THE OLIVE AS AN OBJECT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT:
THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF ORGANIC FOOD AND THE MAKING OF THE
LOCAL

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an in-depth case study of the emergence of local organic food as an alternative rural development tool on the island of Gökçeada (Turkey). Focusing on a cluster of programs and activities identified as the Organic Project, it investigates the politics of the changing relations between producers, agricultural practices, and olive groves. Unpacking the social, political and material aspects of the operations and impact of the Organic Project, this dissertation traces the emergence of the “local organic olive” as a tool in the ethnically contentious history of rural development, nation-building and the particular manifestations of the dynamics of the Quality Turn on the island.

Based on a constructivist-interpretivist methodology that foregrounds situated relational knowing and meaning-making, the thesis draws on an actor-oriented perspective to identify the micro-processes at work in the initiation and realization of the Organic Project. Through the use of interviews, participant observation and document analysis to expose diverse material and discursive processes, it traces the multi-faceted and entangled relations between the political economy of land, organic farming regulations and experiences of the olive producers.

Interrogating relations between the planning and implementation of rural development programs, this study shows the frictions produced and negotiated in the making of the local. It presents an analysis of the contestations, inconsistencies and fractures in competing discourses of the local and of practices of local organic olive farming. It argues that the socio-symbolic orders of market-orientation and the history of an ethnicized political economy of land create challenges for sustainable and fair agro-food relations on the island, and prevents producers from establishing autonomous relations with the land, the produce and other producers. It suggests what the local means, and how it is enacted and promoted as a value in agro-food relations, should be carefully considered to avoid perpetuating assumptions about its inherent value and positivity.

As a critical and extreme case, the Organic Project on Gökçeada highlights matters of debate in several areas of current academic interest, including the cultural politics of food, the understanding of the local, and the connections between rural development and settler histories.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFNs	Alternative Food Networks
CSA	Community Supported Agriculture
DDA	District Directorate of Agriculture (Tarım İlçe Müdürlüğü)
DÜÇ	Devlet Üretim Çiftliği (State-Owned Farm)
EC	European Commission
ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EU	European Union
GI	Geographical Indicators
IPARD	Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance in Rural Development
NSC	National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Konseyi)
SPA	State Planning Agency (Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı)

TURKISH ORTHOGRAPHY AND PRONUNCIATION

The characters and pronunciations that differ most significantly from those in English are as follows:

C, c “j” as in “joy”

Ç, ç “ch” as in “chair”

Ğ, ğ lengthens the sound of the preceding vowel

J, j “s” as in “measure”

I, ı “e” as in “open”

İ, I “ee”, as in “feet”

Ö, ö “eu”, same as unlauted “ö” in German, similar to “fur”

Ş, ş “sh”, as in “show”

Ü, ü “e”, as in “new”

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION:

TOWARDS A COMPLEX SOCIO-MATERIALITY OF THE LOCAL

This dissertation asks how the local is configured as a socio-spatial aspect of rural development and a state-society-environment nexus. It takes a recent rural development project on the Turkish island of Gökçeada as a case-study. Hereafter referred to as the Organic Project, this initiative is focused on the production and marketing of a “local organic olive”. Against the backdrop of broader changes in agriculture, the particular history of rural development and border politics on the island, the research uses this “local organic olive” as a lens to trace the creation of the local as a discursive and material construct. By doing so, the research aims to complicate our understanding of rural spaces.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the conceptual tools used in the research and to show how their interaction contextualizes the theoretical questions that inform the analysis of the case study. I identify nation-building and the Quality Turn as useful frameworks to explain the construction of contemporary rural spaces, as well as how the local is invested with value and meaning. I suggest that on Gökçeada these two frameworks operate through four mechanisms: replacement, reordering, standardization and commodification. These four mechanisms operate together, sometimes in concert, sometimes blocking each other. Together they demonstrate how the complex socio-materiality of the local operates.

This chapter has five sections. The first section sets out the central concern of the thesis and begins to problematize current conceptualizations of the local and the rural. Section two presents a discussion of nation-building and the Quality Turn, and outlines their relevance for the case study. The third section describes the four mechanisms and introduces how they contextualize and animate the Organic Project. A brief summary highlighting the importance of viewing the local and the rural in all of their complexity is set out in section four. The fifth section outlines the remaining thesis chapters.

THE CENTRAL QUESTION: COMPLICATING THE LOCAL FROM WITHIN

In agro-food studies in particular, and in rural and environmental sociology in general, it is now taken for granted that rural spaces have undergone a major transformation in response to the intensification of agricultural production networks, the proliferation of commercialized and industrialized food relations, the prevalence of globalized consumption patterns, and the worsening of agricultural labour conditions (Dunlap 2010; DuPuis and Vandergeest 1996; Goodman, DuPuis, and Goodman 2012; Harris 2003; Redclift and Woodgate 2005). Social and economic changes in rural areas have been analyzed with a view to understanding the impact of this transformation and to explore its social and economic consequences for rural communities. Many of these studies have envisioned the rural beyond a simplistic opposition to the urban and have challenged the assumption that the rural was, at one point in time, uniform, stagnant, and disconnected from broader socio-economic processes. The efforts to overcome this binary thinking in the scholarship involves moving beyond the conceptualization of the globalization and neoliberal restructuring of agro-food relations as external forces

destabilizing and complicating otherwise stable and simple rural structures. The common concern in the scholarship to identify the social and cultural complexity that is inherent in the making of the local, challenges the construction of the local and the rural as closed circuit entities corresponding to an autonomous physical space.

This conceptualization is frequently partnered with critiques of problematic formulations that identify other spaces and scales as having impacts *on* the local. Although there is a substantial amount of case study evidence illustrating that neither physical space nor social relations operate in isolation even in the most remote rural areas (Cheshire, Higgins, and Lawrence 2006; Marsden 1998; Torre and Traversac 2011), there is still a need to broaden the conceptual scope of the discussion to complicate understandings of the rural locality. It is therefore critical to conceptualize the rural and the local as inherently complex, changing, and multilayered socio-material realities from the beginning. The in-depth case study of organic farming that is the centerpiece of this research is a contribution to these efforts.

For the purposes of this thesis, taking such an approach means adopting a nuanced and micro perspective that starts with the presumptions that there is no unchanged essence to the local and the rural, and that all the sites, relations, processes and materialities are historically constructed, fallible, connected constellations that can be unpacked *ad infinitum*. It also means that the values and the meanings of the local are strategically negotiated, contested and changing political tools that extend and expand beyond their immediate location. As such, one of key building blocks of complexity is the inequality, unevenness and diversity of spaces and connections that make the rural locality. These spatialized connections include traces of historical discourses about

difference, and about the exclusion/inclusion dynamics, that make up the local. Under the light of these concerns, this study offers a layered and contextualized approach to the study of local food production. It contributes to the scholarship on rural and development studies highlighting the complexities of the rural and the local by showing how top-down policies that order ethnicized land relations, and appropriate the opportunities offered by local organic food production for the purpose of wider schemes of nation-building has come into being on Gökçeada.

This chapter provides a conceptual framework that is especially relevant to an exploration of the relations that have shaped the local in Gökçeada. Addressing the particularities, contingencies, and contestations through which the local has been invested with value and meaning on the island enables a deeper, theoretical understanding of the relationship between nature and modern society, and of the long-standing inequalities that are implicated in their construction.

