better than a more formal approach.

Although there is a variety of approaches to and definitions of participant observation, in general it can be said that this method is in search of identity and suitable for studies intended to generate grounded theory (Pohland 1972:6). While the interview is a one-off method for researchers, participant observation might reveal more about social factors that cannot generally be grasped by interviewing. For example, in my pilot fieldwork, besides the interviews, I tried to spend time hanging around in the *gecekondu* districts. I went to *muhtars'* offices, local shops and cafes. One day, while I was in the office of the Harman *Mahallesi Muhtarı*, a young woman in a suit and wearing make-up came to his office. After learning that she was a lawyer and lived in the new luxury apartments, the *muhtar* told me: "these kinds of people are what we need. We need people who were brought up in this district to become successful like her." Although she was a newcomer and probably had no contact with older inhabitants of the district, for the *muhtar* she was one of the 'members' of the Harman *Mahallesi*. This generated more questions in my mind about *gecekondu* residents' perceptions of the middle-class newcomers and urbanites. Since I had realized that, rather than pre-arranged interviews and focus groups, informal conversations fit more with the nature of *gecekondu* people and that my own observations would reveal more about their lifestyle, I decided to rent a *gecekondu* house in Ege while I conducted my main field research. So, living inside the social setting would enable me to combine formal and informal interviews and focus groups with participant observations and daily conversations and to have unmediated and immediate access to the local people.

Based on my previous research experience in Turkey, I expected that local people, especially women, would be quite interested in my marital status. On several occasions, some of the respondents during my previous research had tried to match me with suitable men. This showed that I was accepted as a good person who might be similar to themselves and could be matched with one of their sons, relatives or friends. I could say that all these presents, questions and good wishes – and the efforts of the respondents to match me with someone during my previous field studies – indicated that they had

already accepted me as one of their friends. However, this had created some conflicting situations for me in the past when I did not wish to be rude in rejecting their offers about meeting a person with the aim of marriage but on the other hand I did not want to engage with such a setting. In addition, because unmarried women occupy a lower position in the patriarchal age and gender hierarchy, local people might not take me seriously and this would make it more difficult to reach people in Ege. Considering all these factors, I decided not to say that I was a single woman. Wolf (1996) suggests that many unmarried female researchers may feel pressure to claim that they are married during their fieldwork (p.9), and I was one of them. However, saying that I was a married woman might create problems about my reliability. This was mainly because I lived with my parents, not with my husband, and my husband was not visible at all.⁴ So, taking all these things into account, I decided to declare myself an engaged woman. I wore a golden wedding ring and asked my boyfriend, who lived out of Ankara, to wear a wedding ring when he visited me. I introduced him as my fiancé when he came to Ege. Ege people saw his photo on the wall when they visited me and my parents and I consistently answered the questions that were asked about my fiancé according to the real features of my boyfriend.

The districts where I held my fieldwork were a long way from where I lived during the fieldwork and, because of Ramadan, I needed to conduct my interviews in the afternoon because people sleep until midday, and before the evening since especially local women needed time to prepare dinner. These conditions limited my time and I could only conduct one interview each day. Since it was not proper to visit people's homes in the evening – people could be very tired because of fasting the whole day or might go to mosque after *iftar* (the meal eaten after sunset during Ramadan) and return very late – I could only find women during the day. Normally, I could go to the coffee houses in order to find men; however, because of Ramadan, the men were not going to coffee houses. Since I realized during my fieldwork that Ramadan restricted my mobility and the availability of *gecekondu* people, I decided to do my main fieldwork after the Ramadan of 2011.

⁴ Oğuz (2012), as a feminist researcher from Turkey, explained the dilemma she encountered in her fieldwork where she had to claim to be a married woman although she was not (p.7).

2.5 Initial Reflections on Fieldwork

For my main fieldwork, I went to Ege in August 2011 and visited Ali, *muhtar* of Ege, whom I already knew. I asked him to kindly help me find a *gecekondu* in Ege where I could live with my parents for several months. On the same day, he showed me a *gecekondu* just opposite the *muhtar's* office. The owner of this *gecekondu*, Mr. Mahmut, had returned to his village for the summer. Ali called him and told him that “one of my nieces” needed a *gecekondu* for some months. He also bargained about the price although I was ready to pay anything that was suggested. Finally, Mr. Mahmut reduced the rent from 300 liras to 200 liras, which was less than one third of the rent for an average middle-class flat in Ankara at that time. Mr. Mahmut’s *gecekondu*, where he lived in the winter, and the empty *gecekondu* that I wanted to rent were next to each other. The *gecekondu* opposite these two also belonged to Mr. Mahmut, and his mother and nephew lived there. Since the empty *gecekondu* was very close to the others, he wanted to rent it to a trustworthy person to protect his and his relatives' safety. I was introduced as Ali’s niece, which denoted Ali’s trust in me rather than a blood relation, therefore Mr. Mahmut did not hesitate too much in accepting me as his lodger. Ali and I visited them and Mahmut’s nephew gave me the key without any contract, deposit or rent in advance. This was very different from the house renting process in middle-class areas where a deposit, a contract, one month’s rent and sometimes a guarantor are a necessity. I needed a few days to organize some furniture so I told them that I would return and move in with my parents in a few days. Moreover, since I had not expected to find a *gecekondu* on my first visit after a year of my pilot work, I did not have enough money to pay the first month’s rent in my pocket at that time. I offered to pay Onur online or to meet the next day to pay in cash. Both Onur and Ali, although Ali was neither the owner nor a relative of the owner of that *gecekondu*, rejected this and advised me to feel free in terms of paying the rent. In spite of their attitudes, I felt uneasy until I had paid it due to my middle-class habits. Thus, my first day in Ege enabled me see the moral economy and the mutual trust that it created among *gecekondu* people.

2.6 Research Methods

Feminist methodology is used for this study. Although its main concern is gender dynamics, it should not be assumed that feminist methodology is restricted to research on women, since “a particularly important aspect of feminist debate is the relationship of gender to other forms of oppression, for instance those of race, class and disability, and the need to include an awareness of this within the parameters of our research” (Maynard 1994: 159). The starting point of feminism, that ‘the personal is political’, is also central to researching *gecekondu* residents’ lives if we wish to understand their position in the current politico-economic climate and social construction through their narratives about their daily lives. Talking about life in *gecekondu* areas with *gecekondu* people may be invaluable, both for me and the interviewees, in order to conceptualize the marginalized position of *gecekondu* dwellers through their own narratives. Moreover, it is assumed that women experience *gecekondu* conditions differently from men because they hold less power than men, and also because the way in which they migrate and come to *gecekondu* areas is different from that of men. Indeed, one of the aims of this study is to highlight the power relations based on gender in *gecekondu* areas. While feminist researchers cannot change the position of women, the way in which they conduct research can empower women and produce knowledge that can be used to challenge patriarchy (Letherby 2003:4, Maynard 1994:16-17).

There is a huge debate about the differences or similarities between qualitative and quantitative research methods, which of them should be used as part of a feminist methodology and whether feminist methodology requires any particular method (see Montell 1999, Maynard 1994:11, Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:15). Although it has been suggested that feminist research is more compatible with qualitative research methods, whereas quantitative research methods are generally identified with a “masculinist form of knowing” and “the detachment of the researcher and data collection” (Maynard 1994: 11), and also that the focus group is neglected in feminist research (Pini 2002:341, Montell 1999:46-47), it is widely accepted that feminist research is not tied to any particular method (Pini 2002:340, Letherby 2003:4,

Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:15). This is quite compatible with the flexible nature of *gecekondu* people.

Considering the multiple methods used and that the aim is to describe “a specific group in fine detail and to explain the patterns that exist, certainly not to discover general laws of human behavior” (Schofield 2002: 201), this study is based on qualitative research methods and prioritizes the richness of the data as much as possible. In brief, the aim is to present a slice of the transformation in lifestyles of *gecekondu* settlement dwellers in terms of their creative survival strategies, which affect and are affected by development policies and government strategies in Turkey. Since “every instance of human interaction represents a ‘slice from the lifeworld’” (Denzin 1983, cited in Williams 2000: 130), even the narrative of a single interviewee has value.

In line with the principles of qualitative research, which are based on text and writing – from field notes to descriptions and interpretations and to the presentation of the findings of the research (Flick 2007:xi) – the primary sources of data on which this study is based are the narratives of my interviewees and my carefully-maintained field diary. In fact, the main data source for this study is a combination of what I could hear from the tape recordings, what I remembered from our daily conversations and what I wrote down in my diary. So, I put all these fragments together. The data was not collected by conventional qualitative methods, what I did was to use the most appropriate way to reflect the richness and to fit into the flexible nature of *gecekondu* dwellers’ lifestyle. Since I met the local people every day and we developed friendships, our relations were not limited to a researcher and researched relationship. Therefore, in our interviews there are moments when very personal exchanges of confidences take place. As a researcher, I respected all such information and did not reveal it. If this information was relevant to my research questions, I gave a general account and outline without mentioning any particular participant.

In accordance with the interpretative perspective and feminist methodology, my study will not be a value-free one and the methodology of this thesis is based on the idea that value-free data cannot be obtained (Walsham 1995:376). In the context of the relationship between the state and *gecekondu* dwellers, the latter are usually taken as “undeserving profiteers of the estate market” in the public discourse on squatter areas.

However, in this study they will not be taken either as “free-riders who should have paid for the occupied lands” or as passive victims of the informal estate market; rather, I approach the *gecekondu* problem through the complex power relationships among capitalists, state and the rural migrants as the urban proletariat. In addition, while *gecekondu* dwellers’ survival strategies are predominantly discussed in terms of “free-riding” or “threats to city life and modernity” in the media and in state discourse, I consider them as a kind of creative struggle for housing rights. Furthermore, as a researcher, I bear in mind that women experience social reality differently from men, not merely because of their sex, but because of the way in which they are socialized, their position in production and the family, and the unequal distribution of power between men and women.

2.7 Interviews

Beginning with my existing contacts, I used the snowball technique of sampling. This technique is a method that “yields a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest” (Biemacki and Waldford 1981:141). As Bailey (1994: 96) mentions, snowball sampling is useful for the study of groups where respondents may not be visible and routine sampling procedures may be impractical. In fact, in the case of this study, it would have been possible to prepare a randomly selected sample of Ege people instead of using a snowball technique, since I could have easily obtained a list of Ege’s inhabitants from the *muhtar* and prepared a randomly selected sample. However, this would have felt too formal for *gecekondu* people and I might have seemed like a state officer coming to check on them. Since this perception might be the biggest obstacle to reaching the local people, I chose informal ways of engaging with them. So, the best way to reach them seemed to be to go to the districts where they lived, approach the households and politely ask them – and also the *muhtars* – to introduce me to their relatives, friends and neighbours.

At the beginning, I only knew Ali in Ege. He was quite helpful in finding a *gecekondu* and obtaining furniture for my house; he even gave me a sofa and a heater.

Since his office was just in front of my *gecekondu*, he could see us and joined us for breakfast when we ate on the balcony of our *gecekondu*. When other people saw him on our balcony they greeted him and most of them came to our balcony and we served them tea. In this way, I got to know many Ege people. After a week, my father made friends with Cengiz, the owner of the *bakkal* shop (local grocery). Both my father and Cengiz were from the Black Sea region of Turkey, so in one sense we were “*hemşeri*” with Cengiz. Because of the *hemşeri* bond, he told me that he felt much closer to my family, and for him this was another form of the ‘nationalism’ through which he defines his political views. In order to help me, he reserved the front part of his *bakkal* shop for me to conduct interviews and to meet new people (photo 9). This was a big favour since he was introducing me as “my niece” to the customers and when I politely asked them for interviews they mostly agreed because being a niece of Cengiz showed that I was a trustworthy person. I was able to meet some of my interviewees in front of this *bakkal* shop and Cengiz was so kind that he was serving us tea. Because of the fact that we were “*hemşeris*”, he wanted to protect me from possible dangers and for this reason he did not recommend me to conduct interviews with people whom he did not trust. Sometimes, he said that certain people might lie to me or that some men might deceive me since I am a very pure and good person. This was why he was giving me advice not to believe everybody. In due course, I understood that his criterion in selecting interviewees for me was not about faith, ethnicity or political ideology but the ‘morality’ of the people. For example, he was advising me not to conduct interviews with men who were gambling in the local coffee house or were infamous for being part of a gang. For example, Cengiz was a Sunni who declared his political ideology as ‘Turkish Nationalism’; however, he strongly advised me not to become close to Semih and Osman, who used to be part of the grassroots organization of a Turkish nationalist political party, since he thought that they were part of a gang and they might easily deceive me. On the other hand, Güven was an atheist who used to be a socialist activist; I met Güven through Cengiz, who trusted him in spite of their opposing political ideologies. Although I appreciated that Cengiz was trying to help me as much as he could and protect me, I realized that this may be preventing me from reaching different Ege people. Moreover, local people who did not like Cengiz might not want to

communicate with me. So, I tried not to stick only to Cengiz's *bakkal* shop, rather I tried to frequently hang around the local grocery market, the sports park and the *muhtar's* office to meet different people whom I could not meet otherwise. This helped me a great deal in reaching different kinds of people in Ege. Moreover, places such as Cengiz's *bakkal* shop, the *muhtar's* office, the local coffee house, local primary school and so on were all places where I could witness the daily lives of local people.

I explained my aim to my interviewees by saying that I was trying to understand the lifestyle of *gecekondu* dwellers and I would like to interview them about this. But I realized that although people were quite eager to participate in the interviews they got a bit anxious because they thought that their 'intellectual capacity' might not be enough for this. They used expressions such as the following:

I would like to help you.. But I am not an educated person.

I like young people who pursue education like you, so I would like to participate. But what can I contribute to your study?

Sure, you can come to my house whenever you like. But I do not think I am such an intellectual person who is capable of answering your questions.

I answered all these hesitations by explaining that I was not going to test their knowledge and I would only try to understand their opinions, which were the most valuable thing for my study. I think their hesitation was due to my position as a person who comes from a university.

I asked their consent to participate in the research but I did not have a consent form since this would be seen as very formal and signing a consent form might induce a feeling that they were engaging in an activity that was organized by the state or a formal institution. I recorded all the interviews. Before we began, I did not directly ask for permission to record. Instead, I said: "Now, let's talk about your experiences and life story and let me start the recorder." I showed them the recorder and put it between me and the interviewee. It might sound strange but, based on my previous fieldwork experience, I knew that if I directly asked: "Would you mind if I record your voice?" at

the very beginning, the idea of 'recording their voice' would seem to them to be something very serious, they were likely to feel uncomfortable and the interview would be a very formal one. When I introduced it in this more informal way, only two of the participants rejected the voice recorder and I took notes in my interviews with them. The rest, who accepted me recording their voices, asked me to turn off the recorder for a while when they talked about sexuality or if they said a bad word, and I did what they asked me to do. One of the participants was very willing to be part of the conversation and he was openly talking about his life story while I was interviewing someone else and but when I wanted to conduct an interview with him he did not allow me to record his voice. A young woman who was under the strict supervision of her husband and whom I used to meet very frequently wanted to take part and allowed me to record but asked me not to tell this to her husband.

I usually began interviews by asking people to tell me about their lives. I had some questions to get the conversation going and I introduced some key subjects around which the conversation floated. Although I did not always stick to these small questions and key subjects, it is possible to group them into four categories. The first included demographic questions. I only asked them to introduce themselves and tell me about their lives and then let them talk about their life story and their family in any way they liked. Then their migration story naturally revealed itself. When they were talking about their current lives, I asked them what they did in their everyday life and then they started to talk about their daily lives. During our conversations, when/if they talked about their neighbours or *mahalle*, I asked whether they were happy to be living in their *mahalle*. So, the third subject area is about their relationships with other *gecekond* dwellers and their reflections about living in *gecekond*s. For the last part, since the municipalities and central government run some welfare projects and urban regeneration programmes in *gecekond* districts, I asked them about their experiences with this kind of welfare and formal institutions. In many conversations I did not ask about these; however, since they were very important to the local people they spontaneously started to talk about these policies. I used very small questions to encourage and continue the conversation and to lead the interview to the introduction of new topics. This helped me to cover all

the relevant aspects and topics and also to realize other dynamics in their lives that I might not have thought to ask about.

For my fieldwork, I conducted 80 in-depth interviews with local people, some of which were in the form of informal conversations. Since people dropped in on the interviews, when I was transcribing, it was like the voice of a crowd. So sometimes I was highly likely to miss some of the conversation while transcribing. However, due to the chaotic mode of the interviews, the tape recorder mostly became invisible and this enabled people to be more natural during the interviews. I talked to most of the interviewees more than once since I met them regularly around the area. I conducted one pre-arranged focus group with seven local high school students in the classroom at the *muhtar*'s office where they were given extra classes by volunteer left-wing activists. I conducted three in-depth interviews with socialist activists who were active in Ege, and one interview with the city planner on Mamak council. I also used participant observation techniques, I participated in a protest meeting with local people, accompanied them while they were visiting Mamak municipality and the district governorate (*kaymakamlık*), I joined in with local women while they prepared bread and tomato sauce for the winter and so on, and I frequently visited local public places such as the *muhtar*'s office, coffee house, local primary school and market.

I felt that, although I introduced myself and explained my aim of emphasizing the respondents' own ideas in the same way, male and female respondents' attitudes towards me and the interview were quite different from each other. Men were less eager to speak about their own experiences compared to women in my fieldwork, as McKee and O'Brien have observed, and I also experienced the fact that men were less eager to talk about their families (1983:153-158). More importantly, men tried to 'inform' me about other people's lifestyles in their district or the politicians' attitude to their district.

After each interview, I asked each of the interviewees whether they would like to conceal or reveal their names; the majority did not want to conceal their names. Especially for the men, revealing their names was a sort of pride and through letting me reveal their names they were trying to show that they were brave and proud of their life story. However, considering the fact that some of the men were engaged in illegal activities and were telling their stories frankly, using their real names might have put

them in danger. Therefore, although they allowed me to use their names, I decided not to use their real names in order to protect them from any possible danger. To be consistent with the names, I used nicknames for all the interviewees except Sırrı Süreyya Önder who is an MP and Ali who is the current *muhtar* of Ege. In addition to these considerations, there were some women who did not wish to conceal their names but who wanted to pick other names which they thought fit them better than their real names. For example, Türkan picked this name because of Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan, who mobilized all her resources for the education of young girls and passed away in 2009. Türkan told me that, for her, the education of girls was very important and she did everything to persuade her father to allow her to go to the high school when she was young. Because of her respect to Mrs. Saylan she wanted to be named Türkan. In Turkish, *hayat* means life, and one of my female respondents preferred to use this name because she said that she always felt happy and her name should reflect how much she was full of life. Finally, Kader told me that she had a miserable childhood because of her stepmother and this was why she wanted to get married as early as the age of 14. After 15 years of marriage, she was left by her husband, and her sons, who were traditionally expected to take care of their mother and live with her, did not want her in their homes after they got married. Now she lived alone in a small *gecekodu* belonging to her brother and did not need to pay rent and she did not have any regular income. In Turkish, *kader* means destiny and she told me: “Look at my *kader*, so let’s say my name is Kader, it should have been my real name in fact!”

I asked permission to take and use photos of people for this thesis. One of my participants generously shared her personal photo archive and allowed me to use the photos.

Most of the interviews took place in local people’s houses and shops. I think that interviewing them in the places where they spent most of their time allowed me to see their livelihoods and daily lives at closer quarters. Although the significance of place is often neglected as a source of qualitative research data, as O’Toole and Were (2008: 617) have suggested, “material culture and human living strongly influenced each other, and thus studying material culture gives us important clues about the way humans live and have lived in the past.” In this sense, my visits to their houses revealed more about

their lives, lifestyles and living conditions. For example, a portrait of Ali or some verses from the Koran and Islamic pieces in Arabic letters on the wall told me about the religious belief of the family. One might guess the hobbies of members of the household by looking at their gardens and courtyards or the decoration of their homes. Some women made handcrafted accessories for their furniture and some people grew fruit and vegetables in their gardens. Moreover, the room that I was invited into gave me an indication as to whether the usage of rooms was based on gender segregation or not. So, although places and objects have functions, it can be said that they also create and communicate meaning (O'Toole and Were 2008:618-626).

2.8 Power Dynamics between Researcher and Researched

While power relationships are inherent in all kinds of situations (Giddens 1985, cited in Letherby 2003:114, and see Foucault's work), it is hard to deny the power relation and dynamics between the researcher and the researched (Lal 1996:193). I think that since it is the interviewees who decide whether to have an interview or not, and who determine the place and time for an interview, they have significant power in this relationship. Moreover, it is likely that most of the time it is the respondents who decide when to finish an interview. Since it is I, as the researcher, who will be rewarded as a result of these interviews (Letherby 2003:120), and since they chose to spend some time with me when their time was scarce, I was quite aware of the fact that they were doing me a big favour. I also explained this to my interviewees during my pilot and main fieldwork. I said that I would use these interviews for my thesis and, if I could finish it, I would be teaching in a state university.

On the other hand, I was the person who was collecting the information about their lives, and I left the place with this information in my bag and in my mind to write down in English, which they could not speak. On this point, I asked all my interviewees whether they would like to read the transcript or a summary transcript of our interview. Some of the men took this question to mean that I was testing their trust in me and told me that "we trust that you will not change our words." I mostly thanked them for their trust but also added that maybe we could talk more about the issues that we had

discussed during the interview or that they might like to add more. Most of the people who wanted to read it preferred to read the summary since they thought the full transcript might take too long to read. When I gave the summary or the transcripts to the participants many of them, especially the women, asked me to read it slowly and loudly. Sometimes they asked me to pause and told me more about their life story. Some women cried when they saw that their life story was recorded and written down and they told me that they would keep that piece to read to their daughters or other family members. One day a local woman stopped me and said: *“I heard that when we talked about our life, you wrote it down, would you please do the same with me?”* I feel that this lady’s question, as well as the other women’s attitudes about the written form of our interviews, showed that the women felt ‘important’ because their life story was recorded and written down.

Conceptualizations of power and deciding and thinking about the power relations in research must include situations in which the people being studied can exercise power over the researcher (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:156). Although it is widely accepted that in the researcher/researched relationship it is the researcher who has the most power, this argument might be contested in the case of the relationship between a female researcher and male interviewees or institutions. In this case, Maynard (1994:16) suggests that “the problem of power may become particularly acute” and it is advised that “rather than sharing power, our concerns are how to limit its potential use against us” (Kelly, Burton and Regan 1994: 38). In most of my interactions with men, the gender hierarchy overcame the hierarchy based on class and educational background. This was most obvious in the interviews conducted in the local coffee house where men gathered to gamble and to smoke joints. Group discussions in this coffee house usually turned into a verbal competition among the men. Frequently, the men started a hot debate on an irrelevant issue such as soccer matches or horse racing and it was nearly impossible for me to persuade them to return to our discussion because nobody was listening to me.

Since I lived in the same district with them, I discussed my work with my interviewees whenever I found an opportunity during my stay in *Ege Mahallesi*. So that they were involved in the study, and especially the field research process, sharing my

writing with them might be considered a way of eliminating the distance between the researcher and the researched (Acker, Barry and Esseveld 1983:428). The differences between our perceptions contributed to the study in terms of revealing more about my positionality. Furthermore, in our relationship, I was asking questions and aiming to get information about their lives – my questions functioned as prompts to open up a discussion. This may have sustained my hierarchically dominant position, which also emerged out of my class and ethnicity and my position as a researcher. Since I wanted to have as flat a relationship as possible with the respondents, I answered all their questions about my personal life, which included my marital status, my hometown, my age and details about my parents, job and education. Respondents, particularly the female ones, expected me to introduce myself in detail and they shaped our interview as an intimate chat between girls. One of my interviewees said to me during the interview: “We have only talked about ourselves, let’s talk about you.” Then I talked about myself, told them where I was born, where my parents lived, what my plans were and so on. As Oakley mentions, interviewers are advised not to answer the questions put to them by interviewees since researchers are constructed as data-collectors only (1981:35-37). But this sustains a hierarchical relationship between the researcher and the respondents. The interview format is limited to the interviewer asking questions and gathering data from the respondents, who are generally constructed as the passive objects of the interview in dominant traditions of qualitative research (Oakley 1981: 31-40). In contrast to this, constructing interviewing as a social situation is crucial due to the fact that data and knowledge are situated and contextual and are also constructed through a dialogue in which neither the interviewer nor the interviewee is a passive object (Mason 2002: 62-66). Transforming the rigid researcher-researched relationship into a flatter relationship, in which women can share their experiences with each other, is invaluable for feminist research since sharing experiences and minimizing the differences between women in interviews is central (Oakley 1981:58, Kitzinger 1994, Maynard 1994: 6, Montell 1999: 49-50, Letherby 2003: 81-84). But sometimes they asked me my opinions and they liked theirs to be confirmed. For example:

The younger generation are less loyal to their families, aren't they?

I think there are many people who enjoy the welfare distributed by the mayor but they do not vote for him. It seems immoral to me, what do you think?

When I was faced with such questions, I abstained from either confirming or rejecting their ideas and also from answering. I only said, “It’s up to you, everything you said is important.”

2.9 Organization of the Data

After moving out of Ege in January 2012, I returned to York to analyze my data. Nevertheless, I continued to communicate with the people I had met through regular phone calls and emails. In July 2012, I returned to Ankara for one month and conducted some more interviews. This time I did not rent a *gecekondu*, I stayed in one of my friend’s houses in the city centre but made regular visits to Ege. In August 2012, just a week after I left Turkey, some houses and shops were demolished by the municipality teams in spite of people’s resistance (see Chapter 7). This event reminded me of my outsider position. While I was safe back at home, some of Ege’s people had lost their homes. The only thing that I could do was to phone the people who were affected by this demolition and ask them whether there was anything that I could do to be helpful. Through the phone calls and emails we discussed this demolition.

I visited Ege several times in December 2012. Moreover, some of the local people shared their personal photo archives and took photos for this study. I discussed my findings during all my visits and asked their opinions. They contributed a lot to this study, not only by agreeing to be interviewed but also through their photos, feedback and further suggestions.

2.10 Conclusion

Since I had read the experiences and reflections of many researchers, most of whom were feminists (see Gupta 1979, Kelly et al. 1994, Kitzinger 1994, McKlee and O’Brien

1983, Oakley 1981), before I started my fieldwork, I was prepared for the various possible difficulties that I might face, such as the power relations between me and the men and women, and living in a neighbourhood where I was a stranger. I had developed some strategies to overcome some of these difficulties as I preferred to live in Ege with my parents and told the local people that I had a fiancé who lived out of Ankara. These strategies were helpful in decreasing my concerns about my own security and in making the local people more comfortable about my presence in Ege. My father enabled me to contact the men who gathered in the local coffee house, a space that is exclusive to men. Although I had known that male participants could exercise power over female researchers, I was not always able to retain control over the interviews with male participants. Men frequently dominated the interviews and turned them into a demonstration of power among men. I should have retained more control during the interviews with men in the local coffee house.

Living in a *gecekond* neighbourhood reminded me and my parents how to light a stove, as we had done ten years before in our family house, how to find wood and coal, cut the wood and store it. From our storage we took an old copper vessel, large basins and buckets which were quite useful for boiling water on the stove, carrying and storing coal and keeping water in the bathroom. From the fact that half of our conversation was about heating and cleaning away the coal dust, we understood from practical experience how vital the distribution of coal by the municipality was for the people living in *gecekond*s and why women complain about the difficulties of living in them. Moreover, after living in a multi-storey apartment block for ten years, we appreciated the community support in Ege where the neighbours helped us in cutting wood and finding furniture, and shared food with us. For me and my parents, this was a life journey through which we came to question our recent middle-class life in the multi-floor apartment block and our middle-class values and approach to *gecekond* people. This enabled me to take a critical perspective towards the literature on the residents of squatter settlements, all of which is written by middle-class researchers. In this way, I suppose I was able to abstain from both romanticizing and looking down on life in *gecekond*s. Despite the language barriers, I tried to reflect their own perspective in my capacity as a researcher. As well as myself, this fieldwork also touched my parents; my

father still keeps in touch with his contacts from Ege and my mother, who is a feminist activist, wrote her memoirs and published them in a feminist journal.⁵

⁵ For her article, see Şentürk, D. (2012).

3. Internal Migration and *Gecekondu* Communities in Turkey

3.1 Introduction

The rural-to-urban migration experience within Turkey started as early as the 1930s; however, the population distribution was significantly changed by two large-scale mass migrations during the 1960s and 1980s. *Gecekondu* dwellers composed 4.7% of the urban population in 1955 and 16.4% in 1960, but this ratio reached to 22.9% in 1965, 26.1% in 1980 and 35% in 1995 (Keleş 2010:494). The two waves of mass migration from rural to urban areas in Turkey can be considered as a response of the rural population to the transformation in both rural and urban areas as well as an increasing hierarchy between them in terms of quality of life, economic conditions, job opportunities and public services (Ataay 2001:62, Hemmasi and Prorok 2002:400-401). This chapter will discuss the historical context of the internal migration in Turkey by focusing upon the migrants' survival strategies and the interlinked relation between their strategies and state policies.

3.2 Beginning of Rural to Urban Migration

Historically, Istanbul was the capital of the Ottoman Empire and the cultural, financial and political centre of the state, whereas Ankara was a small Anatolian town until the beginning of the 1920s. The new republic was established in 1920, and Ankara became the capital in 1923. Following this announcement, the headquarters of the main state institutions and state officers moved to Ankara, and the state began to invest in this city in terms of industry, city planning, education and healthcare institutions and infrastructure facilities. It was designed to be a modern city and city planning started in the 1920s and early 1930s. At that time, Turkey's population was suffering from the poverty generated by the First World War and this poverty was mostly felt in rural areas. New investment created some jobs in the trade, service and especially construction sector (Şenyapılı 2004:73). Migrants came from many villages in the surroundings of

Ankara and from nearby cities for seasonal work, but some of them stayed permanently. Ankara's population of 20,000 grew rapidly and by 1927 the population was 75,000 (Payne 1984:210). So it can be said that rural-to-urban migration dates back to the early 1920s and 1930s in Ankara, even before the industrialization and mass urbanization period in other large cities in Turkey.

Due to the lack of affordable accommodation for the rural incomers, they occupied empty areas, mostly on public land, and built their own *gecekondu*s in the areas with no services or infrastructure with their own labour and only for their own use value. On the other hand, there were some concrete policies which aimed to provide houses to newcomers in Turkey, especially during early periods of migration. In the late 1920s, it was decided to implement a new city plan, in the sense of modernizing the new capital of Turkey. The Jansen plan was approved and scheduled to be put into effect in 1932. Besides constructing large streets, university areas etc., this plan involved sharing some parts of the city to build houses for low-income groups; this was called *amele mahallesi* (workers' quarter). However, because of speculation and conflict between the originators of this plan and the administrative staff, this aim of the Jansen plan could not be fulfilled (Şenyapılı 2004:63-68, Kılıncı 2012). The houses in *amele mahallesi* benefitted middle-class households, public officers and military employees.⁶ The failure of the social housing policies initiated new solutions and Laws 5218 and 5228 were passed in 1948 to legitimize the existing slum houses in Ankara.

The formation of *gecekondu* regions in Ankara was begun in the late 1940s as a result of the rapid urbanization of the post-war period, mostly by male pioneers from the villages in central Anatolia. Most pioneers were from the villages of Yozgat, Çorum and Kırşehir, which were very close to Ankara. The rural migrants before 1960 formed scattered houses or shed houses which created the nucleus of *gecekondu* areas in large

⁶The state policies aimed at providing accommodation for urban poor and rural migrants in the early years of rural-to-urban migration failed for similar reasons in Turkey and Latin America. In Latin America, during the 1950s and 1960s, many governments built public housing for direct sale or rent; however, these buildings were both too expensive for the targeted groups and in unattractive locations on the urban periphery, requiring additional transport costs. As a result, this policy could not fulfil the aim of providing regular and legal accommodation for the urban poor and the apartments were mostly sold or rented to wealthier people (Mangin 1967: 86-87).

cities. They played a leadership role for the later arrivals since they knew more about the limitations and opportunities in the city (Şenyapılı 2004:188).

At this time, agricultural production was labour-intensive, so the rural migrants who had some land in their villages considered their new status to be a temporary one in order to earn money, while their position as ‘self-employed farmer’ remained more permanent for them (Tekeli 2008:98-110, Keyder 1987:207). In general, the rural incomers before 1960 did not work in the industrial sector, due to the lack of industrial investment. They typically remained at the margins of the economy, with occupations such as street selling, door keeping and construction work. Since migration during this period did not result in the establishment of large *gecekondu* areas (Duyar-Kienast 2005:35), the planners and governors did not pay them a great deal of attention. They were not referred to as *gecekondu*s, but as *baraka* (shanty houses) at that time. From the bureaucratic point of view, they were seen as temporary residences that would disappear in due course or be developed when the government had more resources to do so (Şenyapılı 2004:Chap.4). This was compatible with the negligence approach, which assumed that slums were illegal, unavoidable and temporary but would be overcome by economic development, in other developing countries before the 1970s (UNHSP 2003:129). In Latin America, when migration became widespread during the 1940s and 1950s and slum areas were constructed, the urban authorities, as in Turkey, became anxious about the arrival of such large numbers of poorly-educated rural people (Gilbert 1994:52). The aim of the state before 1960 was not to integrate the migrants into city life, rather they were seeking a strategy to send them back (Şenyapılı 2004:270), or at least to prevent more rural people from migrating like in many places in Latin America. This perspective was shaped through the state’s perception of *gecekondu* dwellers as unnecessary to the running of the economic and political system in Turkey before 1960. On the other hand, the state in Turkey did not instigate severe migration controls as was the case in some countries like Kampuchea, China and apartheid South Africa, where the authoritarian regimes implemented drastic migration controls before the 1970s (Tacoli 1998:152).

3.3 Historical Background for the First Wave Migration

The period following the Second World War was marked by high rates of economic growth around the world. Beginning in the second half of the 1940s, Turkey gave up closed, self-sufficient, state-led industrialization based on domestic resources as its main strategy and shifted to a model which aimed at the mechanization of agriculture based on foreign resources (Boratav 2004:94, Aydın 2005:28-30). Under the guidance of the Truman Doctrine of 1947 and the Marshall Plan of 1948, Turkey had a role as a “bulwark” against communism and was expected to be an agricultural goods supplier, link its markets by road and increase agricultural productivity via mechanization.

Due to the extent of rural poverty, a bill called “A Law Providing for Land Distribution and Establishing Farmers’ Homesteads” was prepared in 1945. According to this law, which was based on expropriation and redistribution of the available land, private holdings over 5,000 *dönüms*⁷ were subject to redistribution but in areas where land was scarce, this could be decreased to 2,000 *dönüms* (Karaömerlioğlu 2009:9). Because of the resistance of large landlords, some of whom were MPs at that time, this law was not successful. In 1950, over 100,000 farming families out of 2.3 million had no land, 27% of farmers were renting or sharecropping land, 300,000 were permanent or seasonal agricultural labourers and, in 1952, about a million farming families were either landless or owned insufficient land (Aktan 1966:321-322). So, the frustrated rural masses flowed to the cities.

Marshall Aid contributed to the large-scale transformation of agricultural production and rural structure during this period. With the loans provided by Marshall Aid, tractors, fertilizers, irrigation systems and new agricultural products were introduced into Turkey. For example, while there were only 53 tractors in the entire country in 1948, this number had increased to 541 by 1951 (Şenyapılı 2010:178). Marshall Aid also contributed to the development of transportation in terms of building more roads linking rural and urban areas (Şenyapılı 2004:119, Yıldırım 2010:408). Turkey focused on the Road Project with the support of the US and much of the aid was invested in road construction. In 1950, the General Director of Highways was

⁷ *Dönüm* is a unit of area used during the Ottoman Period and is equal to a decare, or 1,000 square metres.

established and an extensive programme for the improvement and construction of roads started. Total surfaced roads went up to from 14,961 km to 21,266 km from 1948 to 1957 while asphalt roads increased from 816 km to 4,123 km (Coşar and Demirci 2009:31). These developments, and their effects on rural labour, launched a polarized debate among scholars.

For many scholars (Zürcher 2004:226, Kazgan 1966:74-77, Şenyapılı 2004:116-119), this mechanization created a surplus of rural labour. By contrast, others (Tekeli 2008:52, Munro 1974:650-652, Keyder 1983) suggest that it was not only the mechanization of agriculture as such, but also the process and type of mechanization that made many peasants unemployed and led them to leave their villages. For this second group of scholars, the heterogeneity of the rural population was the key point in a comprehensive analysis of internal migration after the second half of the 1940s. So it could be suggested that, although the mechanization of agricultural production had a major effect by creating a pool of surplus labour in rural areas and generating a pushing effect to urban areas, the various different strategies that rural producers employed when they faced this mechanization should not be ignored.

Rural producers with large-scale land holdings could get loans and tractors, so they were able to develop production and grow food more efficiently. Some small landowners got together to buy a tractor and used it in common, and most of these did not leave their villages (Tekeli 2008:87-91, Aktan 1957:281). Some small landholders worked on their own land and in other rural areas as seasonal workers, or female members of the family made hand-crafted goods (Tekeli 2008:87-91). The rural people who could diversify their sources of income also remained in their villages. On the other hand, a number of landless rural workers, who had worked on the large-scale holdings of other people, became unemployed with the introduction of tractors. Rural families without land were marginalized and had to take more risks, and they moved either to another village to find employment as rural workers or to large cities.

The 1960s were marked by dramatic changes, in terms of the transformation not only of rural areas, but of urban areas as well. After a brief experiment with agriculture-led growth in the 1950s, and the failure of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI), urban production began to be implemented during the 1960s (Altuğ et al. 2008:400,

Aydın 2005: 90). Within the import substitution period, the aim was to scale up national production through montage industry. Turkey, as with many other less-developed countries, would not only provide raw materials but would also integrate into the world economy by initiating a process of industrialization based on import substitution (Ataay 2001: 59-63). Turkey returned to a state-led economy during these years (Zürcher 2004:264-267, see Boratav 2010, Chap.7). Within this framework, national capital owners were supported to produce for the internal market and invest in industrial production and were subsidized by the government; they did not need to compete with foreign investors. As a result, they increased their profits and throughout the 1960s Turkey witnessed a vigorous economic recovery and high growth rates in GNP (Çeçen et al. 1994:38). On the other hand, in the same vein as the Western welfare regimes, the Turkish state's development strategy during these years was based on the inclusion of wage earners, workers and marginal groups.

It was not that the growth of large capital had been restricted but rather that various groups had been protected sufficiently to prevent the expedient destruction of traditional structures. In the same vein, the 'safety net' had extended to agricultural producers, to the newly urbanised, to the gecekondü population, and most significantly to industrial workers. (Keyder 1987: 226)

The new system was based on a negotiation between social classes, with the state taking on the role of arbiter as well as the guardian and manager of national development (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık 2008:1356, Aydın 2010:150). This inclusiveness was apparent in the new constitution of 1961, which enlarged the rights of workers. Trade unions were quite powerful and capable of keeping workers' wages high, although their influence was limited to the employees of large enterprises, while the wages of the rest of the workforce were not so high (Zürcher 2004:272). A social security organization for workers in the formal economy was introduced in 1964. Considering the fact that social security was based on formal employment at that time, being a worker in the formal sector appeared to be a very big opportunity for upward social mobility and generating security in their lives for the rural settlers.

The urban population was not large enough to supply the cheap labour required by the newly-emerging industries. The migrant population was needed by the urban markets, which were searching for cheap labour. So, increasing industrial job

opportunities was the prominent factor that pulled the rural population to urban areas. However, besides this, other factors such as the 'education-skill and information level of potential rural migrants, transportation and communication facilities and existence of previous migrants' (Gedik 1997:171) also played a decisive role in the migration process.

The main difference between rural-urban migration of Turkey and of other developing countries involves the gender of the migrants. In many part of the world, like Latin America, Kenya, Iran, Philipinnes, West Africa, South Africa and Malaysia, India it is usual for women to migrate alone (Velayati 2011:Chap.2, Drakakis-Smith 1987, Gilbert 1994:46). In Turkey, when villagers decided to send a household member to the city, it was always male family members who decided to migrate because, in the context of Turkey, it was not usual and not considered proper for women to migrate alone from their home town in order to find a job. It was mostly the young, the most educated, skilled and shrewd male member of the family who left home. In addition, some rural families (especially those who could not access the loans for tractors) even rented or sold their small land holdings in their village and decided to migrate to urban areas together.

So, the personal qualifications of the potential rural migrants were no less significant than the other push and pull factors. For married men, the usual pattern was to leave their family in the village, because of the lack of accommodation or a definite job in the urban destination. Although the general pattern was the migration of one male member of the family, there were families who migrated together. So, for the migrating nuclear family within an extended family with a small land-holding, the nuclear family who had some connections with the urban areas migrated, since the risk of being homeless and jobless was relatively lower for them compared to families who did not have any kind of contacts. As Todaro states, migrants had to balance the probabilities and the risks of being unemployed or underemployed for a considerable period of time against the positive urban-rural real income differentials (1992:241).

It should be borne in mind that only people who could afford the cost of transportation and the period of time required to search for a job and accommodation could migrate. Rural people either sold their animals or rented out their small farms to

afford the migration costs of the migrating family. In most cases, they did not sell their farms but kept them so that, if they could not survive in the city, they could return to their villages and continue with rural production.

My field study also suggests similar patterns of migration from rural to urban areas. In some of my interviews with first comers, my interviewees said that one of the sons of an extended family would decide to migrate to Ankara and would leave his wife and children (if he had them) with his extended family, while other siblings stayed at home to work on their father's land. On the other hand, some respondents from the first wave said that they rented or gave their farms to their relatives to work on and shared the profit and came to Ankara with their families.

3.3.1 First Wave Migrants in Ankara

The rural migrants searched for some time before securing appropriate accommodation for their stay in the cities. They could not afford to buy or rent a house in the city centre. *Bekar Odaları* (bachelor rooms), which were rented by as many as ten men, or sleeping at their workplaces (for the ones who found a job) were the alternatives. Due to the lack of any social policies to provide the newcomers with accommodation, in Turkey as in many other places, rural migrants had to solve their own problems and the only option for new rural arrivals was illegal occupation of land and spontaneous self construction (Amis 1987:252, Gilbert 1994:96, Keleş 2010:Chap.10, Ward 1976, Lloyd 1979:23-27). So, after staying temporarily in these places, pioneers built *gecekondus* quickly and without legal permission in the same way as the early arrivals had done. They built *gecekondus* either with a loan from extended family members or with savings from selling or renting land in their village. First-wave migrants typically hired craftsmen to teach them how to build the house and some lesser-qualified workers to assist the craftsmen (Duyar-Kienast 2005:148). While most constructed these *gecekondus* for their own use, a few *gecekondu* dwellers built them to sell. The occasional production of *gecekondus* for exchange value began in the 1960s (Duyar-Kienast 2005: 41-46, Keleş 2010: 502, 520, Şenyapılı 2004:Chap.4).

Initially, *gecekondus* were poor residences without any electricity, water or sewerage (Tas and Lightfoot 2005:268), on the outskirts of the city where they did not

even have any public transportation or proper roads into the city centre. But it was the only option if they were to have affordable accommodation. In the beginning, like many slum dwellers in Latin America, *gecekondu* people only built the basic elements (Gilbert 1994:96-97, Ward 1976:340) to give the impression of a finished house since the demolition teams needed to get permission from the courts before they were allowed to demolish this kind of *gecekondu* (Duyar-Kienast 2005:152). Using this strategy, the migrants could delay or even prevent the eventual demolition of their *gecekondus*, so they did not complete the whole *gecekondu* at once, rather they added or developed some parts gradually, so the *gecekondu* dwellers had to “discover spatial and architectural tactics of survival” (Nalbantoğlu 1997:206). According to Keleş, the gradual establishment of *gecekondus* demonstrates that rural migrants found a solution to the accommodation problem without placing a burden on the shoulders of either the state or the market (2010:Chap.10). The respondents in my fieldwork gave another reason for choosing the gradual construction of their *gecekondus* in terms of economic conditions. They said that: ‘We needed to rebuild some parts but it was expensive to do it all at once, so we rebuilt when we had enough money.’ During the development process of *gecekondus*, it could be seen that the physical condition of most of them was not much worse than that of the middle-class houses in the city centre (Buğra 1998:310).

The internal migration had been a chain migration, with the result that many families from the same village or region had clustered in the same neighbourhood (*mahalle*). As a result, the squatter houses of the 1940s, which were the nucleus of the *gecekondu* areas, turned into established and more permanent *gecekondu mahalles* (Şenyapılı 2004: Chap.3). *Gecekondu* areas and communities were quite important for their role of welcoming newcomers and decreasing the risk of being socially excluded as a result of problems such as temporary unemployment, cultural adaptation or lack of accommodation (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2002:117).

After the 1950s, the population of *gecekondu* areas was much larger than the labour-force required by the industrial sector. Turkish industry failed to absorb many of the migrant job seekers (Hemmasi and Prorok 2002:401) and many could not find jobs in the formal sector. The informal sector was the only option for the rest since it required little capital input, few qualifications and there was a lack of legal barriers to

enter it and so they struggled on as well as they could within the informal sector (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık 2008:1355, Koray 1993:18, Tekeli 2008:122). The arrival of migrants in large numbers created a growth in the informal economy in Turkey after the first half of the 1950s (Ataay 2001:62).

As surplus labour transforms people into informal initiators (Davis 2007:182), many used their limited savings to set up their own businesses in the marginal sector; this mostly involved street selling, the marginal service sector – which included creative jobs such as shoe painters, luggage and market bag carriers – and artisanship. Through these self-initiated businesses, some migrants became quite successful and even started to control a sector both in the formal and informal sense. For example, being the driver of a *dolmuş*⁸ (shared taxi), selling clams in the street, parquet making and the construction business are among the jobs and businesses that were controlled by migrant groups, and clientelism based on area of origin was a crucial determinant in finding a job in these areas (Erder 1996:266-272, Pınarcıoğlu and Işık 2008:1362-1363).

By the 1960s, although most of the new migrants were working in the marginal sector, they were no longer at the margins of the economy (Şenyapılı 2004:186-187). Moreover, by the first half of the 1960s, 59% of Ankara's population and 45% of Istanbul's population lived in *gecekondu* (Buğra 1998:307). Their labour was needed for the running of the economy and their role could not be ignored in fulfilling the national goal of developing Turkish industry. On this point, it can be suggested that these changing circumstances empowered the position of newcomers to city life. *Gecekondu* districts, with their increasing population, who had gradually become the main workforce, and their affordable immediate needs, seemed to political parties to be areas where they could act as vote-hunters and *gecekondu* communities were targeted by the political parties. The distribution of title deeds and the provision of infrastructure facilities were used as instruments by politicians to get the support of *gecekondu* areas, especially during the periods immediately before elections. Their empowered situation

⁸ The *dolmuş* is significantly important in understanding the *gecekondu* of Turkey. Due to the lack of public transportation provided by local authorities, individuals in *gecekondu* areas initiated *dolmuş* transportation. So, while this satisfied the need for accessibility of *gecekondu* areas in the 1960s, this transportation business has become widespread in the long term and is usually controlled by migrants in large cities. For further information, see: Tekeli and Okyay 1977, *Dolmuşun Öyküsü, Çevre ve Mimarlık Bilimleri Yayınları*, Ankara.

can be read through the *Gecekondu* Act, passed in 1966. This law was crucially important in the sense of naming the squatter houses as *gecekondu*s and the reorganization of the status of *gecekondu*s (Erman 2001:989) for the first time since the beginning of *gecekondu* building. This law attempted to improve *gecekondu*s as well as to stop more *gecekondu* construction and established the gradual distribution of title deeds for *gecekondu*s to residents for very low prices. In Article 3, it was stated that the *gecekondu* dwellers would be provided with long-term credit in order to be able pay the cost of these title deeds. In Article 2, a *gecekondu* was defined as a settlement that had been constructed by violating the legislation on improvement and construction and general laws, on land which belonged to someone else without the permission of the owner. For Yalçıntan and Erbaş, this Act and the definition of *gecekondu*s were too weak and open to abuse by interest groups whose aim was not to ‘have a roof over their heads’, as was the case of migrants (2003:98). Moreover, through this definition it was impossible to ‘differentiate the innocent, self-survival type *gecekondu* from their commercial equivalents’ (Yalçıntan and Erbaş 2003:98). The distributed land’s value rose with unforeseen speed due to the new demands directed towards land and rapid urbanization. The title-deed distribution of the 1960s was a *fait accompli* and *gecekondu* amnesties followed throughout the 1970s (Keleş 2010:504). However, in the absence of a formal approach to the problem of low-income housing, the *gecekondu* amnesties had a moral legitimacy in the sense of satisfying the need for accommodation for the lower class (Buğra 1998:306-307, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2002:113). *Gecekondu* dwellers who were provided with title deeds secured their accommodation. In addition, during election campaigns, some *gecekondu* districts were provided with water and sewerage facilities even before they had a title deed or a legal status.

The *gecekondu* settlers cannot be considered as passive objects in their relations with politicians and local governors and in the transformation of *gecekondu* areas. When they lived in their villages, they engaged with the state through the village elders or *muhtar*⁹ or larger landowners, on whom they were commonly economically dependent and they used to vote according to the instructions of local leaders. However, once in the

⁹ For a case study examining the legally defined role of *muhtars* in villages, their functions and historical changes in this role see R.B. Scott (1968).

city, their passive role was transformed and they realized their electoral power (Karpas 1976:198-200, Özler 2000:42). The larger the number of *gecekondu* dwellers in a district, the greater was their power in their negotiations with politicians and local governors. The newcomers tried to find new opportunities through negotiations with local as well as central state institutions, and a reciprocal relationship between these institutions and *gecekondu* dwellers, ‘the mythical *devlet baba* [father state] authoritarian semi-deity’ transformed ‘into a living government – into a human organization that could be manipulated to do or undo certain acts, especially with regard to the *gecekondu*’ (Karpas 1976:198) for *gecekondu* dwellers.

During the 1960s and 1970s, people in *gecekondu* areas established *hemşehri dernekleri* (hometown organizations), which comprised people from the same village or town. So, in a *gecekondu* area, it was (and still is) quite usual to see associations like ‘The Association of People of Yozgat’. *Hemşehri dernekleri* were instrumental in communicating with local governors and politicians. Additionally, through these organizations, migrants not only made contact with other migrants from the same region but also maintained close relations with their friends from the same village (Kurtoğlu 2005, Fliche 2005, Hersant and Toumarkine 2005). *Hemşehri dernekleri* were used when entering into communication with local and central authorities and also stood for the institutional aspect of *hemşehrilik* (a social link between migrants from the same place of origin) networks for migrants, which were based on helping each other to find a job, finding a contact in a hospital, school or any other state institution (Kurtoğlu 2005, Erder 1999:165-166). Coffee houses in *gecekondu* districts were another important public venue in which male migrants came together and built social networks which could provide solidarity to cope with local people’s problem when the family and kinship support network was insufficient.

They contacted politicians and local government officials in order to make their needs and demands known. Municipal governors and *muhtars*, who were the elected headmen/headwomen governing the smallest administrative unit, played key roles in the provision of infrastructure and the distribution of social necessities to the *gecekondu* settlements. Municipalities were responsible for the construction and repair of streets, and the installation and operation of water, electricity, gas and light rail services.

Muhtars were also intermediaries in the relationship between *gecekondu* dwellers and municipal governors as well as other state institutions and politicians.

As I learnt from my respondents, as well as their efforts in negotiating with the formal institutions for the provision of services to their districts, the first-wave arrivals in these districts also put much effort into ameliorating their living conditions and livelihoods. They told me that they worked together a lot to construct toilets and primary sewerage facilities and to carry water to their houses from distant water resources. My interviewees among the first comers said that ‘life was much harder for the first comers and it was the first comers who had to face all the difficulties.’ In this sense, Payne argues that rural solidarity practices, especially among the first comers before the 1980s, were exploited by the municipalities, since ‘settlers contributed their savings and labour to help install public facilities to their area, enabling most settlements to consolidate rapidly’ (1984:212). It can be argued that this referred to the self-help feature of *gecekondu*s. Moreover, left-leaning *gecekondu* areas collaborated with the socialist groups of the 1970s. The activists in these groups, which were mostly composed of university students, helped the local *gecekondu* people in constructing *gecekondu*s, planning the neighbourhood, and shaping the roads (see Chapters 4 and 5). These activists also protected the *gecekondu* neighbourhoods from rent-seeking groups in order to keep the *gecekondu*s’ use value (Pekdemir 1988, Aslan 2010:101-105, Aslan 2009:958).

Migration studies in other parts of the world have shown that most of the early-arriving migrants retain strong links with their rural homes, and in some cases straddling the rural-urban divide is an important part of their survival strategies (Tacoli 1998: 149, Nelson 1987: 193). Most *gecekondu* dwellers in the first wave returned to their homes during the holidays to harvest and work on their land or to help their extended families. Some of my respondents among the first-wave migrants told me that, although they had sold their land before coming to Ankara, every summer they returned to their homes and helped their relatives with harvesting and other agricultural chores. Their rural friends and relatives sent or gave them food in order to support them. Some of the migrants, who were better off, constructed houses in their home towns to stay when they went back there. But, at the same time, houses were also a kind of demonstration of how

much they had gained in terms of money and social mobility. In contrast to perceiving their existence in cities as a temporary one, most of them did not return to their home villages since their children had settled in the cities and they also had got used to the life-style in the outskirts of large cities.

Maintaining their relationship with their homes should not be understood as meaning that they did not get used living in cities or that they wanted to turn back. Rather, they successfully built up a new life and new social environment in the cities. It is crucial to see how squatters respond to national and local politics and become accustomed to living in urban areas (Özler 2000). Kurtoğlu (2005) affirmed this claim by giving the examples of *hemşehri dernekleri* and *hemşehrilik*, and argued that these associations and these relationships between migrants were proof of their visibility and their persistence in continuing their lives in the cities.