The analytical framework of the thesis aligns rural change and the construction of the local in Gökçeada with two broader socio-political processes: nation-building and the Quality Turn. The first process, long history of nation-building on the island, has had an enduring discursive and material impact on the shaping of Gökçeada as an ethnically homogenized rural development landscape at the border. Rural development projects have historically been used by the Turkish state as a technology to address national border politics, thereby transforming and settling Gökçeada in order to deal with problems the island's indigenous rural Greek community posed for the nation-state (Harris 2008). Thus, rural development has been complementary to nation-building in the making of the island a national territory with a Turkish population.

The second process by which Gökçeada's particular rurality has been constructed is broadly referred to in the literature as the "Quality Turn." This literature seeks to explain the emerging moral and economic sphere of consumer groups oriented towards supporting or consuming foods with particular quality attributes (Allen et al. 2003; Goodman et al. 2012; Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000; Morris and Young 2000). The Quality Turn is often identified with such labels as organic, alternative, sustainable, fairly-traded, locally-resourced, and artisanal food production. These terms refer not only to food as produce, but to all the places, people, and relations that are invested in making food. The scope of the Quality Turn extends to processes of production in ways that transform the values and meanings associated with spaces and relations of food production (Goodman et al. 2012; Goodman 2003; Ilberry and Kneafsky 2000; Morris and Young 2000). On Gökçeada, conceptual discussions generated by the Quality Turn are critical for understanding the new rural and local imaginaries that started with the branding of the island as an Organic Island via the 2002 Organic Project and continue with initiatives such as the Slow City designation in 2011 and other eco-tourism efforts.

This study conceptualizes the local and the rural as bringing together different and contradictory understandings of power, authenticity, belonging, and the inclusivity and exclusivity demarcated by (national, cultural, geographical) borders. In doing so, it takes its cue from the recent literature that offers significant insights into how to critically interpret these concepts.¹ Both the rural and the local have spatial connotations, but their complex social and material connections cannot be confined to a physical space. Rather, the rural and the local are collectively made, agreed upon, or contested and are thus

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¹ See DuPuis and Vandergeest (1996), R. Feagan (2007), Halfacree (2006a), Hinrichs (2003), Ilbery and Kneafsey (2000), Morris and Young (2000), Woods (2010).

inherently social. At the same time, they manifest themselves through various materialities: agricultural economies, cultural artifacts, the built environment, socio-ecological change and technologies.

Both nation-building and the Quality Turn provide useful frameworks to explain how the crafting of rural space in different and interrelated ways changes the meanings and values associated with the local. As indicated previously, I identify four key mechanisms that animate these two larger processes: replacement, reordering, standardization, and commodification. I suggest that, looking at these four mechanisms and the different ways that they push and pull discourses and practices in Gökçeada, we see how the rural is constituted through various entanglements.² Each and every attempt at ordering of the rural, and shaping the meaning of the local, participates in these complex, conflicted, and fractured entanglements, which are, in turn, sedimented and layered, sometimes leaking into and sometimes blocking each other, affecting each other in different ways for different purposes.

For example, while nation-building inscribes food products with a place-specific national identity, local, in the language of the Quality Turn, refers to a food's micro spatiality. In Gökçeada, the tension and overlap between these two different conceptions of the local are manifest in rural development, ethnicized land ownership patterns, contested valuations of olive groves, and state-society relations in market oriented agro-food landscapes. In this context, the mechanisms of replacement, reordering, standardization, and commodification outline how the overarching dynamics of nation-

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² Entanglements, as a concept, has been used in the literature of feminist materiality, especially in Bennett (2009:20–38), Code (2006), and Barad (2007, 2014). For the use of the concept in critique of development practice, see Moore (2005).

building and the Quality Turn operate on the island, investing the space with new meanings and values while at the same time carrying forward legacies and traces of already existing power differentials and binaries related to the rural.

I turn now to a more in-depth discussion of the two broad processes, national-building and the Quality Turn.

NATION-BUILDING AND THE QUALITY TURN

Nation-building

Rural development in Gökçeada has rested on an ideology and policies of nation-building. This objective has been instrumental in reshaping the rural space of the island since the early twentieth century, when it was formally annexed to the Turkish Republic. The island was drawn into the deep and substantive extension of nation-building policies with the Lausanne Treaty of 1923 and the designation of Gökçeada (and Bozcaada) as autonomous islands. The indigenous Greek rural community of Gökçeada, which was exempted from the population exchange agreement between Greece and Turkey, became the target of the Turkish state's numerous projects and plans to ethnically Turkify the island.³ Despite its *de jure* autonomous status, as a border area, the island has been subject to continuous transformation through consecutive rural development plans that have sought to restructure its demographics and landscape, and to improve Gökçeada's economic viability in accordance with the priorities of the nation-state and its Turkification aims. Residents' relations to the land and space of the island and its changing ethnic composition have thus been shaped from very early on.

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³ The impact of the history of population exchange and Turkification of the island is explained in Chapter 2.

The scope and purpose of rural development, and its place in nation-building and modernization, has been covered substantively in the literature (Escobar 2011; Ferguson 1990; Li 2007; Mitchell 2002). Rural development has occupied a paradoxical position with respect to the modernization paradigm of the nation-state. In the national imaginary, the rural, or more broadly nature, was seen as a resource to be utilized and exploited for the nation's progress (Mitchell 2002; Scott 1998) while it was also considered to be a moral asset, representing the nation's core and roots and therefore deserving of preservation and conservation (Cederlöf and Sivaramakrishnan 2005).⁴

As a tool for intervening in spatial relations, rural development invokes the foundational binaries of the national imaginary, such as inside/outside, modern/traditional, and progress/stagnation. Within the nationalist economic lexicon, rural development describes the simultaneous processes of modernizing the nation's peasantry, food production, and agriculture and of safeguarding and promoting the nation's idealized authentic identity (Herzfeld 2014). As such, rural development is laden with the tensions of nation-building.

Özkan (2013), examining the place of forestry in nation-building, suggests that the national imaginary founded on this paradox of nation-building has continuously informed policies, discourses, and practices regarding relations between the environment and society, swinging back and forth between the high-modernist aspirations of massive development and indigenous and regionalist conservation. The dilemma of the central state, however, takes different shapes in differing locations and affects every locale in a different fashion. Harris' (2008) work on rural development in southeast Turkey, for

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⁴ Rural development and land transfers, like the Homestead Act of 1862 in the US, have been extensively used in colonial contexts. See Frymer (2014).

example, shows that rural development and irrigation projects in the area are used by the state to control the space where Kurdish insurgency is the most prevalent. As evinced by this more recent project, the contemporary development ethos of Turkey is still tied to nation-building—Kurdish separatism is countered in the region while at the same time rural development and dam construction is justified by an expansionist economic rationale that seeks state unification and modernization (Harris, 2008).

In Turkey, this conflicted perspective of natural resources and rural spaces has resulted in the state's sustained and ambiguous relationship with rural development. On the one hand, rural spaces have been treated as natural assets and have been conserved as elements of national heritage (Drayton 2000; Li 2002a; Li 2002b). On the other hand, rural spaces have been assessed for their economic value and used as resources to fulfill modernist national desires for power and status (Schwartz 1999, 2006).⁵ Despite their difference, the ideal of self-sufficiency is at the heart of each of these two views.

Accordingly, Gökçeada experiences the same tensions imposed on other rural places and communities by nation-building projects. It has been both praised for being part of the national heritage due to its natural beauty and maligned as a backward island in need of modernization and improvement. In addition, its borderland status and history of rural Greek habitation produce other tensions that intensify and alter the scope of how rural development is used as a policy tool for nation-building.

The discourse and practice of rural development have been critical in mobilizing the

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⁵ Despite their differences, the ideal of national self-sufficiency as a panacea to development is at the heart of these two views (Levang 1997). This national ideal has been replaced with the discourse of praising the ideal of the independent market-oriented farmer as an engine of local economic development. I explain the making of this new ideal in Chapter 6.

resources, narratives, and imaginaries that inform the understanding of the local in Gökçeada, and the Turkish state has relied on both of these aspects of rural development to achieve three important goals on the island.⁶

First, due to the island's geographical proximity to Greece and its World War I history, rural development was used to control the island as a border territory and military base. This led to significant construction projects and mass land appropriations to supply the land needed for building a military base and the housing for military staff. It also led to the enclosure of coastal areas on the island either as conservation or military zones. Some of the land appropriated on infrastructural grounds was later assigned to settlers within the scope of new rural development projects starting in the 1970s. Furthermore, the military base has become a major purchaser of local goods on the island, especially from settlers and settler stores.⁷

Second, the state engaged in massive rural development and settlement projects, constructing settler-villages on the land appropriated from Greeks. Settlement, which I will explore in more detail in the following discussion of the four mechanisms, has been one of the most important instruments through which the island's ethnic composition was homogenized.

Third, the state engaged in a national agriculture discourse which combined with rural development projects to promote the Republic's bigger narrative of economic unity, development, agricultural self-sufficiency and modern economic progress. This discourse

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⁶ The next chapter will present further information of the island's characteristics and development. Here I want to illustrate the significance of nation-building, and the Quality Turn, by highlighting the significant details.

⁷ I explain the relations of trade and how the state used local consumption as a way to manipulate ethnic economic discrimination on the island in the next chapter.

was mobilized as a means to position the island and its history as aligned with the broader ambitions of the Republic.

These three dynamics operated either together or separately, as strategies that were available whenever state needed to consolidate its presence by shuffling land-based rural relations. All of the state's activities on the island were part of a rural development discourse founded on a nation-building ideology, and the ensuing shifts in the political economy, meaning, and value of the land have had far-reaching implications for the making of the local on the island.

The Quality Turn

The emergence and development of food production, distribution, and provisioning based on food quality (and social, cultural, and economic relations surrounding it) rather than on quantity, marks a shift in agro-food relations that has come to be referred to as the Quality Turn. The Quality Turn developed within the context of the industrial food production milieu, and premised the quality of food upon its connection to local, ecologically sensitive, traceable, and small-scale agricultural production. As such, the Quality Turn encompasses an alternative set of agro-food interests including organic food, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), Geographical Indicators (GI), sustainable agriculture projects, Fair Trade, and many different forms of new food relations.⁸

Movements associated with the Quality Turn underscore the embeddedness of food in

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⁸ See Robert Feagan (2007), Goodman (2004), Goodman and DuPuis (2002), Marsden and Murdoch (2006), Murdoch, Marsden, and Banks (2000), Parrott, Wilson, and Murdoch (2002).

social, economic, and cultural relations.⁹ In contrast to the disconnection and alienation conveyed by mass-produced agricultural items, artisanal, certified organic, and small-scale specialty products provide consumers with a sense of community, connectedness, and safety through knowing the origins, producers, and conditions surrounding the food they buy. Emphasizing the embeddedness of food within other human-environment relations requires increasing the significance of local conditions in defining the quality of food items.

The Quality Turn is, in a sense, an assemblage of technologies of meanings, procedures, and standards that inform producers and consumers about their connection to food and agriculture. As an alternative to models that glorify the modernization and industrialization of agriculture, the Quality Turn encapsulates movements that perceive the quality of a consumer food product to be proportional to its proximity to the source, be it through geographical closeness to the place of origin or proximity as enacted through materials or standards that represent, perform, or guarantee of the closeness to the source (Trentmann 2007).¹⁰ In this sense, the Quality Turn provides a broad framework for understanding how and why the local has come to occupy an important place within alternative food practices. It is also helpful for exploring the local politics

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⁹ The concept of “embeddedness” has a debated use in agro-food studies. As Winter (2003) suggests it has been widely used as part of the economic geography lexicon but theoretically contested. See for a debate Murdoch et al. (2000) and Hinrichs (2000) and Krippner (2002) critique of Granovetter (1985). For a more recent contribution see Morris and Kirwan (2011). I use the concept of “embeddedness” as Polanyi (2001) put forward originally and Krippner (2002) suggested, to pinpoint the social life of the markets and economic relations in concrete institutions.

¹⁰ This corresponds to different meanings of the “local” in local food in different contexts. In the European context, local food implies proximity to the source of production whereas in the North American context when a food is qualified as “local” it usually refers to a known place that is not necessarily physically close.

related to claims over space and practice in food production. As Goodman et al. (2012:13–14) suggests, the relation between the local, quality, and embeddedness calls for a historical and socio-cultural unpacking of these concepts as constructs with contested material and symbolic values, as their different adaptations and incorporations point to the diverse, heterogeneous, and complex field of food relations. Thus, attention must be given to ambivalences within the politics and meanings of activities related to the Quality Turn.

In order to understand the Quality Turn and to examine the emergence and development of organic agriculture in Gökçeada, as well as the practices and politics of rural development on the island, it is critical to be mindful of the micro construction of ecologies, histories, and power relations that lead to agro-food changes (DeLind 2002). Debates about the meaning of quality and the different expressions of the Quality Turn show that, although local embeddedness is usually associated with progressive aims, local relations are not intrinsically bottom-up, democratizing, less exploitative, or emancipatory (Brodt et al. 2006; Hinrichs 2000, 2003).

The Quality Turn has taken different forms in different contexts. In European and North-American grassroots agro-food movements, localism symbolizes socio-ecological responsibility and has become an important tenet of quality in the alternative food scene (Born and Purcell 2006; Sbicca 2015a). However, as Guthman (2004) points out the original social and ecological premises of the Quality Turn have been taken over by industrialized logic of standards and regulations.

In Turkey, various understandings of quality have been used by the state for potential rural development models, leading to a more *top-down* approach to the Quality Turn

(Hegnes 2012). Standardization of organic food production has been part of a market-oriented agricultural policy from the beginning as part of a structural adjustment of the rural subsidy system. In fact, organic farming is especially supported by Turkish state policies, but not necessarily because it is a more sustainable and equitable way of supporting rural economies. Rather, the state's interest in organic production is a response to an increasing consumer demand in the West for organic produce and thus represents a possible business opportunity (Strategic Plan 2012). For the state, organic food production started as an extension of commercialized long-distance agricultural relations and did not seek to solve the agro-economic problems faced by small-scale farmers and rural communities.

The increasing interest in organic agriculture in Turkey can be seen as a manifestation of the Quality Turn within a neo-liberal milieu of agro-food restructuring by state policies. In this light, organic agriculture in Turkey in general, and the Organic Project in Gökçeada in particular, have been part of a larger, institutionalized agricultural restructuring operating within the context of the state's shifting role in rural development.

THINKING NATION-BUILDING AND THE QUALITY TURN TOGETHER: FOUR MECHANISMS

It is important to identify more specific mechanisms by which projects of nation-building and the Quality Turn are accomplished. In this section, I describe the four identified as especially relevant to rural development and the construction of the local on Gökçeada.