Arabesque, as a type of music, can be seen as another indicator of the recognition of *gecekondu* dwellers and their visibility. In this type of music, Eastern musical patterns are played on Western instruments and this combination summarizes the appearance of cities after mass migration from rural areas. The roots of this music go back to the 1940s, however, it became popular during the 1960s and 1970s. It was originally listened to by the *gecekondu* dwellers. The lyrics of arabesque songs are based on rural-urban contradictions, living conditions and the exclusion of *gecekondu* people. This music was identified with *gecekondu* dwellers and carried a pejorative meaning for urbanites. In this context, until the end of the 1970s, it was forbidden for arabesque singers to appear on TV or to sing on the radio¹⁰. This was to ‘protect’ modern life from the ‘invasion’ of ‘backward and rural’ *gecekondu* people. However, as the number of migrants increased in the cities and they became integrated into city life, their effects on urban areas became more visible. Furthermore, during the 1970s it was not only the *gecekondu* population who listened to this music, rather it had a large audience. For example, İbrahim Tatlıses, a very famous arabesque singer, broke all sales records in Turkey in 1978. During the late 1970s, arabesque songs started to be played on TV, only

¹⁰ For further information, see Özbek, M. (2006).

on New Year's Eve, but this was just the beginning of the widespread acceptance of the *gecekondu* community's music.

3.3.2 Women of the First Migrant Wave

Married women among the first-wave migrants usually came to the city after their husbands had found a job or a place to build a *gecekondu*. Despite the fact that rural-urban or international migration of single women is not unusual in many parts of the world, such as Iran (see Velayati 2011), Mexico (see Kanaiaupuni 2000) or the Philippines (see Parrenas 2001), it was not common in Turkey. Marriage between relatives or *hemşeris* was a strong tradition (Özgür and Aydın 2012) so many single male migrants got married to women in their home villages. Therefore single women in the same category came to the city through their marriage to a man from the same village who was already there. Some migrant women who came to the city via marriage told me that their husbands had married them because they needed a woman to do the housework, take care of elders and sick members of the household and satisfy the needs of the newly built *gecekondu*. So, for previously single women, it was marital migration.

The early female migrants felt very lonely since they did not have friends or relatives in the towns. Their loneliness was also due to the fact that they did not have the freedom and the community support that they used to have in their villages. Since they were not familiar with the city and knew nobody, they stayed at home for the whole day while their husbands were outside.

Public spheres are generated to interact, to establish close relations. As Mahmud and Duyar-Kienast (2001:272) suggest, 'the intensive use of public spaces enables people to interact and to help each other'. It was not considered proper for women, especially migrant women, to be visible publicly, so they could not be as active as men in *hemşehri dernekleri*. Furthermore, coffeehouses were exclusive to men and there were no available special public areas in which women could gather and engage in social life. In order to compensate for this, women mostly designated the doorstep of the house as the public space in which they could gather with their neighbours and relatives. In due course, first-wave migrant women started to meet and build friendships with the other migrant women in their *gecekondu* district. The doorsteps of the *gecekondus* were

the equivalents of coffeehouses for *gecekodu* women. In these areas, they could both do some housework, such as cleaning dishes and clothes, hanging up washing and baking seasonal bread, and help each other and socialize with their neighbours at the same time (see photo 11). It can be claimed that this doorstep part of their houses was the first step for them to become visible in the public sphere. The longer they stayed in the cities, the more familiar they became with the public sphere through taking their children to school, shopping at local shops etc.

First wave migrant women rarely worked in paid employment which was also the case for my respondents in this category. When the family thought that the family income was enough for their well-being, working for female members of the family could seem to them to be unnecessary and improper. Their husbands and fathers might not allow them to work, since they were new in Ankara and male members of the family were anxious about their safety outside the house (Hemmasi and Prorok 2002:401). It could be suggested that male members of the family feared that they would lose their culture, that their daughters and wives would look like the urban women and they would lose control and power over them. As women are mostly constructed as the indicators of the borders of cultures (Yuval-Davis 2003:Chap.3), male control over the migrant women implied keeping their culture under control and unchanged. Moreover, since it was traditionally men who were responsible for making money for the household as the main part of their gender role, the working of women outside might reduce the men's reputation in their neighbourhood since they might be perceived as being unable to fulfil their breadwinner role.

Although first-wave migrant women did not earn money directly, their contribution to the family budget cannot be ignored. Migrant women are mostly considered as dependants, both in economics and migration studies (Velayati 2011:18). However, women who moved to the city just after their husbands had found a plot to construct a *gecekodu* worked on their construction no less than male members of the family did. It was women's primary responsibility to make their scrappy houses into liveable places, and to transform these hovels into 'homes'. Due to the lack of infrastructure and services, they organized their courtyards to clean the dishes and clothes, and built primitive ovens or heaters in the garden for baking bread. Additionally, it was also their

responsibility to find water sources and to carry the water for their daily needs to the house. These water sources might be the nearest mosque or water fountain. Thanks to their skills, they made jars, tomato pastes and breads and sewed for the family. As a result, less of the main family income was spent on food, clothes and construction. On this point, it should be noted that social networking among the migrant women played a crucial role in their subsistence production. Their close relations with their neighbours provided them with a supply of labour for demanding tasks such as making tomato paste, jam, and seasonal bread-making (Eroğlu 2010:48).

First-wave migrant women whose households became better off over time and succeeded in increasing their living standards did not want to live away from their districts although they had enough resources to do so. Since they became used to living in the same district for years and having their social circuits and they felt secure in their district, they preferred to live in the well-built apartments in *gecekondus* districts. They said to me that ‘we have been living together for about 50 years, so we became like relatives’. So, most people within the better-off families preferred to develop and ameliorate their *gecekondus* and continue to live in the same area. For them, living in an apartment could be better in terms of cleaning, but it would restrict their social contacts with their neighbours, with whom they ‘became like a family or relatives’. They can visit each others’ houses at any time and their doors are often open, which enables other people to come in whenever they want. Although this limits their privacy, because of the very high level of trust among the neighbours, people are very happy with this kind of relationship with their neighbours and feel themselves very secure. Moreover, for them, life in an apartment would allow them neither to cooperate with their neighbours nor to continue the home production of food.

3.3.3 First Wave *Gecekondus* Generation

During the chain migration, some pioneering rural migrants brought their families from their homes and some got married to women from their home villages, brought them to the cities and had children. So, when we consider that first-wave migration started in the early 1960s, it could be suggested that during the 1970s and 1980s a new generation emerged in the *gecekondus*, who were either born in the city or arrived there

at a very early age. In other words, these were the people who were brought up in *gecekondu* areas by first-wave migrants.

From childhood, they helped their parents a lot. Initially, they helped in *gecekondu* construction. Boys helped their fathers in setting up a business or they worked as street sellers such as bagel selling or shoe polishing¹¹. So they began to work at a very early age and engaged in the *Hemşehri* community and businesses in *gecekondu* areas while they were very young.

This generation maintained their connection with their homes as their parents did. Not only did they go to their villages to help with agricultural work, but they also received guests from their villages and helped them during their move to the city. They got married to someone either from their home or from their *hemşehri* network in the cities. So they replicated the rural culture which they had inherited from their parents.

It can be said that this generation was an in-between generation. They were brought up in the cities but with rural values. They were socialized within the *gecekondu* community and appreciated the give and take relationship with their *Hemşehris*, which would gradually become less important after the late 1980s.

Girls usually stayed at home with their mothers and they were the principle assistants of their mothers in housework, constructing *gecekondus*, home production and transforming *gecekondus* into homes. However, they had more opportunities in terms of work and education compared to their mothers, so they became more familiar with the public sphere. They completed at least primary school and a significant proportion of the women in this category finished high school. Some of them worked as domestic servants, textile workers, at handcraft jobs or as unpaid family workers. They did not like to go back to their villages because of the hard agricultural work. For this reason, they did not want to marry someone in their villages since, in the context of the family structure in Turkey, women were supposed to move to where their husbands lived.

¹¹ For more information, see: Altıntaş, B.(2003).

3.4 Structural Adjustment Policies and Changes in *Gecekondü* Areas after 1980

In the late 1970s, Turkey's economy, like those of many other countries, was dramatically affected by the large imbalance of payments on its current account, the oil crises of the 1970s, instability and prolonged exchange-rate crises (Stewart 1992:14-15, Aydın 2010:150-157, Altuğ et al. 2008:400, Yalman 2009:227-237). Capital accumulation problems for capital owners were exacerbated. A number of developing countries applied for funds to the IMF and World Bank. Funds were made available after a series of agreements in which the countries agreed to apply an economic programme determined by the funding institution. Turkey also applied for funds and prepared a new package, known as the '24 January Decisions', which took the perspective of the IMF's stability policy and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) (Boratav 2004:147-149) during the early days of 1980. In the intention letter submitted to the IMF and in the letter of commitment presented to the World Bank, it was stated that an economic system based on free-market forces would be formed, the state would withdrawal from various sectors and the sectors of industry, agriculture and oil would be opened up to foreign investors. In brief, this package of decisions aimed to shrink the state's share of the market and minimize its role in the regulation of the market and the economy, decreasing real wages.

Many Third World countries moved towards a contraction of public expenditure and a series of market-oriented development policies as a result of the implementation of SAPs (Afshar and Dennis 1992:3), and Turkey was no exception. The 24 January Decisions, which 'consisted almost entirely of macro policy instruments; and had not been concerned with the distributional effects on different groups within the country' (Stewart 1992:18), were a start and created a base for the SAPs in Turkey. Due to social unrest and the relatively powerful left-wing opposition to the implementation of neo-liberal policies before 1980, these decisions could only be implemented after a coup d'état in 1980 which harshly subdued opposing voices. At this time, 650,000 people were arrested, 230,000 were tried, 50 were executed and 171 were killed, besides the thousands tortured. Moreover, the activities of 23,700 civil society associations were

suspended and 927 publications banned (Hurriyet Dailynews 2008, Human Rights Watch 2012). In a series of public speeches, Kenan Evren, chief of the general staff and president after the coup d'état, listed the problems in the Turkish economy and accused the trade union movement and its struggle to increase the real wages of workers of exacerbating these problems. His speeches can be understood as an attempt to justify both the coup d'état itself and the structural adjustment policies that were applied directly after this military invention. In this vein, the military rulers banned a large section of the trade unions.

After the suppression of organized left-wing opposition, the SAPs which marked the years after 1980 were adopted and put into action. These SAPs prepared Turkey to play its role as a developing country in the global marketplace and fulfil its prescribed task in the global division of labour. This new role for Turkey was about being engaged in labour-intensive production for global markets. As Elson (1991:169) has pointed out, 'the encouragement of the production of labour intensive manufacture for export is an important component of the switch from non-tradables in many countries.'

Turkey's economic policy shifted from a developmentalist, economically protectionist, closed economy with an import-substitution-based programme to an economic policy that aimed at integration with the global economy. Rather than focusing on production for the internal market, an export-oriented economic policy was adopted. So, after 1980, the aim was to narrow down domestic demand through a drop in real wages, while exports were promoted by incentives provided by the state. In the domestic sphere, these programmes notably brought about privatization, devaluation, an expansion of the informal economy, deregulation, a shrinking of public expenses (Davis 2007: Chap.7, Özar and Ercan 2004:193-198, Şenses and Taymaz 2003:2-10, Aydın 2005:43-48) and 'improving incentives for the production of goods which are internationally tradable and to switch resources away from production of goods which are not internationally tradable' (Elson 1991:164). In terms of foreign affairs, the reduction of trade barriers was the most important issue. In brief, the coup d'état of 1980 provided a base for the implementation of SAPs and the transformation of Turkey's economic policy. The implementation of the 24 January Decisions, in the framework of SAPs, effectively dismantled 'the constitutional framework and the redistributive

institutions of the previous period' (Keyder 1987:228) and demonstrated that the existing development strategy had been abandoned.

Due to the attempts at integration with the global market, which highlighted cost competition, the capital owners needed a flexible and fragmented labour-force and reduced labour costs. When the laws enacted over the last 20 years are considered, it is obvious that flexibility for employees has been greatly expanded whereas the laws that used to protect workers have been abandoned. The 1982 Constitution contained a number of restrictions on labour strikes and union activity. According to Article 52, unions may not join in political activities; Article 54 suggests that strikes and lockouts may be forbidden or postponed by law. Additionally, given the relative weakness of the trade unions, which had a downward effect on salaries, market flexibility is maximized. According to research by Petrol-İş, if the real wages of 1979 are taken as 100, they dropped to 79.89 in 1980. While increasing throughout the period 1982-1984, they dropped to 79.3 in 1985 (Petrol-İş 1995:339). The share of wage incomes was 32% of GDP in the 1970s whereas it decreased to 26.9% in 1980 and 20.7% in 1987 (DİE 1999:54-55). The scope of the informal sector was enlarged as a result of new profit-generating strategies which were supported by SAPs in the 1980s and the 1990s. According to estimations by Çetintaş and Vergil, the informal market increased its share of the economy from 18.01% in 1975 to 23.07% in 1988. It continued to increase and reached 31.29% in 1995 (2003:28). As the object was to increase the flexibility and fragmentation of the labour market, the number of establishments based on employing more temporary, part-time and contracting employees and preferring to work with subcontractors grew (Özar and Ercan 2004:195). During the 1980s, the state also began to provide fewer subsidies and loans for small agricultural concerns as well as investing less in agricultural production than it had done previously (Boratav 2004:165). For example, the number of subsidized agricultural products decreased to 10 in 1987 from 22 in 1980 (Turkish Development Bank 2012:13). So, for the rural population, the returns from agricultural production were diminished.

3.5 Second Wave Migration

A sharp decrease in agricultural subsidies under the SAPs after 1980 caused more small and middle-scale agricultural rural producers to decide not to continue with agricultural production. It has been suggested by many scholars (Tekeli 2008, Şenses and Taymaz 2003, Ataay 2001:82-86, Kendir 2003,) that these state interventions in agriculture were the prominent push factor for mass migration after the 1980s. In addition, because the new mode of production created by SAPs increased the need for cheap and unskilled labour in urban areas, this constituted the main pull factor for the second wave of mass migration, which started during the 1980s.

Expansion of telecommunication services and media instruments were viewed as a vital foundation to support a vibrant national economy integrated with global markets by Özal's austerity program in 1980s (Wolcott and Çağıltay 2001:135). This resulted in easier access of mass population to the telecommunication facilities. The number of telephone subscribers grew by 80% , and the number of villages having telephone service grew by 162% and the total capacity of telephone exchanges increased by 83% between 1982-1986 (Wolcott Çağıltay 2001:135). Thanks to the development of communication technologies during the 1980s, rural people could communicate with their friends and relatives by telephone more easily and this kept their relations closer. Their connections with their relatives, friends or family members who had already settled in urban areas were their primary source of information about their opportunities in the city. Therefore, compared to the first comers, the migrants in the second wave knew more about city life, job opportunities and facilities in Ankara before their migration. Moreover, compared to the 1950s and 1960s, transportation facilities were much more advanced in the 1980s and afterwards, so it was easier for the second wave of migrants to move to Ankara. Since the accessibility of urban centres can be important as one of the factors in migration (Gedik 1997:171, Greenwood 1997:666-668, Lucas 1997:782), the advancement of communication and transportation infrastructures and facilities might have accelerated the migration to urban centres.

When newcomers arrived in the cities during the 1980s, most of them knew where to go and had somewhere to live (Şenyapılı 2004:188), at least for a limited period until

they found a job and proper accommodation. They mostly lived in the houses of their *hemşeris* or relatives whom they had known from their hometowns. What I mostly heard was that the second comers came with their families and stayed at the home of one of their relatives or *hemşeris* until they could find a house. For example, Nahide, who came to Ankara with her husband at the beginning of the 1960s, told me that ‘we always used to have some guests from our village. It took these guests more than a month before they found a proper house and a job. They were lucky; we knew nobody when we arrived here.’

The introduction of general liberalization policies during the 1980s also affected *gecekondu* appropriation and the *gecekondu* market and this resulted in less state control over *gecekondu* settlements. During the general election campaign in 1983, Turgut Özal, head of the Anavatan Party, promised to grant land title deeds and won the elections (Karpat 2004) by taking a significant proportion of the votes in *gecekondu* areas. A series of *Gecekondu* Amnesties were passed in 1983, 1984 and 1986, which legalized the *gecekondus* built before 1986. Like the previous title-deed provisions, these were also a *fait accompli*. The main aim of the amnesties of the 1980s was to open up public land for the land market. The amnesties permitted construction in *gecekondu* areas. This amnesty played a major role in the development of existing *gecekondu* houses by the private construction market as well as by the *gecekondu* owners themselves. Most of the *gecekondu* dwellers transformed their *gecekondus* into two or more storey houses or sold their plots to construction businesses and received more than one flat in return. In the most advantageously located *gecekondu* areas, large construction firms were the main actors and transformed these areas into “high-rise prestigious residential neighbourhoods” (Dündar 2001:392). In *gecekondu* areas that were not close to the city centres but were linked to them by main roads and were close to the prestigious residential areas, the main actors were small-scale developers. People who lived in non-advantageously located *gecekondu* areas transformed their *gecekondu* houses into four-storey family apartments on their own, mostly using their family savings (Dündar 2001:393). The amnesty functioned as an instrument to transform urban rents created by the improvement plans for *gecekondu* owners of the pre-1986 period and construction contractors. In this way, many *gecekondu* owners of the pre-1986 era became well-off

and transformed their *gecekondu* houses into multi-storey apartments. So, these laws caused increasing population density and the transformation of *gecekondu* areas into low-standard residential areas with limited social services and green areas (Dündar 2001: 393, Sat 2007:31).

Legalization of *gecekondus* could also be considered as compensation for unequal income distribution or, as Başlevent and Dayıoğlu say (2005:40), ‘... an informal redistribution process... where the state failed to provide social assistance to the poorer sections of society...’. Two aspects of these amnesties throughout the 1980s are most commonly highlighted by scholars: the first is about the general orientation of the political system during the 1980s that left everything to market forces and individuals’ limited choices (Duyaroğlu-Kienast 2005:46-50). The second, on the other hand, is about the state’s attempt to compensate lower class people for the losses generated by the structural adjustment policies (Başlevent and Dayıoğlu 2005:40-42). Besides, this was why the early migrants whose *gecekondus* were legalized before 1985 could remain appeased during economic liberalization, exacerbating working conditions and decreasing level of real incomes (Boratav 2010:153). From the state’s perspective, it was also an instrument to prevent social unrest from dominating in squatter areas and integrating structurally urban periphery to the new economic system (Buğra 1998:309-310, Aslan 2009:960). However, since the period after 1980 was infamous for the commercialization of *gecekondus*, they lost their legitimacy in public opinion and the *gecekondu* people were increasingly considered as undeserving beneficiaries of unfair privilege and invaders of public property by the urbanities (Pınarcıoğlu and Işık 2008:1356, Duyar-Kienast 2005:46-51, Keyder 2005:130).

If the second wave migrants had close relatives or family members in the city, these allowed the second comers to built *gecekondus* on the same plot as theirs. However building their own *gecekondu* on in-city neighbourhoods was no longer an option because there was no available land in existing *gecekondu* areas. At this point they either bought or rented *gecekondus* that had already been built by the first comers or searched for new districts at the outskirts of cities where they could find empty plots to occupy. Although some late comer migrants could find empty plots at the outskirts of city, they could not find a place in-city neighbourhoods and more importantly could not

legalize their *gecekondus* built after 1985 since the latest *gecekondu* amnesty covered the *gecekondu* houses built before 1986. Following Harvey's suggestion that social groups who enter to urban land market late are less advantageous compared to early comers (2009:168), it could be suggested that people who built *gecekondu* houses after 1985 had less choices compared to the early comers. Therefore the early migrants gained higher positions in terms of ownership of *gecekondu* and the location of their *gecekondu*.

It can be said that *gecekondu* areas seemed to be more heterogeneous after 1980. While the liberalization of markets through structural adjustment policies decreased the living standards of second wave migrants, the early comers could enjoy limited places for upward mobility through their established networks which they could be depend on in finding a job, developing their business and making deals on their *gecekondus* and through success in mobilizing political contacts. In this sense, *gecekondu* dwellers became differentiated not only in terms of ownership of *gecekondus* but also in terms of their income levels and integration to the city life both economically and spatially. The number of migrant employees in the informal sector, which was mostly characterized by short-term, insecure and flexible employment relationships and little or no prospect of internal promotion, increased sharply, especially after the 1980s. Newcomers to the industrialized cities comprised a reserve labour-force and this situation led the workers in the primary sector to become anxious about keeping their jobs and they began to regard the workers in the secondary sector as their rivals (Içduygu et al. 1998:210-213). In addition, even the unions considered the workers in the secondary sector to be rivals and were reluctant to reach out and organize them (Erendil 2003 cited in Bergan 2009:224). However, these secondary jobs were the only chance for the newcomers and they could not be included in the system at all unless these kinds of jobs were provided (Koray 1993:18). The informal economy was not the rescuer but, if there had not been any opportunities provided by the informal economy, people in *gecekondus* would have felt totally hopeless (Davis 2007:198). Despite the harsh working and living conditions during the 1980s, it can be suggested that both first and second wave migrants were content with their new status. As the previous studies on rural migrants in Turkey suggested (Karpat 2003:173, Alpar and Yener 1991:128, Erman 1997b:267-270) some

of my respondents told me that although they were quite poor in Ankara, their conditions would be worse if they had stayed in their village. They talked about not only their income but also about health and education facilities. They said that ‘at least health institutions are quite accessible here and our children were able to go to high schools’. On that point, Tekeli has argued that migrants did not feel a great deal of relative deprivation (2008:127) because they compared their new status with their previous one, which provided them with less access to public services and fewer opportunities for social mobility.

As well as solving accommodation problems, in their job seeking process their friends and relatives who already had networks helped them. It can be suggested that, compared to their town counterparts, *gecekondu* dwellers were much more helpful to each other. For Korte and Ayvalıođlu, *gecekondu* dwellers’ ‘low income status and strong identification with a territorial area may also encourage local patterns of mutual aid’(1981:137). Sometimes their jobs were even ready before they came to Ankara because their relatives already had networks in the job markets or because people from their village controlled a sector as in many other cities (Erder 1996:268). This mutual relationship was mainly based on mutual trust, as was the case in helping each other in finding accommodation, or finding a contact in schools, hospitals and other formal institutions (Kurtođlu 2005). Although it seems as though it was a kind of ‘favour’ for the second comers, their relationship was a reciprocal one. The first comers found jobs for the second comers or employed them in their businesses, however, the second comers needed to show their loyalty to the first comers. For example, if someone was employed in an enterprise by a person from the same village, it was not proper for him/her to ask for job security, to reject working for longer hours than others etc. Borrowing the term “poverty in turn” (*nöbetleşe yoksulluk*) from Işık and Pınarcıođlu (2002), it could be suggested that the migrants of pre-1985 era handed over the unprivileged status to the later comers. So, the migrants of pre-1985 period were not the dispossessed anymore, they gained higher positions in the hierarchy due to the better locations and income generating opportunities (Keyder 2005:126). Their role was replaced by the later migrants in Turkish cities since they were not the only people who were constructing for their own use, but they were also selling the *gecekondus* and

employers for the late comers (see Erder 1996, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2002: Chap.2, Dubetsky 1976).

3.5.1 Women Amongst the Second Wave Migrants

With the economic liberalism which brought about high rates of unemployment, flexible and insecure working conditions and low incomes, accompanied by the shrinking of public expenditure, migrant households had to create their own survival strategy in order to deal with these conditions. Within this framework, it was nearly impossible for marginal groups to survive on one person's income. In many *gecekondu* homes, the male head of the household tried to find a second job. While Chant (1994) examined the situation of slum dwellers in Mexico City after structural adjustment policies she called the families survival strategy as "self exploitation of families"(p.206). They cut down on expenditure and consumption and alongside the male's labour, child and especially female paid employment grew to be valuable for families in terms of survival strategies (Chant 1994:206, Latapi and Rocha 1995:66-69). This was the case in Turkey where women in large numbers in squatter areas had to work in paid employment due to the economic necessity of the household, which was not usually the case before the 1980s.

While the enlargement of the informal market due to the neo-liberal economy increased women's participation in employment, they were mostly concentrated in low-status jobs (Ecevit 2007:15, Chant 1994:210). Due to market conditions, lack of education, required skill and language, their traditional housewife role, the lack of public childcare facilities, discrimination against women in the labour market and the patriarchal social formation, women mostly preferred to work in industrial home-based jobs such as piece-work. According to TUIK (Turkish Statistical Institute), in 1989 in urban areas the number of women in home-based employment was 66 000. which had increased to 100 000 by 1995 (Ecevit 1998:61).

It can be argued that, with the increase of urbanization and urban women's participation in the formal labour market, the need for domestic workers (*gündelikçi*) also increases. Unlike the other informal jobs of women, although through domestic work women can gain a significant amount of money, it is considered a very inferior job

which is about cleaning the other's dirt (Özyeğin 2001:Chap.3 and 5) and is associated with a very low status. As Velayati's work has noted, some domestic workers' children are ashamed of their mothers' occupation (2011:256). Among my respondents, Alev, whose mother was a *gündelikçi* in a prosperous house in the city centre, told me that, although she was proud of her mother, she felt weird when she went to the house where her mother worked because of the huge difference between her own clothes and those of the people who lived in this house. It can be said that women could find these jobs through their networks. For example, Zarife told me that she used to work as a cleaner in a bank and found this job through a reference from her relative's neighbour who worked in the same bank. This network was also crucial in domestic workers' pattern of finding a house to work in. If a *gecekondu* woman knows a domestic worker, this person could possibly recommend her to the friends of her employers.

When the state withdrew from social spending after the coup d'état 1980, women's domestic labour, home-based production of fundamental necessities¹² and their caring responsibilities for children, the elderly and sick members within the family became more important. Women needed to increase their input to caring facilities (Elson 1991:177). Since the adjustment worsened the available health and educational facilities and the government started to devote lower budgets to these services, the time that women spent on these activities increased (Stewart 1992:34, Elson 1991:176). When a woman in a *gecekondu* household started to work outside, other female members of the household, mothers, sisters and especially the elder daughters needed to spend more time on household chores.

The relationship between the *gecekondu* women's income-generating activities and the empowerment of these women is very problematic. As Erman (1997b) claims, these women who work in the informal labour market are aware of the fact that their economic contribution to the family is indispensable. According to Kümbetoğu, in general *gecekondu* women's earnings comprise around 1/3 of the total income of the family (1996:233). On the other hand, this income-generation does not provide them with more control over the family budget or more say in the decisions of the household.

¹² Hattatoğlu insists on the fact that home-based production was done by women, so calling this activity 'household strategies to struggle with poverty' or household labour might conceal the fact that it is women's labour that is spent on these activities(2007:19).

3.6 *Gecekondu* Generation

In the late 1990s and especially in the 2000s, the *gecekondu* districts appeared in the literature on poverty, social exclusion and social policy rather than that of migration or industrialization. In the same wave, on the agenda of the Turkish state, *gecekondu*s became the subject of urban poverty, criminals, urban transformation and welfare. The squatter areas in industrialized cities have started to be referred to as *varoşes*¹³ rather than *gecekondu*s since the 1990s. While the term *gecekondu* recalled ‘the rural, failing to integrate into modern city life and backwardness’, the term *varoş* has always negative connotations with criminals and threat, although studies on criminals and *varoş* have not indicated any significant relation between *varoşes* and criminal affairs (Keleş 2010:483). Moreover, *varoş* does not imply “a concrete spatial reference indicating the lifestyle in periphery settlements only” but also used to denote “underground or kitsch aspects of contemporary urban life” (Demirtaş and Şen 2006:88). *Varoş* people were ‘dangerous’ to people in other parts of the cities. In this context, it goes far beyond a coincidence that the majority of upper-class people have started to live in houses with private security services and these security services have become very popular over the last 20 years.

The state’s approach to the problem of *gecekondu* dwellers and *gecekondu* areas during the 1990s and 2000s is a kind of continuation of the policies that started to be implemented after the coup d’état in 1980. *Gecekondu* areas are courted by the political parties, who try to mobilize votes through patronage. Current state policies towards *gecekondu* areas are marked by the conservative liberal’s free market orientation and philanthropic affairs. On the reverse of previous centre right political parties who favoured *Gecekondu* Amnesties (see Chapter 6 and 7), the political party at power, AKP’s (Justice and Development Party) populism is based on social welfare. This social welfare is mainly limited to distribution of a ton of coal annually and a food package quarterly. It could be claimed that regarding *gecekondu* people, populist policies of AKP do neither contribute to *gecekondu* people social upward mobility nor ameliorate their neighbourhood whereas the populism of previous centre right political parties included

¹³ The word *Varoş* originates from the Hungarian word *város* and means the outskirts of the city.

investments in infrastructure facilities in *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. So the handing out of welfare such as coal, food and scholarships to *gecekondu* dwellers is the new type of redistribution practice of the state in the 1990s and especially in the 2000s. But as suggested by Hale and Özbudun (2010), “this was no substitute for a systematic and properly organized system of social assistance and more effective policies of employment creation” (p.118).

In the absence of a sustainable social policy working to improve the living conditions of *gecekondus*, the perceived problems of *gecekondu* dwellers are restricted to an abstract conceptualization of poverty without touching upon *gecekondu* people’s unemployment or poor working conditions (Boratav 2004:153). The only solution offered to the poverty that the Turkish state perceives as the main problem is the philanthropic business generated occasionally by the state but generally by NGOs and religious communities. This perception and this method of struggling with poverty contributes to the ‘obeying’ of the masses to political authority and diminishes the legitimacy of seeking remedies through rights. In my pilot field, the *muhtar* of *Harman Mahallesi*, who was involved with the distribution of welfare to the settlers of *Harman Mahallesi*, told me that he could perceive the changing attitudes of people towards the state and political authority. He said that:

Welfare is harmful to the dignity of humans since they need to beg for the state’s and other institutions’ aid. Rather than providing job opportunities through which our people can make their own living without depending on anyone, the AKP, the political party in power, tries to make people dependent on it to generate thankfulness in them.

In order to be eligible for welfare, people need to prove that they are ‘really’ poor and needy, so the distribution of welfare is based on means testing. Having a car, a house or sometimes a pension of more than 1000 TL (£400) a month can prevent people from getting this help. It could be suggested that welfare distribution opened the door for further disagreements and hidden conflicts among *gecekondu* people. I learnt that it is very common among *gecekondu* communities to inform on other people who are receiving welfare to the municipality and prevent their access to help by claiming that they are not poor enough to be eligible for it. The debate on the receipt of welfare also has a moral aspect in the interviews. For example, two of my interviewees said that they

had never applied for any kind of help since they thought they were not poor and it was immoral for them to get this help if they were not poor enough. Another respondent also said that, if people received social aid, not voting for the AKP was misconduct, and people doing this should be ashamed.

The 1990s and 2000s, when the impact of globalization was most visible, saw the continuation and maturation of the structural adjustment policies that had begun to be implemented during the 1980s as well as the completion of economic liberalization and the consolidation of neoliberalism (Akbulut and Başlık 2011, Brenner and Theodore 2002:374). The main focus was on shrinking the state and liberating the free market from state intervention. Paradoxically, disciplinary forms of state intervention increased in order to impose market rule upon all aspects of social life (Brenner and Theodore 2002:352, Helvacıoğlu 2000). In Turkey, the basic feature of politics since the beginning of the 2000s has been decreasing the role of the state and leaving the market in the hands of private entrepreneurs. This is not a new attitude but this time the implementation of neoliberal policies has been coupled with harsher interventions by the shrinking state to impose these policies in Turkey.

The focus on shrinking the state apparatus went hand in hand with a great emphasis on localization and the role of local government. For Jessop (2002), this was mostly in order to “promote the community which is supposed to be a self-organizing compensatory body for the inadequacy of the market mechanism” (p. 455). In the context of globalization and neoliberalism, the significance of cities as “the engines of economic growth, key centres of economic, political, and social innovation, and key actors in promoting and consolidating international competitiveness” (Jessop 2002: 465) is highlighted, whereas the role of the nation state is being seriously challenged. Cities, as the new centres of reproduction and continual reconstitution of neoliberalism, are transformed into a commodity which can be sold in the market and are considered “active agents when they are mere things” (Harvey 1989: 5, Brenner and Theodore 2002). Urban investment, such as building sport fields, shopping malls and so on are designed to enhance the reputation of cities. Ankara Master Plan 2023 is inspired by this attitude towards the city as this plan is concerned with the role of Ankara within development on a global, national and regional scale. Urban transformation projects can

be seen from the same perspective. Since 2005, 46 urban transformation projects for the centre of Ankara have been approved by the Metropolitan Council of Ankara (Güzey 2012:77). These projects were inspired by the global trend of creating global cities. Moreover, all these projects and investments are promoted as being for the benefit of all the people in the city. *Gecekondu* areas were considered as problematic areas that should be transformed.

In Turkey after the coup d'état, the municipalities were empowered in terms of their authority. Laws no 2380 and 2464 were enacted in 1981 and increased the financial resources of local government (Bayraktar 2007). They were allowed to establish companies and also to provide services through contracting. Under Law No. 3030, the status of metropolitan municipality was introduced into the local government system and municipalities were authorized to prepare and approve urban transformation projects. In Harvey's terms, this indicated a shift from the managerial to the entrepreneurial form of governance (1989:4-5). This was compatible with the idea of the shrinking state and of empowering local government inspired by neoliberalism. While it used to be the central government that made decisions about urban reforms, as was the case with the *gecekondu* amnesties, the municipalities became the major actors in urban regeneration. They were allowed to prepare urban reform projects. The empowerment of local authorities, particularly in terms of urban reforms, has been supported and it is expected that it will increase the level of local participation (see Habitat II 1997, p.102-103), as was suggested by the Habitat meeting of İstanbul in 1996. However, research in Turkey shows that this does not result in an increase in the participation of local people. Furthermore, as Harvey (2009) suggests, many scholars within urban studies agree that the city should be regarded as "a functioning totality within which everything is related to everything else" (p. 303). Starting from this point, it could be argued that reform in one part of a city directly affects the dynamics of the rest of the city. However, the urban reformation projects in Turkey have been project-based and not the result of a holistic restructuring process which considers the larger urban scale.

The improvement plans of the 1980s and 1990s were taken as the starting point for the urban renewal projects of the 1990s and 2000s. For the AKP government, the housing sector is the dynamo of current Turkish development, so urban renewal projects

have been one of the top agenda items of the AKP since it came to power in 2003. In terms of urban planning, retaining the perspective of the shrinking state, leaving the renewal process to private entrepreneurs was compatible with the attitude of the government after the second half of the 1990s, and especially of the AKP.

The AKP considered *gecekondu* areas to be backward and an impediment to development and civilization. The new discourse is based on the clearance of *gecekondu* houses rather than transforming them as was the case in the era of improvement plans and amnesties up until the 1990s. Appropriating a modernist-elitist perspective, Mr. Erdoğan, the Prime Minister, named the *gecekondu* areas “tumours of the cities to be cleaned” and the slogan of Melih Gökçek, the mayor of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality is “we will clean Ankara of the *gecekondus*.” The AKP’s pejorative language indicates a break in their alliance with *gecekondu* people regarding their populist policies. On the other hand, Mr. Erdoğan frequently refers to the fact that he grew up in Kasımpaşa, a former *gecekondu* area in İstanbul, and claims that the AKP represents the grass roots against the elite – especially in election speeches.

Currently, in Turkey TOKİ (Mass Housing Authority) that replaced the role of Ministry of Development and Housing, and the municipalities are the main actors in managing the urban regeneration projects. In practice, in prestigious urban areas municipalities initiate urban reformation projects and leave the area to the private firms. In urban areas where the private sector does not see any profit in enter, TOKİ starts the urban reformation. So the form of urban reformation of 2000s in Turkey is an obvious example of entrepreneurial private-public partnership in cities, since as Harvey suggests, “public sector assumes the risk and private sector takes the benefits” (1989:7).

In this partnership of public and private entrepreneurs, with the influence of newly arising neoliberal policies, there will be no room for *gecekondu* areas in cities. The aim of the urban reforms is not to ameliorate the living conditions of *gecekondu* people but to integrate the former *gecekondu* areas, which have become central and prestigious over time, into the land market and obtain unearned urban rent. This is compatible with the general features of capitalist development in which it is necessary to mobilize particular territories, places and scales as productive forces (Brenner and Theodore 2002:354). Currently, rather than the “*gecekondu* people” who were needed as the urban

labour force in the development strategies of the pre-1990s era, it is the houses of *gecekondu* people which are needed by the neoliberal development policies. The early comers, slightly more well-off, start to feel more “middle class” as a direct outcome of the benefits they have received from the urban regeneration process, whereas the latecomers were left without choice and displaced. This created a remarkable conflict and division among the *gecekondu* dwellers in terms of the future benefits or losses they could expect as a result of the urban regeneration process. The policy of clearance of *gecekondu* areas from the cities, which are supposed to be marketed, not only displaced the *gecekondu* population to other distressed areas but also transferred the socio-economic and cultural problems of this population to other areas.

Like in many migrant communities in all over the world, it can be suggested that *gecekondu* people among the second generation had more opportunities to attain higher levels of education than their parents. While their parents have primary school degrees at most, a far from negligible number of their children were able to study for university degrees. This was due both to more education opportunities in the city and their parents’ support for their children’s education. Parents in both the first and second generation regarded education as one of the instruments of social mobility for their children and for them education could provide their children with white collar jobs. It can be said that the longer a rural family lives in the city, the more attention they give to the education of their kids. This attitude of the parents can be thought of as a proof of their adaptation to city culture (Keleş 2010:499-500). The children with university degrees could find better white collar jobs than their parents. However, the children who had more education than their parents but did not have a university degree comprised the largest group among the second generation and they failed to find proper jobs if they did not work in their fathers’, other relatives’ or parents’ friends’ enterprises. The usual job pattern for these people was one of lower income and no or little job security so they often changed their jobs. The parents that I talked to were quite anxious about their children’s futures. So, in general, it can be argued that, in spite of higher levels of education, the second generation work in worse jobs in terms of job security, wages, status and working hours than their parents. But if their parents or close relatives already had their own business or a good network in some job sector, the children could find a

job more easily than the ones who did not know anybody in the job market. In this sense, the second generation had the opportunity of using their parents' or relatives' channels to find a job. In other words, there were some jobs made ready by their families and neighbours for the second generation migrants. For example, in Ankara, the street selling of clams was controlled by the migrants from Mardin. So, it was easier for second generation migrants from Mardin to be street clam sellers compared to migrants from other regions.

In terms of accommodation, it could be stated that second generation migrants had more opportunities and did not need to find strategies to have a roof over their heads. This was because they lived either in the expanded parts of *gecekondus* or in the flats in turn which their parents had given their *gecekondus* to construction businessmen. They were not supposed to pay rent to their parents for these because providing accommodation, especially for sons, was considered to be a primary duty of parents. Among my respondents, there were even some people with good incomes who still lived in very small and badly constructed houses which were built in the garden of one of the spouses' parents. This was a strategy designed to decrease household expenses. However, it was also a strategy to maintain solidarity between the first and second generations. The second generation got the help of their families, particularly the help of female family members, in caring for the children, doing housework and keeping the house.

It can be said that, within the context of this solidarity, it is mostly the parents who transfer resources such as accommodation, jobs, networks and money to their children. The *gecekondu* generation, the children, are aware that their parents have worked hard and been quite creative in solving their problems, finding ways to generate upward social mobility and ameliorating their living conditions. In my fieldwork, respondents among the *gecekondu* generation, especially the children of the first-wave arrivals, said that they admired their parents in the sense that they had found ways of rejecting the existing conditions and creating new opportunities for themselves .

The new *gecekondu* generation does not maintain a close relationship with their villages as their parents did. Some of them still visit their villages once a year or less for holidays, however, for many of them the home-town is limited to the image of pastoral

life and warm human relations. But they never think about going back to their villages. For them, this is not just because of fewer job and educational opportunities, besides these reasons they also thought that they belonged to city life where they were born and could not adapt to the life there after all. Furthermore, they neither engage themselves with *hemşehri* networks or neighbourhood community in *gecekondu* areas nor try to ameliorate the living conditions of these areas. Rather, their aspiration is to leave any kind of relationship with these communities and to move to other parts of the cities. There is almost no sense of belonging to their homes, *hemşehri* networks or *gecekondu* communities amongst this generation. It can be said that this is the most significant difference between them and the first-wave *gecekondu* generation. Women in this category told me during my fieldwork that they would not marry a man in their village since they did not want to go back to settle in their home. This was not the case for men in the same category because, due to the patriarchal family structure, it is the women who usually have to move to their husbands' houses in Turkey. If a second-generation migrant man married a woman from his home village, the woman would migrate, while the reverse was the case for second-wave migrant women. Marriage to a man in their home village meant they would have to move to the village, and they anticipated that they would not have the same opportunities for education and jobs in their home-town. So, it was a kind of downward mobility for them. On the other hand, this did not mean that they did not like their villages. Although they did not have as close a relationship as their mothers with their home, they really admired the way of life and the atmosphere in their villages. However, it should be noted that this appreciation was limited to some images of their home and they just liked having holidays in the villages.

It can be said that the *gecekondu* generation hope and want more than their parents (Erman 1998:558). This might be related to the fact that they were given more opportunities in terms of accommodation and education by their parents and they were more engaged with the urbanities and these increased their expectations. Moreover, they do not see living in the city as a success in terms of social mobility, while it was so for their parents, who migrated from rural areas. Despite the limited job opportunities and the increasing gap between social classes, it is still hard to say that the *gecekondu* generation is hopeless. It can be suggested that this generation is looking for a space in

city life. For example, although they do not earn enough money, they try to buy trendy mobile phones. Since they cannot afford smart and expensive clothes, they wear fake reproductions of famous and trendy trademarks. Moreover, they visit the city centres not only for shopping but also for enjoying their spare time, which was not usually the case for their parents. It can be said that people from this generation are strengthening their relationship with city centres and they are becoming more visible in city centres. However, the willingness of the *gecekondu* generation to be seen as urbanite, in their lifestyles as well as in themselves, is considered as being due to the corruption of modern life by most of the urbanities and in official discourses (Özyeğin 2002:Chap.1, Öncü 2002:184-186, Bali 2009:322). The *gecekondu* community is also accused of causing a degeneration of modern city culture. This perception of the urban population and the state is not new or specific to the *gecekondu* generation only. However, by this time it is already clearly understood that the *gecekondu* community is not temporary in the cities and they will not go back to their villages. Moreover, it is the first time that there are people in large numbers who claim to be townspeople just as much as the people in the city centres, although they are not perceived as townspeople. In this sense, for *gecekondu* generation, illegal activities and participation to the gang groups appeared as the instruments of achieving power in the face of exclusion by the urbanities and formal labour market as well as the dissolving of the community.

With the increasing transportation facilities to their districts and the transformation of *gecekondus* into big apartment blocks, many *gecekondu* districts have become a part of the city. The improvement of transportation facilities and the number of middle-class people living in *gecekondu* areas are interrelated. The provision of relatively cheap apartments with relatively good conditions attracts more middle-class people, especially state officers, to *gecekondu* areas. On the other hand, as the number of middle-class working people increases in these areas, the municipal government provides more means of transportation to *gecekondu* districts. The influx of non-rural dwellers has also increased the level of heterogeneity of *gecekondu* areas.

Migrants in *gecekondu* areas whom I talked to told me that they have started to feel less isolated and that it is good for them to have white-collar people in their districts. On the other hand, migrant people who moved in at least 20 years ago have started to feel a

bit insecure. Although people's material conditions, infrastructure facilities and transportation circumstances are better, they start to complain about their insecurity in their own districts. My interviewees commonly say that: 'all our doors used to be open but now we could not trust anyone'. As a researcher, I also experienced their feeling of insecurity. For example, I visited Fadime, who is very poor and survives with the help of her neighbours and lives with her mentally ill son. She was defrauded by a visitor just a few weeks before my visit. Although the *muhtar* district introduced me to her, on the day when I visited her, she invited some of her neighbours to her house in order to protect her from any kind of threat from me. She asked me to conduct my interview in the garden not inside the house. After completing the interview, she explained her reason and that she trusted me now and apologized for her behaviour, but I tried to reassure her that she had not hurt my feelings and that she had done the right thing.

While the social capital of migrants before the 1980s played a major role in terms of finding jobs, accommodation or loans for their small businesses, this role began to be less important with the effects of the structural adjustment policies during the 1980s for the *gecekondü* generation. For example, Erođlu claims that social capital's contribution to reducing the deprivation due to economic constraints became gradually more restricted (2010:49-50). This is because people in the same social network live under similar economic and social conditions and this means that the benefits of having a greater number of social contacts 'implies very little about the quality and quantity of the benefits obtained from them' (Erođlu 2010: 42). Research conducted by Aksu Bora (2007) in the *gecekondus* of İstanbul also indicates that there is a positive correlation between the economic situation and the quality and quantity of social contacts (p.102-105), and social contacts even diminish in crisis times. His study shows that, when the economic conditions of *gecekondü* dwellers worsen, they lose their contacts, and Erođlu's study also illustrates that better-off *gecekondü* dwellers do not maintain contact with their poor relatives and friends (2010:43). In my field study, I also came across similar examples. People among the poorest inhabitants told me that even their children with relatively high incomes did not want to communicate with them since they thought that their parents would ask for material help or money.

While the first and second wave migrations to large cities, not only to Ankara, were dominated mostly by people from the Black Sea Region and Central Anatolia, especially with the Kurdish migration of the 1990s, the numbers from Southeastern and Eastern Anatolia grew (see Wedel 2001). The migration of Kurdish people in large numbers has created a clustering of Kurdish people on the outskirts of the big cities. In addition to economic reasons, the majority of Kurdish people migrated to cities and metropolitan areas due to security issues, dangerous living conditions, conflict in their home villages and forced migration (Hemmasi and Prorok 2002:401). It might be said that having different reasons for migration, experiencing the violence of the Turkish state and exclusion by the non-Kurdish people, made them more marginalized. In that sense, it was not surprising that they felt closer to the Kurdish movement, which highlighted the inferior living conditions of Kurdish people and state attacks and violence against them (Romano 2006:159-163, Bruinessen 1995:357-362, see McDowall 2004:Chap.20). With the migration of Kurdish people in large numbers to the *gecekondur* areas, ethnic diversity became visible. As was the general pattern for the previous migrants, Kurdish people also clustered in areas with other Kurdish people from the same place of origin. This created a distinction between existing migrants and Kurdish newcomers and there was some conflict among the migrants. Nevertheless, there are also some *gecekondur* areas, like *Ege Mahallesi* in which the Kurdish inhabitants did not come as a result of forced migration.

It could be stated that the daughters of the first- and second-wave arrivals who were born after 1970 had more social mobility compared to their mothers. Most of their parents, especially mothers among the second-wave migrants, encouraged them to get an education, since mothers thought that through education their daughters would have more chance of finding better jobs and would not suffer from low wages and poor working conditions as they had. So, they have achieved a higher level of education compared to their parents. As a result of the relative adaptation to city conditions and lifestyles, the migrants became more tolerant towards their daughters' working outside and the majority of second-generation migrant women engaged in income-generating activities. In that sense, it can be argued that, for women, the age at which they move to the city really matters. Since the second-wave migrant women were born in the city,

they adopted city life more easily than their mothers. Because of this, they felt themselves to belong to city life, not to the lifestyle of their homes. It was not unusual that, while a man was opposed to his wife's working outside, after spending some years in the city he could support his daughter to work outside. While the general working pattern for these women was again low-paid jobs in the service sector, there are also some women who have office jobs and work as teaching assistants, accountants etc. In brief, it should be considered that migration has benefitted the younger generation of women (Velayati 2011:Chap.9) in *gecekondu* areas.

It can be said that *gecekondu*-generation women were much more active than their male counterparts in terms of increasing the resources of their household. Besides working, they put a great deal of effort into accessing the welfare distributed by the municipalities, NGOs, religious communities and some wealthy people who make contact with the *muhtars* to help *gecekondu* dwellers. They register their family with the local authorities for welfare. For this registration, they collect documents from various formal institutions. In contrast to previous periods, now it is the women who make contact with local authorities in order to ameliorate their situation. So it can be suggested that, while it was the male *gecekondu* dwellers who initiated the connections between local authorities and formal institutions, it is the female *gecekondu* residents who have taken up this mission and are developing it. While this might show the empowered situation of women, it can also be suggested that, since seeking welfare is related to a family's low income, for male members of the household it is a kind of proof of their failure to fulfil their roles as breadwinner (Kalaycıoğlu and Tılıç Rittersberg 2001). So, the men pass this duty to the women because of their masculine honour (Buğra and Keyder 2006:221-222). Moreover, women try to make connections through their neighbours, bosses and colleagues – if they work – in order to find jobs for their household members, the best school for their children and to be informed more about welfare and easy ways to access health and transportation services. However, the women can be easily accused by their husbands of failing to reach welfare or create networks .

Gossiping in *gecekondu* areas could be considered as one of the prominent factors that determined young women's attitudes and their ability to move. It became the major

control mechanism over women, especially over the younger and single women. Most of the women tried to control and limit their public visibility in order to prevent any kind of gossip. If there is any gossip about a married women, then her family, husband and in laws will not let her go out at all. So she could lose her network and the chance of working. Moreover, gossip about a single woman decreases her marriageability, so in the case of gossip about a single woman, she was not considered to be a proper ‘family girl’ for marriage at all. During my pilot fieldwork, Didem, who was a young shop assistant and born in Ankara, told me that she was quite troubled with gossips in her district. According to her, since everybody knew everybody else, they could watch each other easily. So, for her, she had to be very careful with her clothes, friends, behaviour, and visibility in her district, but she felt more comfortable in the city centre. Moreover, the type of visibility was also important for preventing gossip. If young and single women were always with married and older women it was not a problem at all. They could even go out at midnight if they were together with their married and older relatives or neighbours. If they were alone or with other single younger women they could easily be stigmatized.

3.7 Conclusion

It can be suggested that the migrants have been among the most important components of Turkey’s industrialization and urbanization story since the early 1960s. They were active agents whose survival strategies have marked the state’s approach at different times and have influenced policies about *gecekondu* areas. Their movements and strategies also brought about changes, especially in the composition of the labour market, the distribution of land resources and the social formation of rural and urban areas. On the other hand, their movements were dramatically affected by the systematic economic changes and state policies.

Based on the historical context and background given in this chapter, the following chapters will discuss the formation of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods and communities, the change in the self-perception of *gecekondu* dwellers and in their survival strategies in

the face of state policies and the dynamics of dissolving of community ties through the case of Ege district.

4. Building a *Gecekondu* Neighbourhood

4.1 Introduction

When the rural migrants arrived in the cities, in the absence of affordable accommodation and social housing programmes they had to solve their own problems of accommodation. They occupied land that mostly belonged to the state on the outskirts of the cities. The first settlers of the *gecekondu* neighbourhoods had to solve the problems generated by the lack of infrastructure and struggle to get amenities. In this sense, the burdens of the market and the state were taken by the *gecekondu* people. Their efforts to find a roof overhead and to ameliorate their living conditions were the first step towards building *gecekondu* communities. This chapter will focus on the building of a community in Ege through the narratives of the Ege people themselves.

4.2 Village Life Before the Migration and Deciding to Migrate

Until they migrated to Ankara, the migrants had lived in the rural hinterland where they grew up. As Lloyd (1979:101) wrote, “the village community is by definition small, and relatively isolated and self contained. Its members are bound together by multiple cross-cutting relationships,” and for them there was no life outside the village until their migration. In the villages, everybody used to know each other intimately and they always had contact with the same people. The population of Central Anatolian villages was homogeneous in terms of faith. The villages were either Alevi or Sunni. Therefore, the rural migrants did not have much experience of socializing with people of different faiths. Sıtkı, who came to Ege in 1981 from Büyükincirli village in Yozgat, told me that his village was Alevi surrounded by Sunni villages. They had contact with the people from the Sunni villages only at harvest time. They had never talked about faith differences. Gül came to Ankara in the 1960s from the Alevi village of Gürün-Sivas and moved into Ege at the beginning of the 1970s. She told me that when she was a primary school student in her village, her teacher used to take them to other villages as a school activity. Her only experience of Sunni people was during these extra-curricular

activities. The only difference she knew between Sunnis and Alevis was that girls in Sunni villages wore headscarves and fewer Sunni girls attended school compared to girls in their Alevi village.

Rural people usually married people from the same village or from neighbouring villages. Endogamy was usual and marriage between patrilineal parallel cousins was the most common type of endogamy. These marriages strengthened the relations between families, ensuring that the community remained as close as possible and these relations were the social capital of the rural migrants, who used them to migrate to the city and get help in city centres. Delaney (1991:109) suggests that endogamy was an expression of mistrust of the outside world and a strong denial of separation among the community as villagers take and give brides (*kız almak-kız vermek*). Due to the patriarchal form of the family, new couples used to live together with the husbands' family and they worked together on the plot that belonged to the family of the husband. Living with their extended family was not easy for new couples. Young couples felt greatly oppressed by the mothers and fathers in the extended family. The father in the extended family was the head of the household and controlled the family budget. Married sons did not have as much control over the budget as their fathers; therefore they had to ask everything of their fathers and bow to their fathers. The mother of the extended family was usually in charge of arranging the division of labour among the female members of the family. This control over young couples affected young women more. Some of the female rural migrants told me that they wanted to leave the village just to escape from the extended family's control over them.

In the villages, life was based on collectivism in which people shared their work, problems and happiness with the rural community. So, everything related to the village had a direct impact on them. Given the fact that the government made few investments to help them (Szyliowicz 1962:437), villagers usually solved their problems on their own. When their village needed something they resolved the problem through *imece* and *salma* practices. In *imece*, people do not contribute money, but they give their labour. *Salma* means collecting money from the villagers according to their income. The *muhtar* and the Council of Elders (*İhtiyar Heyeti*) decided the amount for each family in the village, the wealthier gave more and the poor gave less, and then they solved their

problem. A *muhtar* is the elected head of the smallest administrative unit in Turkey. *Muhtars* are available both in villages and in the cities. In villages, they work with a Council of Elders, all of whom are in theory elected by secret ballot. *Muhtars* play a key role in villages since they are the official representative of the state in the village. Most official business passes through them. They receive all visitors, especially state officials. They pass on orders and regulations, make statistical returns, make out the electoral roll, report crimes, convey special requests, and certify the identity of people and the truth of their statements for state marriage ceremonies, bank loans and so on. They are also in charge of collecting the local village tax and administering village funds.