Replacement

Replacement refers to the different mechanisms that change the island landscape through the eradication and substitution of existing subjects, relations, knowledge, and narratives. It refers to the material and discursive elements that configure the local by filling in the space with convenient narratives and material relations aligned with the priorities of nation-building and the Quality Turn.

As a concept, replacement stems from theoretical studies in settler-colonialism, such as the seminal work of Veracini (2010) who, following Balandier (1966), interprets settler-colonialism as a situation, much like how Wolfe (1999) sees it as a structure and not as an event. This approach illuminates the processual, ongoing entanglements of settler-colonial logic—how it is infused in places and relations, and gets reproduced and reconfigured over time through different actors as the main hegemonic method of ordering patterns of governance, the use of space, and subject positions. The settler-colonial situation is not only marked by the “domination of a majority that has become indigenous” (Wolfe 1999:5) but also aims to establish a collective that represents the ideal social body as defined by the centre (1999:4). As such, indigenous populations become dispensable, or, as Wolfe (1999:163) posits, the settlers’ objective is to take control of the land, and replacement operates on the basis of the sustained logic of the need to eliminate the Indigenous population currently occupying the land.

However, most contemporary studies on Turkey and nation-building, and Gökçeada in particular, do not approach settler-colonialism as a condition or process, and therefore ignore the layers and dynamics at play on the island in the relations between different

communities, the state, and the island as a place.¹¹ Historians have expressed an interest in understanding the conditions of settlement and the dynamics of power that have operated in Turkey, although settler-colonialism is not the most popular framework for these analyses (Dündar 2001, 2006; Öktem 2008). While contemporary studies focusing on the particularities of non-Western settler-coloniality have arisen, e.g. a small body of recent empirical work on Turkey (Arslan 2014; Ünlü 2013, 2015), research on Turkey that seeks to uncover the impact of settlement on contemporary social dynamics is missing. I argue throughout this thesis that aspects of settler-colonialism are significant and critical conditions that configure residents' relations to the environment as well as the making of the local on Gökçeada.

The island's unique status as an autonomous territory with a rural Greek population differentiates Gökçeada from other places in Turkey where the state successfully eradicated the indigenous communities very early on.¹² It is a settler island established through the forced migration of its indigenous Greek community, and unlike most of the other regions of Turkey, nation-building and ethnic homogenization actively continued in Gökçeada until the 1970s.

Replacement is a critical mechanism marking a *making* by doing away with the *existing*. It evokes processes of discarding, eradicating, and rendering invisible. Replacement also implies a spatial aspect in processes of settler-colonialism in the sense that through re-placement, new orderings of social life are put into place. Finally, replacement hints at restoration, return, restitution, and claims of origin, authenticity, and

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¹¹ There are exceptions to this tendency. For an example of the studies on Cyprus, see Loizides (2011).

¹² There are infamous examples of Armenian genocide and eradication of other minority groups in rural areas in the late 19th century.

ownership. It is the combination of these distinct aspects of replacement that gives settler-colonialism its particular framework. Veracini (2010) suggests that the mechanism of replacement is one of the ways that settler life is normalized and rationalized and replacement is hidden and made invisible. More specifically because the settler continuously rejects the dynamics of replacement, it keeps operating, concealed under other discursive and material relations. Tropes of what Veracini refers to as “settler normative” are helpful in unpacking the role of replacement in settler-colonial situation:

The settler hides behind the metropolitan coloniser (the settler is not sovereign, it is argued: “he is not responsible for colonialism” and its excesses), behind the activity of settlers elsewhere, behind the persecuted, the migrant, even the refugee (the settler has suffered elsewhere and “is seeking refuge in a new land”). The settler hides behind his labour and hardship (the settler does not dispossess anyone; he “wrestles with the land to sustain his family”). Most importantly, the peaceful settler hides behind the ethnic cleanser (colonisation is an inherently non-violent activity); the settler enters a “new, empty land to start a new life”; indigenous people naturally and inevitably “vanish”; it is not settlers that displace them (...) Settler colonialism obscures the conditions of its own production. (2010:14)

Considering the project of nation-building by looking at Gökçeada as a settler-colonial space offers a deeper perspective than an approach that understands nation-building as a uniform and homogeneous practice that is only defined by the central rule, and illustrates how processes of replacement on the island have spanned most of the last century.¹³ In Gökçeada, one of the most pronounced enactments of replacement operated through nationalist policies of settlement and land appropriation. The cultural appropriation of symbols, narratives, and images belonging to the Greek community has

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¹³ There are diverse terms to conceptualize the different experiences and particularities of each case. One of those terms is “settler-nationalism,” which refers to settler-colonial experiences, but it had been challenged by the concepts of settler nationalism and native nationalism (McGrath 2012). Here, my aim is not to discuss whether Gökçeada qualifies as a case for either of these categories, but to engage with the insights of settler-colonial scholarship to better understand the complexities of environmental and social relations in Gökçeada. Thus, I will keep settler-colonialism as the general framing concept.

been another facet of replacement. The adoption of indigenous cultural heritage replaced its owners with settlers who used Greek narratives as a mechanism through which to claim the historical and geographic authenticity of their agricultural products and their own belonging to the island. Thus while on the one hand, nation-building replaced the Greeks, the Quality Turn complemented the mechanism of replacement by claiming ownership of their ideas and culture by normalizing, naturalizing and romanticizing the ethnically contentious history.

As one of the key dynamics that have worked together to configure the local in Gökçeada, the mechanism of replacement has been vital to the construction of a sense of local permanence as a settler normative narrative, to the erosion of the history and presence of the indigenous Greek local population, and to return to a localism that appropriates the symbols of Greek culture.

Reordering

Reordering refers to all the processes associated with the configuration of space for the purpose of re-organizing the island as a national border territory, and as an organic island and tourist destination: acts that evaluate, sort, and categorize the island space, create new taxonomies, and those that reorganize the land's purpose and use. Reordering also encompasses the discourses that justify these acts and shape the people and the country's economic and cultural connections to land as a socio-material reality.¹⁴ Spatial

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¹⁴ Conceptually, (re)ordering is often used in relation to Foucauldian analysis of knowledge systems and taxonomy (Foucault 2002). Taking the lead of such an analysis, others also mobilized different uses of making and unmaking of orders, classification systems, cosmologies and materially consequential dimensions of these acts as it relates to the environment-society relations (De la Cadena 2010; Escobar 1996; Haraway 2013; Ingold 2000; Raffles 2014). These studies emphasize the naturalized and rationalized orders that render the politics of difference technical and, thus, invisible. As I use the

reordering is an important aspect of how the knowledge and practice of the local rurality are constituted on the island, and has been significant in nation-building through rural development and in Quality Turn efforts. As a consequence, reordering adds layers to the rural space and its use reveals the gaze of the state and of planners.

As a mechanism, reordering contributes to the repertoire of discursive and material processes that change understandings of the local as an administrative practice and of producer's relation to the island as a spatial entity. Reordering can also be understood in light of debates about the concept of place. Although the terms space and place are sometimes used interchangeably, they usually refer to slightly different things (Manuel-Navarrete and Redclift 2010). In general, space is used to represent a more abstract, indefinite, and mathematical concept, while place describes a more concrete, populated, or physical area. Given its abstractness, space has often been used in theoretical analyses, while place has been seen as contextually contingent and therefore less suitable for theorization (Agnew 2011).

In geography, for example, place has been theorized through its spatialization, using maps, statistics, and other representational methods. This approach was controversial—not due to inaccuracies in the representations of place—but because critics questioned the conception of a geometrical empty space (Bird et al. 2012; Harvey 1996). Recently, geographers have suggested a more relational understanding of place using the concept of “sense of place.”¹⁵ Sense of place describes how the personal and communal meanings

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concept in this thesis, reordering is not only important for the construction of the *epistemes*, but also for showing the political tools that render certain groups, species, areas and relations “out of place” on the island (Douglas 2003).

¹⁵ Babül 2006; Davenport and Anderson 2005; Gieryn 2000; Jorgensen and Stedman 2001; Manuel-Navarrete and Redclift 2010:336–337; McCann 2002.

and narratives attached to a setting, the non-material characteristics attributed to it as a *genius loci*, and the un-systematized but sophisticated knowledge of the things that happen or grow in that setting all contribute to a sense of the whole rather than a knowledge of the parts that make up the place (Stedman 2003). This approach has gained momentum in recent literature on environmental management as a way of accessing the meanings attached to a local setting (Alkon and Agyeman 2011).

Place is typically invoked as a marker of physical reality that encapsulates cultural difference and genuine identity. This conception, again in contrast to more fluid understandings of space, supports binary thinking, positioning the local in opposition to the global, culture in contrast to economy, and the agentic versus the structural. When it comes to interactions between humans and the environment, place is used to represent the physical bonds that hold people and things together within the borders of a cultural and geographical space (Cloke 2006; Halfacree 2006b; Nazarea 2005; Slocum 2007).

The conceptual difference between space and place resonates with different rationalities that order, give meaning and change the landscape in Gökçeada. For example, the state sees the island mostly as a physical space. Similar to territory, planners see an empty land, ready to be settled and improved. On the other hand, the Quality Turn and organic farming promotes reviving attachments to place, seeing it as comprised of social and cultural relations with meaning and value. Similarly, settlers have their own place-based attachments that see the island sometimes as a place to live and prosper and sometimes as a territory saved by the state. In order to reflect this diverse and interchangeable use, I consider space and place as contextually specific concepts. They

cannot be defined abstractly. Their meaning needs to be established within the particularity of the political, economic, social and cultural relations examined.

The inclusion of place-based narratives in the value schemes of local development often happens concomitantly with change in the material aspects of the spaces concerned (Hall 2003). In the case of rural development, in particular, as an activity that organizes itself around different materialities related to land, crops, and other physical factors, turning space into a place requires an active rebuilding that has intended and unintended consequences.

Tsing's (2005) notion of "frontier" is an important concept that helps to explain how the reordering of space and construction of place operates in Gökçeada. The island is framed as a border area and as a peripheral region in which different rural development projects, including organic farming, are tested. Tsing invokes the concept of frontier to account for the spatial constitution of the meanings, politics, and connections generated by the relations between nature, human beings, and non-human actors:

A frontier is an edge of space and time: a zone of not yet – not yet mapped, not yet regulated. It is a zone of un-mapping: even in its planning, a frontier is imagined as unplanned. Frontiers aren't just discovered at the edge; they are projects in making geographical and temporal experience. Their wildness is made of visions and vines and violence; it is both material and imaginative. Frontiers move back and forth in time energizing old fantasies, even as they embody their impossibilities. On the resource frontier, the small and the great collaborate and collide in a climate of chaos and violence. They wrest landscape elements from previous livelihoods and ecologies to turn them into wild resources, available for the industries of the world (...) Landscapes are simultaneously natural and social, and they actively shift and turn in the interplay of human and non-human practices. Frontier landscapes are particularly active: hills are flooding away, streams are struck in mud, vines swarm over fresh stumps and ants and humans are on the move. On the frontier, nature goes wild. (2005:137–138)

According to Tsing, frontiers interweave place and process in a way that creates new technologies of spatiality and temporality. What seems empty is continuously expanding and what seems timeless is driven by an “erratic temporality of rumor, speculation and cycles of boom and bust, encouraging very intensifying forms of resourcefulness” (2005:143). Here, Tsing suggests that seeing the frontier as an environmental project rather than just as a place allows us to acknowledge that the landscape can never be filled or completed: there are always other things going on, other projects and space-making efforts that coexist outside of the logic of the frontier.

In this context, the reordering of Gökçeada as a frontier is strongly tied to how both nation-building and the Quality Turn have crafted the local rurality of the island. The spatialization of rurality is enacted through the different narratives and meanings attached to the land through the Quality Turn. Most of these narratives reorder the history of the island with a view to re-visioning it as a rural ideal. Planners and others work to craft an “organic island” that will be appealing to tourists. Nation-building has reordered Gökçeada as a national territory, redistributing land to settlers and re-designing the meanings of spaces by claiming new purposes for areas—turning agricultural land into military zones or settler villages, and former animal grazing pastures into conservation zones (Memorandum 2004). The multiple rural development plans that have been devised for Gökçeada mostly focus on how space and land should be used and reorganized for specific types of activities. However, these plans are not perfectly translated into spatial outcomes. Rather, they are tested on the ground, adjusted, and changed based on new information or the shifting priorities of the state and planners. At the same time, the

reordering visions expressed in development plans are contested by the settlers, and spatial purposes are further re-defined, adding to the complexity of the island's space.

Here, it is important to note the association of ethnic difference with backwardness in the national imaginary. For the Kurds in southeastern Turkey (Harris 2008) and the Greeks in Gökçeada, ethnic difference (non-Turkishness) signaled a need for the state's help with rural development, just as the ethnic threat these communities posed to the nation's ideal homogenous social body was seen as grounds for the improvement and modernization of their lands. Non-Turkish indigenous communities were, one could argue, treated like natural resources upon which the state sought to exercise its improvement ideology. This strategy resulted in the ethnicization of relations of land and of resource usage, and mobilized rural development in the name of ethnic cleansing, including in Gökçeada. It also had far-reaching implications for how space is seen and how its meaning is constructed in ways that extend beyond the nationalist imaginary of building a modern nation through replacement. The equation of non-Turkish ethnicity with backwardness laid the foundation for the settler imaginary discussed previously. I argue, in addition, that considering the land to be empty and unused was an essential perspective for the mechanism of reordering to function.

Reordering, as a mechanism through which space is inscribed with new value and meaning, reconfigures boundaries and differences. It works physically and discursively, tainting and layering the connections the planners envision as well as how the producers relate to the local and account for their position within local relations. Thus, reordering puts into effect the spatial designs of the planners while simultaneously adjusting to the multiple narratives that inform and challenge these intentions. Reordering also elucidates

the complementary processes that envision the island as an empty space primed for restructuring by the state. In that sense, both nation-building and the Quality Turn tackle the island space as ready-to-use land, and their dynamics operate based on priorities that are not always consistent but yet productive. Reordering, thus, challenges the association of the local and the rural with an inherently positive and progressive ideal, locating them within more complex and power-laden entanglements.

Standardization

As a third mechanism, standardization refers to existing regulations, laws, codes, and standards related to farming, land, and rural space on the island, as well their making as uneven, political processes that shape the rural and the local in Gökçeada. Both in the context of the Quality Turn's focus on organic farming and nation-building through settlement and land appropriation, rules and standards have played an important role in making the local in various, sometimes parallel and sometimes contradictory, ways.