Due to the absence of investment by the state in villages, many still suffer from a lack of infrastructure. Nearly all of the interviewees, especially women, in Ege spoke about how they suffered from the lack of infrastructure facilities. Women told me that they needed to carry water every day and that they washed their clothes by the river. Interviewees among the first settlers told me that most of them did not have electricity, their villages did not have proper roads and these roads were blocked by snow in winter, they did not have hospitals or secondary schools. Most peasants had only minimal contact with the administrators and bureaucrats of the central government and suspected any strangers who wandered into their village of being tax collectors or a similar evil species (Szyliowicz 1962:436-437). They were engaged with the state through “the village elders or *muhtar*, or larger landowners, on whom they were commonly economically dependent. They used to vote according to the instructions of local leaders” (Özler 2000:42).¹⁴

The rural migrants used to work on agricultural production in their villages. The people of Ege had plots which belonged to their extended family. Although daughters were legal inheritors of their families’ property equally with their brothers, they were not socially expected to claim a right to their families’ land in rural areas. It was the sons

¹⁴ Fakir Baykurt’s novels are famous for giving a detailed account of rural life in Turkey, especially of the Alevi villages. In most of his novels, especially in *Kaplumbağalar*, he writes about the peasants’ attitudes towards people outside their villages and people from the central government. In any visit of a government person to their villages, the peasants got anxious and they mobilized all their resources to host these government officers to prevent their villages from receiving any punishment from the central government. His novels, *Kaplumbağlar* and *Tırpan*, also explain the way in which villagers solved their problems through collectivism and without any help from the government.

who continued to work on the plot after their father's death. Brothers who shared their parents' inheritance with their sisters were appreciated and considered to have a good personality. Sıtkı told me that, after his parents died, he gave their house to his older sister and because of this his sister always respected him.

The interviewees told me that their plots were not sufficient for the whole family. Especially after the sons got married and had children, they started to worry about the future of their family. The plot was the same, but the number of male members in the family increased, so they needed to find some other solution for the family to survive. Nazım, who came to Ankara in 1972 when he was a child, explained their decision as follows:

Why did we come? Well, we could not find a plot on which we could survive in Çorum. We lived in the village [of Çorum]. We were 7 siblings... 4 sisters and 3 brothers... Never mind the sisters, I mean, they would get married and leave the family. But, as a man, if you stayed in the village, there was no plot that could feed you. So, we said that there were more opportunities in large cities.

Additionally, rural life was based on less consumption. They were skilled enough to solve their problems without depending on money. In rural areas, the working unit was the family, which means women, men and the children. Peasants used to work from an early age. Children, after the age of 6-7, could do some work such as carrying lunch to their working parents, taking care of animals, looking after the babies, accompanying the elders and so forth. Fidan came to Tuzluçayır (a former *geceköndü* neighbourhood) in the 1950s and her daughter lives in Ege. She frequently visits her daughter and sometimes stays with her. Fidan was the eldest sibling in her family and her mother died when she was very young. Her father was working in different nearby villages and they usually moved to different cities. She was in charge of all the housework, cooking, taking care of her younger sisters and brothers and cleaning. Since they were very poor, Fidan used to check the rubbish bins to try to find food and materials that could be used as clothes or for the house.

A farming family could produce its own food and feed the family and could sell the small surplus for exchange and obligatory dues (Llyod 1979:95). If they had animals such as cows, sheep or hens they could have dairy products and eggs. Since the climate

of Central Anatolia is suitable for the production of wheat, they could produce flour and women baked their own bread and made *erişte* (a traditional type of noodle). If a village was rich enough, they could grow vegetables and fruit. So, women could make jams and tomato paste, which is the basic ingredient of many Turkish dishes. It can be suggested that the village community was self-sufficient.

Considering the poor state of communication and transportation in villages, the low income levels of peasants and their hard work, it was not usual for them to visit other places. They used to go to the city centres or provincial districts at harvest time to sell their produce and to buy things and also when they needed to contact a government institution, e.g. when they needed to go to court, to hospital etc. It was only the men who visited the city centres. Some of the men became familiar with the cities (or other places apart from their villages) during their military service, seasonal work or visits to their *hemşeris* and relatives who lived in cities. Knowledge about Ankara was important in the migration decision process. At this point, based on the profile of my interviewees, I can suggest that, besides the villagers' concern about their future economic opportunities, their contacts with Ankara played a major role in the decision process about migration. For example, Sefer, who came to Ankara in the 1960s and moved to Ege in 1992, told me that he had nephews in Ankara before he migrated. He visited them regularly and this is why he was encouraged to move to this city. He knew about the opportunities and lifestyle in Ankara and had relatives who could help him.

Rural migrants did not sell their plots in their villages since they regarded them as security. Some *gecekondu* dwellers returned to their villages because they felt they could not survive in Ankara anymore, and then came back to the city after spending some years in their villages. Moreover, the extended families did not often all migrate together. Usually a son went to the city and other members of the extended family farmed on their plot. If an extended family had young sons, they could send these young sons to their older sons in the city to enable the younger son to learn a job or to have an education. Parents did not want to stay in the village alone unless they had married sons who lived with them, so parents were usually the last ones to migrate to the city centre. When all the members of the extended family had migrated to the city, they left their plots to relatives or neighbours in their villages. They worked on the plot and paid some

of the income to the owner. Rural migrants did not want to sell their plots even when none of the family members lived in the village. Most of them told me that, if they sold their plots, the money would be shared among the brothers and the shares would not be much. So, they thought that it would not matter for them. In most cases, an adult son built a house in his family's home village after he had improved his living conditions and used it as a summer house.

It can be suggested that the migrant who "carries his mattress bundled upon his back along with his bag of food" (Şenyapılı 1982:238) was a typical figure of rural-to-urban migrants. At this point, when the first generation of migrants came to the cities, especially in the early years of migration, nearly all of them had nothing. Most of their migration stories were full of pain. Gül came to the city at the end of the 1960s with her husband, Mahmut, because she needed medical treatment. Mahmut knew Ankara, since he had done his military service there. He took her to the hospital in Ankara and this created a crisis in his family, with whom they lived. In those days, as Gül told me, young brides were not considered to be important by the in-laws and husbands were not supposed to show their love for their wives. Since Mahmut showed that he valued his wife when he took her to the hospital in the city centre, this was a kind of challenge to his family. It broke their ties with them. The couple felt uneasy in their village and decided to move to Ankara. Gül told me that they did not have enough money even to buy a bus ticket. They found a person in their village whose job was transporting goods from Sivas's villages to Ankara. Gül and Mahmut got on the back of the van. There was nothing covering it although it was very cold. Gül said that it was winter time and Sivas was one of the coldest areas in Turkey. At the time of their migration, they had a seven-month-old baby. Gül started to cry when she told me that the baby contracted pneumonia during the migration and died a week after their journey to Ankara. For Gül, it was not the pneumonitis, but their poverty which killed the baby. Others' stories of migration were similar. Most of my interviewees told me things like: "we came to Ankara with only a spoon", or: "when we came, we did not even have a blanket."

The migrants did not arrive in the city with blank minds, they brought their rural experience, skills, considerations and priorities and they sustained their habits in the cities (Ayata and Ayata 1996:Chap.9, Kıray 2003:185 Lloyd 1979:92, Erder 1997:156).

For example, since Fidan used to check the rubbish bins and reuse some materials, when she came to Tuzluçayır she collected the materials available in rubbish bins or in her neighbourhood to build a *gecekonda* house. She even used the mud in the streets as clay to stick the materials together in her construction. The first generation were not used to relying on cash in their daily lives; they used to produce what they needed collectively and consume collectively and they brought this habit to the cities. This is still the case for the first settlers. For example, Mahmut worked as a cleaner in a public hospital for 30 years. Gül and Mahmut had three *gecekondas* at the time of our interview and Mahmut had a regular retirement pension. All of their children are university graduates, have white-collar jobs and have moved to the middle-class districts. Although her family is much better off now, Gül still produces jams, dried peppers, tomatoes and aubergines, makes cheese and tomato paste and *erişte* (noodles, a special kind of pasta) in large amounts. She shares them with her relatives, daughters and sons who live in the city centre as well as with me and my parents. They built a summer house in their village in Sivas without hiring any workers and they built it with the help of the villagers during the summers when they visited their village.

4.3 First Settlers' Faith and Ethnicity

The majority of the population of Ege came from the villages of Sivas, Çorum and Yozgat. There are some first settlers who came from the rural areas of Gümüşhane, Kırşehir, Kırıkkale and Çankırı. There are many Alevis both in the city centre and in the villages of Çorum and Sivas. There are not so many Alevi people in the city centre of Yozgat, but some of Yozgat's villages are Alevi. So, the majority of first settlers in Ege were Alevi people. Among my interviewees, there were some Alevi-Kurdish people¹⁵ who came from the villages of Sivas, Yozgat and Çorum.

¹⁵ Among the Alevi Kurds, there has always existed a dilemma about whether their loyalty should be to their ethnic or religious community (Çelik 2003). The Kurdishness of Alevi-Kurdish people in Ege was a bit ambiguous since they did not declare that they were Kurdish, what they said was "we have Kurdish ancestry". They did not know how to speak Kurdish and they emphasized the "Alevi" features of their identity rather than their Kurdishness.

Alevism vs. Sunnism is the main sectarian divide in Turkey. The majority of people in Turkey are Sunni Muslim and in the context of Turkey, Sunnism historically refers to the orthodox version of Islam. In a very general sense, Alevism is a branch of Shia and, in Turkey's socio-historical context, it refers to heterodoxy in Islam and is known as a more liberal branch of Islam in Turkey. Alevis in Turkey believe in God, the Prophet Muhammad, and Ali, the prophet's cousin. They place emphasis on Ali, which is not usually the case for Sunnis in Turkey. As discussed in the methodology chapter, Alevi people mostly put a poster of Ali on their interior walls. They do not build mosques and they do not follow *imam*, the Sunni religious leaders. Rather, their ceremonial gathering meeting (*cem*) is led by a *dede*, "a member of a hereditary priestly caste" (Şahin 2005:466), and conducted in an assembly house (*cem evi*). So they do not go to mosque. *Namaz* (prayer) and *oruç* (fasting) in Ramadan, *zekat* (Islamic charity for the poor) and *hac* (pilgrimage to Mecca), which Sunnis are supposed to practice, are not commonly observed among Alevis. Despite this general framework of Alevi belief, Alevis in Turkey are allowed to combine this with Sunni beliefs. In this sense, many Alevi people in Turkey might fast during Ramadan, pray five times a day (*namaz*) and sacrifice animals during Eid. Because women and men worship together, there have been widespread rumours among Sunnis that communal sex is a part of Alevis' religious rituals (Şahin 2005:466). Alevis are labelled as *Kızılbaş* (red heads) by Sunnis and this Turkish word is a reference to the red bandannas of the followers of Caliph Ali. In most cases, it has a negative connotation. Bruinessen states that Alevi "is a blanket term for a large number of heterodox communities whose beliefs and ritual practices differ significantly." (1996:7). He gives an account of Alevi categories as follows:

In the eastern province of Kars, there are communities speaking Azerbaijani Turkish and whose Alevism closely resembles orthodox Twelver Shi'ism of modern Iran. The Arabic speaking Alevi communities of southern Turkey (especially Hatay and Adana) are ethnically part of Syria's 'Alawi (Nusayri) community and have no historical ties with the other Alevi groups. The large Alevi groups are the Turkish and Kurdish speakers; both appear to be the descendants of rebellious tribal groups that were religiously affiliated with the Safavids. (1996:7)

Alevi people living in Ankara *gecekondu*s appear to be the descendants of the third category that Bruinessen (1996:7) mentions, the “rebellious tribal groups that were religiously affiliated with the Safavids.” The estimated numbers of the Alevi population in Turkey in different resources ranges from 10 to 25 percent (Erman and Göker 2000:99, Rittersberger-Tılıç 1998:99-100), Vorhoff 1998). The official statistics do not provide accurate information about the number of Alevis in Turkey because the official census does not ask for the ethnic backgrounds of the population. On the identity cards, there is a section for religion but if a person does not come from the Greek, Armenian or Jewish minorities, the only option for this section is “Islam”. There is no separate category for Alevi people. Due to the long-term assimilative politics of the state since Ottoman times, Alevi people might tend to hide their identities (Erman and Göker 2000, Çelik 2003). For example, my mother and I met Ayşe, who came from a village of Çorum in 1970, in the park just opposite our *gecekondu* house. We invited her for a coffee to our home. She started to talk about her marriage. She did not say that she was Alevi, what she said was that her husband was Alevi. I asked whether their parents opposed their marriage because of the difference in faith, and she said they did not. After ten minutes, she asked whether we prayed five times a day. It was obviously a question designed to discover whether we were Sunni or not. My mother replied no. We did not say anything about our faith but not praying five times a day does not mean anything about our faith since not all Sunni people pray five times a day. I realized that she felt relieved since she understood that we were either Sunni who were not very religious or Alevi. So, she said: “I do not want to deny my background, I am an Alevi.”

Alevis have been the target of historical and recent oppression because of their heterodox beliefs and practices (Bozarıslan 2007:3) since the time of the Ottoman Empire. Alevis’ identity was shaped through oppression by the Sunni Islamic feature of the Ottoman State and their resistance against this. The Ottoman Empire was replaced by the Turkish Republic in 1923. This new state, founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, was based on ethnic nationalism and was constitutionally secular. Since the Sunni feature of the state was abandoned by Atatürk, Alevis became emotionally attached to the new Turkish Republic, Atatürk and the CHP (the Republican People’s Party), which was founded by Atatürk. The new modern republic strived to differentiate itself from the

Ottoman Empire and a new Turkish identity, cleansed of its Sunni-Islamic features, was the aim. In this sense, Alevi people were considered to be the original Turks who had been less affected by Sunni Islam and they were appreciated by the CHP (Ertan 2012). Moreover, the new Turkish state declared Alevis as Turks and “regarded them as ardent supporters of secularism” (Çelik 2003:143). So, as a result of the elimination of all the major institutional obstacles to the Alevis’ equality with the Sunni majority, such as the dissolving of the shari’a courts, the abolition of the sultanate and the caliphate, a new alliance appeared between Alevis and the modern Turkish Republic (Kehl-Bodrogi 2007:57). In this sense, it is not unusual to see a portrait of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk next to a portrait of Ali on the interior walls of Alevi houses, in *cemevis* or in political meetings of Alevi people (see photo 12).

Laicism failed to end the widespread Sunni prejudices against the Alevis (Bruinessen 1996:8). With the introduction of multi-party democracy in 1946, right-wing political parties that were inspired by Islamist perspectives started to be dominant. Kemalism could not sustain its laicism. There have been violent assaults by radical Islamist and fascist movements, some of which were implicitly supported by the right-wing parties and the government, against the Alevi population.¹⁶ Considering right-wing parties’ support for attacks on Alevis and their emphasis on Sunni creed on one hand, and on the other hand the laicism discourse of Kemalism and its appreciation of Alevism, the majority of Alevi people support the CHP, which is a centre-left party that was founded by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Dubetsky’s research on a *gecekondu* neighbourhood in İstanbul suggests that, while Alevi-Kurdish residences united in

¹⁶ The most well-known violence against Alevis is the Maraş Massacre of 1978 (see Sinclair-Webb 2007). The prime perpetrators of this massacre were the Greywolves, the grassroots fascist organization of the ultra-nationalist MHP (Nationalist Action Party). It was an attack on leftists by the right wing, on Kurds by Turks and especially on Alevis by Sunnis (McDowall 2005). Official numbers suggested that 109 people, most of whom were Alevis, were killed and 500 shops and homes were destroyed. The other prominent violent attack is the Sivas Massacre. This happened on 2 July 1993 and resulted in the deaths of 37 people, most of whom were Alevi intellectuals. On this day, the writers, intellectuals and musicians were in Otel Madımak in Sivas to commemorate Alevi poet Pir Sultan Abdal, who was a major figure in Alevi culture. After the traditional Friday prayers (*Cuma namazı*), militant Muslim fundamentalists set fire to the hotel. Every July 2, thousands of people, especially Alevis, gather to commemorate the arson of the Madımak Hotel in Sivas.

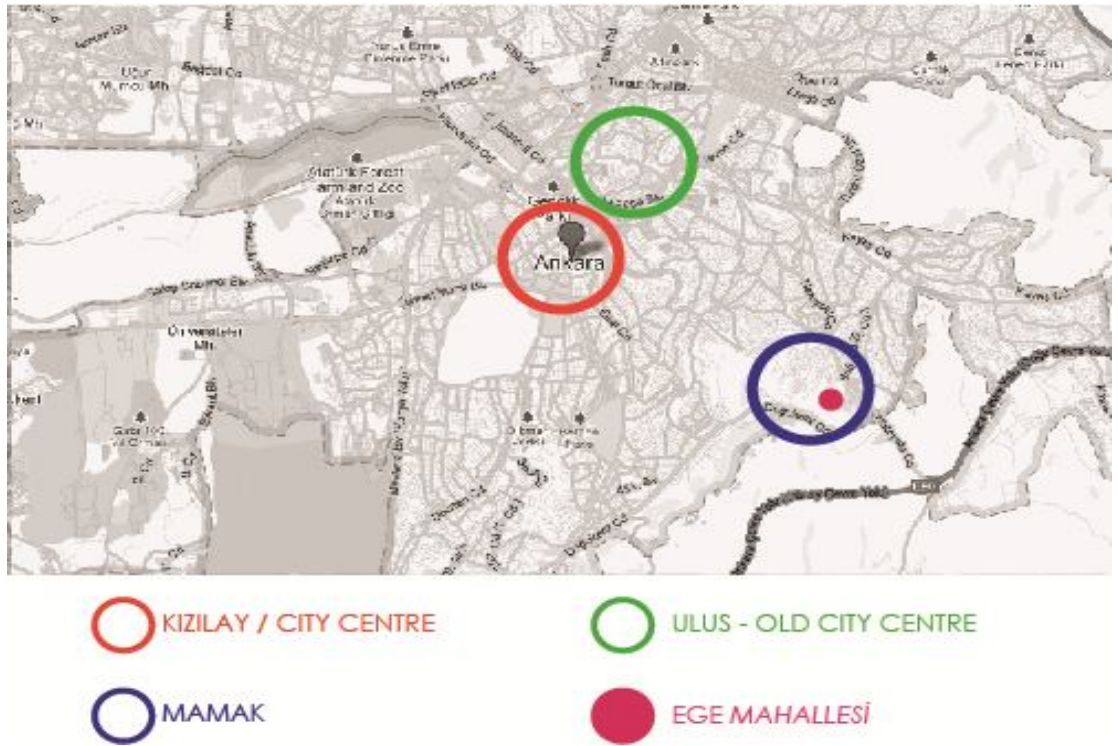
support of the CHP, the majority of Sunni Turks supported the right-wing Justice Party (1977:369).

4.4 A Brief History of Ege District

Distance mattered for the migrants and they tended to migrate to nearby cities in order to reduce the cost of the journey (Lloyd 1979:118, Todaro 1992:240). Given the fact that Ankara is in Central Anatolia, the majority of migrants are recruited from this region of Turkey (State Plannery Organization 2003). In the initial decades of the migration, in-city districts were the place for *gecekondu* communities. In due course, the number of rural migrants, and so the number of *gecekondu* dwellers, increased and it became harder to find a plot in old *gecekondu* areas. Some early rural migrants who had spent several years in other *gecekondu* areas of Ankara wanted their own *gecekondu* and searched for new areas on the outskirts of the city. This resulted in the city expanding. Ege was discovered by the dwellers of central *gecekondu* areas in the 1970s and it became an entrance point for the rural migrants who came directly from the villages of Sivas, Çorum , Çankırı, Yozgat, Kırıkkale and Kırşehir, which were the cities in Central Anatolia and to the east of Ankara (Figure1) in the 1980s and 1990s. Additionally, there were many first settlers from the villages of Gümüşhane, which was a city in Eastern Black Sea Region (See Figure2).

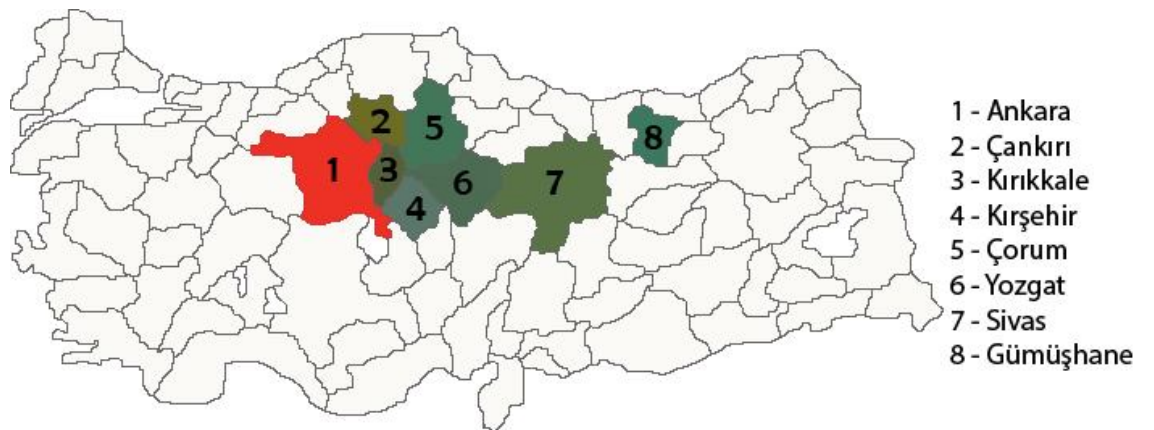
Ege neighbourhood is a part of Mamak district, which is one of the seven metropolitan districts of Ankara. Each one has a district municipality which is linked to Ankara (Metropolitan) Municipality and has a district governor (*kaymakamlık*), who is appointed by the central government, and the district governors are linked to the Governor (*vali*) of Ankara. Mamak is a typical *gecekondu* settlement and is populated by low-income early Sunni and Alevi migrant families who came from the villages of Central Anatolia (Alpar and Yener 1991 cited in Eroğlu 2011:56-57) . Mamak has a population of 549,585 according to the 2010 census and is composed of 66 neighbourhoods, which are governed by a *muhtar* elected by the local people every five years.

Figure 1: Location of Ege



Source: Prepared by the author

Figure 2: First settlers' place of origin



Source: Prepared by the author

Before the 1970s, Ege was a part of İmrahor village. The government gave the tenure of this area to the villagers of İmrahor and they used it as a pasture for feeding their animals. This district was formally constituted in 1973 according to the state records. Until 1989, Ege *Mahallesi*¹⁷ also included its neighbouring *mahalles*, namely Cengizhan, Boğaziçi, Akdere, Durali Alıç, Akşemsettin, Fahrikorutürk and General Zeki Doğan, and in 1989 these areas were formally separated. Although Ege *Mahallesi* is the name of a specific area, in Ankara people still consider it to be the sum of all these *mahalles*. For example, currently “Ege Mahallesi” is written on the buses that go to all these *mahalles*.

The rubbish dump area (*çöplük*) of Ankara was in the northern part of Ege and Ankara Municipality started to cover it in 1979 and finished by 1985. Özüğurlu, who conducted research on poverty in the *çöplük* area, claimed that the first settlers in the *çöplük* area of Ege came as a group of people who were mostly from Gümüşhane and built *gecekondu* houses nearby since they thought that the *çöplük* could not remain there forever (2001:45). So the northern part of the *mahalle* was built on a former solid waste dump. Before 1979, Ege district was identified with *çöplük*. Behzat came to Ege in 1974 and was among the first settlers there. He told me that “This neighbourhood was *çöplük*... When people asked where I was going, I said I was going to *çöplük*.” Ege people still call the northern part of Ege “*çöplük*”, although this part of the *mahalle* is now full of *gecekondus*.

4.5 Building Gecekondu Houses

When the rural migrants came to Ege, the *muhtar* of İmrahor Village, Mr. Fazlı, started to sell plots to the newcomers. I was told by the first settlers of Ege that Mr. Fazlı was encouraged by his official position and he claimed the right to sell land in Ege since it was the common land of İmrahor Village. He did not provide any written documents that proved the sale and ownership of the plots. So, it was not a formal deal of selling. Constructing a *gecekondu* on this land was not legal, and my interviewees suggested that

¹⁷ A *mahalle* is the smallest unit of the Turkish urban and rural administrative system. A district is made up of seven *mahalles*.

Mr. Fazlı took advantage of the illegality of this situation and if anybody refused to pay him, he reported them to the gendarmerie. Since Imrahor Village was not a part of Ankara city centre in the 1970s, and the pasture that would become Ege district was a desolate place, there were no regular checks and controls by the gendarmerie unless there were reports or complaints.¹⁸

When first settlers were asked for money by Mr. Fazlı, they could not understand that he was doing so illegally. They also added that “*Even if we had known it, we would not have complained about him since we did not know where to complain and how to complain.*” First comers told me that it took around two months for them to understand that Mr. Fazlı was not authorized to sell the plots and they did not need to give money to him in order to construct *gecekondus* in Ege District. İbrahim, who was among the first settlers, told his story of having a plot in Ege as follows:

My brother-in-law enclosed a plot here and he told me that this place was very nice and asked me to come. At that time I lived in Misket Mahallesi in Mamak. Then I came and enclosed another plot. Fazlı told me that the government had given the tenure of this area for 99 years. I refused to pay him. Then he came with some other men and the corporal of the gendarmerie station, since at that time the gendarmerie was in charge of the security of Ege. I said to the corporal that you were working for the state and I was paying tax. So, whose money were you asking me for? I paid Fazlı once, and I did not pay him anything more.

After paying some part of the required money to Fazlı, they came together and decided not to pay him anymore. Since all the people refused to pay him, he could not do anything. If they had not behaved as a community and had contacted Mr. Fazlı individually, they would have continued to pay him. This implies that, through collective action, the people were able to discard Mr. Fazlı. Nazım, who was one of the first settlers in Ege, narrated this process in this way:

Do not think that the Ege district was like it is now. There was nothing around. There was not even a small shop or a proper road around. It was like countryside. So, there was no gendarmerie, police station, municipality, I mean there was no formal organization around. Yes, we could complain about Mr.

¹⁸ In Turkey, the police force is in charge of providing security for the city centres. For the countryside, the gendarmerie provides security.

Fazlı. But to whom? And how? It took some time until we realized that we did not have to pay him. Then a group of people in the district came together and talked about this. But till we understood, we had already paid around one third of the money that Fazlı asked us. We informed people around... No, we did not do it through an organization; there was no need for it. We were seeing one another every day in those days. People were persuaded not to pay him anymore. Of course he could not do anything afterwards.

Nazım explained to me that they organized the land of Ege district. He said that the male settlers came together and decided where the roads and plots for *gecekondus* should be. They also shared a plot for a school. The account of Ali, the current *muhtar* of Ege, supported Nazım's narrative and he told me that Cevat, a person among the first settlers, drew up a draft plan for Ege and they decided where the roads should be according to this draft.

During the early years of migration, buying a plot for a *gecekondu* was not based on a formal contract. My interviewees told me that the seller asked for a little money or something in exchange such as a vacuum cleaner, washing machine or a bin of *bulgur* (a traditional type of wheat) and the seller did not provide a title deed or any document that showed the sale. It seemed as if the later comers were given informal permission by the earlier occupier of the plot to use it and the buyer gave something in return. As I learnt from my interviewees, the early comers occupied a plot, invited their extended family members, and then sold some of the plots that they occupied to the late comers. Trust between the people mattered in reserving plots next to their own. Kinship was the main source of trust. In that sense, people usually reserved the plots around their *gecekondus* for their kin. Moreover, the first comers tried to show (or rent and sell) spare plots to their friends, *hemşeris* and relatives, in order to ensure that there were no strangers in the neighbourhood. So, knowing a person meant trust and this gave a sense of security to the *gecekondu* dwellers. As Wolf (1966:9) suggests, "the private realm of trust may thus be translated into cooperation in the public realm."

Due to economic hardship, the first generation tried to build their *gecekondus* step by step with materials that they bought from *ardiye* (literally meaning storage, see picture 13-14) and collected from demolished buildings (Duyar-Kienast 2005:Chap.5).

At least a week before the construction of a *gecekondu*, the rural migrants started to accumulate the material to be used in building it. They needed all the materials at once since they had to build the *gecekondu* overnight. They usually did not have enough money to afford all the materials at once so they asked *ardiye* to divide the price of all materials into small instalments that they could pay monthly. Since people in *ardiyes* were used to this kind of deal, they usually accepted. Abbas established an *ardiye* in Ege in 1986. He told me that if he asked for the cost of the materials all at once nobody would buy from him. They signed a contract which showed the monthly payments of the buyer. He said that:

People were usually very careful in terms of paying regularly, they were more honest compared to now. Even though there were occasionally some people who did not pay, I did not care. Because in the old days I was so busy in terms of selling materials and not being paid by some customers would not be so harmful.

When all the required materials were collected, they started to build the house overnight and finished it by the morning because the municipality demolition teams did not check *gecekondu* areas at night (see picture 15-16). Certainly, it was not possible to finish a *gecekondu* house in a night. What the *gecekondu* dwellers did during the first night of construction was to give the shape of a finished house to their structures to prevent the municipality demolition teams from destroying their houses since they were not allowed to destroy a finished building without special permission from the municipality. *Gecekondu* people helped one another, particularly during the first night of building, to speed up the construction of their neighbours' houses. Ali, the *muhtar* of Ege district explained to me that if the population of a place was large enough they could apply to be recognized as a district, which meant an administrative unit of the city. If a place was recognized as an administrative unit of the city, it became easier for the inhabitants to apply for title deeds and harder for the demolition teams to knock down the *gecekondus* and the municipalities – at least theoretically – were in charge of providing infrastructure and transportation service to these areas. So, mutual help was to the benefit of all. It could be suggested that helping one another in building houses was the basic activity that was inspired by the sense of community.

My interviewees among the first settlers told me that when the demolition teams came to Ege district, neighbours resisted them to prevent the *gecekondus* from being destroyed. Some of the local children and teenagers threw stones at the demolition team and blocked the path of their bulldozer. Women told me that they thought that if the women did not resist but cried quietly, the demolition teams might have mercy and delay the destruction. So, they told me that they tried not to resist but cried silently to attract the teams' attention. The interviewees whose *gecekondus* were destroyed told me that they could use various "tactics" to be affected less by this destruction. Nazım told me that Ege people, although they were very poor, gave money to the demolition teams as bribes to prevent their houses from being demolished. Ferhat was one of these people whose *gecekondu* was destroyed several times. He came to Akdere, another *gecekondu* area of Ankara, in the 1960s from a village of Çorum when he was a teenager with his family. When he got married, he lived with his family for some years and then decided to move out with his wife. He sold one of his wife's golden bracelets and with this money bought a plot and constructed a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1983. His house was destroyed in the same year. He told me that if a person knew the people in the demolition teams or if someone had the same political view or a person was from the same ethnicity/religion, the demolition teams could do him "a favour". He explained as follows:

*When the demolition team came we were having lunch here, I mean in the living room. I had known the head of the demolition team before. They only destroyed two of the walls of our kitchen. You know, they pretended to demolish. They would destroy the two walls in order to be able to show the neighbours and to report to the municipality that they have completed their mission. In the 1980s and the 1970s, political views mattered. If you were of the same political view, they would turn a blind eye to your *gecekondu*... If you were not, it would be a disaster for you. It was not difficult to understand one's political view; even the shape of your moustache would reveal your political position in those days. I am Alevi, in those days Özal [liberal right-wing prime minister] was powerful, but fortunately, the head of the demolition team was my friend. After they had demolished, we served them lunch, and they made jokes like "we destroyed your kitchen, you will rebuild it". In those times, sometimes people paid bribes and saved their houses with small*

destruction like me. After they left, I started to build the kitchen again.

If *gecekondu* dwellers realized that the demolition teams would certainly destroy their houses, they politely asked them to do the job with the minimum harm to the materials because they wanted to reuse the materials of their houses to rebuild them. This would reduce the cost of rebuilding. So, as well as Ferhat, many other people whose *gecekondu* houses were destroyed did not give up and they rebuilt their houses every time they were destroyed. “They destroyed, we rebuilt, and the *mahalle* was established” (*Onlar yıktı, biz yaptık, işte mahalle kuruldu*) was the motto that they narrated during the first decades of Ege. The neighbours who had helped in the first construction and in the development of the *gecekondu* usually helped when people needed to rebuild. However, some of my interviewees, who were among the first comers, told me that the families whose houses were destroyed by the demolition teams sometimes spied on their neighbours to get their *gecekondus* demolished as well. So what I understood was that the relationship among the first settlers was not always an easy one. They were all helping each other, especially when this help was for the benefit of all, but if something directly happened to one family, this family might change its strategy. It could be suggested that *gecekondu* dwellers were in solidarity against the outside world (in this case against the demolition teams), but, as in other slum areas all over the world, there was also internal competition for the power and wealth (Lloyd 1979:164).

Since *gecekondus* were built overnight, they were in a very poor condition at first. Ege people developed their *gecekondus* step by step despite the danger from the municipality’s demolition teams. Whenever they had some money, they bought more materials and added more rooms, a balcony or storage. In developing their *gecekondus*, they also used the materials that they found around them. For example, large banners from companies and political parties were used as balcony curtains and barrels were used as a chimney (see photo 17).

Ege people, like other *gecekondu* dwellers, shaped their *gecekondus* according to their needs. The marriage of their sons was the primary reason for adding extra rooms or building a smaller *gecekondu* next to their house. For example, Fadime, who came to

Ege in 1984 after spending 13 years in another *gecekondu* area, told me that they built another *gecekondu* house for her newly married son next to their house. She told me that, in order to maintain privacy for the new couple, they built the gate of the second house in the reverse direction from the first house. In this way, the new couple did not need to meet Fadime and her husband when they entered or left their house. Şehriban, who came to Ege in 1982 with her husband, told me that they bought a *gecekondu* from the first owner. They built a house for her married son in 1984 in front of their existing *gecekondu*. During the first night, they built only one room, which they currently use as a living room. Later they added two more rooms, a bathroom and a kitchen (see photo 18). Gülay was born in Sivas in 1977 and came to Tuzluçayır, which used to be an inner-city *gecekondu* area, in 1979. When her husband went bankrupt, they moved to her father-in-law's *gecekondu* house in Ege in 2009 (see photo 19-20). The story of this *gecekondu* house shows how *gecekondu* people reshape their houses according to their needs and how people living in *gecekondus* change over the life course of a family:

My husband was born in this house. Well, it should be built around the 1970s. They built another gecekondu where his mother and father used to live, just above this one. When this house was built, there were only two rooms and they used the corridor as the kitchen. First of all, my older brother-in law lived here. He added this living room and a children's room which is linked to the living room. Anyway, then, my older brother in-law improved his economic situation and moved into a flat in Tuzluçayır. After that, my younger brother-in-law got married to a woman from their village. They moved into this house and lived here for 10 years. When they improved their economic situation they got a loan from a bank and bought a flat in Tuzluçayır. My in-laws found a tenant for this gecekondu. The tenant lived here for several years and then moved out. All the brides came together to clean the house. While I was cleaning, I did it very deep. But at that time, I did not know that my husband would go bankrupt and we would move into this house. When we had to move in here I said to myself that "I had done all that cleaning for myself without knowing it." ... I like these rooms which were added later. It is good for keeping the house warm and paying less for heating. We light only the stove in the living room and open the door of the children's room. Since the rooms are connected, the children stay warm. Our bedroom is not connected with the living room. In order to

economize on the heating cost, we do not light the stove there. In winter time my husband and I sleep in the living room.

Mahmut was skilled in constructing *gecekondus* since he used to come to Ankara as a seasonal construction worker before he moved to the city permanently. He built four *gecekondus* in Ege and added an additional room onto the house where he lived. He told me that he built this additional room for his children and added that:

The children grew up. I thought that if they could not find a job, this small room could be used as a small market. All the children have good jobs now, so we use it as storage and my wife makes pasta there.

Hacer came to Ege directly from her village in 1986 to take her husband to hospital (see photo 23). In the beginning she was not planning to live in Ankara. However, her husband was seriously ill and she needed to take care of him. She told me that:

*I did not know Ankara. There was a nurse at the hospital where my husband stayed and had medical treatment. We became friends. She understood that I was a left-wing person, she was too. She advised me to build a *gecekondu*, which I had never heard of before. She was right because my husband was so sick, I needed to visit him every day and I was staying in the garden of the hospital. In that year my son also entered a university in Ankara. This nurse and her husband found us this area and we built a *gecekondu*. My husband died and we stayed here. In due course, I built 5 *gecekondus* on this plot. It became ugly, I know. All of my children lived in these *gecekondus* for some time. I also found some tenants when all the children moved to other areas of Ankara.*

It should be noted that Hacer's way of improving the space of her *gecekondu* was unique. She loves cats. In the beginning, she had only one cat in her house. Then she started to feed the cats that lived in the streets of Ege. So, the cats started to walk and sleep around her *gecekondu*. They gave birth and their number increased. Moreover, people in Ege who saw helpless cats around brought them to Hacer's house without asking her. At the time of our interview, she had 67 cats. To protect them, she transformed her garden into a cat shelter (see photo 21-22). The cats in her garden looked much healthier than street cats since Hacer fed them regularly and took care of their health. She woke up early in the morning and checked the rubbish bins in the local area to find food for them. She contacted the vets in hospitals, wrote formal letters and

asked them to come to her house to check the cats regularly and neuter them. She told me that she even offered the vets payment for their travel cost although her only income was a monthly minimum wage. The vets got formal permission and started to perform regular checks at her house without asking for money from Hacer for their transportation.

4.6 Getting Infrastructure Facilities

There were no infrastructure facilities in Ege District in the 1970s. In Turkey, the municipalities are in charge of providing water, sewage and electricity infrastructure facilities. Ege people regularly visited the Mamak Municipality and Ankara Municipality to ask for water and electricity. But when they began their visits, they could not get anything. They were in charge of solving their own problems. For water, they initially went to the fountain, which had been built by a “beneficent” act, by the river downhill of the *mahalle* and carried water. Since the men were working elsewhere, it was mostly the women who carried the water and sometimes the men helped them in the evening when they returned from their work. This fountain was crucial in terms of getting to know one another since the first houses were built separately and far from each other. The first comers met the people who were not their *hemşeris* or relatives around the fountain. After some time, thanks to their visits to the municipality, another fountain was built by the Mamak Municipality in the middle of Ege. It became easier for Ege people to carry water since the fountain was closer.

After carrying water, they stored it in large bins to be used later. Ege people told me that they could not always have water from the fountains. Sometimes the water dried up and they needed to wait. When they found water in the fountain after waiting many hours, they stopped whatever they were doing at that time and rushed down to inform each other and carry water. Türkan’s family came to Ege district in 1974 and she was born in 1975. She told me that they regularly waited for a long time by the fountain but could not get any water and returned to their houses. Local people checked the fountain regularly and when there was water in the late evening they woke up everybody in the household. Then they informed all their neighbours. All the *gecekondu* people rushed

down to carry water from the fountain. Women started to wash their clothes or got their kids to have a shower.

Eventually, most people dug a well in their gardens. Some of them could not reach water and asked their neighbours who had reached water to share. The wells were not a sustainable solution for the water. During the 1980s, Ege became crowded and this combined with the regular visits of people to Mamak Municipality for water. Finally, in 1986, the municipality accepted their demand but told them that ASKİ (Ankara Water and Sewer Administration), which was a sub branch of the municipality, did not provide full service to Ege so they could only install water pipes along the main road. Since Ege residents needed water as soon as possible, they accepted this offer. People in Ege helped in digging the main road for ASKİ. Sıtkı, who came to Ege in 1981, told me that:

In those times everybody knew who lived in which houses, so we knew about who could help or not. Anyway we planned like this, for example I would dig 10 metres and my neighbour would dig 15 metres. The decision was announced by Vesile who became a muhtar in the second half of the 1980s. She visited every house. Suppose that I was not at home, she came and told my mother to ask me to dig 10 metres. So everybody dug some parts. Then ASKI came and installed the pipes in the main road.

Installing water pipes in the main road did not mean that *gecekondus* had water. People needed to buy water pipes and install them on their own if they wanted to have water in their houses. As Sıtkı added

If your house was 10 metres away from the main road, you were in the charge of digging these 10 metres, buying water pipes and installing them.

In this sense, Ege people did not have the water facility in their houses at once. People who had a regular income got it first and others got it when they had saved enough money or found a regular job. In due course, all the households bought the necessary pipes and installed them between the main road and their houses. Having the water pipes was not enough to get the water in their houses. They needed to register with ASKİ and pay a registration fee. Registration meant paying bills. People who did not have a regular income yet did not apply in the beginning. They waited until they had improved their economic situation. People who got water before their neighbours shared

it with their neighbours; they also shared the water bill. By the second half of the 1990s, every household had water in their house. Zeynep came to Ankara in 1968 and lived in Misket *Mahallesi*, which was within walking distance of Ege, and moved to Ege in 1979. Her account briefly summarizes Ege people's story of getting water:

We carried water on our shoulders for seven years. We dug a well in our garden, after digging four metres we reached water...Of course we shared our water with everybody. Even people who we did not know come to ask for water, and we shared it with them. But, how long could we survive like this? Then, the municipality brought water pipes and installed them in the main road. If you wanted to have it in your house, you would buy the water pipes and either you would install them or you would hire someone to get them installed.

As for electricity, initially they pulled it from the street lamps in the main road. People told me that although it was not legal and they could be fined if they were caught by the state officers, it was their only option to bring electricity into their houses. Pulling the electricity from the street lamps was free, but they would have liked to have electricity legally in their houses and pay the electricity bill. They organized and visited the Mamak Municipality and TEDAŞ (Turkish Electricity Distribution Company)¹⁹, which used to be the only legal authority in Turkey providing electric infrastructure, to ask for the electricity. Zeynep told me that, when local women visited the Mamak Municipality, she told the officers that “*we are pulling electricity from the street lamps. You know, it is very dangerous. What if we got an electric shock?*” Her husband, İbrahim, was caught by the inspectors of TEDAŞ while he was pulling the electricity from a street lamp. When he was warned by the inspectors, he explained his helpless situation and told them that he did not have any option other than this. Ali, who came to Ege *Mahallesi* in 1984 and has been the *muhtar* of Ege since 1996, told me that:

We applied to TEDAŞ. In order to provide electricity, TEDAŞ needed to participate in an auction, however there was no auction for Ege at that time. They told us that “because of this, you need to wait for a long time. But, if you need it

¹⁹ Turkish Electric Authority (TEK) was established in 1970 and in 1993 it was divided into two public companies TEAŞ (Turkish Electricity and Transmission Company) and TEDAŞ. So, although the name of the institution was TEK when Ege people asked for electricity in the 1980s, since people today mention the current name, TEDAŞ, I use this name.

urgently, we could provide you the lamppost.” *Then we began to install 1-2 lampposts monthly.*

In the beginning, there was no sewage infrastructure in Ege. People dug a deep pit and used that for sewage. They covered it with a piece of metal. Once a month, they asked the municipality to bring a vehicle and empty their sewage pits in their garden. My interviewees told me that the sewage infrastructure facility was provided by the Mamak Municipality by the time the water pipes were installed. In fact, providing services for electricity, water and sewage was the responsibility of the municipalities, but *gecekondu* people did not have time to question this and what they did was to do their best to get these services as soon as possible. It should be noted that not all *mahalleli* got water and electricity in their houses at the same time. People who had more resources or more people who could work at installing water pipes and electric cables to their houses got them earlier. But by the second half of the 1990s, all the houses were provided with water and electricity.

Çöplük in Northern Ege threatened people’s health. People in Ege told me that the smell of this rubbish area was unbearable. The local area was full of mosquitoes. They complained about it many times to the Mamak Municipality but they could not get any answer. Zeynep was one of the people who visited the municipality for this reason. She told me that she was very angry with the attitudes of people in the municipality because they ignored the *gecekondu* dwellers. She told me that she went to the municipality with her six-month-old baby, and she told the people there that “*you made me so angry. I will bring my son and make him a director in spite of you!*” One day, Ege people hired a van, loaded some rubbish onto it and unloaded it in front of the building of Mamak Municipality to show everyone and the people in charge how the rubbish was disturbing. Another day, Ege residents organized people in nearby neighbourhoods. As Sıtkı told me, “*everybody came with a stick*” and they went to Tekmezar, which was 40 minutes walking distance from Ege and was the last stop for the buses in the 1980s. They did not let the vehicle that carried rubbish to Ege district come to the *mahalle*. They were attacked by the police force. Sıtkı described this attack:

Some of us were beaten with truncheons, some of us were dragged along the road by the police. But, we had no other option.

As a result, Ege people finally succeeded in persuading the municipality to take action in this area. *Çöplük* started to be covered by rubble in 1979 and by 1985, it was ultimately covered and a coal yard was built on the covered area (Özüğurlu 2005:46). When this area was completely covered, it was rapidly occupied by new settlers. This time, the new settlers were disturbed by the coal yard since it affected the air. They petitioned the legal authorities to remove it and organized protest meetings. The legal authorities reminded them that their *gecekondu*s were not legal and tried to stop their protests. Hacer, who had built a *gecekondu* on the waste dump, told me that they visited the police office to complain about the coal yard. The police chief told her: “*be careful what you ask for. Your houses there are not legal. If the coal yard is removed, your houses might be destroyed.*” The struggle to remove the coal yard was the main collective work of Ege residents during the 1990s and it was removed in 1997.

There were no proper roads from Ege to the city centre. Nazım told me that, in order to apply for a *dolmuş* (a small minibus), they needed to wait until the population increased since the municipality did not provide *dolmuş* to places with few people. Interviewees told me that before the second half of the 1980s, they used to walk as far as Tuzluçayır, which took them around an hour, and then caught *dolmuş* from Tuzluçayır to the city centre. They told me that the road to Tuzluçayır was very muddy and they had to use this muddy road when they went shopping or to hospital, work and school since it was the main road that linked Ege to the city centre. Their shoes got muddy and they were ashamed of this. Hayriye told that when they got on the *dolmuş* or bus in Tuzluçayır other people recognized that they were coming from a *gecekondu* area and some *dolmuş* drivers did not want to let them on since their muddy shoes would make a mess in their *dolmuş*. So, when they went to visit a state institution or to work, they had two pairs of shoes with them. They wore one pair until Tuzluçayır and then changed their shoes. Sometimes, they left their muddy shoes under a lamppost in Tuzluçayır and wore them when they returned to Ege. Gül told me that she put some basins in front of her house and filled them with water. When children came back from their school she washed their shoes. The main road was properly built towards the end of the 1980s. Mahmut and Gül claimed that the main reason for this was that a military institution

related to NATO was built on the eastern edge of Ankara and this was the reason why this road was called Natoyolu (Nato Road). So, the main road was built in order to provide proper roads for the people who worked in this military institution rather than the *gecekondü* people who live close by this main road.

Before 1987, there was no primary school in Ege. Children used to go to the primary school in Misket, which took at least half an hour on foot. Metehan Primary School was built by the state in 1986-1987 in Ege. Semih, who was born in 1976 in Ege and attended Metehan Primary School, told me that the physical conditions in the school were very poor. His narrative about this primary school shows that the *gecekondü* children did the porter's work at school in the same way as their parents were cooperating with the municipality to get the infrastructure:

The roof of the school was sheet metal and the school building was masonry construction. There was no porter in the school to be in charge of cleaning, lighting stoves and carrying wood. We, the students, were in charge of doing all these things. I remember every day one of us was carrying wood and lighting the stove.

Until the beginning of the 2000s, there was no market in Ege *Mahallesi*. The nearest market was a 40-minute walk away. They used to go to Ulus, the old city centre, for shopping. For their daily needs, they shopped from *bakkal* shop. At the time of my stay in Ege, there were several supermarkets on the main road, Natoyolu Street and five *bakkal* shops (see photos 24-25) in different locations around Ege. *Gecekondü* dwellers whose houses were far from the main road could not easily go to the markets on Natoyolu Street. They shopped for their immediate needs such as milk, bread, cigarettes and so on in small amounts from the *bakkal* shop. The goods in *bakkal* shops could be slightly more expensive than the ones in supermarkets; however, it was convenient for them since the *bakkal* (owner of the grocery shop) recorded their daily shopping and delayed payment so they could pay the *bakkal* when they had enough money. The availability of flexible payments depends on “trust, familiarity and on-going negotiations” (Bartu and Kolluođlu, 2008:23). Alaadin, who was the owner of a *bakkal* shop, told me that he kept a notebook and had one page for each customer. At the end of each month he was paid. He told me that he did not have any formal record to prove that

the customers had shopped and not paid yet. He did not like this situation since some people's debt kept increasing and he could not get the money back easily. This is why he put a note in front of the stall saying "please do not ask for credit and do not get offended because of this" (see photo 24). However, he was quite aware of the fact that if he stopped delaying people's payment, he would lose his customers. *Bakkal* shops were also a good place for children, who could buy candy, chocolate and so on for a small amount of money.

4.7 Conclusion

Lefebvre (1991) considers space to be a social relationship, and a precondition and result of social superstructures. For him, this social relationship is "inherent to property relationship and not a mere frame designed simply to receive whatever is poured into it", rather "it is to lived experience what form itself is to the living organism and just as intimately bound up with function and structure" (1991: 88-94). In this sense, it could be suggested that the relationship of property in terms of house ownership in the city was the first factor that contributed to the production of Ege, as with many other *gecekondu* areas. Secondly, the first settlers strived for the amelioration of their neighbourhood. So sharing the same locality has an impact on creating solidarity and self-help networks. Their collaboration in these activities contributed not only to the physical production of Ege but also to the collective history of its residents and to the building of a community, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

5. Building Identity through Social Cohesion

5.1 Introduction

Sociologists have been concerned by the concept of community since modern societies appeared. The personal ties within the community were thought to be the antithesis of the impersonal and anonymous social relations of industrial society (Bell and Newby 1971:22). The definitions of community “tend to overlap and interrupt each other” (Tonkiss 2005: 16). In its basic sense, community refers to a group of people who have something in common (Cohen 1998:12). In this sense, the basic elements of a community can include shared residence (Willmott 1986:96), common leisure pursuits, a shared sense of identity and belonging (Bell and Newby 1971:24), a potential set of social interactions (Mooney and Neal 2009:7), the active involvement of the individuals (Suttles 1972:Chap.1 and 2), a shared interest, social networks and institutions and social ties such as kinship, friendship, neighbourly relations and *hemşeri* networks.

The first settlers of Ege lived in a shared locality. This could be considered a first step towards setting up a community. The people of Ege were bound together through the high density of kin, family and *hemşeri* networks. Moreover, their socio-economic and cultural background and their initial experiences, needs and life chances in the city were quite similar. The first settlers had a common interest in terms of obtaining title deeds, getting infrastructure provision and ameliorating conditions in their neighbourhood. Their lives were patterned by the same broad complex of estate and labour market, and state policies on *gecekondu*. Due to the large scale of rural to urban migration, the potential supply of inner-city land, which was already filled with *gecekondu*, lagged behind the needs of the second-wave migrants. So most of the migrants who came with the second wave of migration could not find a plot to demarcate and build a *gecekondu* in existing inner-city *gecekondu* settlements. They looked for new areas to build their own *gecekondu* and this is why most of the time they were not able to settle down with their fellow country people. Therefore, close encounters between different ethnic, sectarian and *hemşeri* groups occurred in *gecekondu* settlements (Demirtaş and Şen 2006:91). In Ege, as in many other peripheral

settlements, the faiths of the first settlers were not all the same; the majority was Alevi but there were also Sunnis among the first settlers. While this increased the potential for conflict between different groups, their shared interests overcame other differences and accelerated the building of a community in Ege.

Building a community, in spite of the diversity among the *gecekond* dwellers, was the only option because they had to act collectively in order to get the infrastructure services. Community in Ege, like many other *gecekond* communities, offered a shield against the insecurities and pressures of the outside world and formed a social setting suffused with collective meanings and forms of mutuality for the migrants. This chapter will examine how the first settlers of Ege built a community and it will be suggested that a community was actively established by its members and this was predominantly interlinked with struggling to meet their common needs. It will be suggested that thanks to their community spirit they succeeded in generating Ege district physically and improving their living conditions.

5.2 *Hemşeris* as a First Step

Hemşeri was not a social category in the migrants' home villages since all the people were *hemşeri* to one another before coming to the city. However, *hemşeris* became very important for the migrants in the city centres in terms of feeling secure. *Hemşeris* were the people who came from a similar cultural background to the cities, where their needs were similar. Due to chain migration, the first settlers knew some of the other first settlers in Ege since they were relatives or *hemşeri*. The clustering of similar people in terms of origin gave a sense of familiarity and, as Halperin (1998:30) states, it "permeates the community, especially if you know it well." As Dubetsky (1976:444) suggests, people have more access to information about their *hemşeris*, so they "can more easily obtain a reference about them or put pressure on them to behave properly via mutual acquaintance, or, as is often the case ... he just feels he knows their characters better owing to geographical proximity."

In large cities, the *hemşeri* relationship does not stand only for having the same interests, it is shaped by having the same emotions (Kurtoğlu 2005). *Hemşeris* became

like members of the same extended family. Because endogamy was the predominant form of marriage in villages, it was likely that *hemşeris* would have a kinship tie as well as the *hemşeri* bond. In this sense, it was usually hard to differentiate *hemşeri* relations from kinship relations.

Despite being employed in formal jobs in large numbers, the first-generation migrants retained strong ties with their villages (Şenyapılı 2004:184, Tas and Lightfoot 2005:269, Erman 1998:546). Some scholars (Boratav 1981:172-173, Pekdemir 1988) have suggested that, since *gecekondu* people have not become detached from the peasantry, it is hardly possible to analyze their attitudes under the category of working class. *Hemşeri* relations made a significant contribution to the development of a sense of community in Ege. While “special interest groups are relatively both more common and more important in larger communities” (Fischer 1976:111), people in Ege, like other rural migrants in large cities, established *hemşeri* associations. In this sense, it can be suggested that, while the *hemşeri* relationship emerged out of the necessity for trust and mutual assistance among migrants, it did not develop on its own. In order to survive this relationship, migrants institutionalized it. Ege people told me that these associations not only allowed them to socialize with their *hemşeris*, to organize social events and to solve the problems of city life, but they also helped them in regulating their relations with their villages. Sitkı told me that their *hemşeri* associations provided them with transport for ceremonies in their village. The association was in charge when one of its members or a relative/family member of its members died, so the mourning family did not need to worry about the funeral and bureaucratic process. Moreover, through this association they collected money and built a common house in their village where they could accommodate guests, hold religious ceremonies (since Sitkı was from an Alevi village in Yozgat, he meant *cem* ceremony) and village meetings. So, as suggested by Soytemel, these associations are “effective in the decision- making processes concerning remittances” (2013:5).

Willmott and Young (1976) argued that family and kinship networks could provide wider contacts rather than being limiting, enclosed and exclusive (Chap.8). These networks could be useful, especially in accessing economic and employment opportunities. Most of the first settlers of Ege found plots in Ege with the help of their

relatives and *hemşeris* who lived in Ankara. Some villagers sent their sons to cities where they had relatives to provide the son with the chance of acquiring skills, finding a job or studying. Ege people helped their relatives and *hemşeris* to find a job. Often, jobs for later migrants from rural areas were ready before they came to Ege. As Tilly and Brown suggested, “relations of kinship provide functional alternatives to personal skill, knowledge, and power in dealing with the host community” (1967:144). Moreover, migrants from rural areas who are skilled might make themselves more independent. In contrast, people with no or few contacts might struggle more to survive in the city and therefore might become skilled in dealing with the receiving community. The life story of İbrahim illustrates this. İbrahim was from Evcik village of Sungurlu, Çorum. He had no siblings, since all his 11 siblings died at birth. When his mother died, his father married another woman; İbrahim was 17 years old at that time. His father did not want another adult man in the same house after his marriage, so he did not let İbrahim live in the same house any more. İbrahim had no money and no place to stay. He came to Ankara, where he had an uncle (the brother of his mother), in 1957. His uncle was married and lived in Gülveren, another *gecekondu* area of Ankara. His uncle found him a job and İbrahim started to work as an apprentice tailor for a while. He explained to me how low his salary was in the following way: “*At that time, a bus ticket was 30 kuruş, and my daily payment was 20 kuruş. Think how low it was! I was walking 1.5 hours every day since I had no money for the bus.*” Later he changed his job and started to work as an apprentice baker. After two years, he realized that his uncle’s wife did not want him in the house and she always had arguments with her husband on this issue. İbrahim did not want to bother them any more and left the house. He started to spend his nights in the bakery where he worked. He was alone in the city. He told me that he was not like other young men who enjoyed themselves drinking, roaming around and going to pubs and clubs around Ulus. This caught the attention of his employers and they began to pay more attention to him. He told me that he proved to his employers that he was a trustworthy person. Once the employers were persuaded that he was an honest and trustworthy person, they started to support him. They lent him money when he got married so that he could buy a *gecekondu*. They allowed him to manage the bakery rather than being an apprentice. His employers were Sunni religious people and

members of *Milli Selamet Partisi* (National Salvation Party), which was a political Islamist party of that time. They recruited İbrahim and he started to participate in the meetings and social events of this party, and he built up a network of grass-roots political activists. During our interview, he told me that he still sustained his close relationship with the local politicians of Islamist parties and, thanks to this network, he managed to find a job for his son.

So, since the very beginning of their life in the city, slum dwellers did not define themselves primarily through their position in labour relations. Their reference point for identity was their place of origin (*hemşeri* relations). As White, who researches on rural immigrant communities, says, these communities are oriented more by their place of origin than by urban geography (2004:43).

5.3 “We Stamped in the Same Mud”: Becoming “*Mahalleli*”

In the beginning, the first settlers of Ege were “strangers” to one another. Due to chain migration, some first settlers had known one another before, since they were *hemşeris* or relatives; however, this did not apply to all of them. They came from the different villages of Central Anatolia. There were Alevis and Sunnis, implying that there were people of different faiths. But here it is important to speak about whether they were perceived as “unusual” or “unknown” strangers by one another. Unusual strangers are “often individuals who are clearly identifiable as members of particular ethnic, class, age, and life-style groups” whereas “being among people who are unknown but not unusual has little effect” (Fischer 1976: 84-85). At this point, the social and economic background of Ege people and their first experiences in the city are the key factors in understanding what type of strangers they were to one another. Firstly, the village culture and their living conditions in their villages in Central Anatolia where they were born were similar, so their lifestyles were similar before coming to Ege. What the first settlers of Ege *Mahallesi* brought with them from their villages was similar. They were all socialized into a village culture in which they used to be less dependent on cash, cooperated for common needs, helped one another with daily chores and developed close social ties with their neighbours and the people in their community. The common

village background contributed to feelings of familiarity and the building of a sense of community among *gecekondus* residents (Pekdemir 1988). Furthermore, when they arrived in Ege, their urgent needs were the same. Having a roof over their heads was their ultimate aim but owning a *gecekondus* went beyond fulfilling this. A *gecekondus* of their own meant security and it was a sign of their permanence in the city and of their success in surviving in the city. Finding jobs, surviving with little money, protecting their houses from demolition teams and surviving in the absence of infrastructure facilities were among their immediate concerns. They all saved as much as money they could in order to develop their *gecekondus*, their major fear was getting their *gecekondus* destroyed by demolition teams from the municipality and their major aim was to own their *gecekondus* houses as soon as possible. Their similar socio-cultural and economic background was combined with their needs and concerns in their urban life. This made their daily chores and lifestyles very similar. Although their faith was different and not all of them were bound by *hemşeri* relations, their similar concerns about the city, common necessities and similar lifestyles did not allow these differences to divide people. So, they were “strangers” in the beginning but they were not perceived as “unusual strangers” by one another, rather, they were just “unknown strangers”. Their common situation, problems and struggles for common needs made them closer to one another. They told me that since they had nothing, their problems were the same, so they became like brothers and sisters.

Their common economic situation, the needs of their locality and their common culture based on rural life brought them closer and they felt an attachment to Ege. This sense of community was the primary factor for their common activities. For example, dealing with Mr. Fazlı, getting the infrastructure facilities and removing the rubbish area were all for the benefit of everyone (see Chapter 4). Moreover, individual struggle would not work in forcing the state to take action to provide infrastructure services, so they all needed collaboration and collective action. The need for collaboration reinforced the relationships among Ege people, resulting in mutual help and solidarity. They helped one another in *gecekondus* construction, carrying water, cooking and so on. In the developmentalist period, the Turkish welfare system did not focus on social assistance for the unemployed and employment was the main tool that saved people

from poverty. The people who were excluded from formal employment could benefit from emotional and material aid, which were provided through the mobilization of kinship, neighbour and *hemşeri* relations. The men told me that when they came home after work they asked their neighbours whether they needed anything, especially about the *gecekondu* construction, and if they needed help, men helped them with building work. Nazım contributed to the establishment of Ege. His narrative is a good example in terms of explaining this help.

The old days were different. When we came home from work, the first question we asked was how our neighbour's day was today. We visited our neighbours every night to see whether there was anybody sick or they needed anything. If they needed help in construction of their gecekondu, we did not even have dinner after work and went directly to their houses to help them.

Women amongst the first settlers told me that they stayed at home when their husbands went to work or to look for a job. Staying at home alone was not what they were used to when they were in their villages, where they were always working and producing together with other people outside their homes. So, in *gecekondu* areas, as soon as women had finished the basic housework and sent their children to school, they got together. If there was something to do, such as building/improving the *gecekondu*, carrying water, making tomato paste, *erişte* and washing carpets, they did it together. It was not only the work they shared with one another, they also shared their happiness and problems. Ayata and Ayata's research on the housing, neighbour relationships and property in different districts of Ankara showed that, compared to other parts of the city, women in *gecekondu* areas talked more about the gendered division of labour and its problems (1996:89). This research argued that neighbourhood penetrated into the daily lives of *gecekondu* women, they socialized with their neighbours more closely and their relations diffused into many aspects of their lives. Women amongst the first settlers used to ask for things from each other such as potatoes, tomatoes, onions and so on. They even bought some home and kitchen appliances, e.g. vacuum cleaners and saucepans, together and shared them. They did some of the housework, such as cleaning carpets, together. Sharing and seeing each other very often made them sisters, they said. Kader was in her 60s and we spent much time together watching TV, drinking tea and chatting

apart from our two-day-long interview. For Kader, life was very miserable. For this research, she would like to use this name not to disguise her identity, but because the word Kader means “destiny” in Turkish, and she told me that this name fitted her and reflected her life story. She said “*we had nothing, but we had one another, so we were at least happy*” and followed with:

Every day, we women met. We had a system, tomorrow in your house, Wednesday in her house. We were knitting together and dreaming about having a gecekondü of our own, a Hoover, a washing machine. In due course we had them all, but we are not as happy as we expected. You know, we were together all day, but again when our husbands came, after dinner straight away we visited one another again with our husbands. We were so close. If I was sick, it was certain that other neighbours would come and do the housework, take care of the children. When I needed to go somewhere, like hospital, I would never worry about my children. I was sure that one of the neighbours would look after them. Even the children were looking after one another at that time. For example my kid was 7 years old, I mean too young to go to school alone, so other kids from the neighbours used to accompany him to school. We were like sisters with the women, and with their husbands as well we were like sisters and brothers. We were asking everything from one another. You know in those days there was no market here. You did not need to go to the city centre if you needed a potato, you could just ask your neighbour. We sometimes bought kitchen stuff together. You see, we had nothing; it was why we were together always. We were suffering from the same problems, so we were the only ones who could understand one another.

The social relationships between the first settlers, especially the women, were place-based. Since women stayed at home more than the men, they contacted their neighbours more often. Strong relations among neighbours provided relative freedom for women in relatively traditional and closed societies (Ayata and Ayata 1996, Chap.6). Therefore, the female first settlers, as well as the other women in Ege district, told me that they could visit their neighbours without getting the permission of their husbands. When *gecekondü* women talked about the people they regularly met they did not mention their friends. The first comers still co-operate with each other and have a good relationship as they help and visit one another frequently. They are still connected to their previous neighbours who have moved to other parts of Ankara. Their explanation

for the maintenance of these relationships is based on two factors. The first one is that, during the early years of the migration, economic conditions were more or less the same for everyone and, as they said, this helped them to empathize and help each other. Indeed, this was the basis for their sense of community. The second is that since they have known each other for years they have built up mutual trust. *Gecekondu* women among the first generation of the first and second wave did not have “friends”. All the people they saw in their lives were their families, neighbours, relatives and *hemşeris*. This was not because they did not have any friends, but rather because they did not call their *hemşeris* and neighbours friends. *Gecekondu* women among the first generation of the first and second wave referred even to their old neighbours who had moved to other parts of the city many years ago as “neighbours” rather than “friends”. In this sense, it could be suggested that “having friends” was not in the daily vocabulary of *gecekondu* women who have rural backgrounds, whereas having “friends” resembles modern, urban relations.

They became not only “neighbours” but also *mahalleli*, which means people who live in same neighbourhood (*mahalle*). *Mahalleli* became the first people whom residents of Ege would ask for help. Moreover, *mahalleli* was the key word to refer to “us”. For Ege people, *mahalleli* refers to the proximity of people in terms of culture and socio-historical background and, moreover, to the common interests of people. Besides their adherence to their families, *hemşeris* and relatives, they became closely linked to the other people of Ege. When my interviewees talked about some other resident of Ege, they usually said “*mahallenin çocuğu*” (son/daughter of the neighbourhood) and it was clear that they connected themselves to the other people of Ege.

It could be asserted that the use of the term “*mahallenin çocuğu*” showed the people of Ege to be “us”. They became “us” through their collective needs and actions. For them, “us” meant *garibanlar* (powerless people, dispossessed). Using “us” when talking about a particular class, gender or nation refers to the priority given to what unites “us” (Bauman 1990:45), and the use of “us” by the first settlers of Ege refers firstly to their powerless, precarious position in the cities, which was given priority. Secondly, it can be suggested that their collective memory made them “us”. As “local communities, constructed through collective action and preserved through collective

memory, are specific sources of identities” (Castells 1997:64), in the early years of migration, being a *gecekondu* person in the larger sense, and being an Ege person in a narrow sense became a new identity for them. If we consider a group to be “us”, it is only possible to think of some other groups as “them”. So, “us” and “them” are constructed through a clear antagonism between them (Bauman 1990:41). In this sense, for the first settlers of Ege, “they” were the middle-class urbanites. The middle-class urbanites were strangers for Ege people, but they were not only “unknown” strangers, they were also perceived as “unusual” strangers, since Ege people considered urbanites’ middle-class lifestyle to be fundamentally different from their own. For the majority of Ege people, especially for the early comers, the urbanites were more educated, cultivated, perceptive (*gözü açık*) and had enough resources to enjoy their lives as they were going out in the evening or they could have summer holidays. On the other hand, for most Ege people, the urbanites are alienated and morally inferior compared to the rural people as well as the *gecekondu* people. Yiğit, who was born in Ege, told me that TV programmes describe well how the urbanites live and for him they go to the theatre twice a week, have domestic servants, and have strict schedules for meals and spare-time activities and this is why he found them unnatural and boring. For İbrahim, who described himself as a conservative Muslim, in the central neighbourhoods where the urbanites live, people do not live a moral life as *gecekondu* people live. Moreover, for him, as for many other Ege people, speaking Turkish with a rural accent is a sign of preserving their identity and is a matter of pride, whereas imitating urbanites’ way of speaking seems to be a sign of immaturity and corruption. On the other hand, Gülden, who was not sent to school by her father although she desired to go, aspired to the way that urbanites speak and tried to learn from them. She told me that she aspired to be like the women who are employed, but on the other hand when she saw the urban women with clothes not covering their bodies, she told me that “I do not want to be one of them.” For Nazan, who came to Ankara when she was a child as a domestic servant, the urban people knew much about life whereas people of rural origin are more pure and naïve. So, *gecekondu* people define urbanites as the “other”, which has many pejorative meanings such as immorality and alienation, but this “other” also has some features that *gecekondu* people would like to have to improve their lives.

5.4 Political Polarization in the 1970s

The 1960s were years of rapid change. Considering the relatively higher numbers of jobs available in the formal labour market and decent working conditions, *gecekondu* people had social upward mobility during the 1960s and 1970s. So, these decades were hopeful years for the *gecekondu* youth of that time. There was an increasing student mass and an enlarging industrial proletariat (Zürcher 2004:254). Then, due to global economic instability and oil crises, the late 1970s were marked by widespread social unrest, increasing politicization of the urban poor, the political polarization of the extreme right and socialist left and political violence (see Chapter 3).

The extreme right movement appeared as the *Ülkü Ocakları* in the 1970s; they were known as “fascists” by the people of Ege and many other left-leaning communities. *Ülkü Ocakları* literally means Houses of Ideal and the activists of *Ülkü Ocakları* were usually called *Ülkücüler*, which can be translated as “Idealists”; however, they are mostly known as Grey Wolves in the literature in English. They were an ultra-nationalist and neo-fascist²⁰ youth organization and formed the grassroots organization of the MHP (Nationalist Action Party). Many of the leaders and high-ranking politicians of the MHP came from *Ülkü Ocakları*. The security service and police force had ties with the MHP and this provided a free rein to *Ülkücüler* as the grassroots of the MHP (Bovenkerk and Yeşilgöz 2004:590). Considering the fact that: “The Turkish underworld has strong interconnections with politicians and officials and also the special police and military units engaged in ‘counter terrorism’ who use their position to get into the drug trade” (Bovenkerk and Yeşilgöz 1999:81), *Ülkü Ocakları* is infamous for having close links with the Mafia (see Bora and Can 1991, Chap.8). For example, Abdullah Çatlı, who was a vice-chairman of *Ülkü Ocakları* in the 1970s, was a convicted drug trafficker and a contract killer for the counter-guerrilla and was connected to Mehmet Ali Ağca, who worked for *Ülkücüler* and tried to assassinate Pope John Paul II in 1981. He had been wanted by the Turkish authorities since 1978 as the suspect in a number of murders and he had been wanted by Interpol, too. In 1996, a car accident in Susurluk (the Susurluk Incident) revealed his close ties with the Turkish state and as Hale suggested this

²⁰ Grey Wolves never defined themselves as “fascists” or neo-fascist.

accident showed how the state was also linked with organized crimes (1999:31). Abdullah Çatlı, his girlfriend, a police chief (Hüseyin Kocadağ) and a deputy (Sedat Bucak) were in the same car. Mr. Kocadağ was the director of the Police Academy in Istanbul. Besides being a deputy, Sedat Bucak was a Kurdish warlord and village guards leader. *Ülkü Ocakları* is inspired by a Turkish-Islamic synthesis. They focused on recruiting Sunni Muslims of the mixed regions by fanning their fear and hatred of the Alevis, thus provoking violent incidents (Bruinessen 1996:8). For *Ülkücüler*, Alevis were identified with communism at the political level and with irreligiosity and being out of Islam in terms of faith, so Alevis were both “political and moral other” (Ertan 2012:205-206). Therefore, there was no room for Alevi people and this was why the *Ülkücüler* could not appear in Ege *Mahallesi* or in other *mahalles* with an Alevi majority during the 1970s.

Until the two waves of migration, the Alevi population used to live in the countryside, not in the city centres. Since they clustered in the same villages, they barely had any contact with Sunni people and there was no apparent violence or conflict between them. Considering the weak ties of villagers with politics and the central government, it could be suggested that there was no political discourse reflecting Alevi identity. When they arrived in the cities, they encountered Sunni people and the extreme right for the first time and they realized that there was a grassroots leftist movement whose discourse overlapped with Alevi identity²¹. Although socialist groups, which were known as “revolutionaries” by the people of Ege, did not directly link their political discourse to Alevism, since they focused on the struggle against the extreme right and did not support Sunni Islamic dominance, Alevis easily became attached to the leftist ideologies. Moreover, Alevi people had a long tradition of opposing the Islamic features of the Turkish state from Ottoman times; therefore, Alevis were considered de facto leftist people by the public at large. In brief, the Alevi people, for the first time in their lives, met with “other people” whose values and resistance to Sunni dominance were compatible with their own identity. For the public at large, the place of birth or hometown of a person revealed their political ideology. For example, Deniz, who was an

²¹ For a historical discussion on the relation between Alevis and the socialist movement and central left, see Küçük, M. (2008).

Alevi and used to be a revolutionary left-wing activist, told me: “*When people learnt that I was from Sivas, without knowing anything more about me they said ok then you were a leftist, you were a communist.*” The revolutionary left, regarding the Alevi rebellions of the past as proto-communist movements, considered the Alevis to be natural allies. As Erman and Göker (2000: 100) suggested:

Although there were various orthodox Marxist groups with differing strategies, in general they tended to resort to the ahistorical, class-accentuated use of the cultural and historical content of Alevism in order to gain the populist support of the subaltern Alevis, especially of the poor peasants and the urban poor.

The political polarization was apparent even in the physical appearance of the people. Besides their place of birth, faith and hometown, even the shape of a moustache could be a symbol of one’s political ideology. Male *Ülkücüler* and their male sympathizers had Fu Manchu-style moustaches and left-wing males had walrus-style moustaches. For example, when Ferhat explained the relationship between *gecekondu* dwellers and demolition teams, he told me that,

*Your political side was important. If you were from the same side, it was fine. It was so easy to understand; even looking at one’s moustache was enough to understand it.*²²

5.4.1 Ege as a Part of “Little Moscow”

The political polarization contributed to the basic features of chain migration which caused slum districts to become homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, place of origin and faith. People from the same ethnicity/religious/political ideology preferred to live together to protect themselves from the violence and this accelerated the clustering of likeminded people or people from the same sect or ethnicity. For example, Sefer, who came to Ankara in the 1968 and rented a *gecekondu* in İskitler neighbourhood, which was known as a right-wing *mahalle*, could not survive there for long. His son’s name was Ulaş, which was the first name of Ulaş Bardakçı, a famous revolutionary of the 1960s and 1970s in Turkey. He told me that he could not call out his son’s name publicly so he used another name. Everybody knew that his son was called Ulaş. He told

²² Currently, a new type of greeting among male nationalists has emerged: They shake each other’s hands, lean forward and touch their temples mutually from the right and the left.

me that he had never been disturbed or exposed to any direct violence by his neighbours but he did not feel secure and this was why he moved from İskitler to a left-leaning *gecekondu* area.

Since the majority of people among the first comers were Alevi, Ege was famous for being left wing. Ege, and neighbouring districts as far away as Tuzluçayır, which were highly populated by Alevis and Kurds at that time, were called “little Moscow”. My interviewees told me that in the 1970s it was quite usual that in the entrance of each *gecekondu* neighbourhood, local young people used to ask strangers whether they were Alevi or Sunni, left wing or right wing in order to protect their neighbourhood from the “fascists”. People were also asked where they were from. It was the basic question to understand the political ideology of a person at that time. They told me that, during the 1970s, activists or politicians from the MHP could not enter Ege district to talk to the people. Even when a member of the MHP’s party car was passing through Ege silently to go to other *mahalles*, all the local children and youths would stone it.

During the 1970s, the socialist groups were mostly organized by university students and these activists were the targets of state violence. In this sense the left-leaning *gecekondu* areas were a kind of shelter for activists from socialist groups (Pekdemir 2008:745). For example, Sırrı Süreyya, who is an MP now, was a university student and an activist with a socialist organization in the 1970s. He told me that he started to live in a *gecekondu* area and be active in *gecekondu* areas, including Ege, since he was wanted by the police for political reasons. He added that when the police came to the neighbourhood they could not differentiate the revolutionaries from the local people since the revolutionaries used to live and appear like the *gecekondu* people and *gecekondu* people used to protect the revolutionaries. The second generation who lived in Ege during the 1970s were also partly affected by the leftist ideology and some of them became left-wing activists.

The socialist movement (revolutionaries) helped in the physical production of many *gecekondu* neighbourhoods.²³ They contributed to the prevention of rent-seeking activities in *gecekondu* areas and protection of the left-leaning *gecekondu*

²³ For research on the building of a *gecekondu* community and space production with the help of the socialist movement see, Aslan, Ş.(2010), Chap.2.

neighbourhoods from possible attacks by *Ülkücüler*. In Ege, socialists helped the local people in preparing the draft plan for the neighbourhood. They ensured that everybody had a plot large enough for their family and nobody paid for it. When Osman, who came from a right-wing family, talked about the socialists of the 1970s, he mentioned his appreciation of Nazım, who was a local person and became an activist with the socialist left as follows:

Sister, you know the leftist people focused on brotherhood and solidarity, and they also appreciated labour a lot. So, they had the tendency to share everything, and to look after oppressed people. Let me say what would happen if our boys [Ülkücüler] took control... It would be very bloody, they would kill many of the inhabitants. I am so thankful to God that it was the revolutionaries who took control... Sister, I should say that if Nazım Abi wanted, he would be a millionaire now. He and his friends distributed all the plots to the landless people who came from the villages. He could have reserved all the plots for himself. You know, at that time they were powerful but he and other revolutionaries did not do it. You see that he got by with his pension and he only had a very small gecekondu. So, he deserved respect a lot.

The police and juridical services are available for the upper class but nonexistent for the majority of crime victims, who are usually poor and marginalized (Goldstein 2005:397). From the very beginning of their squatting, Ege residents said that the state ignored them in terms of service provision and crime prevention. In the absence of protection from the state, the “revolutionaries” used to fill the gap left by state authorities in terms of crime prevention and contribute to sustaining the sense of community which enabled people to be more conscious about their community. Sırrı Süreyya used to be a revolutionary in Ege and in some other neighbouring *gecekondu* areas at the end of the 1970s. He mentioned the relationship between sense of community, revolutionaries and the absence of crime in those years as follows:

When we came to these neighbourhoods, the robberies started to disappear. First of all for us, gambling was a kind of crime against humanity. Prostitution was a crime that we would never allow. We were building new lifestyles in gecekondu mahalles. You know, we used to spend our time, eat and read together. All of a sudden, the local people found themselves in a new social structure. All the incentives behind crime are about

the relationship between people and consumption. We tried to break down this relationship. The revolutionaries of that time were the university students who would be doctors, lawyers, governors in the foreseeable future. But the local people realized that these bright students lived with them, they had the same lifestyle. So they trusted them. I remember at that time we did not have personal wardrobes. You could wear the clothes of people who you lived with in gecekondü areas. So we were not so dependent on consumption and our relation with consumption was so different... So, local people did not even think about committing crime thanks to this new lifestyle.

Cevdet came to Ege in the 1970s when he was a high school student. At the time of the interview, he ran a local off-licence shop in Ege. His account of the socialist movement summarizes the interrelatedness of the sense of community of *gecekondü* people and the influence of the socialist movement:

... our neighbourhood was strong, I mean in terms of leftist social movements. We used to stand guard at night. Well, we had to do this. And we had to participate in protest meetings. Otherwise, you would be excluded from the community. In those days, you would not think about whether to participate or not, you just participated, as I said, you had to do this. And, the friendships and human relationships of that time were much warmer and closer. People were disciplined before. You could not say that I would not participate in this social movement, if there was a social movement or a political movement. You should obey the dominant political orientation of the neighbourhood. If not, you would not survive, I mean, you would be oppressed. You would be excluded and be alone. So, people of that time were afraid of being left alone. Ok, it was good to have a society which considers social problems and has a level of consciousness, but it is not good to participate in it as a result of pressure from someone else.

Nazım, who used to be among the local socialist activists in the 1970s in Ege told me the following:

Being a revolutionary is something different. Not everybody can be like them. Me, I cannot call myself a revolutionary. It requires a high level of consciousness and commitment. The revolutionaries consider ethical and moral issues more than anybody. They never used drugs or committed crimes in those times. In the 1970s, the revolutionaries were very active in Ege and they were supported by the community. They would never

let any person sell or use drugs, get involved in gangs or prostitution and they would punish the criminals if it occurred.

For Ege people, since *mahalleli* were so sensitive to their society and had a high consciousness about their community, they would never let these crimes and illegal activities occur. People mentioned the role of activists in the socialist movement in preventing illegal activities and crime. Rahmi, who is a drug user, told me that:

...you could never see a drug user or seller in our neighbourhood. It was even very hard to find a joint in Ankara, you could not ask anyone. We used to go to İstanbul to find it. Now, you can buy it on any street in Ankara and it is even sold in front of the primary schools.

5.5 Gecekondü Identity

The country's development strategy was based on import substitution and required a silent class balance in which the state acted in the role of referee and oversaw the inclusion of the working class in the economic system during the 1960s and 1970s (Keyder 1987). Wacquant suggests that, during the Fordist era, the social classes were bound together "under the tutelage of the social welfare state" (2000:107). This was the case for the state/society relationship in Turkey during the 1960s and 1970s. This inclusiveness was apparent in the new constitution of 1961. It was politically liberal and permissive compared to the previous constitutions –including the 1981 constitution. Moreover, the social values and the atmosphere that supported less consumption and depreciated revealing class differences (see Chapter 3) contributed to the survival strategies of *gecekondü* dwellers and to accommodating their lifestyles to the requirements of urban life. During this period, the laws protecting the working class and allowing trade unions were enacted, ensuring social security for them. This empowered the urban working class, which was mostly composed of rural migrants. There were relatively more job opportunities, in both the formal and informal sectors, for rural migrants and their children in Turkey. Formal employment was the major safety net against poverty and promised social upward mobility. So, the structurally disadvantaged urban periphery partially benefitted from the growth of this era. In Ege, people who were in formal employment during this period explained that a wage earner in the

formal sector could earn enough money for their family and that employers provided them with support such as food, clothing, cleaning supplies, coal and so on. Due to the high levels of social solidarity, people who could not enter into formal employment could be supported by their *hemşeri*, relatives or community networks.

Gecekondu dwellers were perceived by the socialist movement of the 1970s as *halk* (people) who were oppressed by capitalist relations. *Gecekondu* residents who had been considered inferior by the urbanites were valued by the socialist groups and their discourse. *Gecekondu* youth were harbouring hatred against the apparently huge inequality between *gecekondu* people and the middle-class urbanites who excluded them and they considered themselves as a political category to be *gariban* (dispossessed) and outsiders. The Marxist movements of the 1970s were translating this anger into anger against the political system, the state and the fascists.

These led *gecekondu* people to partially adopt a working-class identity and take part in the working-class movement. However, it could be suggested that they were not primarily defining their identity through their position in the labour market. As Dubetsky's (1977) research on the migrant workers in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood of İstanbul in the 1970s suggests, "class consciousness among these workers does not readily develop, then, because of the strength of traditional ties and categories of sect and community which cut across occupational lines" (1977:367). Rather than problems based on labour, they have always been more conscious of the problems facing their neighbourhood. For example, the interviewees who used to be revolutionaries in the 1970s told me that, although the *gecekondu* people might enter into a violent armed conflict against the police or the fascists and run the risk of getting injured or killed, they would not participate in a peaceful protest meeting in the city centre. But they combined their rural background with the identity of being working class. *Gecekondu* people built up pride in their *gecekondu* identity against the urbanites during the 1970s. As a result of this combination, they created their own values and class norms that were mainly based on being anti-urban and anti-middle class. The arabesque music of the 1970s and the movies of the arabesque singers – particularly Orhan Gencebay's

movies – reflected supporting *gecekondu* working-class people’s norms and identity against the urban middle class.²⁴

5.6 Transgressing the Boundaries of Political Polarization

Being a part of “little Moscow” does not mean that all the first comers were leftist and Alevis. Moreover, it should be noted that not the all Sunni people were supporters of the right-wing parties. There were many people in Ege, as in other *gecekondu* areas, who were Sunni and left wing. There were some people who were not supporters of the leftist movement and who were Alevi. So, despite common sense, faith did not perfectly overlap with political orientation. Ege people told me that this political polarization used to automatically put them into camps and they had to prove that they were leftist in order not to be excluded by the *mahalleli*. If they were not left wing, they had to remain silent in order to survive in Ege which was a part of “little Moscow”.

First settlers who did not support left-wing parties complained about some of the income-generating activities of socialist groups. I was told that every night leftist people wearing masks over their faces visited the houses and asked for money. For the majority of Sunni people, it was the Alevis who collected the money and if they did not pay up, they could be killed. Most of the left-wing people did not agree with the fact that socialist activists were charging money, while some of them narrated this situation as a “necessity” of that time and more educated leftist people (regardless of their faith) thought that it was one of the biggest mistakes of the revolutionaries at that time because they frightened many people and made these people hate them. Tuncay, who is a sociologist and came to Ege when he was a high school student, was a left-wing activist in the 1980s. He said:

Revolutionaries... Who were they? They were innocent young people aged 16-17. They were told that “the organization needs money, go and collect money”.Of course the socialist movement had some mistakes.

²⁴ For a representation of the merits of poverty and the *gecekondu*s in the Turkish cinema of the 1960s and 1970s, see Öztürk, M. (2004).

This, combined with the clear-cut segregation between left-wing and right-wing *gecekondü* areas, meant that people could not enter *mahalles* with a different political ideology. All of this resulted in the people of Ege considering the political polarization of the pre-1980 period as a state of terror.

Due to Alevi support for the leftist movement, most of the people who lived in Ege district in the 1970s and early 1980s perceived this political polarization as a division between Alevis and Sunnis rather than between the left and the right. This was clear from the way in which they explained it. When I asked them to talk about the pre-1980 era, they asked me: “Do you mean Alevi-Sunni stuff?” They mostly referred to the conflict between the fascist movement and the revolutionary left movement as an “Alevi-Sunni” fight. Kader is Sunni and she said that she always supported left-wing people. Her account of the political polarization is a good example of the perception of the conflict as an Alevi-Sunni fight and her confusion about her political ideology:

It was such chaos! They [Alevis] were in the majority in our district. We could not say anything, we were only keeping our silence. We were even afraid of turning on our lights when we woke up for sahur²⁵. They [Alevis] knew that we were Sunni so they might kill us or harm us. We used to read the Qur’an secretly. But in due course, we also got powerful since many Sunni people moved to Ege.... Me, I am leftist. I do not like the right wing. I am a big admirer of Bülent Ecevit [the leader of the CHP between 1972 and 1980]²⁶. Once Murat Karayalçın²⁷ [the

²⁵ Fasting during Ramadan is common among Sunni people and *sahur* is the meal eaten by fasting people just after dawn during Ramadan.

²⁶ Mr. Ecevit was elected to the Turkish parliament for the first time in 1957. From 1957 until his death in 2006 he was active in political life. His political discourse was inspired by leftist populism. During the 1960s and 1970s he was supported by the working class and the grassroots leftist movement. With the support of labour unions and some leftist groups, Mr. Ecevit served as Prime Minister twice more during the 1970s. He favoured generous social programmes, a large government role in the economy and protective tariffs to keep low-priced foreign goods out of Turkey. Early in his career he donned a symbolic working man’s cap and was rarely seen in public without it and he shunned luxury cars and big apartments and was untainted by accusations of corruption that plagued many of his political colleagues (Turgut 2006). His nickname was *Karaoğlan* (Black Boy). It could be asserted that this nickname revealed that the people thought Mr. Ecevit was one of them. During the 1970s, the famous slogan was “*Umudumuz Karaoğlan!*” (Black Boy is our hope!), which demonstrated that the working class and the grassroots leftist activists trusted him. Mr. Ecevit and other political leaders were jailed after the coup. They were released after a few weeks but banned from politics. In 1981, he was imprisoned again for three months after publishing an article criticizing military rule.

mayor of Ankara from 1989-1993] *visited the neighbourhood and I went to see him. I am a fan of his.*

It is clear in Kader's narrative that when it comes to political polarization, the boundaries between "us" and "them" are redefined. In this case, "us" is defined through the faith background of the people of Ege. However, the redefinition of "us" and "them" in terms of being Alevi or Sunni disappears when it comes to the collective needs of the Ege community and being a right-wing, Sunni person did not prevent them from acting collectively with the majority who were Alevi and leftist. For example, Zeynep, who is in her 60s, used to be a right-wing person and is still engaged with Sunni religious *cemaats*²⁸ (communities). She and her husband, İbrahim, were complaining about the Alevi and leftist people. İbrahim called Alevi people "gavur"²⁹ (non-Muslim) and thought that they could not have a close relationship with them. However, Zeynep claimed that she was one of the people who mobilized other Alevi and Sunni women to go to the municipality to protest and complain about the water problem during the 1970s. Her husband supported her and he told me that:

I would have loved to go with them. Unfortunately, in those years I was working and I could not participate in their visit and protest. It was important to come together and solve the problem collectively; otherwise, you could not get anything.

²⁷ Mr. Karayalçın was Deputy Prime Minister 1993-1995. He has been engaged with the CHP and other centre/left-wing parties. After Mr. Ecevit, he was the second person to be supported by working-class and leftist people.

²⁸ In its general meaning, *cemaat* refers to community in Turkish and in its narrow meaning it is a group of people who belong to the same religious group. Here *cemaat* is used in its narrow meaning of a religious community.

²⁹ Literally, *gavur* means non-Muslim. This word comes from the Persian word *gerb* in Ottoman times, and it describes anyone who is non-Muslim, with particular reference to Christians like Greeks, Armenians, Bulgarians, Serbs and Assyrians. The word, first employed as a term of contempt and reproach, has become so general that in most cases no insult is intended in its use (1911 Encyclopædia Britannica). But in due time it became an offensive ethnic slur and was banned by the *Islahat Fermanı* (The Imperial Reform Edict), which aimed to create equality among the different *millets* (nations) of the Ottoman Empire in 1856. In modern Turkish, *gavur* has a pejorative meaning and refers to Christian people (mostly Western Christians) in an offensive way. In its general sense, the word can be used to describe a heartless, mean and unjust person. In Ege district, it was the first time in my life that I heard a person use this notion to describe an Alevi person. It was only İbrahim who used this word. Other Sunni people did not use it to describe Alevis.

The story of two next-door neighbours, Deniz's family and Semih's family, tells much about how the sense of community overcame the divisiveness of political polarization and faith background. Semih declared himself to be "the son of the right wing" and he came from a Sunni and right-leaning family. He was a drug addict and told me that he had been engaged in a number of illegal activities such as beating men for money, and hiring gangs to rape somebody's wife for revenge. Semih introduced me to Deniz, and gave me insistent advice to talk to him for my study.

Deniz's family came to Ankara in 1977 from Sivas. They were a left-wing Alevi family. Deniz used to be an activist with an orthodox-Marxist organization, having joined at the age of 14, and had spent time in prison for political reasons. His parents and his three brothers supported him as well as his political activities and views. His brother Onur, who ran a café-pub in Kızılay, was a university student and seemed like an "urbanite" with his long hair and earring, told me that:

There is nothing wrong with my brother. I am proud of him. I tried to understand other people... I mean our relatives and hemşeris who broke their relationship with us immediately after my brother Deniz went to prison. They were scared. They thought that contacting us might be dangerous for them.

Their mother, Hatun, agreed with Onur. At that point she spoke resentfully and contributed to her son's account:

People... with whom I ate my bread, shared my food and whom I fed... they did not call me; they did not dare to ask how I was... They stopped visiting me.

Despite being a conservative Sunni and right-wing family, Semih's family did not break up with Deniz's family because of the political activities and imprisonment of Deniz. Deniz's other brother, Can, told me: "They know that we are Alevi and we know that they are Sunni." During the interview with Deniz's family, all the family members mentioned Semih's illegal activities. However, they all said that they had a close relationship which was based on mutual trust between the two families. Their narratives were shaped by common memories, such as the day that their *gecekondu* house was destroyed by the demolition teams and Semih's family came to help rebuild, and how the children of the two families played together when they were young. Besides

mentioning the mutual trust and collective memory, members of these two families emphasized that they could easily go to each others' houses, eat together and ask for help without any hesitation. Deniz's family said that they felt more comfortable in Semih's house than in their relatives' and *hemşeris*' houses.

Semih and Deniz's families emphasized the fact that they have been neighbours for 26 years. On this point, Can said that "*Our problems have always been the same. The absence of proper roads is not only my problem, it is also their problem.*" Deniz's words about Semih's family briefly summarized the sense of proximity and how collective memories and daily practices erased the differences of political ideology and faith:

We have never had this kind of problem [of different political ideologies and faiths]... I mean, from the very beginning of our life in Ege. You know, these are Alevi, these are Sunni, these are supporters of the MHP... I have many friends who vote for the MHP, we still keep in contact. We grow up together. We always go to the same schools. After all, they walked on this mud, we did too [Sonuçta şu var, bu çamuru onlar da çiğnedi, biz de]. When our house was destroyed, this did not please them. Or, when their house was damaged, we were not delighted. At our funerals, we were in solidarity, helping each other. If they saw me on the main road, they gave me a lift to my house. Before selling our car, I also gave them lifts.

In one of my visits, Semih talked about Deniz's family, although I had not asked him about them. He began by talking about his control over his wife, Gülden. Semih told me that since he could not trust society, he restricted Gülden's activities outside the house. She needed to persuade him even to be able to attend the Qur'an course at the local mosque. He told me: "*But the Denizs are different. I told Gülden that even I may harm you, but no way would Deniz and his family harm you.*" Semih described his special respect for Deniz by mentioning that Deniz read a lot and he had many books in his house. Although they were around the same age, Semih called him "*Abi*", which means older brother. As Duben (1982:92) suggested, the usage of *abi* (older brother), *kardeş* (sibling) and *oğlum* (my son) within the same social class is based on age-status differences and when they are used across class lines, they reveal differences in social status based on class. So, if social status is a determinant in a relationship between two

men, regardless of their age, they can call each other *abi*. Deniz and Semih had the same class background. The hierarchy between these two men was created by the intellectual capacity of Deniz and his reputation due to his political activities.

In spite of their conflicting political ideologies and religious identities, the first settlers were in the category of “us”. As Bauman (1990:93) suggests, they were not a “‘specimen of a category’, a case to which some universal rule may apply”, but they were “unique” cases for each other. Since their relationship was a personal one, it was their quality which determines their relationship with one another rather than their performance. This feeling of “us” certainly affected the way in which Ege people behaved towards one another. In turn, their behaviour towards one another made them “us”. The behaviour of people towards strangers or people with whom they were close was not supposed to be the same. Dubetsky (1976) suggested that *dürüstlük* (trustworthiness) was the most appreciated feature among the migrant communities in Turkey. However, he continued that “what is considered to be a *dürüst* [trustworthy] behaviour toward one’s kinsmen or *hemşeri* is not necessarily so toward impersonal organizations, strangers, or society at large” (Dubetsky 1976:444).

5.7 Relationship with Mainstream Politics

Rural migrants were welcomed by the mainstream political discourse during the 1960s and 1970s since they met the labour deficit of that time. *Gecekondu* people were good at solving their own accommodation problems, so neither their employers nor the state needed to provide accommodation for this new labour force. In due course, the number of *gecekondu* dwellers increased and they started to be considered by the politicians as potential voters. The demands of *gecekondu* dwellers, such as electricity, water, proper roads and title deeds, were very concrete and the *gecekondu* dwellers were ready to collaborate with the government to ensure their provision; therefore, the state could afford these demands without changing the whole state mechanism or expending much effort.

The *gecekondu* settlers were not passive actors in their relations with politicians and local governors. Increasing numbers of *gecekondu* dwellers during the 1970s and the

relatively powerful labour movement of that time increased the bargaining power of the *gecekondu* communities. The rural migrants began to realize their electoral power when they came to the city. They enjoyed greater economic independence compared to their life in the villages and were often specifically targeted by political parties (Özler 2000:42). They were good at contacting politicians, especially through the *hemşeri dernekleri*³⁰ (hometown organizations), to ask for the provision of services for their neighbourhoods. They used a variety of ways to reach the politicians; sometimes they got an appointment and visited them at the municipality, sometimes they organized protest meetings or they went to the municipality or other state organizations without an appointment just to create a “shock effect” on the policy makers. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the first settlers of Ege used a variety of tactics to reach the politicians, from blocking the main roads to frequent visits to the council. I asked interviewees how they organized these activities and whether they set up an organization to do it or not. They told me that they did not need any organizations (including the *hemşeri* organizations) to get together, act collectively or help one another. Sıtkı told me that:

People had the responsibility for their society. When our gecekondu community had a problem, people got together naturally. If you asked people to do something for the local community, they would listen and follow you. We used to visit one another every night to see whether any of us had any problems. Our social interaction was closer than it is now.

In the first decades of Ege, when the people were acting as a community, like the other *gecekondu* dwellers in Turkey, people in *gecekondu* areas could be analyzed and addressed as a category. This was reflected in the political language, the laws about housing and urban policies during the 1960s and 1970s. Politicians talked about “*gecekondus*” and “*gecekondulular*” (people who live in *gecekondu* areas). “The problems of *gecekondu* dwellers” were mentioned in election campaigns, or when politicians were addressing the *gecekondu* dwellers as if they were a social category on their own. In this sense, a series of *gecekondu* amnesties were passed throughout the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s and legalized the existing *gecekondus* (see Chapters 3

³⁰ *Hemşeri Dernekleri* are very engaged with politics. As the research of Uysal and Topak (2010) has shown, these organizations became a useful place for people who wanted to build a political career.

and 6). The provision of water and electricity as well as title-deeds was also for the benefit of the market and politicians of that time. Through these provisions, the politicians got the support of *gecekondu*s and the market was provided with cheap labour which was ready to solve its problems without creating any burden on the state or on the employers. It was not a coincidence that Ege residents got their infrastructure facilities and their *gecekondu*s were legalized simultaneously during the second half of the 1980s. It could be suggested that the provision of infrastructure facilities and title-deeds were interlinked. Providing infrastructure facilities, even at a basic level, started at the same time as the final *gecekondu* amnesties of the 1980s were implemented. In fact, some *gecekondu*s were provided with water and electricity before being legalized. This was not a contradiction since it could be suggested that the provision of infrastructure services prepared the way for the legalization of *gecekondu* houses and it was all a part of this legalization process. But if *gecekondu* people had not acted as a community and worked for these provisions, Ege would not have been provided with water pipes and lampposts and the coal yard and *çöplük* would not have been removed. Moreover, thanks to the willingness of Ege community to work together, they developed these provisions and got the infrastructure to their houses. In conclusion, it could be suggested that the demands of *gecekondu* people were in line with the demands of the market and this combination accelerated the legalization of *gecekondu* houses.

Their struggle for the provision of services, even though it was a tool for populist policies, empowered Ege people. They believed that the provisions they got were their rights and their struggle was to get their rights. For example, when Ege people talked about the provision of water and electricity facilities they mentioned that “*we, all together, succeeded at it*”, “*we worked, we struggled and we won*”. It could be suggested that Ege people were so engaged with politics and their lives were so significantly affected by the changes in politics, that when they needed to remember the date of an event (such as getting their title deed, finding a job, giving birth etc.) they referred to the political party in power at the time or the political party of the mayor. For example, they used the following expressions: “*It was during Demirel’s rule that I moved to Ege*”, “*I got the job when the mayor was from the CHP*”, and so forth. When they talked about the improvements or the problems in their district, they mentioned the different attitudes

of political parties and leaders. The possibilities of finding a job or becoming unemployed were also affected by the changes in political parties. When the CHP, which was a relatively left-wing party in Turkey, came to power and was largely supported by the Alevi population, many of the inhabitants of Ege District managed to find a job through their personal contacts. Moreover, Ege people told me that when the Mamak Mayor was from the CHP, their roads were improved. Research on Boğaziçi neighbourhood by Demirtaş (2009) confirmed this. Boğaziçi is within walking distance of Ege, and the ethnic, social and economic backgrounds of its inhabitants are similar to those of Ege. She also found that, when social democrat mayors were in power in local politics, Alevi communities in Boğaziçi and in other low-income neighbourhoods were briefly put in an advantageous position (2009:197).

On the other hand, a separation between political commitment and commitment to their society was the rule in people's relationship with mainstream politics. Studying the electoral behaviour of *gecekondu* people in Turkey's three largest cities (İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir) in the 1960s and 1970s, Özler stated that "... urban squatters have allied with different political parties based not on a difference in ideology, but on their material interests" (2000: 45). Ege people, like other *gecekondu* people, prioritized commitment to their community rather than commitment to their political ideology or faith background, especially in *muhtar* elections which would affect their lives directly. *Muhtars* have always played a key role in *gecekondu* areas, including Ege. They are the ones who contact the municipality and other administrative bodies. Besides, people who need to apply for welfare have to ask for documents proving their eligibility, and these documents can only be obtained from *muhtars*. When NGOs or rich people would like to distribute goods such as meat, clothes, money and so on at the Eid festivals, they first contact *muhtars* and the *muhtars* select those most in need in their neighbourhood. So, people really need to have close contact with the *muhtars*. In the central areas of cities, where middle-class people live, *muhtars* only play a bureaucratic role. People go to the *muhtars*' office only to get documents, for example, birth certificates or written proof of place of residence in middle-class *mahalles*. But since slum dwellers had (and still have) closer contact with politicians, they expect more from their *muhtars* and the election of *muhtars* has always been crucial for them. My interviewees told me that they tried to

elect people who were good at networking with politicians in higher positions and had the motivation to go to the municipality often, and also those who might develop good relations with the municipality. For example, when the mayors of both Ankara and Mamak were from the CHP, Vesile Arı, who was an Alevi woman and CHP supporter, was very active in the collective actions of Ege people. She was elected as *muhtar* of Ege by the local people. Sitki, who was a first settler and still living in Ege, explained to me that he supported her not just because she was Alevi and left-wing like himself, but also since he thought that she could struggle for the district and be active due to her close contacts with Mamak council and the CHP. My interviewees, some of whom belong to the extreme right, told me that they also voted for her. İbrahim, who used to be an activist in political Islamist parties, explained his reason for voting for a left-wing candidate in *muhtar* elections as follows:

There was a gavur [Alevi]³¹ woman. She supported the CHP, and the CHP was the power in Ankara, so she could do many things for the district, we voted for her, and she did not disappoint us, she helped in providing service to our districts through her close networks in the CHP.

Hatun's account of the development of Ege supported Sitki's as she told me that Vesile led and organized people in struggling for roads and water after she became *muhtar*. Hatun's son, Deniz, told me that:

It was so obvious that in this neighbourhood nobody loved Vesile. But at least she was regularly visiting the council and said everything to the mayor without any hesitation. Sure, it was also related to the fact that she was linked to the CHP.

5.8 Conclusion

Ege people, like other rural migrants, did not come to Ankara with blank minds. They brought their skills, perspectives, lifestyles and the social relations which they gained in their villages, to their destination. Thanks to what they brought with them, they were able to survive in their new neighbourhood. They worked hard, were less

³¹ *Gavur* literally means non-Muslim but in this context the interviewee used it to refer to Alevi. See footnote 29.

dependent on money than the urbanites, skilled enough to solve their own problems and collaborated with one another. Since it was a chain migration, more people from the same original location, ethnicity and religion clustered in Ege. However, Ege was not an absolutely homogeneous district in terms of ethnicity, religion, original location and political view. This did not result in severe separation between them since their common problems and collective action overcame the religious, ethnic and hometown differences among them. This accelerated the trust between them and trust was an important factor in building a community in this new place.

Their common activities in ameliorating their neighbourhoods are interlinked with building social cohesion and a sense of community. These activities strengthened their relationships and stood as the backbone of community building and their sense of community. As suggested by Soytemel's research, shared space can enable the urban poor to cultivate survival and coping mechanisms (2013:2). Also, this sense of community enabled them to act together. In this sense, it is hard to decide which was the starting point in the creation of Ege, whether it was the building of a community or whether common activities preceded the other. So, it could be suggested that building a community and building Ege physically through common activities emerged at the same time, supporting each other. If the people had not felt that they were part of the community, they would not have worked for the improvement of Ege; on the other hand, if they had not struggled for infrastructure facilities for their *mahalle*, they could not have become a community or developed a sense of community. Even so, it was a conditional cooperation, driven by the pursuit of material gain. This cooperation continued as long as the community in Ege shared the benefits. People in Ege sustained their community and cooperation until the late 1990s when the urban reformation projects started to be implemented and Ege people's interests became diversified.

6. Feeling Connected to the Middle Class while Remaining Slum Dwellers

6.1 Introduction

The first settlers of Ege were composed of the early-comer inner-city dwellers who could not find a plot to build a *gecekondu* in the inner-city *gecekondu* areas of the pre-1980 era. In the 1970s, Ege was on the urban fringe of Ankara and there was a waste area in the northern part of Ege. It was considered to be a suitable area for *gecekondu* construction for migrants, who either rented a *gecekondu* or lived with family members in the *gecekondu* areas that were closer to the city centre. When the migrants started to build *gecekondu* houses in Ege during the late 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s, the Turkish government started to consider the *gecekondu* houses as a tool for meeting the need for public housing for the working class. Such an approach would compensate for the losses of the working class generated by the neo-liberal policies initiated just after the coup d'état in 1980 and, more importantly, would transform public lands to private ownership.

Over decades, the urban ecology of Ankara, like that of Istanbul and Izmir, was transformed through the expansion of the settled area of the city as *gecekondus* were built in areas where least resistance was encountered (Keyder 2005:126). So, as Ankara expanded, Ege, like many other *gecekondu* neighbourhoods, ended up being close to the city centre. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the attitude of the government towards *gecekondu* areas and migrants has changed dramatically. They no longer considered the phenomenon of *gecekondus* as a tool for providing cheap houses for the urban poor and did not attempt to solve the problem of *gecekondus* through legalizing and transforming them into apartments. The new idea was to solve the problem of *gecekondus* through project-based entrepreneurialism which was based on cooperation between the municipalities, central state authority and capitalists. There was no room for the *gecekondu* dwellers in this alliance, which focused on gentrification.

There were some migrants who came to *gecekondu* areas after the late 1980s. After 1985, late comers hoped that their *gecekondus* would be legalized, as had happened to previously built *gecekondus*. However, the last *gecekondu* amnesty only included the

gecekondu built before 1985; therefore, the *gecekondu* houses built after 1985 were not legalized due to changes in government policy after the late 1980s. Because of this, in many of the *gecekondu* areas the population was heterogeneous in terms of ownership of their homes. It could be suggested that this heterogeneity was even higher in *gecekondu* neighbourhoods that were built around the late 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s. This was because, in the *gecekondu* areas that were close to the city centre and built before the second half of the 1970s, there was almost nowhere left to build a *gecekondu* after the second half of the 1980s when the last amnesty for *gecekondu*s was past. So, in these areas, nearly all of the houses had been legalized by the 1990s. On the other hand, in areas where some migrants moved in after the first half of the 1980s, some *gecekondu*s were not legalized. Research on slum areas suggests that this kind of heterogeneity brings in different kind of solidarities, social movements and strategies in the face of the government's attitude and the policies towards *gecekondu* areas (Deniz 2010:Chap.3 and 4, Erder 1996:Part 3 Chap. 4 and 5, Pınarcıoğlu and Işık 2002: Chap.7).

Ege had a very heterogeneous population in terms of ownership. Starting with the legalization process of houses in Ege, this chapter will discuss how the legalization of *gecekondu*s and urban reforms affected the formal title deed holders in Ege. It will be argued that Ege people who have formal title deeds consider the urban reforms to be developments from which they will significantly benefit since they will gain money as a result of the Ege Urban Transformation Project (EUTP). On the other hand, it will be suggested that, despite this gain, their position in the class structure and social capital has not changed. It will be argued that this contradiction will result in the voluntary displacement of holders of formal title deeds in Ege.

6.2 Legalization of Ege District

Construction law no. 2805 in 1983 and no. 2981 in 1984 legalized the *gecekondu* built before 02.06.1981 (Keleş 2010:521). In 1986, a change in these laws made by law no. 3290 legalized the *gecekondu*s and other illegal buildings which had been built before 10.11.1985. This was known as the last *Gecekondu* Amnesty. To administer these

laws, Special Technical Offices (*Yeminli Özel Teknik Bürolar*) were introduced. These offices were in charge of receiving the required application documents from *gecekondu* owners, providing them with *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi* (provisional title deeds) and running the technical procedures. Giving these jobs to private bureaux in 1984 was compatible with the general political and economic atmosphere of the 1980s when the state started to shrink and attempted to privatize public services.