The concept of standardization refers broadly to the continuous process of making ways of regulating things to render them manageable. It encourages simplicity at the expense of complexity and multiplicity while disguising, depoliticizing, and naturalizing otherwise power-laden and unequal processes. As such, standardization refers to the simplification of measurement and verification for administrative purposes, and equates rules and ideals to natural representations of truth.

With its ambitious project of quantifying and reducing, standardization often faces negotiation, contestation, and modification on the ground (Sbicca 2015b; Sbicca and Perdue 2014). Standardization is always an unfinished project. It is a ruling strategy that claims to determine and control the value of materials and practices. It is constantly

contested, modified and changed on the ground. In other words, it is a continuous and active effort of inscribing external rules and principles to a diverse and messy web of human-environment relations. Thus, standardization is defined by its practice. Yet, it requires constant performance of its rules in order to re-enact its power. As such, categories, tools and regulations of standardization do not necessarily function in reference to the things it aims to manage and control. However, these challenges are not always reflected in adjustments to the standards. One of the most powerful aspects of standardization, as a mechanism that continues to pattern the local in Gökçeada, is the fact that regardless of any on-the-ground challenges to their purpose, or function, the standards established through various development plans have remained intact.

The standardization of organic agricultural practices aligned with the Quality Turn have been instrumental in shaping the meaning of the local in Gökçeada, but standardization has also long been used as a nation-building tool by the Turkish government to efficiently manage its population and ensure its productivity. It is a mechanism whereby complex, diverse, unpredictable, and fragmented activities have been translated into the language of modern power—measurable data that can be compiled to facilitate the governing of resources and subjects (Aistara 2008, 2014; Konefal, Mascarenhas, and Hatanaka 2005). The rural has been tamed in Gökçeada through the metrics of land registration, cadastral surveys, population censuses, and planning tools, and one of the most critical manifestations of standardization on the island has been the land measurement and distribution process. Land and property was tediously numbered and categorized, converted into administrable units to ease the political project of Turkification, despite the fragmentation and contestation that resulted from this

standardization process through the Land Registry. As I argue in more detail in this thesis, these standardization attempts are never complete, even or homogenous.

Depending on how it is implemented, the standardization of organic farming and other local food production practices based on marketable categories can reinforce and re-craft artificial boundaries between complex processes. For example, the standards that delineate what is and what is not organic limit who can participate in the system and in what ways they can practice organic farming. Standardization in terms of the certification of organic land can also create new systems of value including the valuation of the land itself (Alkon 2013; Guthman 2004:143).

Fundamentally, in Gökçeada, the mechanism of standardization has reproduced existing boundaries and power relations, introduced new categories, and altered old ones, thereby contributing to the making of the local. The modern-state's technologies of measuring, registering and controlling land ownership based on the standards of modern land division techniques and land use allocations permanently shaped the pattern of ethnicized land ownership. Transition and permanence are thus very much ingrained in the organic certification procedures that certify not only particular farms and produce, but also validate settlers' ownership of the land and confirm its value. In this sense, standardization not only works as a regulatory mechanism that quantifies and measures organic production and simplifies the administration of farming activities, but it is also an intrinsic characteristic of the state's presence on the island and of its role as a rule-maker and regulator of the local.

Commodification

As the last key mechanism that contributes to the reconfiguration of rural space and the conceptualization of the local in Gökçeada, commodification refers to the ways that the rural and the local, as well as their associated activities and practices, are made into commodities for market consumption. Similar to standardization, commodification operates through different entanglements, and despite its definitive authority over food production in contemporary rural settings, it is neither a monolithic nor straightforward mechanism.

The debates surrounding capitalist and market-oriented activities in agricultural production are essential to our understanding of how rural places and relations are patterned and how the local is invested with value and meaning through commodity relations (Fløysand and Jakobsen 2007; Goodman and Watts 1997; Lind and Barham 2004; Scott and Anderson 1992; Takahashi 1999).¹⁶ Approaching commodification as a process illuminates the practices whereby value is added to a product, and markets and marketing tools are accessed, as well as the factors that facilitate and impede these processes. In this context, commodification is a mechanism that changes relations at the local level along with their representation in the market. One way to interpret this rural patterning is by looking closely at how certain items and places are commodified and produced for marketing purposes rather than for subsistence needs.

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¹⁶ The terms commodification and commoditization are used interchangeably, although they are tied to different debates in the scholarship. “Commodification” is grounded in the Marxist definition where things acquire market value. “Commoditization” is used as a process whereby goods are made part of the trade relations. Although they are used interchangeably, in this thesis I use “commodification” to encompass a more general process of marketization and use “commoditization” only in reference to Friedmann (1980) as adopted from Bernstein’s definition.

Commodification has been an indispensable concept for understanding the connections and patterns that constitute rural spaces in studies that address the intense change in the countryside brought about by capitalist relations. As a critical thread in the political economy of agriculture, commodification has been explored widely. Friedmann defines commoditization in agriculture as a “ process of deepening commodity relations within the cycle of reproduction” and notes that it occurs “to the extent that each household (...) comes to depend increasingly on commodity relations for reproduction” (1980:158). Van der Ploeg (2010:3) suggests that a reshuffling of commodity and non-commodity relations is taking place in the countryside and posits that the increasing importance of de-commodification will lead to a new, similarly seismic shift in agro-food relations.

These debates, speaking partially to those about commodification in agriculture, address the inclusion of non-market items in a marketized logic through their commodification. From seeds to soil ingredients, the range of what can be sold in the market has widened. Consequently, the local, as a place, as an imaginary connection, and as a practice, has become an important factor in the valuation of marketable items, especially in Alternative Food Networks (AFNs). The aesthetization of rural and local agro-food landscapes for marketing purposes has been extensively debated in the literature (DuPuis and Vandergeest 1996; Finney 2014; Woods 2010). Tidy, aesthetic representations of rural life, along with idealized, romantic depictions of the model local producer working in harmony with nature, have been the simple and unifying tropes with which products have been inscribed. At the same time, scholars argue that the tourist gaze has transformed unruly, messy, fragmented rural spaces into neat, organized, clean, and

consumable spaces (Darling 2005; Little and Austin 1996; Urry 1995; Van der Ploeg, Jingzhong, and Schneider 2012)..

Commodification in Gökçeada has followed a similar path. The current Organic Project not only aims to equip producers with better practices so that they can compete in the market, but it also regards the island's space and history as marketable items that are potentially helpful for Gökçeada's economic development. Consequently, Greek history, villages, and culinary culture are being revived and rediscovered for their value in marketing the island. Similarly, in this revival, olives, especially the island's *Ladolia* variety, have been rediscovered as an endemic crop symbolizing the culture of the island.

The ethos of market-orientation crafts the producer as an entrepreneurial organic farmer. However, as I will argue, these marketing strategies clearly contradict the ethos of nation-building that has territorialized the island as a settlement and security zone. The island's legacy of military and state-owned enterprises and land-use patterns are not conducive to making every possible aspect of the island marketable.

However, some of the government regulations are being relaxed and previously restricted spaces are starting to be included in commodity networks. For example, the biggest organic firm on the island, Elta-Ada, occupies the premises of a formerly state-owned enterprise that was originally built on land appropriated from Greek farmers to provide food for the island's military base. Such changes and transitions are significant in uncovering how the local came to be in Gökçeada and what kind of rural imaginary it entails.

Based on how commodification works, as a mechanism, it is critical to recognize that the local has been complicated by the trends in consumption patterns that local food

movements and AFNs have promoted. The intricate ways in which commodities are crafted in Gökçeada illustrate the myriad power relations that pattern the local and create an uneven, heterogeneous rurality, socially configured as a place based on a contingent and contextual reality.