The main aim of the distributing of title deeds was to solve the problem of property before the implementation of improvement plans. After the amnesties passed, experts from the Special Technical Offices came and measured the size of plots to determine the share for each *gecekondu*. They also measured how much of the plot should be left for roads. According to the law, each person is assigned a maximum of 400 m² of land. Law no. 3290 permitted the reconstruction of existing one-storey *gecekondus* on 400 m² of land up to four-storey houses. The amnesties of the 1980s were followed by improvement plans to accelerate the amnesty. For Ankara, the improvement plan was defined in law no. 2805 in 1983 and 22 improvement plan areas (Sat 2007:29) were designated. This could not be considered as proper planning since these improvement plans were limited to defining the property ownership and regulations for construction (Güzey 2009). The only positive aspect of the improvement plans was the legalization of all squatter housing areas built in Ankara up until 1985 (Sat 2007:35).

Mamak District started to be planned in 1987 and the planning was completed in 1995. In 1992, an improvement plan for Ege was prepared. This meant that Ege could be legally planned and developed and people could legally build houses and develop them. The acquisition of construction rights resulted in a significant rise in land prices in *gecekondu* areas and this increase was higher in neighbourhoods on the urban fringe (Sat 2007:33-34), such as Mamak District. Ege was declared to be an urban renewal project area but it was not developed immediately after the improvement plan was drawn up. However, inclusion in an improvement plan was a sign of the development of an area in the foreseeable future; therefore, the level of increase in land prices in Ege was remarkable.

The 1990s was a time when there were almost no spare plots to build a *gecekondu* in Ege due to the fact that (1) the population of Ege was increasing and (2) the

improvement plans including Ege had been completed and all property ownership was legally documented. So, this was the era when Ege was completely settled. Regardless of their status in terms of owning legal title deeds, *gecekondu* owners looked for other places to build *gecekondus* in order to have more security and to be able to provide houses for their children. In this respect, for Ege people, Yakup Abdal, which is a village of Ankara within 10 minutes driving distance of Ege, was suitable since this area was nearly at the farthest eastern edge of Ankara and there were almost no houses there and the plots were cheap. The plots in this area became more expensive as more people bought them. However, the plots in Yakup Abdal are still cheaper than other places closer to the city centre since the area has not yet been opened to zoning or included in the improvement plans. This time, people were also provided with formal title deeds for their plots in Yakup Abdal. In the legal procedure for building a house in Turkey, a building project is prepared by an architect, and then five engineers (a mechanical, civil, survey, electrical and geology engineer) work on the project. This project should be approved by the chambers of each engineering branch and the chamber of architects. The next step is to get the approval of the Building Inspection Authority. Then the project is taken to the municipality to apply for a building permit. The Municipality checks the project and if nothing conflicts with construction law, it gives the building permit. Until this building permit is obtained, it is not legally allowed to even dig the soil to start the building. After getting the building permit, people can start to build and after they finish the municipality experts come to check. Following this check, the municipality gives an occupancy permit and with this people can apply to TEDAŞ (Turkish Electricity Distribution Company) and ASKİ (Ankara Water and Sewage Management Authority) to have electricity and water supplied to their houses. However, hiring an architect and five engineers for a housing project is costly for *gecekondu* people. Additionally, this process requires a major set of bureaucratic steps which can be very time-consuming unless a person has a reliable contact to help in the municipality. More importantly, since this area has not yet been zoned, people are not legally allowed to build houses and they cannot get building permits. Ege people build their new *gecekondus* in Yakup Abdal in the way that they used to do when they first built in Ege and they skip all the bureaucratic steps mentioned above. The only

difference is that this time they have the legal title deeds for their plots. After buying the plot, they accumulate the materials required for *gecekondu* building. When all the materials are ready, they hire workers. This time, although they hold the legal title to the plot, since it is not legal to build houses in Yakup Abdal they try to finish the entire house in a single night. These houses should not be called “*gecekondu*” since they are built by people on their own plot; nevertheless they are called “unregistered houses”. However, people from Ege called these new houses “*gecekondu*” since they undertake more or less the same process as when building *gecekondus*.

I was told that the villagers of Yakup Abdal spy on the people who build houses there and the municipality teams check the area and can demolish the newly built houses. But people try to use their old strategies to prevent them. Sometimes they explain their difficult situation, find a *hemşeri* or a *tanıdık* (acquaintance) among the demolition team members who can ensure that the teams turn a blind eye to their *gecekondus*. However, sometimes none of these strategies work and their houses are demolished. But, as they did previously in Ege, they rebuild them. Hacer, who moved to northern Ege (Çöplük Area) in 1984, narrated her story about building a new house in Yakup Abdal as follows:

In 1996 I bought a plot in Yakup Abdal. You know it was the time of demolition. I could only afford a plot there. I started to buy materials and when everything was ready, I hired 10 workers to speed up the building. My sons and daughters-in-law were helping me. Then the demolition teams came. The villagers of Yakup Abdal spied on us... Why? Because in the beginning they did not think that this area would be valuable and they sold plots to us to make money. But in due course everybody started to build houses there. Anyway, the demolition teams came; they asked me to stop the building since it was not legal. I told them that “I am in a very difficult position, but if you want me to be homeless do not hesitate to demolish my house.” I knew the head of the demolition team from my visits to the municipality. He recognized me and asked me to stop the workers until the demolition teams left. And then he followed: “sister, ok, you did not see us, we did not see you.” Then I called all the workers and served them tea until the team left... Normally, it was not possible to have water and electricity. They required a building permit that I did not have. I visited ASKİ and TEDAŞ with a box of chocolate. There were some people that I knew before since I had visited these institutions many times. I explained my situation and they sorted it out for me.

The houses of Ege people in Yakup Abdal can be demolished by the municipality and this has happened to some of the Ege people who have built a *gecekondu* there.

However, there has not been any urban reformation project for this area, which indirectly means that houses are not immediately demolished. But still, the people know that they run the risk of getting their *gecekondu*s there demolished; however, they think that even so it is better than not having a spare *gecekondu*, which gives a feeling of greater security. People think that in due course they will be able to legalize their houses in Yakup Abdal as was the case in Ege. For them, due to the frequent *gecekondu* amnesties and the many changes in the construction law since 1948 (see Chapter 3), their construction might force the state to legalize their houses. It could be suggested that building a new house in Yakup Abdal shows that *gecekondu* people consider their situation to be very fragile, so it can be a way of increasing their security. In this sense it could be suggested that changes in construction law, improvement plans and the unstable attitude of the government in terms of *gecekondu*s has resulted in leaving *gecekondu* people alone in struggling against their insecure situation.

6.3 Increasing Value of Ege

Ege is linked to Çankaya, which is the most prestigious district of Ankara and where there are business and state institutions, including the presidential palace, by Çankaya-Mamak viaduct (see photo 26 and Figure3). This viaduct reduces transportation time to Çankaya to 10-15 minutes by car – there is no direct public transportation across the viaduct yet. Since 2005, large shopping malls and business centres such as Metro Gross Market, Nata Vega and Ikea have been built close to Ege (see photos 27 and 28). Yılmaz (2011) claimed that these companies had obtained the land when it was cheap from the first owners, who were not informed about the plan that had been prepared for the area (p. 62). A 5000 metre square aquarium is located in Nata Vega shopping mall and it is a new city attraction. Moreover, shows and concerts by famous Turkish singers, some of which are free, in these shopping malls are attracting many people to the area.

Figure 3: A map prepared by Özmen Construction Firm to illustrate the central position of Ege



Source: Özmen konutları Website. www.ozmenkonutlari.com / I translated the Figure into Turkish.

Ege is also very close to the area of Doğukent Urban Regeneration Project and İmrahor Valley recreation area. Kentkur's report (2001), which was prepared by a

private consultancy firm to provide information about Ege to Mamak Municipality in 2001, emphasized the fact that Ege can be a self-sufficient area in itself with close links to the city centre and integrated with the recreation area and forest land and that these features are unique to Ege (p.5). These factors elevate the area's prestige. Ege is 15km from the city centre and is located in a strategic position which has a transportation advantage. The width of Natoyolu Street –the main road through Ege – is 50m, which is suitable for two-way traffic. Southern Ege is located in a valley (see photo 29) and this is important in terms of urban aesthetics. In the Ankara Master Plan 2023, Mamak District is indicated as being among the most disadvantaged districts of Ankara in terms of socio-economic indicators. In this sense, it is expected that the development of Ege will contribute to the overall development of Mamak District. The city planners whom I interviewed emphasized the significance of Ege as follows:

Ege is a very beautiful and special area. It looks towards Çankaya and it has an amazing view. So, it has potential to be developed. The Ege Urban Reformation Project aimed to develop here and Ege's development will also accelerate Mamak's development.

As Dündar (2001) suggests, all these developments have led to a revaluation of the area and left it under speculative pressure, resulting in a speeding up of its transformation (p.399).

6.4 A Brief History of the Implementation of the Ege Urban Transformation Project (EUTP)

The neighbouring areas of Ege were not developed through urban reforms until the 2000s. The sudden development of Ege created a huge gap among the nearby areas in terms of urban rent and this was not desirable for the urban authorities. This was the major factor cited by the city planners of Mamak Municipality to explain why the urban transformation project in Ege did not start immediately after improvement plans were completed in the 1990s.

Ege people with title deeds were quite content with this project and they said that it should have been started much earlier. For them, the primary reason why this project started as late as the 2000s is about politics. They considered the delay to be a result of

the fact that (1) Melih Gökçek, the mayor of Ankara for 15 years, was punishing Ege people because they would never vote for him and (2) the conflict between Mamak Municipality, which was governed by the CHP, and Ankara Municipality, which was governed by right-wing parties before the 2000s.

Ali, the current *muhtar* of Ege, and some other residents told me that in 1997 Mamak Municipality began to prepare the first urban reformation project. At that time the mayor of Ankara was from the Welfare Party, which was a political-Islamist right-wing party and was succeeded by the AKP, the current political party in power. Since the mayor of Mamak was from the CHP, this created a conflict between the two municipalities. Vesile was the *muhtar* of Ege at that time and she was against this project. Ali, the current *muhtar*, and Sıtkı, a member of the *İhtiyar Heyeti*, (Council of Elders) which is run by *muhtar*, claimed that it was because this urban renewal project was against her interests. They told me that she enclosed 3000-4000m² plots and if this project was implemented she would lose some of her plots. For them, she told the people in Ege that if this project was accepted, Ege people's *gecekondus* would be demolished without any compensation. For my interviewees, this was a fake story invented to persuade people in Ege. She organized the people in the area and circulated a petition signed by around 650 people in Ege. Sıtkı suggested that she was able to persuade her followers, relatives and *hemşeris* since they trusted her, which demonstrates the importance of kinship and *hemşeri* relations in local politics. She submitted the petition to the Ankara Municipality to show that local people were against this urban renewal project. Kemal claimed that Vesile talked to İsmail Değerli, the mayor of Mamak from the CHP at that time, and asked for a privilege for her plots. According to Kemal, İsmail Değerli announced this question of Vesile to the people in Ege publicly and said that he was against any kind of privilege, even if it was asked by the *muhtar*. All the urban transformation projects prepared by the district municipalities in Ankara should be confirmed by the Ankara Municipality. At that time, Ankara Municipality was against this project. For Ege people, this was because the mayor of Ankara at that time, Melih Gökçek, who is also the current mayor, was against the development of Ege since Ege people did not vote for him. Vesile's petition and struggle helped Melih Gökçek not to approve İsmail Değerli's plan. Vesile's struggle

stopped the implementation of urban renewal during the second half of the 1990s. However, it was not a total termination, but only a delay since a new urban renewal project was prepared in 2001 and approved by the Ankara Municipality when both municipalities were governed by politicians of the AKP. This project, which was the first urban renewal project of Mamak Municipality, covered Southern Ege, a 225 hectare area starting from Natoyolu Street and stretching to İğnelidere Forest area.

The aim of the project was declared to be “transforming *gecekondu* areas which developed in an unhealthy and irregular pattern into liveable urban areas” (Kentkur 2001:28). Dündar (2001:394) suggests that:

Urban transformation projects can be evaluated in a sense as the implementations which are brought by global economy supported with new conceptual developments and the transfer of the improvement and development plans approach to a great scale.

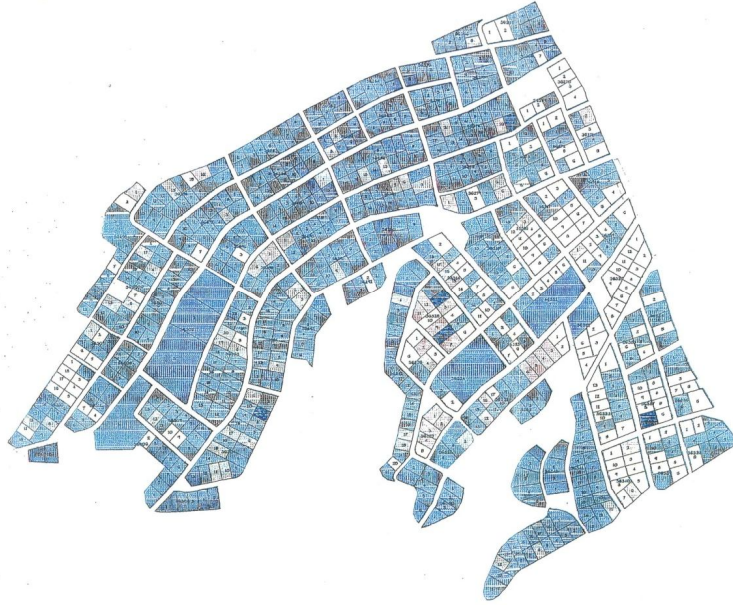
Considering laws 2981 and 3290, EUTP could be perceived as a revised version of the improvement plans. It could be suggested that, since Ege is becoming an increasingly prestigious area, the private sector regarded it as a profitable area; therefore TOKİ (Mass Housing Administration) did not need to undertake the project here and this area could be left to the private market through the hands of Mamak Municipality. Currently, in this project, the role of Mamak Municipality is restricted to preparing a plan showing the location of public areas such as green areas, kindergartens, schools, sports areas and describing the basic features of the buildings. The construction businessmen and the companies become the main actors in this transformation process. They plan the buildings according to the regulations determined by the municipality and contact the *gecekondu* residents who have legal title deeds in order to try to get an agreement. Ege people can choose the construction companies or the construction businessmen they want to deal with about their plots.

Currently, in EUTP, 10 plots comprise a parcel (see Figure4) and agreements with construction companies are based on parcels. In each parcel, one plot belongs to the municipality and it can sell it to third parties but the priority should be given to the people who have a plot in that parcel. Expropriation does not occur in Ege where people leave their parcels to private firms and own the new flats when they are finished. This is

why the people of Ege did not exhibit an extensive negative reaction. The usual agreement between *gecekondu* owners with legal title deeds and the firms is as follows: a person gets one flat if s/he has a 140 m² plot in the parcel. If s/he has more than this, s/he can either have one flat and some extra money or have two flats and pay some money back to the construction businessmen/firms. People with title deeds are not legally forced to get an agreement but they told me that since everybody is getting an agreement, they have to do the same sometime, otherwise they may have many problems. The problem is that, according to Turkish law, if the other people who have plots in the same parcel go to court, the person who does not get an agreement will be found guilty.

Since the value of Ege district is increasing, luxury apartment blocks with large gardens, swimming pools and sports areas are appearing in the area step by step (see photo 31 and figure 5). This shows that this project is being undertaken to open Ege up to upper-class people. The price of these new flats is increasing day by day. Buying a flat in Ege became a tool for investing in the future (Yılmaz 2011:86). In the winter of 2012 a new flat in Ege cost between 180,000-270,000 TL, which is more than double the price of a flat for middle-class people in other parts of Ankara, which are older areas close to the city centre. A *gecekondu* in good condition cost around 50,000 TL in Ege at the time of my fieldwork. So, roughly speaking, in this calculation, it seems that *gecekondu* owners will make money through this agreement. Compared to the quality of houses in the city centre, the new blocks in Ege are much better. A house of the same quality in the city centre might be double the price when compared to the new houses in Ege. When the urban reformation project is accomplished there will be communal areas such as sports fields, parks for kids and these areas and the new houses will be under the supervision of private security. Since large shopping centres have been built in Ege very recently, white-collar people who work in these centres have already moved to Ege and due to these centres and those that will be built in the future, people expect that Ege will no longer be a suburb in at most five years. So, all these factors are attractive to the middle class

Figure 4: Land parcels covered by EUTP



Source: Kentkur 2001.

Figure 5: Inside plan of a luxury flat in Ege recently built by Özmen Company



Source: Website of Özmen Konutları, <http://www.ozmenkonutlari.com/>

6.4.1. Strategies of Title Deed Holders

Only people with title deeds get a flat when they enter into an agreement with the construction firms. For the people with title deeds in Southern Ege, getting flats in return for their *gecekondus* is a good deal and they feel well-off. But they would like to increase their benefits from this deal. This is not a communal benefit as was the case in getting title deeds and infrastructure facilities in the 1970s and 1980s, rather it is an individual benefit to be sought personally, not collectively. Because of this, they do not act collectively. At this point, their strategies to get the most out of the deals and minimize the cost of losing their *gecekondus* are determined by their individual resources and assets. The only thing that they cooperate in is to talk to amongst themselves about the construction firms and learn different strategies from each other. However, since the rules of the project are determined by the municipality, they cannot set their own rules or increase their bargaining power significantly through individual strategies.

If the householders do not need money urgently they normally wait until the construction firms find their plots necessary in order to increase householders' bargaining power. But this is not the case for most of the people. For example, Cemal, who was among the first inhabitants of Ege, is unemployed, has serious familial problems and is about to divorce. He tried to find a construction firm as soon as possible to transfer his rights on his parcel. The money he got from the construction firm was around half of the money he would have got if he had waited until his *gecekondu* house was replaced by a multi-storey apartment block. After being paid by the construction firm, he went back to his home village where he thought he could survive with this money for many years.

When Southern Ege people agree with a construction firm, they move out of their *gecekondus* and demolish them on their own in order to be able to sell the materials. They need to find a temporary place to live until their new houses are finished by the construction firms. Rather than asking the municipality to find them a temporary place or forcing the construction firms to do so, they depend on their household resources. Most Ege people are not capable of paying rent in Ankara. If they have a *gecekondu* in Yakup Abdal, they move there. People who have kept their houses in their home

villages temporarily return there. Some Ege people, mostly the single young men who live with their parents, take house loans from the banks and buy houses for themselves. If this is the case, the other family members move into these houses until their new homes are finished. So, Ege people's strategy for finding a temporary place to stay varies depending on the household's assets and resources. In general, it can be suggested that renting a new house is their last option due to the unaffordable rents in Ankara.

In the case of Ankara, Harvey's argument might be applied. He suggests that the richest will not move if they do not choose to do so, and this results in squeezing various intermediate groups between the social pressure emerging from below and "immoveable political and economic forces above" (Harvey 2009:173). The populations of *gecekond* areas are included in these intermediate groups and their choices are limited compared to those of the middle-class people who will move to *gecekond* areas after the urban reformation projects are completed. Güzey's research on 31 urban reformation projects in Ankara shows that the level of displacement of the original population is high in prestigious areas, whereas the percentage of displacement falls to under 50% in less prestigious areas (2009:31). Since Ege is becoming more prestigious, the expected displacement rate could be high. Moreover, despite their aspirations of living in luxury apartments, most of my interviewees are very worried about life in a flat. Their concerns, particularly about the cost of living in the new flats and turning them into more profitable investments, can show us that the majority of them will not be living in Ege after the project is completed.

Southern Ege people with title deeds are worried about how to afford the service costs of these luxury buildings. Moreover, most of them are provided with one tonne of coal each year and a food pack quarterly by the district governorate or municipality. Their heating is predominantly dependent on this coal and the food package significantly decreases their monthly expenses. If they move into new flats it is highly likely that they will not be entitled to this welfare since the ownership of a luxury flat will prevent them from proving that they are poor. The new buildings will be heated by gas that they will be obliged to pay for, indicating that the coal provided by the district governorate/municipality will not be useful anymore. There is a large dispute among Ege people in which some people who recently moved to flats heated by gas and are still

receiving the coal sell it to other people in order to make money from it. This might be an option for people when they are in new flats. However, once the state authorities realize this deal, they cancel all the welfare received by these people. So, due to the unaffordable costs of their future flats and the loss of benefits, many Ege people with title deeds plan to sell them and buy more than one flat in less expensive parts of Ankara. İbrahim, who came to Ege at the beginning of the 1980s after spending two decades in Ankara, told me that:

My only income is my pension which is slightly above the minimum wage. Now I am not paying rent and the coal is provided by the municipality welfare. If I start to live in the new flats.. Well, there will be a monthly payment for the security and the cleaning of the building won't there? There will be monthly payments for the heating... Tell me how can I afford them all? After my gecekondü is replaced by a multi-floor apartment building, I will sell my flat and buy two flats in Sincan where the prices of houses are less than half of those in Ege.

In this way they will be able provide a house for their sons/daughters. According to Turkish Civil Law, daughters and sons take an equal share from their parents' inheritance. Due to the patriarchal structure of the family, families are concerned with the housing problem of their sons more than their daughters. This is why the parents, particularly the fathers, solve the distribution of their property among their children during their lifetime. But this does not mean that no families in Ege are planning to provide a house for their daughters. Prioritizing the housing problems of sons is only the general pattern and "norm". For example, Kemal considers his daughter's future and housing problems. He is a retired worker and among the first comers to Ege. He has three children, his sons are married and Kemal lives with his daughter, mother and wife. Kemal told me that his daughter earns very little money and she contributes most of her earnings to the household expenditure. He has a 280 metre square plot in Ege. He recently gave it to a construction business firm and he will be given two flats in return. He is planning to sell one of them to buy two other flats in other parts of the city and he will give one of these to his daughter.

6.4.2. Self Perception and Concerns about Apartment Life

During our interviews and daily conversations, the people of Ege defined their social status as “middle”. When they were asked what they meant by “middle”, they usually told me that they meant people who could survive with what they had. The usual idiom that they used was *kendi yağıyla kavrulan*, which means a person who can stand on his/her own feet. Richard Sennett (1998) mentions a similar account in terms of understanding the perceptions of class of American bakers. He said that class signified little to them and the bakers said they were middle class. At this point, Sennett suggests that considering the American obsession with individualism and the fact that in America class is interpreted as a personal quality, the bakers were responding in terms of how they assess themselves rather than how much money or status they had (1998:64-65). This was also the case for Ege people.

Although Ege people defined themselves as “middle”, they did not call themselves “middle class”. They did not use the term “class” in defining either their own position or that of people other than those living in *gecekondu* areas. This tendency of not using the notion of class in explaining social stratification is not specific to *gecekondu* people. As Mardin (2006) suggests, despite wide socio-economic inequality, the social classes are weakly organized in Turkey and this is the main reason for the absence of class consciousness in the country (Chap.1). In general, it could be suggested that people in Turkey use other categorizations, such as poor-wealthy and urbanites-peasants. Besides being in the middle of the scale of poor and wealthy, especially the first- and second-generation *gecekondu* people feel themselves to be peasants. However, the third generation indicated that they are urbanites although they mentioned the place where their parents were born as their place of origin.

The majority of Ege people did not think that they were poor. Taking into account the fact that the hunger line for a four-person household was 949 TL per month and the poverty line was 3092 TL in Turkey in September 2012 (Türk-iş 2012), almost nobody in Ege is above the poverty line. Moreover, it could be suggested that the household income of the majority of families in Ege is around the minimum wage, which is 715 TL at the time of the interviews. So, based on these statistics, the majority of Ege people live under the hunger line. The most remarkable fact was that even people without any

assets or regular income did not feel themselves to be poor. For example, Kader lived alone in her brother's house and she paid the rent whenever she could. She was not too concerned about paying the rent because of this. Nevertheless, she did not have a regular income. She did not work at the time of our interview, her husband lived with another woman and he did not contribute to Kader's expenses. The only reason that she was still legally married to him was that she could benefit from his health insurance, which is predominantly based on formal employment in Turkey.³² The only cash she got was the *fitre* and *zekat* (charity in Islam) from well-off neighbours or other people. She received a tonne of coal and four packages of food which were distributed quarterly by the Mamak Municipality. Despite all of these, she said that she was "middle". The reason for this could be that Ege people, like many other rural migrants, compared their present with their past. For example, Lütfiye, whose economic situation was very similar to Kader's, told me that she could at least buy her medicine in Ankara and if she were in her home village she would not be able to do so. All Ege people with title deeds feel that they are well-off as a result of EUTP since they will soon have one or two luxury flats. But it is important to bear in mind that this gain does not change their position in the labour market or the class structure in Turkey. In this sense, it could be suggested that this gain will not contribute significantly to their social upward mobility.

The recent presence of middle-class people³³ and the new shopping malls are signs of development to Ege people. For them, this development is also for their benefit.

³² In Turkey, parents, children and spouses of formally employed people can benefit from their public health insurance. People can be covered by health insurance in two more ways other than formal employment. The first one is directly paying to private insurance companies, but Ege people are not capable of affording the cost. The second one is paying for public health insurance on a monthly basis. This is a cheaper option; however, it is still not affordable for the majority of Ege people.

³³ For the pilot field research of this study, I visited Harman neighbourhood. Multi-Floor TOKI (Mass Housing Authority) apartments were recently built in Harman and these buildings attracted middle-class people. The local people claimed that public transportation used to be unavailable on the hilly parts of Harman. They said that thanks to TOKI buildings and the new people, the Council has provided them with public transportation. In this sense, the appearance of middle-class people in *gecekondu* areas which are under transformation has accelerated the improvement of urban services. The local people seemed to be welcoming the new middle-class people. Like Ege people, for Harman people, the residents of their neighbourhood would gain from attracting middle-class people. In one of my visits to the *muhtar's* office in Harman, a young female in a suit and with make-up dropped in for a written proof of residence. It was the

When they compare the previous situation of their neighbourhood with the present one, they emphasize these shopping malls. On the other hand, they stress the fact that they are not able to shop in these malls because of the high prices; they told me that they went to them just to visit and look at the displays. Visiting these shopping malls and participating in the opening ceremonies of the new ones are a kind of leisure-time activity for them. They are proud that the 5000 m² aquarium is close to their neighbourhood; however they mentioned the fact that hardly any of the people in Ege have seen it because the tickets are not affordable. It could be suggested that the hegemonic discourse of development for all is shaping Ege people's perspective on the recent changes in their neighbourhood. Furthermore, for them it is the first time in their lives that the spaces which reflect the middle-class lifestyle have come to their neighbourhood. For most of the people in Ege, EUTP is a kind of social service and an attempt at improving Ege; it is part of the development of their neighbourhood and should have been done before.

The existence of middle-class people and middle-class consumption spaces, combined with the gain that will be obtained through EUTP, make Ege people feel they are getting closer to being "middle class". As the number of luxury apartments increases in Ege, people in *gecekondus* start to be more ambitious to live in apartments. They think that the ideal life is in the apartments whereas the *gecekondu* is old fashioned and destined to vanish. Sayer suggests that a characterization of the social field which is based on the unequal distribution of goods and commodities, as well as biases in the valuation of use-values and the people associated with them, leads to "over-valuing anything associated with the dominant" (2005:122). The idealization of life in apartments goes hand in hand with under-valuing *gecekondu* life, which is assumed to belong to the subordinate. In a binary construction, the *gecekondu* belongs to the peasant, poor, uncultivated and backward whereas the apartment symbolizes urban, wealthy, polite and progressive. The attitude of over-valuing apartment life was most obvious among teenagers and young women who were born in the city, and "modern-

first time that the *muhtar* had seen this woman. Soon after learning that she was a lawyer and lived in the TOKİ buildings, the *muhtar* told me that "*these kind of people are what we need. We need people who were brought up in this district and have become successful like her.*"

life” oriented, discontented *gecekondu* dwellers. For example, Türkan was born in Ege in 1974 and graduated from a girl’s college in the centre of Ankara where all of her school mates were from middle-class families. Currently her husband’s monthly income is quite a lot higher than the average household income in Ege. They could afford to move into a flat; however Turan, the husband, prefers to stay in their *gecekondu* until it is demolished to save more money for their future. Türkan would like to move into a flat, where she thinks life is more civilized. Their teenage daughter Selin told me that she abstained from making friends with other teenagers in Ege and made friends only with young people at her high school. She told me that she did not like living in a *gecekondu* at all. For her, apartment life was more modern, whereas a *gecekondu* was behind the times. This is why she used to refrain from inviting her school friends to her house until Türkan persuaded her to do so. On the other hand, Necip, Türkan’s father, as a first-wave migrant, was emotionally attached to his *gecekondu* house in Ege and was quite upset that it would be destroyed in the near future.

Erman’s research indicates that, among *gecekondu* dwellers, the main reason for the preference for apartment life is the higher standards (1997a:101). This was the case for Ege people. My interviewees, especially women, complained about the heating and cleaning of *gecekondus*. Most of the houses are heated by a stove and there are generally only two stoves in each house; one is in the living room and the other in the bathroom. The stove in the bathroom is lit when the family takes a shower. They do not have more stoves in order to reduce the consumption of coal and even try to light the stove in the living room only at specific times of the day. So, the house gets cold quickly and lighting the stove is tiring and time consuming. Women told me that, despite wiping and sweeping their homes frequently, it was barely possible to keep them as clean as they liked due to the poor construction of *gecekondus*. So, they would like to move to a flat to have a better heating system and to make household duties less burdensome. On the other hand, they talked about their friends who recently moved into flats from *gecekondus* and turn on their heaters as little as possible in order to pay less. So, while they are dreaming about a comfortable house with a good heating system, they are worried about their future heating bills and are quite sure that they will not be able to afford them. On this point, it might be suggested that they will have the properties but

they will never be able to enjoy their features. In brief, the objective difficulties of *gecekondu* life are coupled with under-valuing it as an inferior lifestyle. This results in alienation from *gecekondu* houses. One of my interviewees told me that:

Now, the gecekondu are surrounded by apartments. People watch them through their windows and they dream of being there one day. People think that if they live in a flat, then they will be happy and have an ideal life.

They do not take care of or improve their *gecekondu* houses since they plan to move to the apartments soon and they have given up growing vegetables in their gardens. Gül, my landlady, has a place to grow things in front of our houses. She tells me that she used to grow many things there but she told me: *Nowadays, I do not want to do so. Because what we will do is not clear yet, you know, the urban reformation project.* Kader also used to grow many things in her garden, but not anymore. She told me that, *“You see I have a suitable place to grow many things. But I do not know, I do not want to grow anything.”*

As suggested by Sat, life in apartments brings socio-cultural problems for *gecekondu* people who used to live in one-storey *gecekondu* houses with a garden (2007:35). As slum areas are viewed as urban villages (see Gans 1962, chp.1), so *gecekondu* people consider the *gecekondu* settlements to be an extension of their village life. My landlady Gül did not want to spend the summer in her home village although her husband insisted on going there every summer. This was because she thought that life in the village was not so different from the life in Ege, where she at least had some friends. Fadime has been in Ege for 30 years and she told me that since the living conditions, daily practices and social relations in Ege were not so different from those in her home village, she was not surprised when she arrived in Ege.

Considering the fact that *gecekondus* correspond well to their lifestyles (see Chapter 4), it is not unexpected that Ege people are concerned with the difference between lifestyle in *gecekondus* and a life in flats. The most frequently mentioned point is the freedom provided by a *gecekondu* settlement, which is related to privacy: they can listen to loud music, beat their rugs in their gardens, go out and enjoy their garden anytime they like. Besides, they know their neighbours and the other inhabitants of Ege. This gives them a sense of localism which is based on mutual trust and familiarity. Taking

into account the fact that the satisfaction with privacy and localism are key factors in a sense of community (Wilson and Baldassare 1996:38), it could be suggested that Ege people strongly belong to *gecekondu* life, which is the basis of their sense of community (see Chapter 5). In this sense, in addition to belonging to the peasants, the *gecekondu* symbolizes warm community ties, intimate relations and solidarity between *gecekondu* dwellers, especially for those who were born in rural areas or are left-wing by orientation. In contrast, since they suppose that life in apartments brings in formal relations, it is frightening for them in terms of social relations and privacy.

Erman suggests that, for *gecekondu* dwellers, apartment life is restrictive and this is the prominent reason that they hesitate about moving into apartments (1997a:97). For the majority of Ege people, life in a flat is like life in a jail, so if they move into a flat they think they will lose their freedom and privacy. The narratives about the restrictions of apartment life go hand in hand with the stories of “uncultivated” people who have recently moved into flats from *gecekondus*. For Ege people, what makes these people “uncultivated” is their unrestricted behaviour in the use of public areas, such as leaving their shoes in front of the door, shaking out carpets through the window and making noise. It is surprising because these are the things they used to do in their *gecekondus* and would like to keep doing in apartment life. Their narratives show that living in a flat requires being polite, which is assumed to be a sign of civilization and progress. Hayriye and Şeker have been next-door neighbours for 30 years and, according to EUTP, they will be living in the same apartment block when the project is completed. They used to call each other by their nicknames. Şeker’s nickname was “bad apple” and was given by Hayriye. One day they were talking and making jokes about their future lives in the new flats:

Hayriye: When we are in the new flats I will shout “bad apple” at you as I do here.

Şeker: No, not anymore, I will kill you if you do so in the apartment. You are supposed to call me [she changes her voice here] Mrs. Şeker and I will reply to you “yes Mrs. Hayriye”.

The residents of Ege were quite aware of the material and symbolic distance between themselves and the urban middle class, whom they consider as the “other” (see Chapter 5). Ferhat, who was quite contented with his life in the *gecekondu* house that he

had constructed in 1982, was concerned with prevailing formal neighbourly relations in apartments:

I know, in apartments people call each other "Mr.", so they will call me "Mr. Ferhat". I do not like this. What is Mr.!!! and why? Do not call me Mr. Ferhat, call me just Ferhat. These social settings are not my cup of tea... Look at my furniture, it is 30 years old. The construction firm told me that a doctor, an MP and a lawyer have already bought flats in our future apartment block. How can I invite them to my home? How can I speak to them and make friendships?

For Sayer, shame is related to the failing of a group or individuals to live according to values and commitments that others will value (2005:152). It could be suggested that Ege residents, like many other *gecekondü* people, are aware that they are different from the middle-class people in terms of consumption practices, cultural and educational background and social class. Their narratives showed that their way of life was not appreciated by the middle class. This feeling of difference is not value free but creates a sense of shame and inferiority among them. This is related to the idea that posh is equated with people who are supposedly superior (Sayer 2005:122). From the very beginning of their migration, especially since they have begun to have frequent encounters with the middle class after the urban reforms of the second half of the 1990s and after, they have started to see themselves through the eyes of the middle class. With the EUTP, they are going to be living with middle-class people in the same neighbourhood and even in the same apartment block. So, although their position in the labour market and class structure of Turkey will not change as a result of EUTP, their consumption practices in terms of infrastructure and accommodation might change, as well as their immediate relationships with their neighbours, which play a great role in *gecekondü* people's lives. This increases their tendency to compare and multiplies tension, so elevating the level of shame that they feel. As is obvious from the narratives cited in this chapter, they compare their furniture, social attitude and vocabulary to those of the middle-class people who have moved into the new flats in Ege. In that comparison, it can be seen that Ege people do identify apartment life with middle-class qualities whereas they seem to be closer to *gecekondü* life. So, they feel that they will not be able to fulfil the middle-class criteria in terms of cultural and economic capital and class position and this is why they feel that they will be looked down upon by their

future neighbours. In sum, Sayar's observation about the socio-spatial segregation of classes is relevant to the situation of Ege people with title deeds:

The socio-spatial segregation of classes makes living in a class society more bearable not only because it hides material inequalities and symbolic violence but because it facilitates sharing of internal goods (which tend to be class differentiated too) and provides scope for recognition of worth among equals. (2005:186)

The narratives that were shaped by the feeling of shame were more popular among *gecekondu* dwellers who had aspirations of upward social mobility and modern life. Tarık came to Ankara alone when he was a teenager to work. He had a very difficult time, and worked hard at several jobs at the same time until he became well-off. Currently he is retired and running an estate agency in Ege, where he used to live 15 years ago. He celebrates EUTP, which will gentrify the area and complains about the *gecekondu* people who replace their *gecekondu* houses with luxury apartments.

These people do not know how to live in apartments. They are still gecekondu dwellers, what does it matter if they move to luxury houses, they are the same. Women sit in front of the luxury apartments as if they still live in gecekondu. But, you know, most of them are not able to afford these houses, so they will be moving to other areas and middle-class, educated, civilized people will come to Ege. They will be the people who will develop Ege.

Among left-wing oriented people, being different from the middle classes and living in *gecekondu*s are sources of pride. For this group, rather than apartment life, it is *gecekondu* life which is to be valued. They are community oriented and emphasize social solidarity and privacy in terms of the space provided by the *gecekondu* settlements. They undervalue the middle-class life and the apartments which symbolize a middle-class way of life in terms of promoting individualism, atomization and consumption. Besides, they try to enjoy the facilities provided by the lifestyle in *gecekondu* areas. Deniz is a left-wing activist in white-collar employment and his five-person household income is around 4000 TL, which is five times the minimum wage and quite a lot higher than the average household income in Ege. During the summertime, he and his two brothers use the backyard of their *gecekondu* as an open-air cinema. They play a movie and reflect it onto one of their exterior walls with a projector. They invite their neighbours and watch together. These three brothers would

never like to move into an apartment. However, they told me that since their mother had health problems, it would be better for her if they move into an apartment with better heating conditions. Tuncay came to Ege when he was a teenager in 1986; he is a left-wing activist and sociologist. His wife Aynur is a left-wing activist and research assistant at a university. After living for several years in a *gecekondu* in Ege, they bought a new *gecekondu* in Yakup Abdal and moved in there. They have trees and grow different types of fruit and vegetables in their garden. They think that this is a privilege provided by *gecekondu* life for them.

Despite the fact that some Ege people would like to replace their *gecekondus* with luxury houses or move to other areas, the common feeling amongst nearly all Ege people was that they are emotionally attached to their neighbourhood. Although they are not being forced to leave Ege, it seems that the majority of the original population will be displaced when the EUTP is completed. They think that they were in Ege when the living conditions were not as good as they are now and they suffered from the lack of urban services and infrastructure facilities; nevertheless when Ege is “developed” currently, they have to leave. One of my interviewees, Serpil, who came to Ege district when she was 14 in 1993, told me that:

It was us who had to put up with all the dirtiness of this district, but when it gets developed, it will be the rich people who will enjoy it! In a way, they do not let us enjoy the improved version of our own district!

6.5 Conclusion

The overall feeling of Ege people in the face of urban reforms in Ankara, including EUTP, is positive and they generally think that urban reforms are developing the peripheries of Ankara and that these are beneficial for all the city’s people. Recently arrived shopping malls and middle-class people are proof of the development of Ege for them. Ege people with title deeds will gain money through EUTP. But this gain does not enable them to live in luxury apartments in Ege. Despite this gain, their position in the labour market and class structure does not seem to have changed. In brief, for Ege people with title deeds, urban reforms in Ege bring development, which provides financial resources but fails to provide upward social mobility.

7. The Dispossessed in Ege

7.1 Introduction

The urban reforms have affected people in Ege in different ways depending on their ownership of legal title deeds. EUTP covers only Southern Ege. People with title deeds negotiate with private construction firms and get one or two flats in return for their *gecekondus* depending on the size of their plot. People who do not have title deeds or have only provisional title deeds in Southern Ege are called ‘occupiers’. They cannot legally claim any rights over their *gecekondus*. Northern Ege covers 253 *gecekondus*, most of which were built after 1985, which means they were unauthorized and ineligible for redevelopment since the last The *Gecekondu* Amnesty only covered *gecekondus* built before 1985. Southern Ege contained 1230 *gecekondus*, 704 of which were authorized.(Eroğlu 2011:60). Urban reforms and ownership of *gecekondus* in Northern Ege (Çöplük Area) are different and the properties are different from those in Southern Ege. This chapter will discuss the strategies of occupiers in Southern Ege, the ownership pattern of *gecekondus*, urban reforms and people’s strategies in Northern Ege.

7.2 Occupiers in Southern Ege

The plan of EUTP is based on parcels, which are composed of around 10 plots each (see Chapter 6, Figure4). The owners of the plots in a parcel come together and negotiate with private construction firms/people. Usually one plot belongs to the municipality and there might be one or more occupiers in a plot. So, not all the plots of the occupiers are in the same parcel. If there is no occupier’s plot in a parcel, usually there is not a problem in negotiation and the *gecekondus* on such parcels can be transformed into multi-floor apartment blocks quickly. If there are plots belonging to occupiers in a parcel, the negotiation process gets complicated. Despite the fact that the occupiers do not have any legal right to claim on their *gecekondu* houses, their houses are not simply demolished by the municipality. The city planners of Mamak Municipality told me that:

They do not have any right to claim. However, so as not to make them homeless the municipality will try to provide some plot for them, if there is any. The usual pattern should be to provide them with small plots in parcels to enable them to have a contract with business firms. These people might be paid something and get a flat in this way.

When there are occupiers in a parcel, business firms take them to court and need a legal decision to displace them. The legal procedure takes a long time. It has two results on which the strategies of occupiers are based. If the private firms decide to take them to court, the occupiers do not move out immediately. They wait until the court makes a decision and they think that in this way at least they can live in their *gecekondu* for longer and do not need to rent a house during the court process. If the court decides that the occupier should move out, the occupiers do not allow the private business firm to demolish their *gecekondu*. Occupiers demolish their own houses without causing too much damage to the materials since they sell these materials and make some money. Secondly, the construction firms do not want to waste time with long legal procedures since the value of Ege is increasing quickly and spending time means losing money for them. They might make a financial offer to occupiers to persuade them to leave their plots without applying legal procedures. Occupiers' major strategy is based on obtaining these offers from private construction firms. So, when the legal owners of the plots on their parcel get an agreement with a firm, the occupiers do not demolish their *gecekondu* and they wait for an offer from the firms.

Occupiers who think that they cannot gain as much as they expect out of a possible offer by construction firms look for other ways to gain a legal title deed for some plot in their parcel, regardless of the size of this plot. If their close relatives have title deeds for plots in their parcel or in other parcels, they buy a small part of the plot from them in order to gain more power in negotiations with private construction firms. Turan came to Ege where his married sister lived in 1989. He built a *gecekondu* on the same parcel and got married to Türkan, who lived in another *gecekondu* in the same parcel. Since their houses are not covered by the *Gecekondu* Amnesties of the 1980s, now they have no legal right to claim. Turan's sister and Türkan's parents recently agreed with a construction firm to transform their houses into multi-floor apartment blocks. Turan told me that he bought 20m² plots from Türkan's father and explained this as follows:

A 20m² plot, it sounds strange, doesn't it? I know I can do nothing with such a small plot. But, I have a legal right on this parcel now. When the business firms come, they have to persuade me. Ok, they can take me to court, but it is time consuming for the private firms. So, what they will do is to offer me much more money than the price of a 20m² plot. Let me say I can ask 15,000-20,000 TL to pass on my rights on this parcel. And, I can add some more on it and buy the municipality's share of the parcel. In that way, I can have a flat in the apartment buildings that will be built on our parcel.

Occupiers strongly believe that ultimately their *gecekondus* are demolished without significant compensation. For this reason, they aim to gain as much as possible. Putting it in different words, the strategies of the occupiers in Southern Ege are not aimed at claiming housing rights, rather they are based on getting the most out of their negotiations with construction firms. The occupiers use individual tactics rather than acting collectively. In this sense their struggles are very similar to those of people with legal title deeds in Southern Ege. Moreover, there is no solidarity between them and Southern Ege people with title deeds in terms of negotiations with private firms and housing rights. People with legal title deeds leave the solution of the problem to the private firms and do not intervene or take part in the process. This shows that the collaboration which existed among them during the period when they were getting the infrastructure to their neighbourhood has already dissolved.

7.3 A Brief History of the Northern Area

The former waste dump of Ankara was in Northern Ege between 1964 and 1978. This is why Northern Ege is still called Çöplük (Waste Dump). After the implementation of the *Gecekondu* Amnesties during the 1980s, the urban reforms applied in this area were different from those applied in Southern Ege. This was mostly because of the existence of the waste dump. This wasteland area has been surrounded by *gecekondus* since the 1980s and was not reclaimed as a construction area in the improvement plans due to the waste dump. Ege people struggled to force the municipality to remove it and the municipality started to fill it with used materials in 1979; the area was totally covered in 1985 and turned into a solid waste dumping area (see Chapter 4). After filling it in, the municipality built a coal yard on the waste dump

(see photo 32). Because of the air pollution, this coal yard was threatening people's health in Ege. As discussed previously, the local people struggled to get the coal yard removed and finally succeeded in 1997. After 1997, this area was used as an animal market where cows and sheep were sold for the Eid festival. However, when the number of houses around the animal market increased, people did not want the market either and it was removed. Now, it is an empty area and not used for any specific purpose (see photo 33).

7.3.1 Expropriation of Northern Ege and Ege-Mutlu Housing Cooperative

The level of coal gas created by the condensed solid waste was measured in 1993 and the experts suggested that this accumulated waste was producing high levels of coal gas, which might explode. This would have affected the nearby houses violently so this area was declared unsuitable for human settlement. Therefore, construction was forbidden in Northern Ege in 1993 and Ankara Municipality expropriated this area in 1994. This meant that the area became public land and the municipality had the authority to decide how to use it. It also meant that people could not legally claim any rights to this area. Since none of the people had title deeds, the municipality only paid them the cost of debris (*enkaz bedeli*).

It could be suggested that the relationship between people of Northern Ege and political parties, especially the social-democrat central left parties, was based on clientelism, due to their left-leaning Alevi identity. The majority of people in Northern Ege were Alevi by background, as was the mayor of Mamak at that time (Erođlu 2011:126). The mayor was from the SHP (Social Democratic People's Party) and this party, like other central left parties, was supported by Alevi people (see Chapter 5). He was under pressure from the people who were directly affected by the evacuation decision and he needed to take steps. He offered to initiate a housing cooperative in 1995 for Northern Ege people. People were told that they could own their house by paying small amounts of money monthly. However, they did not know the type of houses and the payment conditions. Based on the Gecekondu Prevention Law no 775, the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement provided cheap land in the Tuzluçayır *Gecekondu* Prevention Area, which was within walking distance of Ege. The

cooperative, Ege-Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi, was established in 1995 by the people and it was legally attached to the ministry. They elected board members for the cooperative and started to pay monthly instalments. After some months, they could no longer pay because the monthly instalments continuously increased. The building lasted for seven or eight years and the monthly payments increased 80 times in nominal value during that time (Eroğlu 2011:127). Most of the residents had to hand over their rights to third parties and get back what they had paid until they sold out. The cooperative should have been composed of only *çöplük* people; however, my interviewees told me that there were other people who became members, paid and got houses when they were finished. They told me that people who were close to the managers of the cooperative, who were among the *çöplük* people, and close to the mayor participated in the cooperative. The number of cooperative members among Northern Ege people had declined from 344 to 161 by the time the construction was completed (Eroğlu 2011:127). Northern Ege people who used to be cooperative members mentioned the sudden increase in the wealth of board members and their relatives and emphasized their fraudulent activities. Hacer narrated this process as follows:

Since 1996 the municipality has been torturing our area. They established a cooperative in İsmail Değerli's [the mayor of Mamak municipality in the 1990s] time. They told us that if you established a cooperative, you could own a house for the price of a packet of cigarettes monthly. Then, the people close to the head of the cooperative and some other people from Mamak Municipality joined the cooperative, so people of this neighbourhood who were the real sufferers could not benefit. A few people from the çöplük area whose incomes were higher than the rest, some employees of Mamak Municipality, enjoyed these houses. The head of the board had his wife, brother and mother as members of the cooperative and now he has at least 3 or 4 houses through the cooperative. I also joined at the beginning, then the monthly payments increased and I could not pay any more, so I quit. At that time they gave me some money back. Some of the people even could not get back what they had paid. All in all, these houses were enjoyed by the rentiers.

Eşref runs a small shop with his two brothers and came to Northern Ege when he was 3 months old. His family were members of Ege-Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi. They paid the monthly instalments for 8 years and had a flat. He narrated their experience of the housing cooperative like this:

Yes we have a flat now, you know, in the cooperative apartments. But ask me how we paid for it. You should see my brothers, mother and father how hard they worked to be able to pay the continuously increasing monthly instalments. The board of the cooperative... I know that the wife of the cooperative board head suddenly had golden bracelets from the elbow to the shoulder. How do you think that happened?

This housing cooperative, which was suggested as a compensation for Northern Ege people's houses, was no different from other cooperatives that were initiated by other groups of people in other areas of Ankara. So, it was not possible to consider this offer as a compensation for the *gecekondus* of people in Northern Ege. The residents think that their losses, caused by the expropriation of the *çöplük* area, were not compensated by the provision of cheap land for Ege- Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi. All of them agreed that buying a house through this housing cooperative was not much different from buying a house in regular ways. So, the Ege-Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi's aim of compensating them and providing them with cheap houses did not work for any of them.

Unlike the people in Northern Ege, the city planners of Mamak Municipality thought that this was compensation and that people were being provided with accommodation which they could pay for easily but that they did not choose to do so. Ms. Sevcan, a city planner of Mamak Municipality told me that:

*You know our people, when they do not see that the danger is approaching, they ignore it and do not take any action. We have informed them several times since the 1990s that their houses will get demolished. They thought that since their houses had not been demolished yet, the municipality could not demolish the *gecekondus* anymore. They were offered houses which were built by their own cooperative, but they did not pay. They had to pay very little, but they did not. Only a handful of them did it.*

In the report of Kentkur (2001:19-20), it was also mentioned that, since Northern Ege people were provided with land from the Tuzluçayır *Gecekondu* Prevention Region by the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the problem of property ownership had been solved in the area. In short, in the case of a demolition, people of Northern Ege would not be compensated.

The majority of people in Northern Ege, regardless of whether they acquired a flat from the housing cooperative or not, did not demolish their *gecekondu* houses in the neighbourhood. The people who could pay the monthly instalments to the housing

cooperative got their flats and some of them moved into these new homes and rented or sold their *gecekondu* houses in Northern Ege. This created further problems since the new owners of these *gecekondu* houses were not compensated by the cooperative but in the municipality records even the houses that had been sold were indicated as having been compensated. In some cases the married son of the household moved into the new flat and the rest of the household stayed in their house in Northern Ege. People who could not afford the cooperative did not move anywhere. In short, the housing cooperative did not result in the evacuation of Northern Ege.

7.4 Attempts at Demolition and Alliance with the Left Wing

Since this area was expropriated and the municipality had ‘compensated’ people for their houses on paper, it decided to evacuate the area and people were sent notification to move out in 1996. However, by that time even the houses built by the Ege-Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi had not been finished yet. If they did not demolish their houses and leave, the municipality demolition teams would come and do it. This decision of the municipality became an inspiring moment for the reunification of Northern Ege people and the leftist movement, which had enjoyed a close relationship with Ege until the early 1990s. When demolition teams came to Northern Ege, left-wing people and organizations, along with university students, came to struggle against the demolition teams alongside Northern Ege people and they did not let the teams in. The collaboration between left-wing activists and the people of Ege continued. But this unification was different from the previous one because, before the 1990s, Ege people themselves were the left-wing activists and many left-wing activists lived in *gecekondu* areas. In those times, there was an organic relationship between the left wing and *gecekondu* people and *gecekondu* areas were both primary living and activity areas for left-wing groups. So, the left did not support the struggle of *gecekondu* people from the outside. But this time Ege district, like many other *gecekondu* areas, was not the ‘homeland’ of the left-wing activists as used to be the case and the left wing’s activity was limited to supporting *gecekondu* people from the outside. In short, after the second half of the 1980s, left-wing activists only visited *gecekondu* areas where they used to be

residents. For the left-wing activists who lived in Ege, this is because *gecekondu* areas are undervalued and considered as peripheral even by the leftist groups. The outsider position of left-wing groups and people created a relationship that *gecekondu* people considered to be temporary and based on personal interest. So, *gecekondu* people's attitude towards left-wing groups is based on pragmatism. Aynur is Hacer's daughter-in-law and she moved to Yakup Abdal after she had lived for several years in Northern Ege. She is a university lecturer and left-wing activist who established an NGO, *Topal Karınca*³⁴, in Northern Ege with her friends several years ago. They aim to get women together and provide a space for children to spend their time by learning to play musical instruments, folk dancing, and getting help with their homework from volunteer teachers (see photo 34). She told me that the children's and other Northern Ege people's attitudes towards her left-wing friends who do not live in Ege were different from their attitudes towards her and other left-wing activists who do live there.

Gecekondu areas are not seen as peripheral only by the AKP and the government. Left-wing people also consider these areas as peripheral. Our left-wing activist friends... They are not bothered about living in gecekondu areas but do not hesitate to pay house loans to banks to live in a middle-class area. They even ask us how we can live in a gecekondu. This shows how they undervalue the life here. All the left-wing associations and parties work in the city centres, not in gecekondu areas anymore... Since I live in this neighbourhood they do not behave towards me in such a way, I mean through pragmatism. But, the children and other Ege people try to get as much as possible from my friends who do not live in Ege but come to Topal Karınca for solidarity. But this behaviour is breaking the solidarity.

In 1999-2000, the municipality decided to evacuate Northern Ege again and informed the residents. But the people did not leave their houses. Again, left-wing organizations, especially *Halkevleri*, which is a nationwide NGO, supported them. The university students came to Northern Ege to support the *mahalleli* a day before the demolition teams came since on the day of demolition the police would not let them in.

³⁴ *Topal Karınca* literally means "Lame Ant". The name of this NGO comes from the story of a lame ant who is carrying water to extinguish a fire. When the lame ant is reminded that he is not able to reach the fire, he replies: "Although I am not able to get there, I will die on the way, it is more than enough." On this point Aynur told me that, although they could not solve the problem of inequality and injustice, they could die on the journey of this struggle. In this sense, it could be suggested that the name of the NGO shows that local left-wing activists, who used to be relatively powerful in *gecekondu* areas, think that they do not have much power now, but are still encouraged to do something to struggle against inequality and injustice.