THE PREDICAMENT OF THE LOCAL: THE STABILITY OF COMPLEXITY

In his account of what constitutes the “global countryside,” Woods (2007:492–495) offers a long list of developments that will likely become the subjects of future research in rural studies. According to Woods, what gives global rural spaces their distinct character is precisely their contested configuration, which cannot be understood through a linear narrative. Rather, the global countryside is a hybrid in three respects. First, the encounter between the global and the local generates hybrid and unpredictable outcomes; second, globalization itself is driven, configured, and characterized by a strange intermingling; and third, hybridity is generated by human and non-human interaction in the rural space. In other words, the constitution of rural spaces is made possible by a “multi-authored and negotiated process that seeks to engage, define and position a vast array of natural, material and social entities” (Woods 2007:498).

Included in Woods’ list of likely developments are some of the more commonly agreed upon factors: the emergence of more sophisticated commodity networks; an increasing corporate presence with links to transnational capital; the increasing dependency on precarious and temporary migrant labor; changes in the rural landscape due to the increasing commodification of nature; tourism flows; the destruction of forestry; the creation of new fields; and the introduction of more commercially valuable

crops. He also suggests that increasing social polarization and new forms of political authority and political decision-making contribute to the novel, dynamic, hybrid, and ever-changing character of the global countryside. Most importantly, he maintains that the global countryside is a contested space marked by resistance as much as by globalization and by hybridity as much as by top-down impositions. Thus, the strength of the local always exists alongside global forces (Woods 2007:492–494).

Gökçeada represents not only an important, empirical case that is useful for unpacking Woods' conception of the hybridity of the countryside, but also goes beyond the dual connotations of the hybrid countryside to conceptualize a more layered rural space. It illustrates that what constitutes the local in Gökçeada is not only determined by the globalization of agro-food networks and the increased marketing pressure for local items. In other words, Gökçeada's predicament is not a problem of maladaptation to the rapidly changing conditions of the global consumer demands and trends of niche markets. Rather, its complexity lies in a desire by the local bureaucrats, national planners and aspiring entrepreneurial producers to take advantage of these changing conditions while simultaneously holding on to the island's established socio-spatial order.¹⁷ This socio-spatial order is patterned by building blocks including the ordering of its ethnicized land relations, settlement patterns and demographics, border-island status, history of nation-building, and everyday micro state-society relations.

In order to understand the complexity of local rurality, this introductory chapter outlined the key concepts that guide the rest of the dissertation. It proposes a framework

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¹⁷ The coalition that fuels such a desire that sustains the inequalities inscribed in land and property relations is similar to the coalition between civil society actors and the state as argued by Migdal (1988).

for looking at the construction of the local through four mechanisms: replacement, reordering, standardization, and commodification. Doing so, I argue, will help to delineate the specific processes and outcomes that nation-building and the Quality Turn produce.

My thesis begins with the position that spatial reification and the simplistic association of the local with quality, safety, fairness, and sustainability are problematic because they define the local as homogenous and straightforward in rural settings that are characterized by harmonious, intimate, and stable social relations. This thesis is aligned with those arguments challenging the prevalent presumption that complexity and change in rural settings stem primarily from the impact of outside forces such as globalization. Of course, rural settings respond to outside dynamics, but their own histories, trajectories and complexities need to be acknowledged. Moreover, relations with the environmental dynamics enacted in rural settings are always socially ordered. As such, the local in rural areas is in fact always-already a complex, heterogeneous, and historically configured concept. This case study of Gökçeada acts as an example of how the complexity of the local is perpetuated and accented by globalization, but not necessarily created by it. It shows that the island's socio-symbolic orders of market-oriented local production, and its history of ethnicized political economy of agriculture, create challenges for sustainable and fair agro-food relations by preventing producers from crafting autonomous, empowered, and intimate connections to the land, farming, and other producers. What the local means and how it is enacted and promoted as a value in agro-food relations should therefore be carefully considered to avoid perpetuating assumptions about its inherent value and positivity.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE THESIS CHAPTERS

Following this introduction, the dissertation will present its arguments and case study material in six chapters. Chapter 2, *Imbros to Gökçeada: From Settler Land to Organic Island*, explores the history and politics of agro-food relations and rural development on Gökçeada from the 1920s onwards, highlighting key processes that contextualize the island's current Organic Project and the role of olives in the making of the local. It also traces the broader dynamics that are important in juxtaposing co-existing visions of rural development and the place of olives on the island. Bringing the island from its earlier incarnation as Imbros to its current identity as Gökçeada, Chapter 2 provides a grounding for the subsequent chapters and reveals how the making of the local through land settlement and politics has been historically contingent.

Chapter 3, *Method and Research Design: A Single In-Depth Case Study*, explains the methodological framework and research design of the fieldwork and document analysis of this dissertation. Explaining the logic of the research process and its guiding concerns, it outlines the main tenets of the interpretative-constructivist approach used in this study. The purpose of the chapter is to highlight the processual approach undertaken by this research to understand the making of the local and the different actors and settings through which the local is enacted.

Chapter 4, *Reordering The Space: Land Registry And Localizing The Olive*, focuses on how the making of the island's space through the politics of land consolidated its ethnicized political economy. Drawing on an analysis of Land Registry records, it argues that land ownership was consolidated on the island in preparation for the Organic Project.

Setting out the replacement of Gökçeada's Greek community and the reordering of the island space through zoning, this chapter highlights how the local olive was incidentally incorporated into the natural landscape. The chapter then moves on to discuss narratives about local olives and unpacks how these narratives are shaped by perceptions of locality informed by the Turkification of the island.

Chapter 5, *Administration of Local Olives: Bureaucratic Interfaces of Organic Farming*, considers the on-the-ground implementation of the Organic Project, emphasizing how organic standards of certification and the record keeping practices of the modern state are negotiated. The purpose of this chapter is to show how the uneven and heterogeneous uses and understandings of standards and certification procedures are key aspects of the construction of rural relations. Based on interviews and observations, Chapter 5 asks why and how the Organic Project in Gökçeada has been seen as a trial likely to end in failure by the local bureaucrats and national policy makers in terms of its encouragement of sustainable rural development, and argues that the categories and tools related to organic standards and practices cannot translate or encapsulate the experiences and practices of the producers.

Chapter 6, *From Settlers To Organic Farmers: Crafting the Local Producer*, is about the island's organic olive producers. Drawing on interviews and observations, it describes how they position their experiences. It looks at how producers perceive and narrate their relation to organic olive farming and how their positions challenge a simplistic and romantic ideal of the local producer. Chapter 6 argues that, in fact, present-day organic olive producers in Gökçeada fall far short of the entrepreneurial, market-oriented

producer that the Organic Project and current rural development schemes envision and aim to craft.

The dissertation concludes with a final chapter that summarizes the research findings and their implications for understanding the rural as a complex process and the local as a multi-layered configuration produced through different imaginaries.

CHAPTER 2

IMBROS TO GÖKÇEADA: FROM SETTLER LAND TO ORGANIC ISLAND

This chapter lays out the historical and socio-economic context of the island setting, focusing broadly on the general dynamics of its various reorderings starting with its annexation to the Turkish Republic. It then presents an analysis of particular aspects of the making of the local as part of rural development in Gökçeada, situating the politics of land, settlement, and rural development on the island within the frameworks of both the nation-building process and the current local agro-food scene.