More than a hundred university students were lodged in several houses in this area. They blocked the roads and kept watch at the entrance to the area. They did this in shifts and others cooked for the people waiting at the entrance. People from other *gecekondu* districts, left-wing organizations and parties came to support them. When the demolition teams arrived with the police, all these people fought against the police. The Northern Ege people and their supporters did not let the demolition teams enter their area and their houses were not demolished. In 2005, again Northern Ege people received notification that if they did not evacuate their houses within ten days their houses would be demolished and they would be charged for the rent on their houses for the previous five years. Again they did not leave their *gecekondus* and were supported by leftist organizations/parties, university students, intellectuals and so on. The demolition teams could not even enter the *çöplük* area to demolish their houses. Hacer told me that, since hundreds of people were waiting at the entrance of Northern Ege, the demolition teams could not run the risk of precipitating a violent fight between the police and the people. She said that, if they had entered, lots of people would have died since the people were so determined. The majority of houses in this area were not demolished due to the strong resistance of the people.

It could be suggested that the relationship between left-wing organizations and the *mahalleli* was consolidated by 2005, after ten years of collaboration. This was a new type of relationship in terms of left-wing discourse. Up to and including the early 1980s, it was the working relationship that attached the left-wing movement to *gecekondu* people. So, it could be suggested that it was the ‘working-class’ feature of the *gecekondu* people through which the left-wing movement related to them and propagated. On this point, it can be claimed that, since the 1990s, the left-wing movement in Turkey stopped restricting itself only to the struggle against problems generated by working relations. Based on their 10-year experience, the struggle of the people in Northern Ege and Dikmen Valley in Ankara inspired Halkevleri (People’s House), a left-wing organization, to initiate Housing Rights Offices in different *gecekondu* areas in Ankara to unify the struggle of *gecekondu* people city-wide. Housing Rights Offices do not have an office in Ege but they do have them in many other *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. The closest one is in the Misket, which is within 15

minutes walking distance of Ege. I attended some women's gatherings there, and spoke to activists from Halkevleri. I also attended protest meetings organized by Halkevleri around Ege and other *gecekondu* districts. I interviewed two of the activists who specialized in housing rights. One of them explained the aims and activities of the Housing Rights Office as follows:

Our offices spread to Istanbul and Adana to unify the struggle for housing rights. In December 2011 we initiated the Assembly of Housing Rights, and in gecekondu areas people elected their representatives. This assembly organizes a general meeting every three months and representatives attend. Each district also has weekly or fortnightly meetings. When we organized a protest meeting, we wrote it on the clipboard in our various offices in gecekondu districts. We listed people in terms of their location and asked them to inform the rest of their community. The Housing Rights Office is not categorically against urban reformation. Sure, there should be some reformation. We are against the way it is done... These projects should be aimed at social benefits rather than individual rent.

McAdam suggests that a feeling of injustice precedes social movements (1999:51). People who feel their position to be unjust get together through a reinterpretation of their position. In this sense, the people of Northern Ege define the situation created by the urban reforms as unjust. This injustice has rebuilt a collective identity for them. Currently, the people of Northern Ege are organized around the Housing Rights Offices that were initiated by Halkevleri. In this area, there are several representatives who were informally appointed by the local people. These representatives attend the general meetings of the Housing Rights Office, in which representatives of other *gecekondu* areas also participate. They inform the people in their neighbourhood about the decisions made in these general meetings. Moreover, representatives speak to the local governors, political parties and other political authorities. Sabahat is one of the representatives for Northern Ege and she explained the features and the responsibilities of the representatives like this:

I have been a representative for some years. It is not a formal election. Once people were talking about the general problems of our mahalle, they said, let Sabahat become representative and others confirmed it... Why did they choose me? The mahalleli knows that I am capable of going everywhere, you know I am not a shy person. Moreover, I am good at communicating with everyone from any strata of society. I can even talk to the prime minister... When we gather to talk to someone, for example the mayor, district governor and so on,

the representatives go inside the office of that person and talk to him/her and the rest wait outside... I attend the meetings of the Housing Rights Office and I inform people in my community.

Most of the people in Northern Ege have a left-wing global perspective, which was mostly generated by the Alevi tradition in Turkey (see Chapter 4). In this sense, they have a positive attitude towards the activists of *Halkevleri*. They generally appreciated *Halkevi* activists' efforts. Cezmi, who is left-wing by orientation and Alevi by religious background said:

They are, I mean, young people from Halkevleri are like my sons and daughters. Whenever they visit our mahalle I accommodate them. I invite them for lunch. They work for my rights more than me, so why shouldn't I support them?

It could be suggested that, just as the first settlers of Ege formed a strong solidarity and collectivity, now they need this kind of collectivity again in order to protect their rights. This is not only because their problems are the same but also the solution can only be achieved through collective action. So, their common problem forces them to act collectively. My interviewees in Northern Ege insisted on their belief that if they did not act collectively they would not gain any rights and would have already been displaced. They believe that individual tactics – such as the ones used by the people in Southern Ege – are not enough and they need to act collectively. The neighbourhood had a memory of the collaboration which contributed to getting the infrastructure and amelioration of their neighbourhood. This history was remembered again in the mid 1990s. Northern Ege people were encouraged not to demolish their houses in spite of the demolition decision of Mamak Municipality because they believed that Mamak Municipality had not been able to demolish their houses on three occasions due to their collaboration, solidarity and determined struggle. On this point, first of all, *Halkevleri* gave them a feeling that they were not alone in their struggle. Secondly, it brought in organized methods through meetings and representatives, so providing a formal framework for solidarity. Besides *Halkevleri*, some of the Northern Ege residents work like housing-rights activists. Hacer is the most prominent of these. She has a close relationship with various intellectuals, local newspapers, university students and left-wing groups and she mobilized her networks to contribute to the collectivity of local people. She tries to persuade people not to demolish their houses and to struggle until

they receive compensation. Since Hacer has been living in Ege for around 30 years, the *mahalleli* are familiar with her and trust her. So, she was able to organize the people. But with the *Halkevleri* and Housing Rights Offices, which Hacer also supports, they could have regular meetings and collaborate with other *gecekondu* people in different areas. Thirdly, *Halkevleri* provided information about their legal rights and the plans of Mamak Municipality. I interviewed Sabahat, who is from Çorum and has lived in Ege for 25 years, and when I asked her about the evacuation decision of the municipality she explained it to me and then she suggested I talk to Candaş, who is an activist with *Halkevleri*. She told me that:

He knows every detail much more than all of us. Talk to him if you want to learn more... You know, they work for us. Once, he even rented a minibus and took us to the protest meeting, he paid himself. We owe them too much.

In this sense, the name of the relation between the left and *gecekondu* people is collaboration, since left-wing activists are still outsiders. Moreover, collaborating with left-wing activists is perceived by the *gecekondu* people as a tactic to gain their rights. For example, in Dikmen Valley, a *gecekondu* area which has been transformed into a prestigious neighbourhood by the urban transformation projects, the early settlers were left-wing oriented *gecekondu* people. Their houses were built before the *Gecekondu* Amnesties of the 1980s, they got formal title deeds and were compensated for their houses when the urban transformation project was implemented. The later comers had a right-wing orientation. They were recognized as occupiers and their houses were demolished. *Halkevleri* organized the people in Dikmen. Left-wing *gecekondu* dwellers in Dikmen did not collaborate with them in solidarity with the occupiers.³⁵ This was because they had already been compensated for their houses and would get nothing out of collaboration. On the other hand, right-wing later comers organized around *Halkevleri*, which was a left-wing organization. In Northern Ege, it could be suggested that the leftist orientation of the people and the history of left-wing solidarity contributed to the close relationship between local people and *Halkevleri*. However, as Aynur suggested about the relationship between left-wing groups and *gecekondu* people, for Northern Ege people this collaboration is a pragmatic one through which they can

³⁵ For detailed research on urban movements in Dikmen Valley see Deniz, M.B. (2010).

achieve their rights. Cezmi's wife, Sema, explained why she collaborated with Halkevleri, saying, "*They are working for my rights*". As was partly the case in Dikmen area, the left-wing people of Southern Ege with formal title deeds did not collaborate with Northern Ege people so much. Only a few people, who were emotionally attached to either the left wing or to Northern Ege, collaborated with them. Furthermore, occupiers in Southern Ege were not struggling and in solidarity with Northern Ege people. This was mainly because the type of ownership of their *gecekondu*s and the municipality plans implemented in these two areas of Ege were different.

The last notification was sent to the people of Northern Ege in the winter of 2012. The theme of the notification was the same as the previous ones and urgently instructed people to move out of their houses within 15 days. The people did not move out, as had been the case when previous notifications were delivered. Since their houses had not been demolished during the previous three attempts by the municipality, they were more encouraged to stay. However, this time the municipality was determined to evacuate the area. The immediate motive was to open up the main roads, on which there were several *gecekondu* houses. Additionally, this latest move could be related to the fact that the EUTP was about to be completed and most of the *gecekondu*s in Southern Ege were about to be replaced by multi-floor luxury apartment blocks. Ege is becoming more prestigious day by day and the existence of *gecekondu*s in the northern part is disrupting the prestige of the neighbourhood. Fazilet, who moved to Northern Ege seven years ago, pointed to the recently built apartments approximately 200 metres away from her house and told me that:

The construction firm of these apartments complained about us to the municipality. The firm claimed that our houses, I mean, our gecekondu s ruin the view from these apartments and this is why they could not find customers for them.

The city planners of Mamak Municipality told me that they had asked Hacettepe University to check the coal gas level of the former waste dump and now they were waiting for the results of the investigation. If it is not dangerous, the municipality will transform this area into a sport and leisure park. If it is still dangerous, the municipality will turn it into a green area and will wait until the danger recedes. It could be suggested that transforming this area into either a green area or a leisure park is an investment that

is designed to contribute to the value of Ege and elevate the value of Mamak. In any case, the *gecekondus* around the former waste dump will be demolished. The city planner continued as following:

Well, we sent out the notifications last winter, but even if they moved out we would not start to work on the çöplük area immediately, so we decided not to evacuate that area till summer. Moreover, we said that it would not be kind to evacuate in the winter time. So we decided to let them spend the winter in their current houses.

7.5 Strategies of Mamak Municipality and Northern Ege People

Although people do not have legal titles, Northern Ege dwellers told me that the municipality could not demolish their houses without getting the written permission of the residents. I was told that the municipality had some strategy to solve this problem. As it was explained to me, first of all, since the beginning of 2012, the municipality had started to send officers who told local people that if they demolished their own houses they would be able sell or reuse the materials, whereas if the municipality demolition teams came, they would damage the materials so they would not be able to reuse or sell them. My interviewees told me that the municipality had invited local people and talked to them one by one and tried to persuade them to sign a document on which it was stated that “I hereby declare that I allow Mamak Municipality to demolish my house and I do not claim any right to my *gecekondus* house or my plot.” People added that the reason behind the municipality talking to them one by one was to prevent them from advising one another not to sign this document. Interviewees told me that they were promised a house or a plot if they signed. But, the next day when they visited the municipality and talked to the people there, this time they were told that they would not be given any house or plot. People who had signed this document talked with other people in Northern Ege and decided that they had made a big mistake. Now they tried to apply legal procedures to cancel their signatures on the documents. I was told that about 15 houses had been demolished by their owners. Most of these were built on plots that would be roads according to the new plan. Since the demolition of these houses was inevitable, people did it themselves in order to save the materials used in their *gecekondus*. Inhabitants of Northern Ege think that another reason to start the demolition

of the houses with the roads was to empty the edges and squeeze the houses in the middle. Demolition of all the houses at once would create expansive negative reactions from the *mahalleli*, as was the case in previous demolition attempts. So they claim that in this way the municipality aimed to decrease the level of solidarity and resistance among *mahalleli*.

A considerable number of *gecekondus* in Northern Ege were rented and the owners no longer lived in this area. For *mahalleli*, this diminished their bargaining power and level of solidarity. In their eyes, the people who rented their *gecekondus* to other people were well-off and as Eşref told me that “*They would not dare to come and struggle for their houses since they would not care about a loss of 150 TL rental income.*”

The tenants did not participate in the Northern Ege people’s struggles since they could simply move to another area and rent another house in the case of demolition. Northern Ege people who lived in their own houses tried to persuade the tenants not to pay their rent to force the landlords who no longer lived in the *mahalle* to struggle for their houses. Aynur talked about their aim to include the landlords who live out of Ege as follows:

We should include tenants and the landlords who do not live in Çöplük in our struggle. Look at these landlords, they are good at making money by renting their houses in the mahalle; however, they think their tenants live here temporarily and they do not struggle for their houses and the mahalle. If the tenants do not pay the rent, the landlord could be forced to do something. So, we keep talking with the tenants and trying to persuade them not to pay their rents.

The Mamak Municipality did not send demolition teams until the end of July 2012. On the 26th of July 2012, the municipality demolition teams came to Northern Ege with police reinforcements. This time the people tried again to prevent the teams from demolishing their houses. Locals were helped by the activists from *Halkevleri*; however, this time there were not as many people struggling against the police as before. Some people lay down in front of the demolition vehicle; some did not come out of their *gecekondus* (see photo 35). But the police used tear gas and high-pressure water hoses to terminate the resistance. People, among whom there were old ladies, disabled people and children, were injured. This conflict lasted 6.5 hours and finally ten *gecekondus* and two shops were demolished (see photo 36 and 37). Northern Ege people told me that,

since the resistance was not as powerful as on previous occasions, the demolition teams were able to demolish some of the houses. On the other hand, the demolished houses and shops were on the main road and it was certain that they would be demolished at some point. So, this demolition was not unexpected for them.

A day after the demolitions, Ege people organized a protest meeting in front of the Mamak Municipality. They tried to persuade the municipality to provide them with houses built by TOKİ in different parts of Ankara. There was a rumour that the rest of the houses would be demolished after the Eid Festival, which was at the end of August 2012, but this did not happen. Housing rights activists plan to take this case to the European Court of Human Rights.

7.6 Individual Tactics

Despite the need for collective action, Northern Ege people told me that the solidarity among residents is not as high as it was before, as was seen in practice during the demolition in summer 2012. This was partly because a significant number of inhabitants of Northern Ege were tenants and some of the rest had already been persuaded by the municipality. At this point, Northern Ege people, even the ones who participated in the collective action, found various individual ways to solve their own housing problems. Fazilet bought a *gecekondu* in Northern Ege in 2005. At that time, she had been in Ankara since 1985 and she had some money to buy a house but not enough for one with a formal title deed. She lived with her son, daughter-in-law and two grandchildren. Her position was slightly different from that of many other people in Northern Ege. The person from whom she bought her house had been a member of Ege-Mutlu Yapı Kooperatifi but quit because he could not afford the monthly payments. She was not entitled to enter this housing cooperative since she did not live in Northern Ege at that time, but now she was asked to move out without being provided with any accommodation. So, although she was not compensated by the cooperative, if it was compensation, her *gecekondu* would be demolished like the others. Moreover, the first owner of her house had made the occupation payment for his house to the municipality and Fazilet kept the document for this payment. Once a week Mamak District Governor

(*kaymakam*) receives Mamak people, and she and her daughter-in-law regularly visit him on these public days. Fazilet told me that she explained the situation with her *gecekodu* and asked the district governor whether a special rule could be applied to her house.

People in Northern Ege also attempt to find alternative housing. Building a new house in Yakup Abdal is the most popular option for them. During the second half of the 1990s, when they were sent notification for the first time from the municipality about the evacuation of the area, some of the residents started to buy plots in Yakup Abdal, which is a nearby village (see Chapter 6). Another strategy of people in Northern Ege – and other people with formal title deeds in Ege – is to accumulate all the income from the wage-earners in the household and take out a house loan from the bank. They take the loans for at least 15-20 years. Some of them rent out the house that they buy and this rent helps them to make the monthly repayments of the bank loans and some of them allow their married sons to live there. Then, if their houses are demolished, their first option is to move into these new houses. In short, it could be suggested that for the people of Northern Ege collective strategies are accompanied by individual strategies.

7.7 What do Northern Ege People Want?

Almost none of my interviewees in Northern Ege demand to continue living in this area. But they certainly do not want to be homeless. They want to be provided with a house which they can afford. They told me that, until now, the municipality has attempted to demolish their houses three times and it has still not demolished all the houses in Northern Ege. Since people had prevented demolitions before, they kept hoping to stop future demolitions. Most of them plan to struggle until they get compensation for their houses. They think that if they do not move out, the municipality cannot demolish the houses easily since they will resist, and the municipality may provide them with houses.

Although they do not insist on living in the same area, some of them are emotionally attached to their houses or invested in them. Because of this, it is very hard for them to move out. For example, Hacer is one of the most colourful people in Ege.

Despite her low income, she provides a shelter for over 60 cats – the number can vary due to births, new cats arriving and deaths – and for her it would be almost impossible to move all her cats to a new place (see photo 21-22). Cezmi, whose father bought his *gecekondu* house in 1988, has worked a lot in his garden and has a variety of fruit trees there (see photo 38). He told me that:

*Yes of course I struggle for compensation for my house.
But, look at my garden, how can I leave this garden that I have
worked on for years?*

Fazilet was a neighbour and a close friend of Hacer and Cezmi. She bought her *gecekondu* in Northern Ege in 2005. She decorated the floor of the living room, rebuilt the interior walls of her garden and built a separate room next to her house to be used if her sons wanted to establish a small shop (see photo 39). She told me that she would struggle to prevent the municipality from demolishing her house without compensation; however, she was concerned about all her previous expenditure on her house (see photo 39-40) and did not know how the municipality could compensate her for all of this.

7.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be suggested that different types of property ownership directly affect the survival strategies of *gecekondu* dwellers. These survival strategies increased the individualism amongst the residents of slum areas. As suggested by Soytemel (2013), the gentrification processes have negative impacts on the urban poor's collective capabilities and support mechanisms (p.10).

As discussed in this and the previous chapter, the urban transformation plans that have been applied in Ege have affected people unevenly. There are two main reason for this: (1) Northern and Southern Ege have a different legal status in terms of urban plans (2) *Gecekondu* amnesties only legalized the *gecekondus* built in the pre-1985 era. These factors brought in different types of property ownership for Ege people. Since the mid 1990s, the struggles and strategies of Ege people have changed due to the different legal status of their *gecekondu* houses. People with legal title deeds in Southern Ege feel that they are going to be well off when they are provided with flats in the new apartment

blocks. Since the plots of people without title deeds in Southern Ege are in different parcels, the common struggle does not work for them. Moreover, due to the fact that their positions are different from those of people in Northern Ege, they have not collaborated with each other. People with formal title deeds in Southern Ege will benefit from the urban reforms so they do not support the occupiers or Northern Ege people. In brief, the discussions in this chapter and Chapter 6 suggest that solidarity and the motivation for collective action are based on mutual benefit and common interests, and when the people's perceived individual interests are not compatible with the interests of the community, the solidarity dissolves.

8. Dissolving of the Community

8.1 Introduction

During the 1960s and 1970s, the *gecekondu* dwellers were struggling for legal entitlement to their *gecekondu* houses and to obtain infrastructure facilities. Getting the formal title deeds and service provision required collective action. So, social solidarity and a sense of community were the main tools to achieve their goals and protect *gecekondu* people from being marginalized during the social cohesion years of the 1960s and 1970s. Obtaining legal title deeds and infrastructure services secured their presence in the cities. Ege residents were able to successfully sustain their sense of community and they acted as a community until the early years of the 1990s. This chapter will discuss the coup d'état of 1980 and the rapid liberalization that followed immediately after, which together eroded the opposition movements and reduced the level of community action. The suppression of social movements, a strong emphasis on individualism and diversification among *gecekondu* dwellers in terms of wealth and occupation gradually marked the end of social cohesion. According to the narratives of Ege residents, by the second half of the 1990s, people had lost the sense of community in their neighbourhood. This chapter will mainly discuss the dynamics of the breakdown of social cohesion in *gecekondu* areas through focusing on the case of Ege. Important factors include: an increase in crime, the individualization of society, increasing levels of neoliberal implementation and a weakening of the left-wing movement and a sense of community.

8.2 Changes in State Structure

As a result of the economic crises of the late 1970s, Turkey, like many other developing countries, applied to the IMF and World Bank for funds. The “24 January Decisions”, which took the perspective of the IMF’s stability policy and the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Policy (Yeldan 2005:6), were prepared during the early days of 1980 (Boratav:146-149). These were aimed at dismantling the state capitalist

framework and introducing structural adjustment policies. The relatively powerful left-wing opposition based on the class movement was the major obstacle to the implementation of neo-liberal policies. The military came to power on 12 September 1980 and Kenan Evren, the head of the General Staff at the time of the coup d'état, mentioned that it was intended to reconstitute peace in the country; rather than changing the state structure, the aim of the coup d'état was explained through the political violence in the country. However, "reconstitution of peace" meant clamping down on all oppositional elements (see Chapter 3).

Turkey witnessed a rapid liberalization, which ironically emerged under the military government, which stepped down in 1983 after preparing a more restrictive constitution in 1982. The Turkish state adopted an outward-looking market development strategy to open the country to globalization. In order to compete in global markets, the Turkish state started to privatize state institutions, which provided decent working conditions and support in kind for the workers. Although the implementation of privatization was slow during the early years of the 1980s, it gained momentum in 1986. Since 1985, state shares in 270 companies, 114 establishments, 22 incomplete plants, 8 toll motorways, 2 Bosphorus bridges, 1 service unit, 929 real estates and 6 ports have been taken into the privatization portfolio. Between 1985 and 2012, the total proceeds from privatization are recorded as USD 43.1 billion (Privatization Administration no date: 5). The role of the Turkish state shifted from an arbitrator to a mediator between the global economy and the domestic economy (Keyder 1987, Kaya 2008:178). The coup d'état was followed by austerity measures and marked the end of policies aimed at diminishing the gap between social classes through employment opportunities. *Gecekondu* dwellers, as the urban working class, were unable to retain their rights to social insurance and job security after 1980.

As in many other countries, in Turkey rapid liberalization and globalization pushed a large proportion of the labour force into informal employment. Despite the fluctuations during 1984-1985 and 1986-1987, the ratio of the informal economy to the official economy significantly increased after 1980 (see Central Bank of The Turkish Republic 2000, p.25 Figure 4 and p.22 Figure 3). The ratio of the informal economy was

8.9% in 1980 and increased to 11.7% in 1984 and 15.7% in 1989 (Central Bank of The Turkish Republic 2000: 21 Table 6).

For the countries of the First World, Wacquant suggests that urban marginality is not a result of economic backwardness but of “rising inequality in the context of overall economic advancement and prosperity” and it is a by-product of a double transformation in the sphere of work (1999:1641-1642). In less developed countries like Turkey, proletarianization and polarization could be discerned as two major consequences of globalization (Kaya 2008:163). The growing numbers of informal jobs had poor working conditions and led to the degradation and dispersion of basic employment; on the other hand, overqualified jobs shaped post-1980 employment patterns. Hence employment opportunities in formal manufacturing remained limited. As shown by many research, for the urban working class, employment no longer granted foolproof protection against the menace of poverty and marginality (Buğra and Sinmazdemir 2005:6).³⁶ Considering the increasing gap between jobs requiring high levels of skill and low-skilled manual jobs in terms of working conditions, employment appeared to be one of the sources of social inequality, urban marginality and poverty. Frank and Cook call these kinds of markets winner-take-all societies, in which successful individuals sweep the board of gains, while the mass of losers have to face intense competition. They suggest that “winner-take-all markets have increased the disparity between rich and poor” and in the absence of an effective redistribution system the winners grab everything (1996:4). *Gecekondu* dwellers were considered to be a large population of consumers; however, the widening gap between the social classes excluded them from the much-advertised consumption. Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan (2000) illustrated a screenshot of Turkish society as follows:

While the rich live in grandeur in housing complexes with their own sports and social amenities, send their children to the West to study, attend special health care centres and invest capital in global enterprises, the have-nots line up to buy

³⁶ In spite of approaches which suggest that employment is a struggle against poverty, approximately 30 per cent of all workers in the world live with their families below the US\$2 a day poverty line (ILO 2012: 41). This has been the case for Turkey since 1980. In Turkey, the proportion of employed poor in the population over 15 was 15.37% in 2009 (TUIK, Results of 2009 Poverty Study)

subsidized bread which, in most cases, constitutes the bulk of their daily diet.(2000: 492)

Withdrawing the policies protecting labour had broader implications for the common political language and academic literature as well as the self-perception of the people. Class was not a unit of analysis and labour could no longer create identity and value (Sennett 1998:64-71). Indeed, the retreat from socialism was a world-wide trend which highlighted non-class identities and inequalities (Kaya 2008:161, Wood 1998). At the end of the 20th century, avoidance of labour became a common theme within the social sciences and class was increasingly perceived as an outmoded and redundant issue (Dinerstein and Neary 2001:25, Crompton 1993:14-16). This tendency directly influenced the *gecekondu* dwellers' self-perception and the way in which they were positioned in political discourse. For the policy makers, after the 1980s, the link between identity and the labour of *gecekondu* dwellers broke down. Boratav names the policies of the governments of the 1980s "corrupted populism" (2004:152) and suggests that during these years governments apparently aimed at corroding the class positions and consciousness of the working class. *Gecekondulular* (slum people) were no longer addressed as the urban working class and *gecekondulular* referred to an identity which did not reflect the class position of the people or their status in production relations. Social insurance, which was mainly based on formal employment, and decent employment opportunities could not be the main tool for *gecekondu* dwellers to improve their lives as they used to be before the 1980s. Protecting labour would be a cost to capital owners, so it was aimed to deal with the problems of *gecekondu* people through extra-market tools. In this sense, the aim, the result and the process of the four reconstruction amnesties enacted during the 1980s were important. They legalized the *gecekondu*s without placing a burden on the market. While the previous *gecekondu* amnesties were aimed at the rehabilitation and legalization of existing *gecekondu*s, the amnesties of the 1980s were mainly aimed at integrating the *gecekondu* areas into the formal land market (Erman and Eken 2004:58, DüNDAR 2001, Aslan 2008:162-163, Dinçer 2011:44). This was compatible with the rapid liberalization aims of the 1980s. These amnesties transformed self-help *gecekondu*s into assets (see Chapters 3

and 6). As a result, *gecekondus* lost their legacy in the perspective of the public at large and *gecekondu* areas turned into rental areas.

The *gecekondu* dwellers were not provided with formal title deeds at once. This legalization process was done step by step. First of all, they had to apply to the municipalities for a *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi* (Title Deed Provision Document). Before applying, people had to pay 2000 liras for the stamps that would be used in the legal documents for *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi*. Then officials from the municipalities came to *gecekondu* areas to measure the plots and define their size. After these measurements, people were given *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi*. This document was not a formal title deed, but the *gecekondu* owners who were provided with these documents became the legal right-holder of their plot. In order to get the formal title-deeds, they then had to pay the price of their plots. The municipality was aware of the fact that people would not be able to pay the whole amount at once, so they divided it into small instalments and *gecekondu* dwellers paid for their title-deeds over time. The houses of people who had only *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi* but had not paid for the formal title-deed were not legalized. For example, Kasım came to Ankara in 1968 and bought a *gecekondu* in 1992 in Ege Mahallesi. This *gecekondu* was built in 1973 and had only *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi* but not a formal title-deed. When he enquired about getting it, he learnt that he needed to pay 80,000 Turkish Liras, which was double price of the *gecekondu*. He gave up on the idea since he could buy a flat with this money in other parts of Ankara. The requirement to have a *Tapu Tahsis Belgesi* before the legal deed could be understood as a tool to keep the *gecekondu* dwellers under control and to tame them. *Gecekondu* dwellers had to be “fine citizens” in order to obtain title deeds. It could be suggested that the allocation of provisional title deeds before the formal deeds enabled the mainstream political parties to persist in their vote hunting in *gecekondu* areas.

Gecekondu dwellers benefitted from the opening up of *gecekondu* areas to the urban land market (see Chapters 3 and 6). Kemal, who built a *gecekondu* in 1983 in Ege, told me that he was against Turgut Özal’s policies since they resulted in impoverishment. However, he told me: “*but also I have to say that.. you know amnesties... We owe too much to him. I have to confess the positive things he has done.*” Most of them tried hard to move out of *gecekondu* neighbourhoods in order to improve their living conditions.

The weakening of territorially based communal bonds contributed to the strategies of distancing themselves from the identity of urban working class. Wacquant suggests the expression “I am not one of them” for this kind of distancing and suggests that this weakening “undermines local solidarities and confirms deprecatory perceptions of the neighbourhood” (2000:114). While Sırrı Süreyya, who used to be a revolutionary in *gecekondu* areas, including Ege, and is now an MP, said that today’s socialist movement fails to get strong support from *gecekondu* areas because the people no longer embrace *gecekondu* identity:

In those times, people claimed that they were gecekondu (slum people). Slum people used to be proud of who they were. But now, you can never find a slum person who accepts and is happy with being gecekondu. They might even disguise that they live in a gecekondu neighbourhood.

The suppression of the oppositional element resulted in a silent society in terms of political activism and collectivity. The suspension of all political parties and two socialist trade union confederations and the declaration of a state of emergency throughout the country exacerbated the situation. Society in general had a constant fear of talking about politics and coming together to raise their demands. On the other hand, it terminated political polarization. Therefore, people of different political ideologies and faith backgrounds could live in the same neighbourhood and this contributed to the increasing diversity of slum areas in terms of faith and political ideology.

Ege people who were brought up during the period of political polarization in slums before 1980 told me that they started to feel more comfortable in terms of political violence and polarization. Even people who said that they would never vote for right-wing parties and that they have always been close to the centre-left said that they celebrated the military government, which put an end to the “anarchy”. People in Ege did not need to prove that they were left wing and right-wing people did not need to disguise their political orientation. For this reason, it was mostly the Sunni people who lived in Ege during those years who celebrated the termination of political polarization. This resulted in greater feelings of comfort for Ege people. However, feeling comfortable in terms of political polarization and abstaining from collective action gradually engendered a kind of ignorance about political issues, social movements and,

most importantly, local problems. People seemed to be content that the political polarization and the violence had ended but they were also quite aware of the fact that it was due to this political polarization that they had been able to easily come together and claim their rights in an organized way. In my interviews and my daily conversations, the coexistence of narratives celebrating the termination of political polarization and complaints about the ignorance of people in terms of political issues and local problems shows the interrelatedness of these two situations. When Ege people talked about the consciousness of people in their neighbourhood and compared the past and the present, they mostly said that nowadays nobody was interested in what was happening. Cevdet's narrative on the political polarization and collective action has been mentioned previously, and he continued to talk about the depoliticization of *gecekond* people like this:

Now, community ties have weakened. Listen to what is being talked about in coffee houses.... Everybody is complaining about the current political and economic situation. But, nobody likes to do anything together. For example, some years ago, I think it was around 1995, we blocked this main road as a protest. The coffee house in Ege and another which is just 5 minutes walking distance from Ege were extremely crowded. Look, we were protesting and blocking the way, and lots of people were sitting in the coffee house and playing cards. Come on, this was for all of us, not just for my benefit. We were doing it to ask for service provision from the state. No-one came from the coffee houses to join us. And finally, a female friend went into one of the coffee houses and said "shame on you!" and in spite of this no-one came to participate with us. You see... If this was the 1970s or early 1980s all the guys would have gone out and participated. It's because the people are comfortable now. But, now, look at the society, no one cares about the community anymore!

Ferhat gave the example of the protest meetings of the 1970s:

*You should have seen the May Day meetings. Everyone from the *gecekond*s participated. Thousands of people I mean. But now look at the current situation. Even in the 1990s, in commemoration of Uğur Mumcu³⁷ and of the Sivas Massacre³⁸,*

³⁷ Uğur Mumcu was a prominent Kemalist intellectual and investigative journalist. He was assassinated by a bomb placed in his car outside his home in 1993, and his murder has not yet been solved.

many people participated. But this year only 50-100 from all Mamak came to the commemoration of the Sivas Massacre. I don't understand... Are people getting sillier?

Rapid liberalization has reshaped cultural patterns and lifestyles and sharply marked the class differences through working conditions and consumption patterns in Turkey. Being a worker was devalued and leading a modest life was no longer seen as a merit in the post-1980 era. The rich became the ideal citizen; Turgut Özal, prime minister during the years of rapid liberalization, publicly said: “I love the rich”. Gaining money, regardless of the means, was encouraged politically after 1980. For example, due to the significant decrease in real incomes, the deteriorating situation of employees in the civil service was one of the hot debates during the 1980s, and Mr. Özal, said: “My civil servants will find their way” (*Benim memurum işini bilir*).³⁹ This expression was an encouraging message for civil servants to engage in bribery. It could be suggested that this message was addressed to a larger audience, reminding people of the income-generating opportunities of liberalization and advising citizens to maximize their profits through creating their own opportunities. So, earning money by hard work was no longer a merit; rather, being an intelligent person who found ways of gaining money without working was the ideal.⁴⁰

In contrast to the pre-1980 period, now it was “nasty” not to consume and show off. Once it was only a small group of privileged people who consumed, then consumption hit the mass market and included the middle class (Ayhan Tarhan 2006:124). But this new mass consumption was based on highlighting status and class differences rather than disguising them. In this sense, as Aydın suggests “highly educated professionals of the upper middle class in big cities have taken advantage of global economic policies

³⁸The Sivas massacre refers to the events of 2 July 1993. On this day, many writers, intellectuals and musicians were in Otel Madımak in Sivas to commemorate Alevi poet Pir Sultan Abdal, who was a major figure in Alevi culture. After the traditional Friday prayers (*Cuma namazı*), militant Sunni fundamentalists set fire to the hotel. Every 2 July, thousands of people, especially Alevi, gather to commemorate the arson of the Madımak Hotel in Sivas.

³⁹ The hidden meaning is that if civil servants cannot survive on their low incomes, they are smart enough to accept bribes.

⁴⁰ Many popular films of the 1980s, such as *Namuslu* (1984), *Postacı* (1984) and *Banker Bilo* (1980) were based on the 1980s atmosphere which promoted gaining social status through money that is not earned by working.

and improved their living conditions” (2009:299). This liberalization promised big dreams for the lower classes through individualistic success stories such as the examples of arabesque singers, football players and pop art figures coming from lower-class or rural families or having a *gecekondu* background, and ending up being very rich and popular. These success stories were combined with Özal’s political promise to “create one millionaire in each district.” However, rapid liberalization did not contribute to general welfare. It resulted in a significant decrease in real incomes generated by the structural adjustments and deepening inequality between social classes. Compared to the pre-1980 era, private enterprises were bound by fewer laws protecting workers’ rights. This decreased the quality of working conditions, the levels of income generated by formal employment and the negotiating power of the working class.

Although the self-regulating market system precluded state intervention to resolve social and economic problems, the need to respond to increasing levels of poverty after 1980 did not remain unrecognized. Poverty became a subject of heated debate during the 1980s in Turkey. These discussions were similar to the poverty discussions of the 16th century in Europe (Buğra 2007:33-34). Social inequalities were not discussed in terms of the decreasing power of the working class and the loss of its instruments and struggle to gain resources. The problem was reduced to an abstract notion of poverty. Özal’s government, which was the liberal government founded immediately after the coup d’état of 1980 and resembled Margaret Thatcher’s government, established The Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASFs) in 1986 with Law No. 3294 for poverty alleviation. However, the budget of the SASFs was used for other aims and it was not used widely for poverty alleviation during the 1980s.

Despite the increasing poverty after 1980, the transformation of *gecekondus* to important assets by the *Gecekondu* Amnesties of the 1980s and the occasional opportunities created by the flexible economy provided some early-comer *gecekondu* dwellers with opportunities to improve their living standards and income. Their survival skills, hard work, use of family labour and their skills in independence about money contributed to this improvement. As suggested by Pınarcıoğlu and Işık’s study on Sultanbeyli in İstanbul, the early comers “enjoyed their privileged positions in the real estate market, and benefitted from the labour market” (2008:1363). Small groups of

individuals in Ege became quite affluent blue-collar employees, some became civil servants and owners of local shops and shops in the city centre. Some of those people moved to other parts of the city and new rural migrants or *gecekondu* dwellers from other neighbourhoods rented or bought their *gecekondu*s. The newcomers could not benefit from the *Gecekondu* Amnesties, which meant that they did not have the legal title deeds for their homes. In this sense, they did not have the same assets as the early comers. The newcomers' opportunities to become employed in the formal sector with decent working conditions were very limited compared to those of the early comers. So, among the *gecekondu* dwellers, there has over the years developed a clearly marked differentiation of wealth and occupation. The heterogeneity among slum dwellers in terms of employment status and household income reflect the divisive effects of neo-liberal policies on the lower classes. The early comers passed on their marginal positions to the newcomers, who were ready to accept working under inferior conditions and became the real marginalized segment of society.

8.3 Social Assistance

The Islamist political movements were quite aware of the urban marginalization of the late 1980s and 1990s. Although the Islamist Welfare Party (RP) was a fringe party, it became a major partner in the coalition government during the 1990s. Between 1991 and 1998 the Welfare Party took seats in the Turkish Parliament and was in government in an alliance with the True Path Party in 1996-1997. In the local elections of 1994, it won 28 of the mayorships in Turkey's 75 provincial centres. Necmettin Erbakan was the founder of the RP and the first Islamist prime minister, holding office between 1996 and 1997. The RP was inspired by a manifesto, National Outlook (*Milli Görüş*), written by Mr. Erbakan in 1969. This manifesto prioritized economic independence, Islamic morals and religion and closer economic co-operation with Muslim countries rather than Western countries.⁴¹ "Just Order" was the slogan of Necmettin Erbakan during the 1990s. It was suggested as an alternative to secular and West-oriented development

⁴¹ For a discussion of Islamic-leaning parties in Turkey see Narlı, N. (1999) and Cizre, Ü. (ed.) (2008). For a further discussion of the rise of the Welfare Party see Öniş, Z. (1997).

strategies, which aimed at integration with the global market and were inspired by the corrupted moral values of capitalism (Özcan and Turunç 2011:69, Aydın 2005:198). Therefore, the electoral base of this party consisted of the poor and the disadvantaged, who were excluded from the benefits of growth in the age of globalization (Öniş 1997:745-748, Ayata 1996:52-55). Hale and Özbudun suggests that the rapid rise of the RP was associated to the weakening of the nation-state and especially of the welfare state and erosion of social rights (2010:13). The RP was inspired by the Islamic tradition of charity, lay stress on social assistance and channelled the budget of the SASFs into poverty alleviation. The SASFs' resources were allocated by the local governorates (*kaymakamlık*), which were appointed by the central government. This is why slum people call this welfare “*kaymakamlık yardımı*” (governorate assistance). In addition, the councils that were governed by mayors from the Welfare Party mobilized their resources, such as networks among businessmen, to allocate social assistance for local people.

In 1992, the Green Card Scheme was introduced as a non-contributory programme to provide poor and uninsured people with access to health institutions; it was meant to be a social assistance mechanism. Until this scheme was implemented, the healthcare system had provided free health services exclusively to the population employed in the formal job market. The allocation of a Green Card is based on means testing and this scheme failed to provide broad coverage to all those in need. Applicants have to prove that they are poor and Green Card holders have to renew the card annually. In spite of the fact that it is quite limited in terms of benefits and only covers expenses for in-patient care provided by hospitals of the Ministry of Health and university hospitals upon referral (Ağartan 2012:461), for a significant number of *gecekondu* dwellers the Green Card appears to be the only available channel for accessing the healthcare system. Although fitting into the scheme's poverty criteria is sufficient to be eligible for a Green Card, local officials have power over the decision-making process. Yoltar's (2009) study shows that:

...in the absence of legible guiding criteria, local officials are free to take advantage of their abundant discretionary powers to make termination decisions based on their own

understandings of who is a 'fine' citizen deserving of the state's compassion. (2009:774)

This scheme has been used arbitrarily and as a political tool, for example, the number of allocated Green Cards might change at election time.⁴² So, the deprived population's access to healthcare depends on the decisions of those in political authority. By 2011, the number of beneficiaries had reached 9.1 million (12.7 percent of the total population) (World Bank 2013:8). However, this scheme fails to provide broad health coverage to all those in poverty in the sense that 36-37% of the population is not covered by health insurance and almost half of the rural population remains outside health insurance coverage (World Bank 2005:72). This indicates that a significant proportion of the population, who live in a society that has already fallen apart, also suffer from the lack of a protective state. Therefore, for numerous people, neither the state nor their community is a shelter against poverty any more.

The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK), as well as the secular political elite and secular section of the population, were not comfortable with this rise of political Islam. For the Turkish military, which declares itself to be the defender of the secular character of the Turkish Republic, the accession of the RP into government was a threat. On 28 February 1997, the TSK initiated a meeting of the National Security Council and took a series of decisions concerning the rising power of political Islam in Turkey. The RP was driven out of the party coalition and its credibility was undermined. In 1998, it was banned for violating the principle of secularism in the constitution. The Virtue Party (FP) was then established by former MPs of the RP. However, the Constitutional Court also banned the FP for violating the secular articles of the constitution after a long process of trials in 2001. This led to a turning point for the Islamist movement and resulted in a division between the advocates of National Outlook and the younger generation in the Islamist movement. The former established the Felicity Party (SP) and the latter the Justice and Development Party (AKP) in 2001. The AKP, in contrast to former Islamist political parties, portrayed itself as a pro-Western party, presupposing harmony between Islamic civilization and the West, and emphasized incorporation into the global system both on a

⁴² According to data from the Ministry of Health, the number of Green Card holders was 14,541,791 before the general elections of 2007. This dramatically decreased to 9,230,604 after the general elections (Çelik 2010:75).

domestic and an international level⁴³. In the general election of 2002, the AKP won a landslide victory and over two-thirds of the seats in parliament. So, for the first time in Turkish history, an Islamic-leaning political party, the AKP, came to power without any alliance with other political parties. Despite the higher economic growth, under the AKP's rule, privatization and employers' flexibility over labour use increased while the once-secure jobs decreased and more people became employed in precarious jobs (Bağımsız Sosyal Bilimciler 2006:16-25, Kurul 2012:92-93).⁴⁴

8.3.1 Social Assistance as a Tool of Inclusion

Since the social insurance system is based on formal employment, the population covered by this system has shrunk due to the decrease in formal and secure job opportunities. Combined with the decreasing protection from society, this has resulted in exacerbating the precarious situation of the population at the urban periphery. In order to compensate for this, the AKP stressed the role of charity in relieving the burden of social spending on the public budget. So, despite the fact that the AKP was in agreement with the basic tenets of modern capitalist development and globalization, it followed the same path as the Welfare Party in terms of social policy. It stressed the social assistance allocated by the councils that it administered. Defining itself as conservative democrat, the AKP kept social assistance outside the realm of social rights, disregarded collective labour rights and undertook a mechanism which only indirectly relieved those who suffered under the market system (Çelik 2010:74-75). According to Buğra, the AKP's philanthropy is characterized by "the mutually reinforcing role of Islam and neoliberalism, which together provide a uniquely strong support to the traditional tendency to undermine the responsibility of political authority in combating poverty" (2007:46). *Gecekondu* dwellers, as urban marginals, are a major target group of this philanthropic social assistance.

In Turkey, the social assistance system, which includes financial aid and aid in kind, is based on means-testing for the population excluded from regular employment

⁴³ For a further discussion on AKP, see Hale and Özbudun (2010), Part I.

⁴⁴ For a critical discussion on AKP's labour market policies, see Bozkur and Yalman (no date). See also Yeldan (2005) for a detailed analysis of privatization in Turkey.

and minimum living standards. It provides very limited protection to those who are excluded from the formal employment, and in this sense it is similar to Southern European welfare models (Buğra and Keyder 2006:212). In order to be eligible, people have to collect the required documents, apply to the council or the governorate and prove that they are poor enough to receive the welfare. Ownership of a car or the formal employment of a family member can be an obstacle to receiving the welfare.

The majority of my interviewees had received social assistance from the Council and through Mamak governorate (*kaymakamlık*). If they provided evidence of entitlement to the welfare, they were given one tonne of coal each year and a food package quarterly by the council. SASFs distribute the coal and some cash for students in poor families through Mamak governorate. *Muhtars* play a key role in this assistance since they have the authority to provide the proof of poverty (*fakirlik kağıdı*) that certifies a person is poor. In this sense, they have the authority to determine who the deserving poor are (Soytemel 2013:7). Moreover, since they have most in-depth know and up-to-date knowledge of their neighbourhoods, they could collaborate with local municipalities, local party branches and provide information other organizations to arrange the distribution of the assistance provided by these organizations (Soytemel 2013:7). The food package consists of cheese, oil, olives, sugar, flour, tea, pasta, rice and tomato paste. People complain about the low quality of these foods; however, they say that “at least we do not need to pay for them.” The coal is such poor quality that in the winter time, from the smell of the smoke one can guess that people are using it.⁴⁵ The amount of the distributed coal is not sufficient for a year, but most people are careful with it and get by without paying for more. It is the women’s responsibility to manage to get by with the insufficient amount of coal they receive. For example, women only light the stove when their husbands and kids are at home. So they heat the living room in the early morning, since their children and husbands are at home before going to school and work, and they do not heat the house again until their children and husbands come back.

⁴⁵ Gülistan Aydoğdu, who lives in Ege, mentions the smoke from the coal in her short article on social assistance and the urban transformation project in Ege. See, Aydoğdu (2012).

Many scholars have suggested that there is a close link between the perception of welfare and trust in government (Edlund 1999, Taylor-Gooby 2011:463). In political science literature that focuses on legitimacy and welfare, welfare policies are considered to be one of the major tools by which confidence in governments is promoted (Gilley 2006:48-50). Taylor-Gooby's research shows that people who adopt a pro-welfare attitude have more confidence in governments (2010:465). The findings of my research show that the relationship between welfare opinions and trust in government and other state institutions should be interpreted the other way around. This means that trust in the government and formal institutions might directly affect people's attitudes to welfare policies. In Ege, almost none of the interviewees thought that the social assistance was distributed fairly. Corruption is an appropriate term to describe the economic dimension of state-society relations during the post-1980 period in Turkey (Buğra and Keyder 2006:212), and for Ege people, this is the main reason for the ineffective distribution of welfare. In other words, it can be said that Ege people's mistrust of state institutions influenced their opinions of welfare. Petersen et al. suggest that citizens' welfare opinions are also shaped by their political values (2010:25). In this sense, Ege people's mistrust of the council, which is run by the AKP, Islamist right-wing party, is reinforced by their negative attitudes since most Ege people are Alevi by faith background and have sympathies towards the central left. Kemal, who is Alevi and a supporter of the CHP, the centre-left and the largest oppositional party in the government, said that the AKP could cancel social assistance for beneficiaries who did not support it.

I have never received any assistance from the council. I applied for myself but I was not eligible since I have a retirement pension. I respect this. But I applied for my daughter who gets by from working in the rubbish and collecting usable things. Look, she was not considered eligible. Now I am helping her, I am paying for her food... But Mashallah Melih Gökçek [the Mayor of Ankara] distributed it to everybody! He got his salary from the state but distributed the state's budget to... I am a citizen, I am paying tax. This is not helping, helping means giving money to a beggar. What they do is injustice, robbery... To be honest, I was organizing people of the CHP before the elections and organized a meeting in one of the neighbour's houses. But then he moved to Sincan since he was threatened by Melih Gökçek's guardians. He cancelled the meeting and moved

to Sincan since he was afraid that his social assistance would be cancelled. Do you see?

On the other hand, Ege people who are closer to the AKP do not talk about corruption in the distribution of welfare by the council. These people accused the *muhtar*, who is a left-wing person, of privileging his *hemşeris* and supporters when providing *fakirlik kağıdı* (proof of poverty) to be submitted to the governorate to receive social assistance from SASF. İbrahim, who used to be an activist in previous Islamist parties and now supports the AKP, says that:

I applied for social assistance once, but I was not eligible, then I did not apply again... yes, social assistance is good, if the distribution is fair. Look there are people who have a car, a house and a regular income whereas a real sufferer does not receive... This is all about the muhtar. The muhtar knows who is truly poor and who is not. He should show the truly poor. But he does not do this, because he privileges people who are closer to him.

Ege people who are, or used to be, activists for the socialist left or define his/her political view as socialist do not blame individual or institutional actors such as the council, the AKP, the *muhtar* or the governorate. In general they have a wider perspective and blame the whole capitalist system in which welfare policies are used to tame the grassroots people. This is reflected in the account of Tuncay, who is a socialist activist.

Capitalism is an irrational system. It is consuming, vulgar and costly. This results in inequality and impoverishment. The problem is here that, people survive in a way. They are given coal, food... If they cannot receive it they gather food from rubbish in the streets. They survive yes, but is it a decent life?

Although there can be intermediary positions and people who do not fit into this categorization, it could roughly be claimed that Ege people's perceptions of welfare are significantly influenced by their attitudes towards the AKP and the government.

Most people in Ege thought that people who were close to the AKP, the party in power, would have more access to the available welfare. Moreover, the AKP is infamous for getting the votes of *gecekondu* people through the allocation of welfare. However, there were poor people who opposed the AKP, and were receiving welfare.

Even so, there were welfare recipients who were against the AKP but thought that only AKP supporters received it. Associating the receipt of welfare with indirect support for the AKP contributed to the segregation of Ege people. Therefore, receiving welfare might be understood as a proof of someone's political orientation. There were jokes based on this perception. People who got welfare were called "*Makarnacılar*" (people who get pasta) by *gecekondu* people, and in the case of insufficient or absent service provision by the state and the council they said that "it is because of *Makarnacılar*". One day, there was a protest meeting against the installation of a base station in a park in a neighbouring district (Mutlu district) and some people from Ege went there for solidarity (I also went). They explained the low participation of *gecekondu* people in this protest meeting through welfare distribution. A group of *gecekondu* people were discussing this during the protest meeting and saying that "if we were distributing pasta, *Makarnacılar* would come in large numbers!"

The issue of desert in welfare policies has attracted a considerable amount of interest from scholars. Petersen et al.'s research shows that the desert of welfare recipients is one of the determining elements in shaping people's perceptions of welfare (2010:26-27). In Turkey, "the discourse around social assistance is predicated on the notion of the 'deserving poor' and 'undeserving poor'" (Soytemel 2013:7). In this sense, most Ege people said that social assistance was needed but it should have been allocated to the needy who really deserved it. For Ege people, it was not the needy but the rich who got welfare from the council and governorate, so the welfare recipients did not deserve the available social assistance. So, the confusing organization of social assistance creates new tensions among the *gecekondu* communities. They suggested that the council and the governorate should have a stricter controlling mechanism for means testing and should abstain from distributing it to people who had a regular income. Şeker, who received social assistance once from the council and once from the SASF, told me that:

*They should identify the disabled, the elderly and ones lacking any income and pay them rather than allocating food. [Paused and hesitated to say] To be honest... the rich receive the welfare now, right? It requires strict control and investigation. It is not the **deserving** [my emphasis] people, but the people who have strong networks who receive the welfare.*

Welfare applicants may request reinvestigation in the case of rejection and raise complaints about fraud or about recipients whom they believe do not deserve the social assistance. In Ege, the accounts about desert went hand in hand with stories of complaints made to the council and governorate to cancel someone's welfare. In the case of complaints, according to my research as well as the research done by Murakami, the officials respond promptly and investigate complaints through their database or unannounced home visits (2011:23). These kinds of complaints were known as "spying" among Ege people. Considering the fact that welfare recipients do not have any control over social assistance, "spying" can be considered as the only way that welfare recipients can intervene, at least in the distribution process (Murakami 2011:23). Despite the constant fear of spying, many welfare recipients share the food sent by the council or governorate with their neighbours, relatives and friends in their neighbourhood. In this sense, the allocation of food and coal started a new moral economy among the *gecekondus* dwellers. So, their relationship is not an easy or uniform one in the case of the distribution of welfare. It could be suggested that the ambiguity of the state's policy on *gecekondus* and welfare such as social assistance, which were mostly implemented through paternalist relations, urged both solidarity and envy, and this led to spying among *gecekondus* dwellers.

The discourses on welfare have two main axes, one focusing on security and redistribution while the other one, which has emerged recently, is based on the individualistic approach and gives greater weight to proactive individual responsibility (Taylor-Gooby 2010:453-454, see Esping-Andersen 1990:Chap.1). The second approach argues that the provision of public assistance could create dependency and encourage laziness, and welfare recipients are defined as lazy and work-shy (Sennett 1998:139-140). The narratives of many interviewees seem to be compatible with this argument. Moreover, for them, welfare support is the main reason for the unemployment in *gecekondus* areas since they say that people depend on the welfare support and do not need to work. This is why most of the interviewees suggested that the welfare support should only be distributed to people who are unable to work, such as the disabled, the old and the sick. The majority of the interviewees told me that, rather than the

distribution of social assistance, the government should increase job opportunities and employ poor people. This attitude reflects Turkey's traditional welfare regime, in which only formal employees are covered by the social security and pension system.

Fraser (1987) mentions that, in many countries, female welfare recipients outnumber males and suggests that "even a minimal and inadequate 'safety net' increases leverage of women who are economically dependent on individual men" (1987:103-104). While this is the case for many women in Ege, it is considered a threat by the men, who usually spend their time in the coffee house in Ege and tend to be involved in illegal activities. They are mostly against social assistance because they say welfare support empowers women, and that female welfare recipients do not depend on men any more. For them, this results in women challenging them and not respecting men's authority. Osman, the owner of the coffee house in Ege told me that:

I am against welfare support. Do you know what happens to women? They say that "I receive my food, coal and pocket money for my children, so why shall I be bothered with my husband? I can find a man anywhere." You see, they do not bother to live with men any more. It will increase the divorce rate.

My research indicates that women and men experience social assistance differently. Most of the time, unemployed men are shy about applying for the available welfare support because of their masculine honour. Men pass this duty to the women and women go through the necessary paperwork to enable their families to benefit (Buğra and Keyder 2006:221-222). While this might show the empowered situation of women in terms of their visibility in the public sphere, it can also be suggested that, since seeking welfare is related to a family's low income, for male members of the household it is a kind of proof of their failure to fulfil their role as breadwinner. Although most of the men do not apply for this support, they silently accept it when they receive it. In some cases, men in precarious and informal work are opposed to applying for welfare support. In these cases, the women in the family applied secretly. Gülay's husband used to be a factory worker who had a regular income above the minimum wage. The factory went bankrupt, he founded his own business but he went bankrupt, too. She told me that:

My husband was unemployed. He was against receiving welfare. But I collected all the required documents and applied. When the coal was distributed he understood. Indeed, he became happy but he did not say anything.

Some of the men ask their wives to cancel the welfare when they improve their economic situation or find better jobs. Murat is a 19-year-old Ege settler. He has two brothers. Except for the younger brother, who was attending primary school at the time of the interview, all the members of his family were employed. He and his brother frequently change jobs and work for the minimum wage. His mother works part-time and gains around two-thirds of the minimum wage. The main income is his father's salary. When his father was unemployed for a year, his mother applied for welfare support from the council and they received it. When his father found a more secure job, he asked his wife to cancel the welfare support in order not to violate the rights of other deprived people. In this sense, receiving and applying for welfare support has a moral dimension for Ege people. Many people in Ege mentioned that truly poor people did not directly express or reveal that they were poor. The most significant feature of the truly poor for Ege people is that if a person is truly poor s/he feels ashamed and this prevents him/her from applying for social assistance. My interviewees told me that this was another reason why, rather than poor people, the rich received the social assistance. My findings coincide with Murakami's research (2011), which investigates the attitudes of applicants and future applicants of a *gecekondü* district as well as of the officials in welfare distributing institutions in İstanbul.

Obtaining welfare depended on individual action, such as collecting the required documents and undertaking the application process. This reduced the motivation for collective action and solidarity and changed the way that *gecekondü* dwellers regard their activity in getting resources. These welfare policies are called *sosyal yardım* (social assistance) by the state institutions as well as the slum dwellers. It could be suggested that the government does not present welfare policies as one of the required jobs of a social state, whereas the Turkish Republic is constitutionally described as a social state. In the same vein, slum people do not regard receiving welfare as a citizenship right, but as a favour from the government. But when it comes to welfare distribution they do not use "we" as the real object, they say "*the council distributes*", or "*thanks to the*

governorate, I have got my coal for this winter.” So, this welfare distribution does not empower them as political subjects, on the contrary it makes them subordinated and less powerful. Ege people regarded welfare either as a favour or as a tactic of the AKP to win the votes of *gecekondu* people. So, they do not see themselves as the real recipients of the welfare.

8.4 Despair and Crime

Limited opportunities for the working class have increased the competition among them in terms of employment opportunities. Low-skilled jobs, which mainly have poor working conditions, long working hours and poor wages, are the only attainable jobs for many people in slum areas like Ege. For some male *gecekondu* youth, these jobs are frustrating, boring, routine and do not promise the social upward mobility that provides them with the opportunity to obtain urbanites’ living standards. Even for low-skilled jobs, there is intense competition. Young men with few skills requiring employment told me that to be employed they found a *tanidik* (acquaintance) to obtain a reference. Semih, who was born in Ankara, does not have a regular job and spends most of his time in the local coffee house. When he was talking about unemployment and the new job opportunities generated by the recent shopping malls around the neighbourhood he stated that:

You know, now there is IKEA, very close to here. I went there for a job interview. They asked me to work 6 days a week, working 8 hours a day. The work was carrying furniture. I would be paid only 800 liras (270 GBP) per month! I did not take the job. We were accused of being lazy. Come on, offer me a desk job where I can earn 1,500 liras monthly, then let’s see who is lazy!

Furthermore, the children of migrants, the *gecekondu* generation, grew up in urban areas and they witnessed the different lifestyles of upper-class and *gecekondu* people and suffered from the widening disparities between the social classes. The interviewees among the second and third generations told me that their accents and clothes would disclose their *gecekondu* identity and this could lead to them being excluded. Hayat came to Ege when she was three years old and now she is 29 and has two kids who go to

the primary school in Ege. She told me that her family was quite poor when she was a child. She described her youth in the 1990s:

I was working as a sales assistant in a patisserie in Tandoğan [a district in the city centre of Ankara]. The customers were different from me. I mean... their outfits, the way they speak... I aspired to be like them. I was insisting that my parents buy me new clothes. They sometimes even did not buy new clothes in Eids⁴⁶. But now I do not blame my parents. They came from the village, so they did not know this kind of thing [onlar da görmemişler]...

Ege men who had temporary jobs and usually hung around the local coffee house told me that their appearance or accent might be obstacles to finding jobs in the city centre. On the one hand they appeal to urban middle-class life and on the other hand they expressed anger against the men with urban style. For example, during one of our daily conversations with the men in the local coffee house, they mentioned the men who wore earrings and had long hair in Kızılay (the city centre). One of the men in the coffee house said that he looked for an argument with those kinds of men to beat them up and the other men agreed with him. They were different from their parents in the sense that they see becoming middle class as the only way to be a respectable member of society. So, despite harbouring hatred against the exclusionist capitalist system in which they are structurally disadvantaged, the younger *gecekondu* generation aspire to obtain the living standards of the urban upper class and are willing to be a part of this system.

Research shows that gangs appear and the rate of crime increases when people are frustrated by the realization that they are not likely to find jobs which can enable them to rise above their parents' socio-economic level and they are suffering from significant social inequality (Portes and Rumbaut 2001:50, Carmichael and Ward 2001:115, Jennings et al. 2012:205-207, Ochsen 2010:55-58). Illegal activities, including organizing around local gangs, offer an exciting income-generating facility which is a substitute for legal economic activities. A group of men in Ege who hung around the

⁴⁶ Buying new clothes during Eids, especially for the unmarried children of the family, is a common habit in Turkey.

local coffee house was called the “Beautification Association”; they excluded women⁴⁷ and behaved like a gang. According to Law 5253, the locals can launch associations and the coffee house in Ege is the club of the Metehan⁴⁸ Beautification Association. Moreover, according to the same law, article 20, the police require a written judicial decision to enter these associations. It is common knowledge that in Turkey some of the coffee houses for gambling are established in the name of beautification associations in order to suffer less control and pay less tax. Not surprisingly, the one in Ege was extensively used for gambling and smoking marihuana, which are illegal in Turkey. The usual visitors to this coffee house were mainly men who were either born in Ege or had lived in Ege for most of their lives.

Despite the desire to gain money, not all the gangs accumulate profit and disperse it to their members and usually their economic activities are focused mainly on paying entertainment bills (Joyeaux 1960, cited in Sanchez-Jankowski 2003:205); therefore, illegal activities do not usually enable them to attain the desired socio-economic level. Men in the local coffee house mentioned that some of them used to acquire a large amount of money in a night but then spent it in a week. So their income could not be considered a means of upward mobility. However, being part of a gang is a means of achieving power for oppressed *gecekondü* youth. The owner of the coffee shop told me that he used to be part of a larger gang outside of Ege and described his life as “we used to live so fast, we’ve slowed down now.” He said that now he was the older brother (*abi*) of male youth in Ege. In Ege everyone, but especially the men in the coffee house, use the word “*bebe*” for young people. *Bebe* is a shortened version of *bebek*, which means a baby. While other Ege residents only mean young people in general, for the men in the coffee house this word also refers to young people who should obey the older men’s rule and respect them, and who occupy a hierarchically lower position. Furthermore, it refers to the young members of a gang. He mentioned his “fast days” and what it meant to be an older brother for the *bebes* of Ege as follows:

⁴⁷ For an explanation of my position as a woman among the men in a coffee-house that excluded women see Chapter 2.

⁴⁸ Metehan is another name for Ege district.

We woke up late in the afternoon. In the evenings, we used to wear our suits [takımları çekerdik] and attack. We used to visit all the casinos and nightclubs in Ankara and collect our money. Of course there was nothing left from it. First, we were crowded; we had to pay for babes' food, clothes and pocket money. And we used to smoke joints and take cocaine, which was extremely expensive. Now I've slowed down. If I like, now, I can get all these babes to sell drugs [he asked a teenager boy in the coffee house to confirm this with him]. I am their older brother, they can't reject me. However, I would never do it. I do not want them to suffer like me. I always prevent drop-outs from school. I recommend them to study [okuyun diyorum]. But they took me and the others as their role model and most of them quit school at an early age.

Sanchez-Jankowski states that member of gangs do not commit themselves to full-time work, which would monopolize their time and energy, so that they can be primarily involved in the gang and its leisure activities (2003:205). Instead, they get temporary or part-time jobs in order to afford the entertainment since the gangs cannot focus on profit accumulation. Yonucu's research suggests that the club culture among *gecekondu* youth is a sign of their desire to be a part of society and a way to narrow the gap between themselves and the urban youth through consumption (2008:65). Moreover, the local coffee houses were usually the only available entertainment for many *gecekondu* men. Based on the life stories of men in the local coffee house in Ege, I can suggest that, after a point, membership of the gang or the "male club" in Ege became the primary activity that shaped their lifestyle and other activities seem to be secondary. Gülden, Semih's wife, was one of the women whom I saw regularly in spite of the long walking distance between our homes. She always complained about her husband, who did not have a regular job and smoked marihuana. For her, it seemed that, if he were not so committed to the local coffee house and if he stopped going there, he could quit smoking and find a regular job. Rahmi, one of the men in Ege who usually went to the coffee shop, won some million liras in a national lottery in 2002. For him, this was the point that his life deteriorated irreversibly because he spent all his money on drugs, nightclubs and gambling with his friends, the majority of whom lived in Ege. The money ran out quickly, but he still continued to be a part of the gang, smoking joints and gambling. For

him, the money from the lottery deepened his relationship with the gang and now it became a lifestyle for him.

Due to the high rate of unemployment, young men are readily available in the coffee house and this can lead to a small dispute turning into an event of violence (Erman and Eken 2004:63). Despite the fact that during my stay I did not witness or hear about any case of violence, the availability of men in the coffee house created a kind of tension in Ege. Women, especially young and single women, hesitated to walk past the coffee shop. Parents tried to prevent their teenage sons from spending time around the coffee house in order to prevent them from interacting with its regular visitors and the gang which gets together on the nearby corners.

Ege people know that there have been illegal activities in their neighbourhood since the 1990s when the sense of community started to dissolve and the collective struggle nearly stopped. The second and third generation who were born in Ege, or those who came to Ege at an early age, could not sustain the sense of community as their parents did. When they became adults, their parents had already solved the basic problems of their neighbourhood through collective action. So, the second and third generation in Ege did not need collectivism and solidarity. This was the main reason for the lack of a sense of community among them. For example, despite living in Ege for many years, the younger generations of the families who built the *gecekondu* houses together may not know each other very well or meet frequently. Moreover, with the introduction of numerous private GSM companies, affordable pay-as-you-go rates in small denominations and private broadband companies in the 2000s, cellular phones and the internet were widely used among the *gecekondu* youth. Teenagers in Ege told me that surfing the internet, facebooking and computer games were their main leisure activities. Therefore, Ege youth tend to communicate with one another and their family members less, instead they tend to spend their time on the internet and mobile phones. For the majority of Ege people, the mass consumption of telecommunication and internet technologies was one of the prominent reasons why Ege youth had lost their sense of community.

In addition, Ege residents mentioned that they were not familiar with their new neighbours who had been displaced from other *gecekondu* neighbourhoods as a result of

urban transformation projects in Ankara. The change in the composition of the population has sharply affected the sense of community in slum areas since people become less familiar with their neighbours. The first settlers of Ege do not develop close relationships with the newcomers but tend to minimize their dealings with them and retreat into their own small community. Döndü has lived in Ege for 30 years. She agreed to allow a construction firm to transform her *gecekondu* house and she was about to move to another part of Ankara at the time of our meeting. She told me that:

Some of the old neighbours died, some of them moved to other districts. The people of Ege changed. Now, we are a bunch of old neighbours... Yeah, of course new people are coming. But new people cannot replace the old neighbours. You know, they don't approach you, even if you approach them, and how can you connect with people who you've only recently met?

Çinçin neighbourhood was infamous for illegal activities and was stigmatized as a gypsy community. When it was transformed by the urban projects during the early 2000s, some of Çinçin's people moved into *gecekondu*s in Ege. Although there were many other new people in Ege coming from other places in Ankara, all the people in Ege told me that because of the newcomers from Çinçin, Ege has degenerated. Ege people explained the degeneration of their district by referring to the negative reputation of Çinçin people. Any crime in Ege was attributed to people from Çinçin. For example, Gül, my landlady, told me that the house that I lived in during my fieldwork was burgled while the previous lodgers lived there. She tried to explain the recent thefts in Ege by saying: “*you know, Çinçin people came here, and the thefts started in Ege.*” Turan, who has been living in Ege for 25 years, thinks that Çinçin people should be deported from Ege, and accommodated in the countryside to prevent them from having a negative influence on other communities. Ferhat has been living in Ege for more than 25 years and explained the current insecurity in the area as follows:

Their [people from Çinçin] households are very crowded. You have seen darker kids in the neighbourhood, they are their kids. If you leave anything in front of your house they suddenly take it, you cannot believe. It did not used to be like this. We could leave our shoes in front of the door, and doors and windows used to be open. Our neighbourhood has changed in 5-6 years.

Auyero's (2000) research on Argentina's slums indicates that slum people complain about the increasing rate of crime and drug usage in their neighbourhood and the main difference between the present and past of slum areas (particularly during the 1970s) is the much lower level of political mobilization (p.108-109). In this sense, the case of Ege, as in many other Turkish *gecekondu* areas, is similar to the slums in Argentina, which was hit by a coup d'état followed by a neoliberal restructuring process in 1976. It could be suggested of slum areas that used to be politically mobilized, that the increase in illegal activities and crime is related to the lower levels of political mobilization. So, the vacuum left by the absence of a strong left wing and the sense of community was not filled by the state authorities. People told me that they suffered from a kind of absence of the state authorities in their districts. They told me many stories about how the police disregarded cases of theft. Hacer narrated a theft story like this:

The police do not care about us. My gate was stolen. I called the police, it was midnight. They came very late and asked me whether I had a witness or not. At midnight, how could I have a witness? They did not even record my application. You see?

In the absence of the state and the revolutionaries, the gang claimed that they were in charge of their neighbourhood security. In this framework, they categorize illegal activities in terms of the location and the kind of activity. They condemn prostitution, which for them is an immoral occupation. In Ege, İsa, who was one of my interviewees, is infamous for pimping out women. The men in the local coffee shop exclude him. Moreover, other Ege people communicate with the men in the gang and collaborate with them when they need to. However, they abstain from any relationship with İsa. For the men in the coffee house, there is nothing morally wrong with having intercourse with prostitutes in other areas; however, this kind of business should not occur in their *mahalle*. In terms of drug use, men in the coffee house told me that using drugs in the *mahalle* was acceptable since the only sufferer was the user. They were not against selling drugs; however, they were completely against selling drugs in their neighbourhood. The men in the gang claimed that they were in charge of their neighbourhood and they would not allow anybody to sell drugs in Ege to protect it.

For Ege people, the state not only turns a blind eye to crimes and illegal activities in the area but also supports them covertly. This is why they see no point in denouncing drug users and sellers and gamblers since they suppose that the police are in league with them. The men who were involved with the gang and the regular visitors to the coffee house mentioned that they did not hesitate to talk openly about what they were engaged with since the police already knew what they were doing. The facts that the local police station was only 500 metres away from the coffee house and that I witnessed regular police visits there prove this account. Moreover, these men told me that if the police did not let them gamble or smoke, they would not be able to do so. According to an ex-drug dealer, the state made money out of drug dealing as he said:

when the police caught drug dealers, they took the drugs from them and gave them to me and when I sold them we shared the money.

The socialist people of Ege suggested an additional explanation for the inaction of the state in terms of crimes. It seemed to them that the state considered the inability to consume might create frustration, which might lead to uprisings in slum areas. Therefore, they claimed that disregarding the illegal activities in these areas was a state tactic. They told me that this is why the Turkish government not only clamped down on the left movement after the coup d'état in 1980 but had also tried to keep potential dissidents busy with other activities since the 1980s. Tuncay, who is a left-wing Ege resident, claimed that the Turkish state even promoted alcohol consumption in *gecekondu* areas.

Did you know that the area of highest alcohol consumption in Ankara is Mamak? You know, Mamak is composed of gecekondu areas, most of which used to be liberated areas of the socialist movement. Now, the parks are full of young men drinking beer in the evening. The state supports this on purpose. In the 1990s, there were beers and if you found the lucky cover you won an extra beer. Most of these were in local shops in the slum areas. I do not believe that it was just a coincidence.

It could be suggested that neoliberal policies created economic insecurity, which was accompanied by a physical insecurity (Goldstein 2005:397). On this point, Erman and Eken suggest that the “unregulated territories” of *gecekondu* areas, which exist

outside of state regulations and functions, are appearing on the urban periphery (2004:67). People told me that drug dealers hang around the local primary school and this is why they tried to accompany their children when they went to school. The parents of teenagers, especially female teenagers, said that they did not want to raise their children here because of their fear of crime. Since they no longer found their neighbourhood safe, the residents of Ege did not want to go out at night or let their children play in the neighbourhood in the late evening as they used to do some years ago.

8.5 Conclusion

The rapid liberalization of Turkey followed the suppression of oppositional elements, which used to be the main instruments for *gecekondu* people to obtain available sources. Their strategy to obtain these sources shifted to an individual-based one. This was compatible with the promotion of individualism in the post-1980 era and people were far less inclined to engage in collective struggle after the violent suppression of oppositional movements. Moreover, austerity measures implemented after 1980 resulted in significant segregation among the lower classes in terms of wealth and occupation. These sharply decreased the level of solidarity in Ege, as in many other *gecekondu* communities. The vacuum left by the absence of a sense of community and left-wing activism was not filled by the state authorities, which led to the feeling of insecurity increasing in *gecekondu* areas. Starting in the 1980s, the economic issues in urban areas were reduced by politicians to a mere problem of “poverty”; the government initiated social assistance programmes, which were effectively used by the Islamist local governments and politicians in the 1990s and 2000s. These social assistance programmes initiated a moral economy in which beneficiaries shared the welfare. On the other hand, they created another tension around who was deserving of social assistance and a divisive mechanism in which entitlement to welfare is assumed to indicate support for the political party in power.

9. A Society in Transition

9.1 Introduction

Urbanization has been considered to be one of the pillars of transition from a traditional society to a modern one (Schnaiberg 1970:419, Martinelli 2005:Chap.2). But in light of the lack of sustainable social housing policy, the appearance of *gecekondu* areas lacking infrastructure facilities, the enlarging informal economy and migrants' dependence on *hemşerilik* and kin networks rather than being individual members of the urban community, the urbanization story of Turkey has been defined as haphazard and unplanned by urban planners, politicians and scholars alike. In this sense, the contribution of urbanization to modernity in Turkey has been a contentious issue. Therefore a great deal of early research is dedicated to understanding the extent to which slum dwellers transform into modern individuals (see Yasa 1966, Hunter 1964, Clinard 1966, Schnaiberg 1971, Levine 1973). However, in the early studies on *gecekondus* in Turkey, modernity was equated with an urban middle-class lifestyle and the adoption of consumption practices, so the early researchers tended to examine *gecekondu* dwellers' habits of reading newspapers, going to the cinema and theatre, brushing their teeth and so on. In the context of modernity and urbanization, more recent studies examine *gecekondu* people's relationship with the state and politics, the *hemşerilik* bond and the effect of apartment life in changing the lifestyles and values of *gecekondu* people after the urban transformation projects. It could be suggested that the available contemporary literature problematizes the extent to which *gecekondu* dwellers turned into modern individuals who are bound by citizenship ties and can survive independently of their *hemşeri* and kin networks. In terms of modernism, this chapter does not consider *gecekondu* dwellers' potential for adopting an urban middle-class lifestyle in terms of consumption practices as the early research did, but rather, along the same lines as recent research on *gecekondus*, it seeks to unpack the process by which the *gecekondu* dwellers develop aspirations to be a part of the larger urban economy with less dependence on *hemşeri*, kin and family networks. Throughout my research, increasing educational opportunities and changes in women's employment patterns seem to be the

major dynamics through which the younger *gecekondu* generation has become familiar with the wider urban economy and urban middle-class people.

The role of education in modern societies is not limited to providing the population with the skills required by the labour market, but it is also used to raise modern citizens who are assumed to be equals. In fact, education is the primary area in which *gecekondu* youth encounter urban middle class people and tend to adopt modern values in terms of community relations, which results in a clash between migrant generations. The first part of this chapter will discuss how the education of *gecekondu* youth is affected by and also affects the experience of living in a *gecekondu*.

Modernization theory suggests that, in contrast to the promoted male dominance in traditional values, modernity promises emancipation and shifting roles for women (Grasmick 1973, Inglehart and Norris 2003:15-16,36-38, Martinelli 2005:12-14). The second part of this chapter focuses on women's employment amongst *gecekondu* dwellers. The effect of familiarity with urban middle class values and lifestyles on *gecekondu* people's attitudes towards women's paid employment, obstacles to women's paid employment and the strategies that women use in overcoming these obstacles will be discussed through looking at the heterogeneity of women in *gecekondu* areas in terms of their age, education, degree of male control over them and generation.

It will be suggested that the duration of stay in urban areas affects the lifestyles, values and living conditions of *gecekondu* dwellers. These result in better educational attainment by the younger *gecekondu* generation and increasing numbers of *gecekondu* women participating in the labour market. The clash between the different *gecekondu* generations, who are influenced by urban values in varying degrees depending on their gender, current age and the age at which they arrived in Ankara, will be discussed through exploring the complexity of migration and the experience of living in *gecekondus*.

9.2 Education as a Tool of Alienation and Social Upward Mobility

The founders of the Turkish Republic were striving, by means of educational reforms, to be “fostering the secular and nationalist values” (Özdalga 1999:419) and they saw education “as the source of modern citizenship” (Pak 2004:325). However, in

1963, 40 years after the establishment of the modern Turkish Republic, there was still no school in one third of villages according to reports of the Turkish Great Assembly. In 2012, only 18,683 villages out of approximately 35,000 have a primary school and 6,613 have a secondary school (Ministry of National Education 2012:38). So, in spite of the great emphasis on universal education, there are still villages lacking even a primary school. For further education, kids in villages have to go to towns or enrol at the regional boarding schools. Additionally, children have economic value in rural areas (see Chapter 4). Sending children to further education or even to a primary school in the villages means losing valuable family labour in rural areas. Considering the patriarchal structure of the villages and the economic value of female children, particularly in terms of household chores, girls were more disadvantaged in terms of educational attainment. Fadime, who came to Ege at the end of the 1970s, told me that since there was no primary school in her village she was not able to go, even though her brothers were sent to the primary school in the neighbouring village. Hacer told me that she aspired to go to school but her stepmother did not allow her to continue after her second year because she wanted her to take care of her younger siblings. In brief, due to patriarchal values, the significance of child labour and an absence of schools, the first-generation migrants had not had the opportunity to go to school regularly. Among my interviewees, the highest educational level of the first-generation migrants in both the first and second wave was primary school.

There are greater educational opportunities in urban than in rural areas. Moreover, Ankara is more advantageous than many other urban areas in terms of educational institutions since it is the capital of the modern Turkish Republic. The availability of educational institutions contributed to the schooling of the children of rural migrants, especially at primary school. However, there were serious barriers for the migrants in squatter settlements to attaining further education. Tansel's study, based on the data collected by a household survey around the country by the State Institute of Statistics of Turkey, indicated that, although living in a squatter settlement did not influence the probability of primary schooling compared to the schooling of urbanites, it had a significant negative effect on the probability of middle schooling (2002:466). For

example, there were no high schools until the early 2000s in Ege and all the kids had to go to high schools in districts closer to the city centre.

A regular household income is a determining factor in the schooling of migrants' children as well as of other children (Tansel 2002:467, McIntosh and Munk 2009:115). For households lacking a regular income or with a low regular income, the opportunity cost of children's schooling, which is associated with the children's labour and their delayed entry into the labour market, is high. In addition, the cost of schooling, such as clothes, books and transportation, weigh heavier for the first-generation migrant families. Economic value and the cost of schooling were the major reasons for dropouts from schools for the first generation migrants' children, particularly in the initial years after their migration. This is because, in the first years after their migration, most of the households lacked regular incomes and children's labour was inevitable. In this sense the families traded off the immediate costs of sending their children to school against the future benefits. Burhan, who had a shoe repair shop in Ege, arrived there in 1976 when he was a nine-year-old boy. He finished primary school in Ankara but could not attend middle school:

[dropping out of school]... *was not my preference, the life forced me to do it. I mean poverty. At that time, if you found a loaf of bread, you were missing the soup. We used to carry other people's coal only for a bucket of coal. You did not have money to buy coal. I had never had a new pair of trousers... Studying was not a priority as it is now. I did every kind of work when I was a kid [yapmadığım iş kalmadı]. I worked as a street seller, construction worker, I carried bricks... My brother was like me, he was working with a shoe repairer when he was a kid. In due time, we improved our economic situation.*

Considering the fact that regular income directly influenced the children's schooling and rural migrants improved their economic situation over time, as in Burhan's account, birth order also played a major role in the schooling opportunities of the first-generation migrants' children. Younger children of the first-generation migrant families had more opportunities to go to school. This was because by the time the younger children got to school age, the family had improved their economic situation with the help of the older children. The gender of siblings was the other prominent factor that influenced the school attainment of the children of the first-generation migrants and girls were

obviously more disadvantaged (see Chapter 3). But the daughters of the first generation had greater opportunities, at least in terms of primary schooling, than their mothers, who grew up in their villages, thanks to the availability of local primary schools in the city.

In spite of the serious barriers for the children of the first generation in terms of educational opportunities compared to their counterparts with urban-born parents, some of them obtained university degrees, found white-collar jobs, moved to other parts of Ankara and started to live in apartments like urbanites.⁴⁹ They were mostly the children of the first-generation migrants who had better job opportunities. So, these were mostly the children who had not had to work during school time. Gül and Mahmut, my landlady and landlord, had two sons and a daughter. All of them were university graduates, had white-collar jobs and lived in the urban centres. The parents told me that they never let their children participate in paid employment and Mahmut used to work at two different jobs while the children studied. The educated children of the first generation did not have the same lifestyle as their parents. Gül and Mahmut go to their home village every year but the children do not accompany them. Once their younger son, who was a teacher, came with them to their home village and wanted to help in the construction of a village house. Gül told me that she felt very sorry for her son since he was not used to working outside at manual jobs like his parents, therefore he was terribly affected by the sun and could not carry on helping them.

Education not only provides jobs and social mobility but also a new social setting. It is the prominent sphere where the children of migrants interact with the urbanites. So, education makes the second and particularly the third-generation *gecekondu* youth familiar with the urban middle class and their life style. As a result of this dense interaction, the children of migrants adopt the values of their urban counterparts. In this sense, education contributes to alienation between generations in migrant families (Qin 2006:172-176, Nesteruk et al. 2009:437-438). This frightened some parents among the first generation, especially in terms of their daughters' interactions with the urbanites. The first generation were concerned about honour and traditional values and they feared that by interacting with different people at school, their daughters would become urbanites and would be corrupted by urban values. Serpil came to Ankara in 1993 with

⁴⁹ Since these people do not live in Ege anymore, I interviewed their parents.

her parents and sisters some years after her two brothers arrived to work. At that time, she was a primary school student and determined to continue on to middle school. She told me that, in spite of her insistence, her father Orhan did not let her go since he said that she was an outgoing and impressionable person (*gözü açık*). Ijaz and Abbas' study suggests that, for first-generation South Asian Muslim migrants in the UK, concern about their honour determined their preferences about their daughters' schools (2010:319-322). Just as these migrants preferred girls' schools because of considerations of honour, so it was the case for first-generation parents in Ege. Türkan came to Ege when she was two years old in the 1970s. After middle school, she insisted on continuing her education, but her father did not give permission. Türkan told me that: "I was natty [süslüydüm] and my father said 'I will not send you to high school'." Then, her mother asked for help from his friend's wife and his friend persuaded Türkan's father. He allowed her to go to a girls-only school. She said that at that time the most convenient was the girls' vocational school in the city centre, in spite of the distance. Her life changed completely after her registration at this school in the city centre in the 1980s and she talked about her high-school years as follows:

First I asked myself how did I jump in among these people, how would I mix with them? There were not many rural students there. All were from Çankaya, Yıldız, I mean most of them from families with high incomes. While I did not have money for lunch and had to bring my lunch from home, they used to buy whatever they liked from the school canteen. After a while I made very good friendships and I still meet some of my high school friends... I realized that I had not known anything before I went to this school in Sıhhiye⁵⁰. I met different people there. I learnt how to speak, how to behave in social relations. I developed myself. Now I would like to move out of this neighbourhood because of this.

Türkan continued her story by describing how much emphasis she put on the education of her son and daughter. Like Türkan, many other second-generation migrants, especially women, regard education as the primary instrument of social mobility and securing white-collar jobs for their children. For them, education not only brings enhanced future earnings but also provides a decent life for their children and

⁵⁰ Sıhhiye is one of the central and oldest districts of Ankara.

prevents them from having a life similar to theirs. Interviewees among the second generation told me that they invested all their time and limited savings for the education of their children. Women schedule their time according to their children's school time and activities. They spend a considerable amount of their time in the local primary school and undertake voluntary jobs in schools, accompany their children to school to keep an eye on their school environment and protect them from possible dangers and they frequently visit their children's teachers. Women who were prevented from having any schooling in particular care about their children's education. For the second generation, the education provided by the state schools is not satisfying, therefore despite their low income, they send their children to additional private courses and register them for extracurricular activities such as sports and music classes. Serpil has an eight-year-old son and they get by on the minimum wage⁵¹ of her husband. She told me that:

I would like my child to do a sport at least. Swimming courses were 100 liras per month. It was expensive. I registered him for a taekwondo class for 60 liras per month. It's still expensive but at least we don't pay for the transportation, we go on foot.

The *gecekodu* generation, who are third-generation migrants and beyond, have more opportunities to attain higher levels of education than their parents. This is also the case for international migrant generations (Kristen and Granato 2007:44, Aydemir et al. 2008:8). My research findings suggest that, for the *gecekodu* generation, the birth order and gender of children is less significant in schooling and obtaining further educational opportunities than the schooling of the first and second generations. Since the second generation had a more stable economic situation than the first generation, the effect of birth order on the third generation's schooling was less pronounced. This was why third-generation men and especially women had greater educational opportunities than their parents and grandparents. While the second generation of the first wave and the second-wave migrants generally have only a primary school education and rarely have high-school qualifications, most of their children were able to study for university degrees. So the educational attainment of slum dwellers increases gradually throughout the

⁵¹ The minimum wage at the time of the interview was 715 liras a month (250 GBP).

generations. Based on their further education attainment, the third generation expects that they will be more successful in getting white-collar jobs and having social mobility than their parents.

It seemed that the second generation in Ege agreed that there was no reason why women should not acquire education. Moreover, for some Ege people, women needed education more than men. Their common reason for this was to provide women with a safety net through education against domestic violence, economic difficulties, sexual harassment and discrimination against women in many aspects of the social distribution of resources. They mostly stated that a man could do a variety of jobs, such as construction worker, porter, carrier and the like while a woman could not. Moreover, the main male breadwinners said that they did not want their daughters/sisters to be dependent on their husbands and wanted them to be able to challenge their husbands in the case of domestic violence. Yiğit was born in Ege in 1979 and had worked since he was a teenager; he was the main breadwinner for his household, which was composed of his mother, divorced sister and her daughter. On this point, he said that:

My niece is everything to me. She is academically successful, she currently goes to the high school and will be taking the university entrance exam in two years. I told her that I am ready to pay all her educational expenses. She should have a university education and a decent job. I do not want her to depend on her husband. She should stand on her own feet.

The third generation *geceköndü* youth expected that their lifestyles would be very different from those of their parents when they grew up. This expectation is based on the higher level of education they achieved and their better chances of obtaining white-collar and well-paid jobs. While none of the mothers of the participants in the focus group were in paid employment, the male participants claimed that they would probably marry women in paid employment, the female participants Ebru and Gönül stated that they would be highly likely to have white-collar jobs. On this point Gönül said that:

For our parents, working is only for money. But it is understandable. It is because their level of education is quite low. Most of them graduated from primary school. But people with only primary school degrees are not employed in prestigious jobs, so they work for little money. Their main

concern is survival. But our working conditions will be very different.

The third generation claimed that their family relationships would be different in terms of equality between spouses and consumption practices. During the focus group interview, Cihan, who grew up in Ege and attended the local high school, gave an example of going to the cinema. He said that, while his parents had never been to a cinema, he would certainly go frequently with his future wife. As Gönül followed by defining *gecekondü* families as families ruled by one person, other interviewees among the third generation suggested that they would have a more democratic family. Ercan, who was a high school student, told me that:

There will be a gap between my marriage and that of my parents. For example, my mother does not have so much autonomy, but my future wife will be able to do whatever she likes.

The latest generation suggested that, due to their different life expectations, there is an intergenerational conflict between them and their parents. In this conflict, they found their parents to be ‘backward’ people who tried to impose the values and norms of their own time on the young generation. They usually expressed this as: “it is not like their time anymore” and “the times have changed.” These issues arose when the immorality or disrespect in the narratives of the first and second generation are perceived as freedom by the third generation. Bünyamin, who attended the local high school, told me that when his female classmates came to his house his father told him off and asked him whether these girls did not have parents to control them. It was obvious that the female third-generation migrants suffered more from the morality critics of older generations in their neighbourhood. The third generation tend to explain this as being due to the backwardness of their neighbourhood. In this sense, they did not consider Ege people to be modern or cultured like the inhabitants of the metropolitan districts of Ankara. Therefore, it was obvious that they were comparing their parents and grandparents with the urbanites. For them, the values of the older generation were not consistent with those of the urbanites, but they expect that the gap between the older generation and the urbanites will disappear in due time. This is why they defined their social setting as “a

society that tries hard to be modern.” During a focus interview conducted with a group of third-generation high school students in Ege, they stated that:

My father is modern on many issues. However, when he saw me walking with a male friend his facial expression changed. I say he is my friend, but nothing changes. He does not understand this issue. But this is about the way that he grew up. He grew up in such a social setting. (Ebru)

Our clothing style was weird to them. My father never let me wear skinny leg jeans. (Özcan)

They project their perspective onto us, they expect us to have the same life perspective. You know, this results in limitations on us. (Gönül)

While the third-generation youth mentioned that their neighbourhood was not like Çankaya⁵², which was considered a modern and progressive neighbourhood where people could behave freely, they stated that their urban counterparts were also different from them. In explaining this, they mentioned different consumption patterns. For them, the life of urban youth was based on the consumption of famous-brand products, and their behaviour was artificial. For *gecekondu* youth, urban youth seemed to be artificial since the urbanite youth had different hair, clothing and speaking styles to attract attention and they looked down on other people. For them, despite their material resources and consumption capacities, the *gecekondu* youth have warmer relationships, which could not be traded off for brand new mobile phones and fancy sports shoes. However, they mentioned that *gecekondu* youth copied urban youth. Bünyamin, who attended a vocational school, said that:

It is said that “if you wear a nice pair of shoes, go to Kızılay [city centre], then all the girls will want to date you.” So many poor young people style their hair. They do it to attract attention.

On the other hand, these parents try to give whatever they can to their children, in order to provide a better life for them. Since their children have much more than the older generations could imagine, these parents expect their children to be satisfied.

⁵² Çankaya is one of the metropolitan districts of Ankara. It is a fashionable business and cultural centre as well as the centre of government.

Therefore, for the older generations the main reason for the intergenerational conflict emerged out of dissatisfaction and the disrespectful behaviour of the younger generations. Elif, who came to Ege in 1975 and used to work as a domestic servant, said: “*there was not enough food, so we could not eat much. My kids look down on what I cook now.*” Hayat, who mentioned her encounter with urbanites and their aspirations in the previous chapter, continued her life story by talking about the relationship between herself and her children. This time, she compared her life to her children’s lives as follows:

Chicken... when our mother cooked chicken I had an argument with my siblings about who would eat the biggest portion. But, look now, when I cook chicken the children sniff at the food. When our parents bought us a pair of trousers we would not know how to thank them, but my kids do not thank us! Now, I do not buy clothes for myself but I buy them for my daughter because I do not want her to emulate anything. But she is not aware of this. Once she told me that, ‘my dad has enough money, and you can buy things for me,’ so she does not understand that we do our best to provide her with anything she likes. I do not want her to suffer as I suffered in my childhood. On the other hand, I would like my kids to be aware of the poverty and severity of life. But no, they are not like this.

The complaints of the first and second generation involved issues of morality and respect. For them, the younger generation did not know how to respect society, their families or the elderly. However, for the first and second generation this was not a problem specific to *gecekondü* youth. All youth in Turkey is like this and the *gecekondü* youth copy them. The examples they commonly gave are about the more comfortable attitudes of young people such as smoking in front of the elderly, wearing fashionable clothes and the loose relations between young women and men. They usually emphasized that the boys and girls could not walk hand in hand in Ege and date one another. Osman told me that, in the 1980s, it was not possible for a woman to wear a mini skirt or that he could not smoke in front of older men as a young boy and young people could not openly have boyfriends/girlfriends. On the other hand, the third generation migrants did their best to empathize with their parents .

The expressions they used, such as: “it was different in their time”, “they grew up in the village” and so on, show that the third generation accepts the fact that their parents

and grandparents grew up in a different social setting than theirs. For this reason, they do not expect their parents to change and become similar to the urbanites quickly. When a female high-school student, Ebru, told me that her father did not feel comfortable with the idea of her having male friends, she added that, because her father was born and grew up in a village and in a traditional closed community, she could not expect more from him. Moreover, it seems that, in contrast to what the older generations suggest, *geceköndü* youth appreciate that their parents suffered due to a lack of economic resources, and that they worked hard to provide their children with more resources. During my interviews with the teenagers of Ege, they expressed their appreciation of their parents thus:

My grandparents did not let my father go to school, although he would have liked to. They told him “go and take care of the animals.” This is why he could not study. But he never asked me to work, on the contrary, he always supported me to study. So, I have to study. (Gönül).

Look, I always try to learn from my parents. They did not have the chance to go to school and this is why they do their best to enable me to study. They provide me with every opportunity, I have to study so as not to embarrass them. (Ebru)

...My parents, too. I mean they are so regretful and angry with their own parents... You know because their parents prevented them from studying. At that time, I mean, they were in villages where people did not know about the value of education. Now they [my parents] do whatever they can to make us able to study. (Cihan)

Furthermore, despite their greater opportunities for education, the students among the third generation still need to find jobs during holidays and weekends. Temporary jobs during school summer holidays, such as sales assistant, pollster, leaflet distributing, waiter/waitressing for boys and girls, and helping fathers at their workplace, such as in construction and restaurants and the like, for boys, are not uncommon among the third generation. In a focus group interview conducted with high-school students in Ege, the participants stated that they either gave the money that they earned during the summer holidays to their mothers as a contribution to the household budget or kept it to meet their educational needs, such as for books, private courses and computers. In fact, this

showed that the *gecekonda* generations understand that their parents give their children everything within their capacity and the *gecekonda* generation try to help by contributing to the family budget rather than spending their income on entertainment or clothes and so on.

In brief, while the parents among the first- and second-generation migrants in Ege compare their children with their own childhoods, the children compare their parents with the parents of their urbanite friends. It could be suggested that the intergenerational difference in terms of expectations and consumption patterns has increased in the relationship between the second and third generation compared to the one between the first and second generation. This was mostly caused by the increasing use of technological facilities with the introduction of the internet in Turkey in 1994 and the greater opportunities for education amongst the third generation compared to their parents. The narratives of third-generation migrant youth show that they are caught between urban values and their parents' values. For them, acquiring urban values means modernity which will bring freedom, but these values are also associated with artificiality and alienation from warm human relationships.

Despite their hopes of obtaining white-collar jobs and having better living conditions than their parents, the third-generation youth in high school is worried and concerned about the increasing unemployment of university graduates. This has been a hot subject of discussion in Turkey, especially during the economic crises of 2001 and 2008-2012. Moreover, the jobs that used to be considered secure, such as teachers and state officers, became less secure jobs⁵³ for which university graduates have to take a highly competitive exam (KPSS- The Selection Examination for Professional Posts in Public Organizations).⁵⁴ The unemployment rate for university graduates in the age-group 20-24 was 32.2% in 2010 (Tansel 2012:103). Considering the “waitresses with engineering degrees” and “thousands of unemployed university graduates”, they told me that they were not so hopeful about the future. In fact, it could be suggested that further

⁵³ According the Turkish Statistical Institution, for the age group 15-34, only 65.3% of graduates from the education department were employed in 2009 (TUIK 2009).

⁵⁴ For a detailed account of the unemployment of university graduates in Turkey see Bora, A. et al. (2012).

education promises fewer opportunities for social upward mobility for the third generation than it did for previous generations.

Research shows that *gecekondü* youth are still disadvantaged in terms of further educational attainment (Tansel 2002:467) compared to the urban middle classes. Dropping out of school is not uncommon in Ege. For many Ege people this is due to the social environment of *gecekondü* areas. Hakan, who was a 30-year-old third-generation migrant and a teacher in the local primary school, conceptualized this as due to “the lack of role models”:

The level of education in Ege is increasing but it is still low. You know, the kids here do not have true role models. All they see is the groups of young males smoking at the corners. So the kids copy them, what do you expect? In our time, we did not have role models. We did not know many people who attended university and got a job. At that time, we did not even know what a university was... Yes, I got a university degree, but it came about by chance. When I was a teenager, all we did was hang around; you know what young men do... In my last year at high school one of my best friends started not to see us so frequently. I used to visit him regularly. He was studying for the university entrance exam because he had an older brother who was a university student. Whenever I visited him, I studied with him and I got the chance to go to university and become a teacher.

The narratives of other members of the third generation seem to support Hakan’s suggestion about the significance of role models on the educational aspirations of *gecekondü* youth and parents. My interviews and informal talks with the older generations show that, despite their hopes and support for the further education of their children, due to the lack of role models, they seemed to believe that it was not likely that their children would be able to get as good an education as the urbanites and rich people. For example, Nazım, who was a second-generation migrant and had only been able to finish primary school, told me that his youngest son is good at his studies and he can get a high mark in the university entrance exam, but he told me that he was worried about the cost. In one of our informal talks, he asked me “*Do you know how much ODTÜ costs for a year?*” ODTÜ (Middle Eastern Technical University) is one of the top universities in Turkey and I explained to him that since it is a state university they do not need to pay any tuition fees. He was surprised and asked me again “*So, if my son*

gets a high mark, can he go to ODTÜ for free?” The people around us were also surprised when I confirmed this to him. It seems that none of the local teenagers had applied to ODTÜ and since it is a very prestigious university, the older *gecekondü* generations thought that it must charge so much money that it would not be possible for *gecekondü* youth to go. This conversation with Nazım and the reactions of the people around us showed me that *gecekondü* people still feel excluded from the better educational opportunities.

The story of Ebru shows the importance of role models in terms of motivation for further education. Ebru is a high-school student and her brother is a sergeant. Her brother strongly supports her to continue on to further education. Her parents have advised her to become educated like him. She told me that her parents encouraged her by advising her not to worry and saying that she could go to a university and have a white-collar job like her brother.

There has been a public primary school in Ege District since 1987. In the Turkish education system, the curriculum for the state schools is prepared by the Ministry of National Education and the same curriculum is applied to all state schools. Moreover, the allocation of teachers to the schools is not based on their professional qualifications. However, many second-generation *gecekondü* dwellers with relatively higher regular incomes and more aspirations to raise their children as urbanites prefer the state schools in the city centre for their kids in Ege. They told me that the state schools in the city centre provide better education. On the other hand, it is quite obvious from their narratives that they are not considering the level of educational quality, so much as the social status of the people whose children attend these schools. They would like to prevent their children from making friends with other *gecekondü* children, rather they try to mix them with the children of urbanites. Aladdin was one of these people and he explained the reason for his preference of a primary school in the city centre for his seven-year-old son as follows:

I do not want to look down on anyone, but you know the children of this neighbourhood, you know their levels... They swear, use slang language. I try to provide my son with the best of everything. I do not want him to be like one of them, I do not want to raise him in varoş culture... When you send your child to a school in the city centre, you should be prepared. For

example, the child sees other parents who give a lift to their children by BMW. They use pencils from famous brands. So, you are not supposed to buy your kid low-quality pencils and the like.

In Ege, the children who are sent to schools in other districts gradually lose their connection to their neighbourhood. Basically, they do not have any friends in their district, so during the school holidays and in their leisure time they only stay at home. Since they socialize with the urbanites from the very beginning of their education, they become alienated from their social environment, parents, *gecekondu* life and their neighbourhood. For example, Türkan's daughter Selin, an 18-year-old high-school student who was born in Ege district, told me that she did not want to live in a *gecekondu* and she hesitated to invite her friends to her house. She explained that the main reason for her detachment from her neighbourhood was that she did not have any friends in Ege because she had been going to schools in the city centre since kindergarten and socialized only with the middle-class urban kids. Considering the narratives of Türkan and Selin, it could be suggested that the alienating effect of education has increased among the third generation compared to the second generation. On the other hand, the third-generation migrant youth who have been socializing mostly with people in their own neighbourhood and attend the local schools are more comfortable in their social settings. They do not have aspirations to live in multi-floor apartment blocks where they suppose there is no warm relationship between neighbours and young people. However, during our interviews when I asked the *gecekondu* youth about the kind of houses in which they would live in the future, they told me that they would be living in apartment blocks not in *gecekondus*. They explained to me that this is not because they prefer it, but because in the future there will not be any *gecekondus*. For them, in spite of the warm human relations in *gecekondu* areas, *gecekondus* are not an appropriate type of houses for our time and are destined to vanish. At this point, *gecekondu* youth suggested that, although the neighbourhood relations were finished, the urban transformation projects are necessary and good for the whole country. Selim is a high school student who works during weekends and school holidays at a local *bakkal*, where I shopped almost every day. Since he is academically successful he believes that

he will be able to have a white-collar job and will have a better life than his parents. He told me:

I will live in apartment blocks in the future. I mean, if I can find a decent job. If not, I will stay here... Apartment blocks, I know it isn't good for neighbourhood relations but the number of gecekondus is decreasing and there will not be any in the future.

In brief, my work suggests that the teenagers who do not spend their time with other local teenagers and whose families are slightly better-off than most of the local people not only want to live in apartment blocks, they also have aspirations to live there. On the other hand, the *gecekondu* youth who have a large group of friends locally and need to work think that since the apartment blocks fulfil the necessities of our time, they will have to live there. So, depending on their family income, future aspirations, and the type of school they go to, the *gecekondu* youth have different views on urban transformation projects and the integration of *gecekondu* areas into city life. However, in general, the *gecekondu* youth is influenced by the idea that apartment blocks are the contemporary form of accommodation and are a sign of development and also that urban transformation projects are good for everybody, including *gecekondu* dwellers themselves. For them, the appearance of new high-rise buildings shows that their neighbourhood is in the process of urbanization and modernization.

9.3 Women's Paid Employment

The first-wave migrant women were rarely in paid employment. This was due to their unfamiliarity with urban areas, lack of required skills, their responsibility for the household chores and childcare and the lack of male family members' permission (see Chapter 3). Due to the lack of infrastructure in *gecekondu* areas during the initial years after the migration, the women spent a great deal of time on household chores and this prevented them from going out of their homes and neighbourhood (Wedel 2001:25). In Ege, for the first-generation women in paid employment, available jobs were limited to manual jobs in the service sector such as cleaning staff in companies and state offices. Domestic service (*gündelikçilik*) was one of the common jobs in informal employment for migrant women. In domestic service work, slum women worked in middle-class

and upper-middle-class houses on a daily basis without any social security. This job was mostly found through networks of other female relatives who were in paid employment, neighbours and *hemşeris*. Although they earn more on average than in other informal jobs, this type of work is perceived as the most inferior job among the slum women since it is considered to be cleaning “the other’s dirt”.⁵⁵ It could be suggested that their main motivation for doing this kind of exhausting work was to gain money for the household. They considered their work temporary and a contribution to the family budget (Şenyapılı 1981:195) and quit as soon as the family overcame its economic difficulties. Considering the exhausting nature of the available jobs and the lack of opportunities to obtain social upward mobility, the women did not expect anything but money out of these jobs. For them, quitting the work meant “being comfortable” (*rahata ermek*). As Çınar (1994:374) suggests about migrant women in İstanbul, many first-generation migrant women in Ege were proud of the fact that their husbands did not let them work outside. In the same vein, they seemed to be proud of their sons who asked them to stop working after they started to earn a regular income.

Duration of stay has a positive impact on women’s school attainment and participation in paid employment (Schnaiberg 1971:89-94). Most of the male first-generation migrants changed their attitude towards the paid employment of women. For example, while Mahmut did not allow Gül to work in a factory in spite of her insistence, he let his daughter to go to university and get a job. He told me that he was ashamed now that he had not let Gül work. But at that time it was not easy for him since he wanted to avoid possible gossip. He continued:

You know, at that time it was shameful [o zamanlar ayıptı] for a woman to work outside. I considered what our hemşeris, relatives and mahalleli would think about it. I did not want them to gossip that Mahmut got his wife to work. But times have changed. Now I am so proud of my daughter that she is standing on her own feet.

In spite of better opportunities for education, familiarity with urban areas and the fact that attitudes towards women’s working outside have changed in a positive direction, not many women were in paid employment. For the second-generation

⁵⁵ For a detailed analysis of domestic service in Turkey see Özyeğin, G. (2001).

migrants, paid employment depended on the number and age of their children, the available assistance from the other females around them in terms of childcare, the immediate needs of the family, their skills and the permission of the male members of the household (see Chapter 3). For them, employment meant more than gaining money and was a tool for “standing on ones’ own feet”, “avoiding dependency on a husband” and “gaining relative autonomy and freedom.” The women in paid employment preferred to keep their money for themselves and have secret kitties. Like Eroğlu who studied the women in 17 *gecekondu* neighbourhoods of Ankara (including Ege), my research suggests that women spend their income on household needs and mostly on their children (2011:224). Türkan said that when her children asked for something she avoided seeking permission and money from her husband since he would probably delay it. It was also to prevent disputes among the family members.

It is noteworthy that it is not only women in paid employment who are able to accumulate savings and keep secret kitties. *Gecekondu* women have various techniques to obtain money for their concealed savings. They could save the money from household shopping, by cutting back on personal expenditure and inflating claimed household expenditure (Eroğlu 2009:63). Moreover, *kabul günüs* have been a technique for women to save money or gold coins. *Kabul günüs* are reception days for women on fixed or known days of the week or month for entertainment where they eat various foods prepared by a hostess in the privacy of their houses. But it is common at these *kabul günüs* to present the hostess with gold coins or a predetermined amount of money. *Gecekondu* women tend to accumulate this money for large household expenditures.

In households with relatively high income and less male control, women’s concealed savings can reach a considerable size and they usually buy gold to protect the money from inflation, which is a common way of saving for women in Turkey. Deniz’s five-person household’s income is around seven times the minimum wage, which is considerably higher than the average household income in Ege. His family is more liberal compared to many other families in terms of a relatively less gendered division of labour at home and a lack of strict male authority. For example, Deniz and his two brothers spend some of their time in the house working, their female friends can visit them and Hatun, their mother, does not ask permission to go out of the house. Deniz told

me that whenever they had an unexpected expenditure Hatun came up with some *çeyrek altuns* (quarter golden coins). When I asked how she could manage to accumulate *çeyrek altuns*, she responded as follows:

I save from my pocket money mostly... even from bread. For example, a loaf of bread left over from yesterday, so today I do not need to buy any. I keep the bread money for my savings. When I had accumulated enough I bought gold.

Gecekondu women keep secret kitties even in the case of a tight household income and strict male supervision. Gülden is a 30-year-old woman who has a nine-year-old son and a drug-addicted husband. She lives in a *gecekondu* which is separated by a wall from her in-law's house. Her husband, Semih, has temporary jobs and was unemployed at the time of the interview. He strictly controls her and does not let her to go out of the neighbourhood and she needs his permission to visit her neighbours. They do not pay the rent, their bills are paid by Semih's parents and they receive welfare from the council. She is rarely given cash by her husband or in-laws. So for her it is nearly impossible to keep concealed savings. She tries to accumulate food stock in order to channel her husband's money to reduce his spending on entertainment and to secure enough food for the household. She stated that:

Let's say there are two bottles of vegetable oil in the kitchen. I conceal them and ask my husband to buy one. He is not spending his money for the household, you know him. It is not just for this. What if I do not have enough food one day? Whom can I ask? I cannot depend on him.

For the women who are firmly controlled by their husbands, keeping secret kitties is not always possible even if they work. Several years ago, Gülden looked after her husband's friend's baby for a while. The parents of the baby paid her directly; they knew that her husband would spend the money on his entertainment rather than giving it to Gülden. She did not keep the money at home and asked her next-door neighbour to keep it safe for her in order to prevent her husband from finding the money and spending it on his entertainment. But after some time he started to ask his friend to pay him directly.

The first- and second-generation migrant women, who were not allowed to work outside by their husbands or fathers, did not give up and found various strategies. As

Dedeoğlu (2008:113-115) argues, all migrant women are aware of the patriarchal pressure on themselves and that the gender ideology limits their resources. However, rather than challenging patriarchy directly, the migrant women try to find the best survival strategy with the scarce available resources provided within the patriarchal community structure and neo-liberal economic system. When their husbands and fathers prevent them from engaging in income-generating activity, they do not challenge patriarchal authority directly and they seem to agree with the male authority. However, they do not give up and, as Kandiyoti (1988) would suggest, they bargain with patriarchy. The common strategy they use is to consult a person whom they think their fathers/husbands would trust. As stated in the previous pages, Serpil's father did not allow her to continue her education, so she decided to acquire a job. Her father did not let her do so. She did not say anything to him at that time but later she secretly asked for help from her aunt. The aunt persuaded Orhan and found her a job in a hairdresser's. She worked in this hairdresser's for four months and started to learn the required skills to be a hairdresser; however, her improvement and working life were undermined by her father's concerns about honour. One day she returned home with some flower-shaped beads in her hair, which were quite popular among the girls in the 1990s, and that day Orhan beat her up and said: "this girl is deviant." He did not allow Serpil to work again in order to protect her from corruption. It can be said that, in the case of strict supervision by the father, marriage is the main strategy used by single women. Via marriage, the women are transformed into individuals in the community whereas single girls are invisible and are subject to the decisions of their family, mostly of male family members. Dedeoğlu's study also shows that after marriage women consider themselves individuals who have their own decision-making power and they become freer to declare their ideas to their families (2008:116-120). On the other hand, with marriage, the women become surrounded by the authority of their husbands and in-laws. Consequently, it can be said that marriage is a double-edged strategy for women. Following Serpil's story: she got married several months after her father prevented her from working outside. A week after her marriage, her husband found a secretarial job for her in the city centre. But this time her father-in-law was offended and quarrelled with her. However, she did not leave her job until she had her first baby.

Patriarchal social formations not only give men the authority to permit women to work, but also give them a say in the type of work the women do. While this increases male control over women, it also opens up another bargaining space for women who would like to work outside. Women who are prevented by their fathers/husbands from economic activity try to find a job that their husbands/fathers may consider suitable. For example, Turan did not let his wife Türkan work outside their home since he thought his income was more than enough for the survival of the family. Türkan did not insist on her request; however, she spoke to Turan's nephew who had a white-collar job and lived in a central district of Ankara and asked if she could work as a domestic servant in his house. The nephew agreed to this idea and Türkan started to work in his house part-time. Turan conceptualized this as "*Türkan is helping my nephew*" and he allowed her to work there since it was a safe area for him. In this bargain, men's power over women's income-generating activity and public visibility is not directly challenged; on the contrary, it is reaffirmed by the women. However, despite confirming male authority over their labour, women find a way to work outside and have more autonomy.

Under the sway of neoliberalism, *gecekondu* households had to find survival strategies to struggle against their increasing poverty. This pushed some women into paid employment (see Chapter 3). This could be interpreted as the primary reason for the increasing rates of participation in paid employment for the second- and third-generation women compared to their first-generation counterparts. Considering the market conditions, their lack of education or the appropriate skills and language, the duties of a traditional housewife, the lack of public childcare facilities, discrimination against women in the labour market and the patriarchal social formation, home-based working is preferable for *gecekondu* women. Ege women who are under extreme male supervision in particular prefer this kind of work. Following Gülden's story, despite being unemployed, her husband, Semih, does not allow her to be occupied with any income-generating activity. For him, this is an assault since it challenges his masculinity. During our interview, Semih told me that:

I would never let my wife work. Look, she doesn't need anything, she doesn't need to worry about the rent or the bills and she has enough food to cook. So what? If I am unemployed

or not, this is none of her business. She should be just busy with cooking, cleaning and caring for our son.

He only let her to take care of his friend's baby (see p.242) because he knew this person and he interpreted this job as helping rather than working. After Gülden's child got sick, she had to quit this job. Like many other Ege women, she did not ask again. For Gülden, as for many other women, home-based working is a preferable option since it is an income-generating activity for which they either don't need to get consent or they can do without consent. She started to do craftwork for sale. Although this is a common leisure activity for women, Gülden told me that when Semih was at home she abstained from doing it since he might realize. When he went abroad to work a year ago, she was able to earn 300 liras (nearly half of the minimum wage) monthly from her craftwork.

Based on my research in Ege, I could suggest that both paid employment and educational opportunities dramatically increased for the women among the third generation compared to their mothers and grandmothers. In terms of jobs and educational opportunities, the difference between the second- and third-generation migrant women was much bigger than the difference between the first and the second generations. Nearly all of the interviewees among the second generation agreed that girls should acquire education and should work. This change in attitude towards women's employment and education affects the first-generation migrants. For example, Orhan, who was strongly opposed to his daughter, Serpil, getting further education and working outside the home, supports his youngest, 19-year-old, daughter-in-law's decision to work outside.

My research suggests that the attitudes of women among the third generation towards women's working are different from those of the first- and second-generation female migrants. For women in this category, working is a must for a woman and it should not require male permission. Significantly different from the women of the first generation, the third generation do not regard employment only as an instrument for income generation. For them, a woman should not depend on her husband and in this sense their concerns about working are similar to those of the second-generation women. The main point upon which their attitudes differ from the women of the second

generation is that they have aspirations for their careers. Additionally, they feel responsibility for their families since most of their families have invested a considerable amount of their savings in their daughters' education. Ebru was a 17-year-old third-generation woman in Ege. Her parents strongly supported her education and her older brother, who was a sergeant and lived separately from his parents, paid for additional courses (*dershane*) for her. She said that:

My grandfather did not let my father study although he desperately wanted to go to school. For the people of that time, money was more important. This is why he strongly supports my education. I appreciate this. We should take lessons from our parents and develop ourselves. My father made an effort for my education, so I must not embarrass him.

Younger third-generation migrant women search for university departments and vocational schools suitable for them. They ask their teachers to help them in choosing high schools and universities. If their parents have enough income, they attend private *dershanes* (additional prep institutions for exams). Some of them attend the complementary courses provided by NGOs or work in small jobs during the summer school holiday to save money to pay for *dershane*. Young women among the third generation prefer the university departments that they believe will provide them with secure jobs such as education, nursing, dentistry and so on. Additionally, they aspire to the occupations that are intimately linked to gender stereotypes. Their preferences for departments are quite different from those of their male counterparts, who mostly aspired to go to the engineering faculties. Young females in deprived families seek the shortest ways by which they can obtain a profession. Arzu's family have major problems, her mother has serious physical and psychological problems, they had to move frequently because of her father's job before he passed away several years ago and finally they do not have a regular income. At the time of our interview, she was a middle school student and would take the high school exam in two years. Her account revealed that all her life had been shaped by uncertainties. She told me: "*I don't want to be homeless when my mother dies*" and she went on:

I would like to go to vocational school. It could be a vocational health school. I could be a nurse... To be honest, I don't fancy being a nurse, I don't like seeing blood and injuries.

But... Let's suppose that I go to Anatolian High School⁵⁶, what happens if I fail the university entrance exam? But if I go to a vocational school, at least I acquire a job immediately after finishing the school.

9.4 Conclusion

The familiarity of *gecekondu* dwellers with urbanites has gradually increased through the generations. In the face of new living conditions, the older generations combine their traditional values with the necessities of modern urban life. From the early years of the migration, their survival in Ankara has depended on the moral economy and kinship, family and *hemşeri* networks. However, they realize that it is not these networks but education that will ensure decent living conditions for their children. They prioritized their children's education and, as a result, the younger generation have had more opportunities in terms of education and obtaining white-collar jobs. For the younger generation, these result in adopting modern values and consumption patterns like those of the urban middle class to varying degrees depending on their family income, academic success and the location of the school that they attend. While their parents mentioned the comfort of the apartment blocks, the younger generation emphasized the idea that, regardless of the harm they do to sustaining close human relations, the apartment blocks are the contemporary kind of accommodation in urban areas and urban transformation projects are the proof of development and urbanization for *gecekondu* areas.

Gecekondu youth did not sustain a close relationship with their parents' home villages and *hemşeris* and did not rely on the moral economy among kin and people of the same neighbourhood. Rather, they considered these ties to be constraints in the adoption of urban values and lifestyles. As they try to be a part of the larger urban economy, they face the threat of unemployment amongst university graduates. They find working in manual jobs humiliating if they have finished university. So, it is obvious that they prefer not to use their parents' networks of kinship and *hemşeri* to find a job. Currently, they try to find sources of employment through channels that their parents are

⁵⁶ Anatolian High Schools were prestigious state schools that were established as an alternative to expensive private schools teaching in foreign languages in Turkey.

not familiar with. So, they have to compete not only with *gecekondü* people as their parents did, but also with their urban peers who have more resources for further education and more chances of finding white-collar employment through networks of contacts.

Familiarity with urban life opens up a new bargaining space for women with its reduction in the effect of patriarchal values, which tend to prevent women from having equal opportunities in terms of education and paid employment. As the older generations' identity is influenced by both traditional values and the necessities of city life, the women's strategies benefit from both of these. In order to overcome the obstacles generated by the patriarchal values of the community, they do not challenge the men's authority directly but develop various strategies depending on traditional values and the necessities of city life in order to bargain. These strategies vary depending on their age, marital status, level of education, income and the degree of male control over them. So, their strategies vary from asking for help from older people among their kinship, family or *hemşeri* networks to persuading the male members of their family by mentioning expensive living conditions and the increasing needs of their children. The increasing familiarity with urban values among the migrant generations is the main reason behind the intergenerational conflicts; in addition, the younger women experienced more conflicts compared to their male counterparts. As Velayati's work on migrant women in Iran showed, migration benefitted the younger women (2011: Chap.9). However, despite more opportunities for education and gaining white-collar jobs and more women participating in paid employment compared to previous migrant generations, the narratives of the interviewees suggest that they lag behind their urban counterparts in terms of educational attainment and women's paid employment .

In conclusion, it could be suggested that urbanization, as one of the main pillars of modernization, changes the values of rural migrants and provides the *gecekondü* youth and women with more chances of paid employment and further education. Becoming familiar with urban values has a significant impact on the attitudes of *gecekondü* youth and women, as well as those of the older generations, towards female education and employment, the role of education, the function of the moral economy and urban transformation projects. However, urbanization has failed to provide the same chances

as the urban middle class have to the younger generation and women in *gecekondu* areas in terms of employment in white-collar jobs and further education facilities.

10. Conclusion

Rural to urban mass migration was a response to changes in development policies in Turkey during the 1950s and 1980s. In most cases, male members of rural families migrated to the city first and the women followed them. Rural women supported their husbands in moving to the city at the expense of losing the community support in their villages since they considered migration to be a release from the strict control of in-laws and tough daily chores. Due to the absence of social housing and affordable accommodation, migrants occupied land that mostly belonged to the state and built their houses on it. Since it was a chain migration, more and more people came from the rural areas and *gecekondu* communities emerged. My participants' life stories showed that when the available lands in central *gecekondu* neighbourhoods filled up, newcomers as well as second-generation *gecekondu* dwellers found new areas to build new *gecekondu* neighbourhoods such as Ege. This resulted in cities surrounded by *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. Although most of the *gecekondu* women did not participate in paid employment at the very beginning, they built their *gecekondus* with the men, carried water and improved their *gecekondus*. Their skills of production at home were indispensable for the survival of the family because they enabled them to depend less on cash. The *gecekondu* dwellers, despite their diversity in terms of faith and place of origin, worked collectively to ameliorate conditions in their neighbourhood and obtain title deeds to secure their existence in the cities. This work shows clearly how inadequate the term "slum dwellers" is to describe the dynamism and extraordinary talents that have emerged and developed in this area as a result of the long process of internal migration.

From the perspective of the state and capitalists, they were the new working class, who solved their own accommodation problems without placing a burden on the shoulders of the state or the market. Since the interests of *gecekondu* dwellers, capitalists and the state were compatible with one another, a series of *Gecekondu* Amnesties were passed between 1948 and 1986. But this was not a smooth or easy process of legalizing *gecekondus*. During this time period, sometimes *gecekondus* were destroyed, sometimes the demolition teams turned a blind eye and sometimes the

gecekondu neighbourhoods were provided with infrastructure facilities even before the legalization of their *gecekondus*. Because of the ambiguity of this process, title deed distribution became the prominent instrument in winning the votes of *gecekondu* dwellers. On the other hand, the *gecekondu* dwellers were not passive in their relations with politicians and they succeeded in legalizing their houses and gaining access to infrastructure facilities thanks to bargains with politicians and their collective struggle. Moreover, the people whose *gecekondus* were demolished never gave up on rebuilding them since they did not have any other option and they hoped that there would be further amnesties that would legalize their *gecekondus*.

This study suggests that *gecekondu* communities emerged as a response to changes in development policies and grew out of the necessity for collective action during the 1950s. The *gecekondu* dwellers were quite aware of the fact that if their numbers increased and they struggled together they would win the power to remain in the city and improve their living conditions. Although they had different faith backgrounds and places of origin, their new situation in the city was similar in terms of their immediate needs for jobs, housing and infrastructure and they shared a feeling of exclusion from participating in city life. As mentioned by my participants, these commonalities enabled them to overcome other differences and to act together for their neighbourhood, and all these factors resulted in the development of *gecekondu* communities. Moreover, the relatively powerful left wing embraced the *gecekondu* people and helped them to improve their living conditions, and this contributed to the building of *gecekondu* communities during the 1960s and 1970s.

The coup d'état in 1980 marked a turning point for *gecekondu* communities as well as the rest of Turkey. It suppressed all the oppositional elements, therefore the leftist movement disappeared in *gecekondu* neighbourhoods and people became afraid to come together and act collectively. Moreover, due to the structural adjustment policies introduced immediately after the coup d'état, the gap between the social classes increased and the state gave up its previous role of referee among the social classes. This brought in more insecure jobs, less state protection, the individualization of society and the promotion of consumption. The need for cheap labour attracted more people from rural areas and the number of *gecekondu* dwellers increased. In their struggle against

increasing poverty, *gecekondu* women started to look for jobs. The newcomers took up the jobs that no-one else wanted; some of them became employees of the early comers and some of them bought/rented *gecekondus* from the early comers. Since the last *Gecekondu* Amnesty only legalized the *gecekondus* built before 1986, most of the newcomers did not obtain legal title deeds for their homes. So, *gecekondu* dwellers diversified in terms of the kind of job they held and ownership of their *gecekondus*; therefore migrants' position was not the same as before. This contributed to a decreasing level of solidarity among *gecekondu* dwellers.

The increasing level of poverty caused by the structural adjustment policies did not remain untouched. Following the coup d'état in 1980, the government introduced Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (SASFs) in 1986 with Law No. 3294 for poverty alleviation; however, the budget was not used effectively. The Welfare Party, a political Islamist party, used this fund, mobilized its resources and massively distributed food and coal throughout the municipalities during the 1990s. AKP, the political party in government and successor to the Welfare Party, enlarged the scope of this welfare during the 2000s. My fieldwork showed me that, for *gecekondu* dwellers, receiving this welfare directly denoted the recipients' political views. So, welfare distribution created a new separation dynamic for the *gecekondu* dwellers.

Capitalism created a new dynamic in Turkish cities, as well as in many other parts of the world, as a new instrument for generating income and marketing the cities was on the agenda of the AKP during the 2000s. In terms of urban planning, the 2000s were marked by urban transformation policies, which mostly aimed at gentrifying the *gecekondu* areas. In the face of these projects, which were based on formal ownership of squatter houses, the *gecekondu* dwellers' interests were not all the same. The early comers, who had formal title deeds, were compensated when their *gecekondus* were destroyed and they became well-off. On the other hand, the newcomers' *gecekondus* were demolished without any concrete compensation since they did not have formal title deeds. At this point, the latecomers returned to their solidarity practices, struggled collectively for their housing rights and collaborated with the socialist movement. My findings clearly show that the *gecekondu* dwellers with formal title deeds did not contribute to the struggle of the dispossessed *gecekondu* dwellers. This division

demonstrates the dissolution of the sense of community. Moreover, drawing on my interview data, I can say that most of the formal title deed holders will not be able to live in the future luxury apartments due to the monthly service cost and most of them were planning to sell these apartments in order to buy more than one house in a less prestigious area of Ankara to provide their children with houses. In brief, neither the dispossessed nor the beneficiaries will be able to enjoy the improvements in their neighbourhoods, even though they were the ones who overcame all the difficulties and turned Ege into a liveable neighbourhood.

Besides gender and the time of migration, generational differences created diversity among the *gecekondü* dwellers, especially in terms of educational attainment, job opportunities and dependence on family, kinship and neighbourhood networks. Although the level of education of the *gecekondü* generation is still not as high as that of urbanites, they have had more opportunities than their parents and grandparents. Many of them had the opportunity to continue into higher education. Education is the prominent space where the *gecekondü* youth get familiar with urbanities. Finding the kinship, family and neighbourhood networks to be constraints, they feel far more a part of the urban economy. So, the younger generation wishes to make space – physical, emotional and intellectual – between themselves and the older generation. Their expectations about their future jobs and lives increased and the younger generation in my fieldwork told me that their lives and marriages would be very different from those of their parents in terms of cultural practices, such as going to the cinema frequently and giving an equal say to each family member.

Although the younger generation in Ege told me that they had more chance of finding white-collar jobs than the previous generation, given the high levels of unemployment among university graduates they seemed to be worried. This is mostly why *gecekondü* youth preferred the vocational schools, which gave them access to the labour force sooner than university and the professions that they perceived to be secure, such as doctor, teacher, nurse and so on. The younger female generation told me that, although their parents had control over them in terms of having male friends and what they wore, they encouraged them to study. Since previous generations of women did not receive this support, the female *gecekondü* generation went much further than their

mothers and grandmothers and there was a much larger education gap than that between male youth and the previous male generations. While the older generations were largely convinced that women should have equal opportunities in education with men, the younger females told me that they would like to work not only to generate income but also so that they could be independent of men.

My literature review, newspaper scans and fieldwork all suggest that the self-perceptions of *gecekondu* people were redefined at each step by their encounters with urbanites. Initially, their primary reference for defining their identity was place of origin. This was mostly because they used to depend on their kin, relative and *hemşeri* relationships to find *gecekondu*s and jobs. During the developmentalist period of the 1960s and 1970s, *gecekondu* dwellers were silently welcomed by the welfare state since the political system was based on the inclusion of all classes. Moreover, the relatively powerful socialist movement appreciated them and wanted to be in solidarity with them since they were defined as *halk* (people) and working class by the socialist movement. Many *gecekondu* dwellers, especially the Alevis, were inspired by the socialist discourse and combined their rural background with the identity of worker. Since their primary concern was having a roof over their heads, they were mostly engaged with the problems around ownership of a *gecekondu* and improving their neighbourhood. In this sense, the building of *gecekondu* identity involved solidarity among the *gecekondu* dwellers, and being *mahalleli* became another dynamic that defined their identity. What all these features of their identity had in common was that they were not urban people. Due to the gains that early comers made out of the urban transformation projects and their relatively better jobs in city centres, they started to feel closer to the middle class. But they still related many conflicting narratives which show that they still feel the difference between the urban middle class and themselves, especially in terms of consumption practices and level of income. The *gecekondu* dwellers who did not benefit from the urban transformation projects also told me that they felt closer to the middle class and had improved their situation. This was mostly because they compared their current situation with their past and therefore felt well-off. They also felt this improvement because of the investments in cities such as the construction of new roads,

bridges, shopping malls and so on, even though their level of income did not allow them to enjoy most of these facilities.

In brief, my study in Ege shows that the emergence and development of *gecekondu* communities was a response to the changes in development policies and was generated by the survival strategies of the *gecekondu* dwellers. *Gecekondu* people had no option other than acting collectively and building up communities in order to survive and improve their lives. My findings also show that the sense of community in *gecekondu* areas had gradually started to dissolve by the second half of the 1980s when the gap between social classes widened and the whole of society became more individualized. This was also a time when the differences between first and second comers in terms of occupation and the ownership of their homes became more obvious. This process of falling apart was accelerated by the welfare policies implemented during the 1990s. The urban transformation projects had the largest effect on this process since the differences between people crystallized as large numbers of the first settlers started to move out and middle-class people started to move into the gentrified *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. Moreover, while the older generations are anchored in kinship and neighbourhood networks, the younger generation do not have close ties with their parents' hometown, *hemşeris* or the local people with whom their parents worked in solidarity in their attempts to become integrated into city life, and this breaks the very ties that were the basis of older generation *gecekondu* people's existence. Based on my research, I can suggest that the *gecekondu* areas are undergoing a huge transition period in which the people not only lose their houses and neighbourhoods but also their community. *Gecekondu* people, who are the urban poor, and the problems associated with *gecekondu* areas such as poverty, insecurity, unemployment, low levels of education and so on are dispersing to other areas of the cities. So, as the *gecekondu* areas gradually disappear, these problems do not disappear with them. As the sense of community dissolves, *gecekondu* dwellers turn into the urban poor with very limited social protection available to them from the established networks of community and the family.

This study sheds new light on the experiences of rural migrants and it is argued that, although they are heavily dependent on the moral economy of kin and neighbourhood

solidarity upon their arrival, they abandon these ties once they become successful and feel ashamed of them and constrained by them. Therefore, the process of migration depends on the moral economy but also destroys it. In this sense, this study offers a new perspective to students of migration and development. Urban planners, particularly in developing countries with rapid rural to urban migration and urbanization, should consider this work since it highlights the necessity for these planners to consider the lived experience of slum dwellers in particular, who need different forms, facilities and accommodation. Without such consideration, it would be extremely difficult for planners to continue.

While the majority of early studies on *gecekondu* focused on the processes of migration and the physical establishment of *gecekondu* (see Yasa 1966, Karpat 1976, Kiray 1970, Öğretmen 1957), contemporary studies highlight issues such as the moral economy, poverty, solidarity networks, welfare distribution, and urban transformation in *gecekondu* areas (see Erdoğan and Bora 2007, Buğra 2007, Altınyelken 2009, Güzey 2009, Erman 2001, Özyeğin 2001, Eroğlu 2011, Çınar 1993, Dedeoğlu 2008, Özyeğin 2002, Çelik 2010, Murakami 2011). Since my research is based on the life story of a *gecekondu* neighbourhood from its establishment to integration, it can reflect on both the community's physical establishment and the other issues that contemporary studies focus on. As my findings related to the physical establishment of Ege are consistent with previous works in terms of the fact that *gecekondu* were built step by step and local people helped one another, it also suggests that once the *gecekondu* people obtained the necessary skills and knowledge about *gecekondu* building, they used them to establish other *gecekondu* later and they always remained hopeful about future *gecekondu* amnesties. The case of Ege, where people built more *gecekondu* in Yakupabdal, shows that *gecekondu* people, regardless of the legal ownership of their *gecekondu*, feel that their position is insecure and use the skills and knowledge that they gained during the initial years of *gecekondu* establishment to find spare plots and build houses.

Despite the emphasis on the potential for crime in *gecekondu* areas by the media and in mainstream political discourse (Keleş 2010: 483), research considering crime and *gecekondu* does not dominate. In addition to the few contemporary studies on crime and *gecekondu*, which suggest that the crime is related to exclusion and is a way of

becoming accepted and being a part of city life (Erman and Eken 2004: 67, Yonucu 2008: 65), my research findings indicate a strong relationship between the increasing insecurity in *gecekondu* areas and the decreasing social solidarity and disappearance of social movements.

An early piece of research on *gecekondus* conducted by Kemal Karpat in three *gecekondu* districts in İstanbul showed that *gecekondu* people's religious and social identities and attachments are represented by their activities. These revolved around the community and religion, which was considered to be a part of the village-communal culture (1976:Chap.5). Drawing on his findings, he clearly stated his expectation that the idea of community would continue in some form despite some possible changes (Karpat 1976:128). His research was conducted long before the emergence of religious communities and Islamist parties who rely on the idea of community and succeed in addressing the *gecekondu* dwellers, but it did give insights that help us to understand the potential for *gecekondu* people to be recruited by religious communities and the Islamist movement which highlight the idea of community and become the current instruments for social cohesion and making more space for *gecekondu* people.

The political Islamist movement, which started in the 1980s, became empowered during the 1990s and in spite of the factions and diversity among the organizations in the movement, the AKP, which is a political Islamist party, came to power with an overall majority in 2002. The Welfare Party in the 1990s and the AKP in the 2000s mobilized their resources through local government, councils and their business networks and reached out to *gecekondu* people, who are mostly excluded by or at the margins of the existing market economy. The rise of the Islamist movement in the 1990s had a large impact on the studies of *gecekondus* in Turkey and the discussions about civil society, welfare, local communities and religious communities attracted the attention of many scholars (see White 2002, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2002, Çelik 2010, Buğra 2007, Erder 1996, Eroğlu 2010). Jenny White's work on Ümraniye, a *gecekondu* district of İstanbul, focused on the Islamist activists' methods of approaching *gecekondu* people and attempted to explain their success in recruiting them. Her study suggests that the Islamic movement's organization and its messages were based on the local culture (2002:31), it channelized its available resources towards the daily necessities of

gecekondu people and the Welfare Party benefitted from the practice of *imece* and moral economy among *gecekondu* dwellers in translating complex political ideas into a “culturally embedded, personally transmitted message” (p.210). So, the Islamists realized the importance of community – which was mentioned by Karpa (1976) – interpersonal dependence and mutuality for the survival of *gecekondu* people and were able to carry both their resources and their messages to the *gecekondu* communities. Işık and Pınarcıoğlu’s (2002) work on Sultanbeyli, another *gecekondu* neighbourhood in İstanbul, took a step forward and discussed the transformation of social relations in *gecekondu* areas through the new channels opened up by the rise of the Islamic movement. Their work suggested that, in a social setting where the line between formal and informal, legal and illegal, was often blurred, the networks provided by the religious communities turned into a new instrument for the *gecekondu* dwellers to improve their welfare and transfer their poor conditions to newcomers (2002: 334-336). They concluded that urban areas in Turkey are not composed of anonymised citizens but consist of the sum of groups which are densely organised through community relations (p.335).

The Islamic mobilization is more about linking everyday practices, cultural values and social relations to new forms of public life and political practice rather than about religion itself (White 2002:271). However, its message was based on Sunni Islamic rhetoric. Due to the historical oppression of the Alevi population in Anatolia as early as Ottoman times, Alevi *gecekondu* dwellers could not be addressed by the message of the Islamic movement. In contrast, they could be easily addressed by the organizations inspired by Kemalist ideology since the majority of Alevis are attached to this ideology because of its promise of secularism. However, the secularist groups could not fit their secular, modern and Kemalist lifestyle ideas to local normative values (White 2002:258) and failed to reach *gecekondu* people or to provide them with new instruments for upward mobility. At this point, while the contemporary academic interest in *gecekondus* focused on *gecekondu* areas whose population was largely Sunni, who could be approached by religious communities and Islamic parties, my work focuses on a *gecekondu* neighbourhood where the majority of the population is Alevi. My research could be considered as complementary to the current works on *gecekondus* in the sense

that it illustrates the survival strategies of a *gecekondu* community which is lacking in new instruments and channels for upward mobility. The Islamic mobilization could be a new sphere for creating civil society, social cohesion, mutual support and a sense of community, as shown by the other contemporary works; however, it could also turn into a practice of exclusion for those *gecekondu* communities whose identity is not compatible with the lifestyle offered by the Islamist mobilization, as suggested by my work. Moreover, my work illustrates that the solidarity practices and welfare distribution by the Islamic movement, regardless of whether it is handed out through formal or informal channels, could have a divisive role among *gecekondu* dwellers, as the receiving of welfare from the religious communities or the municipalities ruled by the AKP could be seen as a sign of political commitment on the part of the receiver. So, the Islamist mobilization can rebuild social cohesion in mostly Sunni *gecekondu* neighbourhoods but, on the other hand, on a larger scale, it destroys the solidarity practices among *gecekondu* dwellers. Therefore, without considering the experiences of *gecekondu* communities that could not access the resources provided by the Islamic parties and the religious communities, which were the most successful movements in reaching the urban poor, neither the *gecekondu* dwelling experience nor the role of the Islamic movement in building civil society and social cohesion and distributing welfare can be grasped properly. In this sense, my work claims that the role of the Islamic movement in providing new channels and relations for upward mobility should be considered in a broader framework which also includes the communities that cannot benefit from these new channels and solidarity practices and as a result become more marginalized.

Appendix 1: Photos of Ege Neighbourhood

Photo 1: A breakfast prepared for me and my mother in a *gecekondu* in Ege



Photo 2: An evening visit to a family in Ege



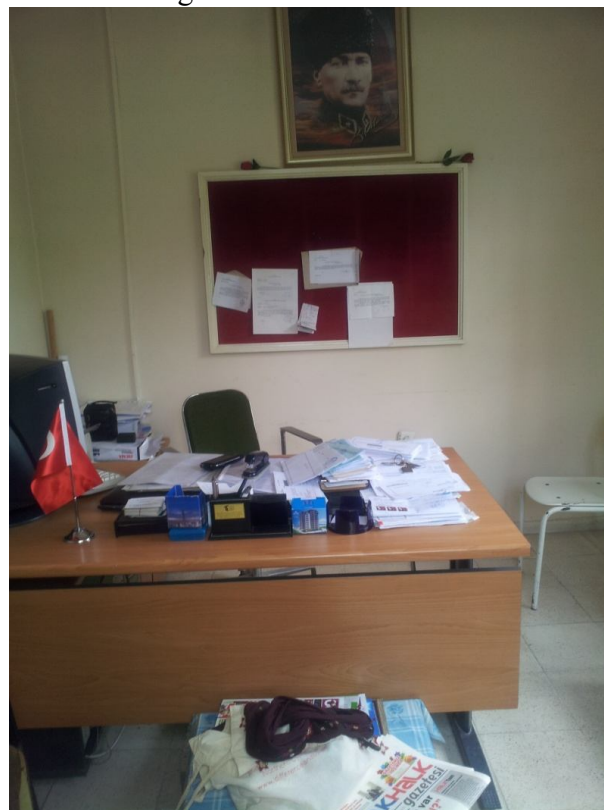
Photo 3-4: A visit to a family in Ege



Photo 5: Local coffee house in Ege



Photo 6-7: Muhtar's office in Ege



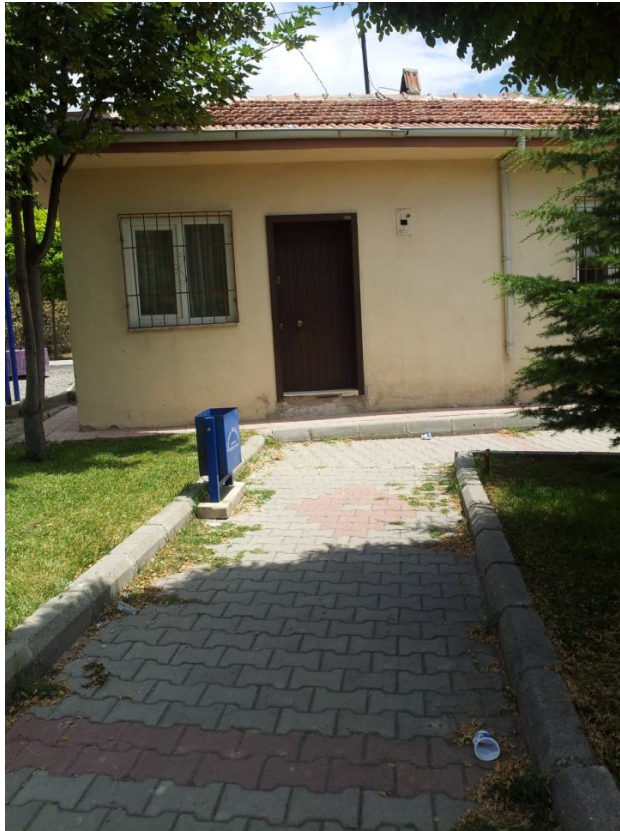


Photo 8: The *gecekondu* that I rented in Ege



Photo 9: Cengiz's *bakkal* shop. I held some interviews with men in the front part of the shop, next to the yellow box on the right-hand side.



Photo 10: Ege people shopping at the local grocery market which was open on Fridays.



Photo 11: A doorstep of a Gecekondu in Ege



Photo 12: A portrait of Atatürk between Ali's portraits is on the interior wall of a room (on the wall to the right) in a *gecekondu* in Ege.



Photo 13-14: An *ardiye* which was built in 1986.



Photo 15-16: A Couple building a *gecekondu* in Ege/ Emine Öztürk's Family Photo Archive



Photo 17: A *gecekondu* house with a chimney made from a barrel and a storage area covered with banners



Photo 18: Şehriban's *gecekondus*. They bought the one at the back in 1982. They built the one at the right hand side in 1986 when their son married.



Photo 19-20: Gülay's *gecekondu*. First they built these two rooms and the corridor (Photo at top). The room at the left hand side of the corridor is a kitchen now. Before, this corridor was used as a kitchen. In due course, they added the living room and the children's room, which are connected (Photo at bottom).



Photo 21-22: Hacer's garden, which she uses as a cat shelter.



Photo 23: Hacer built five *gecekondus* on her plot and all of them are covered by walls and in the same garden.



Photo 24-25: A bakkal shop in Ege Mahallesi,



Photo 26: A view of Çankaya- Mamak Viaduct from Ege



Photo 27: Looking towards Newly Emerging Shopping Malls from Ege Mahallesi/
Taken by Güven Aydoğın (an inhabitant of Ege)



Photo 28: Looking towards the New Shopping Malls from Natoyolu Road



Photo 29: Ege is located in a valley/ Taken by Güven Aydoğan



Photo 30: A photo of Ege which is used on the website of Mamak Municipality to advertise EUTP/ Source: Mamak Municipality's Website



Photo 31: Ege during urban transformation



Photo 32: A family Photo taken beside the coal yard at the beginning of the 1990s./
Emine Öztürk's family photo archive



Photo 33: Former Waste-Dump /Taken by Güven Aydoğan



Photo 34: Two young boys are cleaning away the leaves in front of the door after their folklore dance class in *Topal Karınca*



Photo 35: The entrance to the *Çöplük* area is blocked by the people on the 26th of July 2012. On the stone on the left-hand side is written “not demolition but solution”, on the stone on the right-hand side is written “people have the right to housing”. / Star Journal, 26.07.2012



Photo 36: The *gecekondus* on the plots that are planned to be part of the main road were demolished.



Photo 37: Ankara Municipality initiated road maintenance work after the demolition.



Photo 38 Cezmi has been gardening and decorating his garden for many years and he has many fruit trees.



Photo 39-40: Fazilet added an extra room in front of her gecekondu to provide a small shop for her son (photo at top) and they surrounded their garden with walls.



Photo 41: Room of a teenager in Ege.



Appendix 2 List of Interviewees and Focus Groups Participants

List of Interviewees by Alphabetic Order

1. **Abbas:** He came to Ankara on his own at the age of 17 in 1968. He initially stayed in bachelor houses and worked as a construction worker. He went abroad to work in 1978 and when he came back to Ankara in 1986, he opened an *ardiye* in Ege. He still runs this *ardiye*.
2. **Alev:** She is a 37-year-old second-generation migrant. She came to Ege when she was a child. She finished a vocational high school on child care and works as a teacher assistant in a kindergarten in city centre. His mother, who lives next door, takes care of her children.
3. **Ali:** He came to Ankara in 1978 immediately after he finished high school. In 1984, he moved to Ege where he has been a *muhtar* for seventeen years.
4. **Aynur:** She is a 31-year-old *gecekondu* dweller. She works as a research assistant in a university in Ankara and is a left-wing activist. She moved to Ege when he got married a man in Ege and then they bought a *gecekondu* in Yakupabdal and refurbished it and moved to there in 2011.
5. **Ayşe:** She is a 54-year-old second-generation migrant. She came to Ankara in 1970. She moved to Ege when she got married in 1985. She has worked as a domestic worker, a cleaner and a tea-lady at different times during her life.
6. **Arzu:** She is a 14-year-old third-generation migrant. She attends to the local secondary school. She takes care of her seven-year-old brother and has done most of the housework since her mother began to suffer from serious illnesses.
7. **Behzat:** He is a first-generation migrant in his sixties. He came to Ege in 1974 and built a *gecekondu*. He currently lives in Tuzluçayır.
8. **Burhan:** He is a 46-year-old second-generation migrant. He came to Ege when he was 9 and has been running a shoe-repairer shop in Ege since 1987.
9. **Can:** He was born in Tuzluçayır in 1979 and his family came to Ege in 1985. He has worked as a sales assistant in various shops in Kızılay. Since he could not find a stable job, he frequently changed his work.

10. **Cengiz:** He is 36 years old, dropped out of university and has been running a *bakkal* shop in Ege for six years.

11. **Çenk:** He was born in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood in İstanbul and came to Ege when he was a child. He was a student at one of the top state high schools in Ankara and since he got very high scores in the university entrance exam he got a place in the engineering department of a prestigious state university in Ankara. He occasionally works part-time while he studies.

12. **Cevdet:** His family came to Ankara and built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1979 when he was 19. He finished vocational high school but he has never worked at what he was trained for. He has been running a *bakkal* shop in Ege since the early years of the 1980s.

13. **Cezmi:** He is a second-generation migrant. His father bought a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1988 and lived there until the beginning of the 2000s. Arslan came to Ankara with his family in 1991 after working some years in abroad. He and his family moved in to his father's house in the beginning of the 2000s. One of his sons is dental technician working in Kızılay and his other sons manage a textile workshop.

14. **Çetin:** He is a third-generation migrant. He was born in Ege in 1980 and moved to Tuzluçayır five years ago. He runs a second hand book shop in Kızılay.

15. **Deniz:** He is a 40-year-old second-generation migrant. His family came to Ege in 1985. He works as a technician. He is a left-wing political activist since the age of 14 and was imprisoned for five years for his activities in the 1990s.

16. **Döndü:** She is a 53-year-old first-generation migrant. She came to Ege immediately after she married. She lived with her two married sons and their wives and children until the sons moved out in 2000.

17. **Dündar:** He is a 16-year-old second-generation migrant. His family came to Ege when he was a child. He attends to a vocational high school and works with his father who is a construction worker in summer holidays.

18. **Elif:** She is a university student and a political activist who is active in *gecekondu* neighbourhoods including Ege.

19. **Fadime:** She is a 58-year-old first-generation migrant. She has never been to school and came to Ege directly from her village at the end of the 1970s.

20. **Fazilet:** She is a 69-year-old first-generation migrant. She and her husband came to Ankara in 1985. They initially found jobs through their kin network on a farm in Ankara. Later she worked as a cleaner in a private company until she developed serious sight problems. She bought a *gecekondu* without a title deed in Ege in 2005 and currently lives there with her married son and his family.

21. **Ferhat:** He is a 56-year-old second-generation migrant. He came to Ege at the age of 11 and dropped out of middle school. He used to be a cleaner in a state institution. He started to work as a part-time sales assistant in a local market after his retirement.

22. **Fidan:** She is a first-generation migrant. She came to Tuzluçayır in the 1950s. She used to work as a domestic worker. Although she rents a flat in Tuzluçayır, she usually stays with her daughter in Ege.

23. **Gül:** She came to Ege in the beginning of the 1970s with her husband and children. She finished the primary school and has never worked because her husband did not let her to do so.

24. **Gülay:** She is a 34-year-old second-generation migrant. Her family came to Tuzluçayır when she was two. She moved to her father-in-law's *gecekondu* in Ege when her husband's business went bankrupt four years ago.

25. **Gülden:** She finished primary school and has never worked because her husband did not allow her to do so. She is 31 years old and came to Ege from her village in 2000 via marriage. She occasionally does baby-sitting in her house and sells hand-made embroideries.

26. **Hacer:** Hacer came to Ege directly from her village in 1986 to take her husband to hospital. Since the treatment lasted for a long time, she found a plot in Ege with the help of a nurse she met at the hospital and over time built five *gecekondus* on this plot. She also built another *gecekondu* in Yakup Abdal in 1996.

27. **Hadise:** She is a first-generation migrant in her forties. Her husband died in 2005 and she lived with her adult son who worked in a hairdresser in Kızılay and two other young children.

28. **Hakan:** He is a third-generation migrant. He was born in Ege in 1980. He is a teacher in the local primary job.

29. **Hakkı:** He is a 55-year-old second-generation migrant. His family built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1974. He married an Ege woman from his village whom he had known since 1982. He occasionally worked in a factory. Currently he does not have a regular job.

30. **Hatun:** Her husband came to Ankara in 1977 and took Hatun and their kids a year after. They rented a *gecekondu* in Tuzluçayır where their kins lived. They bought a plot and built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1985.

31. **Hayat:** She is a 29-year-old second-generation migrant. Her family came to Ege when she was three years old. She used to work as a sales assistant in the centre of Ankara before she got married.

32. **Haydar:** He is a second-generation migrant in his thirties. He works in a hospital for the minimum wage. He is a left-wing political activist.

33. **Hayriye:** She is a second-generation migrant in her fifties. She dropped out of primary school since her father wanted her to help her family in agricultural work. She lived with his husbands' extended family when she was in her village. She came to Ege in 1982 with her husband and four children.

34. **Hüseyin:** He came to Ege in 1990 and built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1993. He used to work as a construction worker and currently runs a bakkal shop in Ege.

35. **İbrahim:** He is a 71 year old first-generation migrant. He came to Ankara in 1957, and moved to Ege in 1979 after spending two decades in other *gecekondu* neighbourhoods in Ankara. He used to work in a bakery shop and he is currently retired.

36. **İlyas:** He came to Ankara to go to a military school in the 1970s but was expelled from the school since he stabbed his uncle when he was in his village for a summer holiday. After his release from prison, he came to Ege, where he built a *gecekondu*. He then built an extension and used it as a barber shop until the beginning of the 2000s. Currently he does not work as a barber due to serious health problems but spends most of his time in this barber shop, which he has kept untouched.

37. **İsa:** He is a 60-year-old first-generation migrant. He came to Ege in 1979. He used to work as a construction worker he currently works as a junk dealer. He is infamous for pimping out women.

38. **Kader:** She is a 56-years-old second-generation migrant. She came to Tuzluçayır when she was 13 and built up a *gecekondu* in Ege with her husband in 1986. She used to work in a bakery but due to poor health she quit. She does not have any regular income and depends on social assistance.

39. **Kemal:** He is a second-generation migrant in his seventies. His family came to Ankara when he was nine years old. He and his wife rented *gecekondu* houses in different parts of Ankara until 1983 when they built their own *gecekondu* in Ege. He found a job in a state institution through an acquaintance and after retirement he ran a local *bakkal* shop for ten years.

40. **Şeker:** She is a 48-year-old second-generation migrant. She was born in Tuzluçayır and came to Ege in 1982 when she got married.

41. **Lütfiye.** She is a first-generation migrant in her sixties. She married a man who worked in Ankara as his second wife to take care of his first wife who suffered from a serious illness during the 1970s. Currently she lives with his son who has mental problems and relies on welfare and disability benefit.

42. **Macide:** She is a 54-year-old first-generation migrant. She came to Ege in 1979.

43. **Mahmut:** He came to Ege in the beginning of the 1970s. He built three *gecekondus*. He mainly worked as a cleaner in a hospital during the day and as a construction worker at nights before he retired.

44. **Muhittin:** He came to Ankara in mid-1980s and to Ege in the beginning of the 2000s. He worked as a construction worker until he got seriously injured in 2011. He currently runs a bakery shop with his wife.

45. **Murat:** He is a third-generation migrant. He was born in 1992 in Ege. He finished the local high school. He has worked in different furniture workshops. He spends his spare times in the local coffee shop.

46. **Nahide:** She and her husband came to Ankara in the early 1960s. They built up their own *gecekondu* in Ege in 1979.

47. **Nazan:** She is a 46-year-old second-generation migrant. She has been working as a domestic worker since she was a teenager.

48. **Nazım:** His family came to Ankara in 1969 when he was 8 years old because their land was not enough for their nine-person family to survive. He

worked as a construction worker until his military service, then he found a job in the municipality through his kinship network.

49. **Necip:** He is a first-generation migrant in his seventies. He built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1974.

50. **Nesibe:** She got married to his cousin who worked in a bakery in Ankara and came to Ege in the 1970s. She has been working as a domestic worker for 25 years.

51. **Onur:** He is a second-generation migrant. He was born in 1986 in Ege. He has worked in various jobs such as sales assistant in a phone shop, waiting tables and the like while he was studying. Currently he is a university student and runs a pub in Kızılay, centre of Ankara.

52. **Orhan:** He was born in 1942 in a village and came to Ege in 1993 several years after his sons moved into Ege. He currently lived with his married son, daughter-in-law and grandson. He spends most of his time in a local *hemşeri* association and frequently visits his village.

53. **Osman:** He is a 38-year-old second-generation migrant. He was born in Tuzluca and came to Ege when he was a child. He runs a local coffee house.

54. **Pembe:** She came to Ege with her husband at the end of the 1970s. She currently lives alone and depends on disability benefit.

55. **Rahmi:** He is a 33-year-old second-generation migrant. His family came to Ege at the end of the 1970s. He worked as a waiter. He has not worked after 2002 when he won some million liras in a national lottery. He spends most of his time gambling.

56. **Rüzgar:** He is a 29-year-old, third-generation migrant. He was born in Ege and finished primary school. He has been imprisoned five times for committing theft and burglary. He works occasionally in informal service sector.

57. **Sabahat:** She is a 62-year-old first-generation migrant. She came to Ege with her husband and children in 1986. She lives with his married son, wife and children and she is one of the representatives for Northern Ege.

58. **Sefer:** He had visited his kins in Ankara before he migrated. He came to Ankara to settle down in 1968 when he was 26 years old. His nephew found him a

job in a factory where he worked for 25 years before retiring. He bought a *gecekondu* without a title deed in 1990.

59. **Selim:** He is a 16-year-old third-generation migrant. He goes to a prestigious high school in one of the central districts in Ankara and works in a local *bakkal* shop during summer holidays.

60. **Selin:** She is a 18-year-old third-generation migrant. She was born in Ege and attends a local high school.

61. **Selma:** She is a 30-year-old second-generation migrant. She was born in a *gecekondu* neighbourhood in Mamak. She moved into Ege in 2009 when she divorced her husband and left her home where she lived with her in-laws. She works as a cleaner.

62. **Sema:** She is a second-generation migrant. She and her husband came to Ankara in 1991 and moved to Ege in the beginning of the 2000s. She occasionally does cleaning jobs on a university campus and in a hospital. She and her son are representatives of Northern Ege.

63. **Semih:** He is a 35-year-old second-generation migrant. He was born in Ege. He dropped out of middle school. He does not have a regular job and spends most of his time in a local coffee house.

64. **Serhat:** His family came to Ege in 1987 when he was a 6 month old baby. He finished middle school and runs a local *bakkal* shop with his two brothers.

65. **Serkan:** He is a second-generation migrant. He was born in Ege in 1980. He finished high school and works as a cleaner in a private firm for the minimum wage.

66. **Sermet:** He came to Ege in 1982 with his wife and children. He worked as a construction worker until 1996 when he got retired.

67. **Serpil:** She is a 30-year-old second-generation migrant. Her family came to Ege from their villages in 1993 after some years her brothers migrated to Ankara. Her father did not let her to go to school after primary school. She worked as a hairdresser assistant and as a secretary. Her husband works as a cleaner for the minimum wage which their only income.

68. **Sevcan:** She is one of the urban planners in Mamak Municipality.

69. **Seyran:** She is a second-generation migrant in her forties. She and her husband lived in different *gecekondu* neighbourhoods in Ankara and İstanbul. She came to Ege in the beginning of the 2000s. She graduated from primary school but could not continue since her father did not let her to do so.

70. **Sırrı Süreyya Önder:** He was a university student and an activist with a socialist organization in the 1970s. He started to live in a *gecekondu* area and be active in *gecekondu* areas, including Ege, since he was wanted by the police for political reasons. He is a movie director and an MP.

71. **Sıtkı:** He moved into his sister's house which was in Ankara immediately after he finished primary school in his home village to find a job in 1972. He and his brother who came to Ankara after him built up a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1981. He worked as a tailor and found a job in the military. He worked in the military during the daytime and in his tailor shop at nights before he retired.

72. **Sonül:** She was born in a village in 1939 and lived there until 2010. During this time, she frequently visited her children who migrated to Ankara in the 1980s. In 2010, she moved into Ege where she had three children.

73. **Şehriban:** She is a 66 year old first generation migrant. She came to Ege in 1982 several years after his adult sons migrated to Ankara.

74. **Şerife:** She was born in 1979 in Akşemsettin, a nearby *gecekondu* neighbourhood to Ege. She runs a *bakkal* shop in Akşemsettin while his husband has another *bakkal* shop in Ege.

75. **Tarık:** He eloped to Ankara alone when he was 12 to work. Initially he worked in his brother's *bakkal* shop and then he worked in different off-licences and lodged at his workplaces. Finally he found a stable job in a state institution but also did supplementary jobs. He built a *gecekondu* in 1976 and lived there until he became sufficiently well-off to afford a flat in 1996. Currently he is retired and running an estate agency in Ege.

76. **Tuncay:** He is a 42-year-old second-generation migrant. He came to Ege in 1986. He is a sociologist and a left-wing activist. He currently lives in a *gecekondu* in Yakupabdal.

77. **Turan:** When he was a teen-ager in 1986, he came to Ege where his sister and kins lived to find a job. He works as a crane driver in the municipality.

78. **Türkan:** Türkan's family came to Ege in 1974 and she was born in 1975. She graduated from a girl's college in the centre of Ankara. She works as a part-time cleaner

79. **Ulaş:** He is a political activist who organized *gecekondu* people to struggle for their housing rights.

80. **Yılmaz:** He is a 38-year-old second-generation migrant. His family came to Ege when he was 6 years old. He finished primary school. He worked as a sales assistant in various shoe stores in city centre and he opened his own shoe store in Ege in 2010.

81. **Yiğit:** His family moved into Ege in 1977 and he was born in 1979. He graduated from a vocational high school. He currently works as a security guard in a private hospital.

82. **Zehra:** She is a 64-year-old second-generation migrant. Her family came to Tuzluçayır in 1956. Her father did not send her to school. She and her husband built a *gecekondu* in Ege in 1974. She worked in the laundry of a military school. Her daughters were teachers.

83. **Zeynep:** She came to Ankara in 1968 and lived in Misket, which was within walking distance of Ege, and moved to Ege in 1979.

Participants of focus group by Alphabetic Order

1. **Bünyamin,** a third-generation migrant. He studies computing in a vocational high school. He works part-time in an IT support service.

2. **Cihan,** a third-generation migrant. He is a student in a local high school. He sometimes works with his father who is a construction worker at weekends.

3. **Ebru,** a third-generation migrant. She is a student at an Anatolian high school which requires high entrance grades. It is in a different neighbourhood from Mamak and she needs to use public transportation to get there. She works at summer school in local markets.

4. **Ercan,** a third-generation migrant. He attends to a local high school. He works as a waitress in school holidays.

5. **Gönül**, a third-generation migrant. Her family lives in Misket neighbourhood which is within walking distance of Ege. She attends free courses provided by the volunteers of an NGO in Ege at the weekends.

6. **Özcan**, a third-generation migrant. He was born in Ege and attends to a local high school.

7. **Süha**, a third-generation migrant. He goes to a local high school. He works as a waiter in touristic areas of Ankara in school holidays.

Abbreviations

- AKP: Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi)
- ASKİ: Ankara Water and Sewer Administration (Ankara Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi)
- CHP: Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi)
- EUTP: Ege Urban Transformation Project (Ege Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi)
- FP: Virtue Party (Fazilet Partisi)
- ISI: Import Substitution Policy
- KPSS: The Selection Examination for Professional Posts in Public Organizations (Kamu Personeli Seçme Sınavı)
- MHP: Nationalist Action Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi)
- RP: Welfare Party (Refah Partisi)
- SAP: Structural Adjustment Policy
- SASF: Social Assistance and Solidarity Foundations (Sosyal Yardımlaşma ve Dayanışma Fonu)
- SHP: Social Democratic People's Party (Sosyal Demokrat Halk Partisi)
- SP: Felicity Party (Saadet Partisi)
- TBMM: Turkish Great Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi)
- TEDAŞ: Turkish Electricity Distribution Company (Türkiye Elektrik Dağıtım Anonim Şirketi)
- TOKİ: Mass Housing Authority (Toplu Konut İdaresi)
- TSK: Turkish Armed Forces (Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri)

Glossary

Abi: Older brother

Abla: Older sister

Alevi: Follower of Alevism which refers to heterodoxy in Islam in the context of Turkey

Amca: Paternal uncle

Amele Mahallesi: Workers' district

Ardiye: Literally meaning storage; *gecekondu* people bought the materials required for *gecekondu* construction there.

Bakkal Shop: Grocery store

Baraka: Shanty house

Bekar Odaları: Bachelor Rooms

Bey: Sir/Mr.

Cem: The central Alevi communal worship service which is performed in the houses called as *Cem Evis*.

Çankaya: A district where mostly affluent people live in Ankara.

Çöplük: Waste Dump

Dolmuş: Shared Taxi

Erişte: Noodles, a special kind of pasta mostly made by women at home.

Fakirlik Kağıdı: Proof of poverty.

Gariban: Dispossessed.

Gecekondu: It literally means “built over-night” and refers to squatter houses and areas in Turkey.

Gecekondu: Slum dweller.

Gündelikçi: Domestic worker.

Hanım: Miss/Mrs/Ms/Lady.

Hemşeri: Fellow-countryman.

Hemşeri Dernekleri: Fellow- countryman association.

Hemşerilik: A social link between migrants from the same place of origin

İhtiyar Heyeti: The Council of Elders; a body consisted of locally elected persons to assist *muhtar* in administering *mahalles/villages*.

İncece: A shared work process in which the work of each member is completed in order.

Kabul Günü: Reception days for women on fixed or known days of the week or month for entertainment where they eat various foods prepared by a hostess in the privacy of their houses.

Kaymakam: District governor.

Kaymakamlık: District governorate.

Kızılay: A central neighbourhood which is known for its trading and shopping centers in Ankara.

Mahalle: Neighbourhood.

Mahalleli: People living in the same neighbourhood.

Mamak: A district where Ege is located in Ankara.

Muhtar: Elected governor of a neighbourhood or a village.

Salma: Village tax.

Sunni: Sunni belief refers to orthodoxy in Islam in the context of Turkey.

Tandık: Acquaintance.

Tapu Tahsis Belgesi : Provisional title deeds.

Teyze: Maternal aunt.

Tuzluçayır: A former *gecekondu* neighbourhood in Mamak.

Ülkü Ocakları: Literarily means Ideal Houses. They are grassroot organizations of MHP (Nationalist Action Party).

Yeminli Özel Teknik Bürolar: Special technical offices which apply *Gecekondu* Amnesties

Varoş: Slum area with a strong reference to the assumed insecurity of slum areas.

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