The aim of the chapter is two-fold. First, its goal is to provide a general background for the following chapters. Second, before discussing what local means within the context of the island's current rural development ethos, this chapter aims to reveal the construction of other imaginaries of the local that have arisen in Gökçeada's transition from a securitized border space of the nation-state to an organic tourism island. The chapter is organized in sections that outline the history of settlement and rural development on the island from the early Republican to the contemporary period, and describes the path to and details of the Organic Project.

IMBROS AS A SETTLER ISLAND

The scale and consequences of nation-building on Imbros¹⁸ have often been interrogated within the framework of the Turkish Republic's social and demographic

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¹⁸ In this chapter I use both Imbros and Gökçeada as the island's name. Until it was changed to Gökçeada as its Turkish name in 1970, the island was known as Imbros

engineering, which is geared towards the homogenization of its population as Turkish and Muslim (Babül 2004; Erginsoy 1998; Tansuğ 2012). Literature on nation-building sheds light on different aspects of the nationalization of the citizen body through genocide, population exchange, and forced migrations, combined with land and property appropriations. These practices illustrate the crafting of an imaginary Muslim Turkish national community (Aktar 2003; Bali 2006).

Much of the literature on nation-building focuses on the political and social aspects of crafting a national identity that are at play at the centre (Bozdoğan 2001; Kadioğlu 1996; Maksudyan 2005). To understand how nation-building operates at the margins, in liminal spaces like Imbros, attention must be given to how these borderlands are continuously defined as part of the nation, yet their distance from the centre and proximity to borders elude inclusion in the the central national imaginary. Approaching these places as “frontiers” that illustrate the politics of re-ordering relations between land, people, and things enables a deeper understanding of how places are made by the state, people, and space (Tsing 2005).

In that respect, as the Introduction chapter put forward, the scholarship on settler-colonialism offers an insightful approach to understand the history and politics of Imbros. As a frontier territory with an ethnic minority population, Imbros has experienced several attempts at governance, all of which have been tinged with a settler-colonial logic. I suggest approaching Imbros as a settler-colonial project for three reasons. First, as border land with a Greek rural population, Imbros has been gradually occupied and settled by the Turkish state through appropriations of land, the elimination of livelihood resources,

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(Ιμβρος). The local Greek population still uses Imbros (or Imvros). For the period before the name change, I use Imbros as island’s name.

and the purposeful settlement of mainlanders. Its mechanics of social and economic change, similar to those of settler-colonial projects, has been based from the beginning on asymmetrical power relations between settlers and natives. Second, a settler-colonial approach complicates a nation-building perspective by exposing the cracks, frictions, and contingencies of the nationalist imaginary and allowing place-based relations to be interpreted as unfinished, continuing colonial projects with present-day consequences. Lastly, I suggest that Imbros can be understood through a settler-colonial lens because, as an occupied land to which autonomous status was granted by international treaties but denied by the settler state, the politics of the island still revolve around the management and governance of land and resources, and seek to appropriate the meanings attached to the island itself (Babül 2004) . That is to say, the technologies of nation-building on Imbros have operated through the disruption of the Greek population's relation to the land, and shifting the epistemic foundations of this relation.

Wolfe argues that settler-coloniality functions as a system, a structure rather than an event (1999). As the island's occupation continues, these processes of disruption, shifting and twisting persist. The recent repositioning of Imbros as an idyllic tourist destination, with its healthy, natural, organic agriculture and Mediterranean tranquility, is an example of how the settler project has been twisted and appropriated to create economic growth. As the Greek community is not actively living on the island, their culture and heritage have now become a motif in this new narrative of the local.

Seeing Imbros as a settler-colonial space acknowledges the processes through which not only the ownership, but also the meaning of land changed. This is important in terms of seeing settler-coloniality on Imbros as a process, rather than as a project with a

beginning and a definitive end. It helps to illuminate how the island's administrative strategies did not lead to the implementation of a master plan devised by the state, but rather, that Imbros' incorporation into the nation-state and the containment and replacement of Greeks on the island were facilitated through changing, improvised plans—often contradictory exercises of governance that operated through trial and error.

To illustrate the processes of crafting the “local” and shaping rural space on Imbros, I will now focus on how the island's landscape changed through settlement.

MAKING IMBROS AN ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT¹⁹

When Imbros was annexed, along with other coastal districts, to the Ottoman Empire as part of Thracian Sporades in the mid-fifteenth century, it was administered by the head of the Ottoman Imperial Navy.²⁰ It was not until the mid-nineteenth century that the Ottoman Empire defined the island as an administrative district of the larger regional Aegean Archipelago and administered it as part of the central government through a district governor (*kaymakam*). This continued until the Balkan wars dragged Imbros into a conflict between Greece and the Ottoman Empire.

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¹⁹ The historical information presented in this section is compiled from historical accounts about Imbros, including the work of Alexandris (1980), Tansug,(2012), Babul (2004), Bozbeyoğlu and Onan (Bozbeyoğlu and Onan 2001) and Memorandum (2004).

²⁰ Thracian Sporades consists of Thassos, Lemnos, Samothrace, and the islands of Imbros and Tenedos.

Turkey would not apply to Imbros and Tenedos, further guaranteeing the autonomy of these island communities.²²

The very significant shift to autonomy marked the beginning of decades of rough relations between Imbros and mainland Turkey. As part of a larger border reconciliation and nation-building process, Turkish central administration took the opportunity to undermine Imbros' autonomy and dismantle some of its local administrative components. Only a week after signing the Lausanne Treaty, a committee arrived on the islands and appointed four officials to the local administrative council. In 1927, Turkey instituted a law (No: 1151) that Imbros (and Tenedos) were to be administered by a semi-autonomous council composed of ten indigenous members for a term of two years.²³

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²² Article 14 of the Lausanne Treaty reads as follows: "The islands of Imbros and Tenedos, remaining under Turkish sovereignty, shall enjoy a special administrative organisation composed of local elements and furnishing every guarantee for the native non-Moslem population in so far as concerns local administration and the protection of person and property. The maintenance of order will be assured therein by a police force recruited from amongst the local population by the local administration above provided for and placed under its orders.

The agreements, which have been, or may be concluded between Greece and Turkey relating to the exchange of the Greek and Turkish populations will not be applied to the inhabitants of the islands of Imbros and Tenedos." (www.mfa.gov.tr n.d.)

²³ Law number 1151 "Law on the Local Administration of Imroz and Bozcaada" (RG: 20/7/1927 No: 638) regulates the local administration of two islands. In line with Article 14 of the Lausanne Treaty, it stipulates that local administration and security forces of the island will be composed of members of the indigenous Greek community and will make sure that the non-Muslim community has full autonomy. Article 3 of the Law stipulates that in order to be elected for the Island Council the candidates would need to fulfill the Turkish language requirements. Article 16, that regulates security forces on the island, had a similar restrictive requirement for indigenous community. These requirements were impossible to fulfill for the indigenous community, the majority did not have Turkish literacy. Also, most of the administrative and intellectual elite had fled the islands upon the arrival of Turkish forces and the remaining community was not able to fulfill the requirements of the post. The ones who left were denied the right to return, along with approximately 1,500 other Imbriots, by Turkish authorities that refused to issue them passports. Although a small minority managed to return, they found their property and land confiscated under the new law. Article 15 stipulates that in the case that there are no

With Law No: 1151, on paper, the local community was given the right to elect municipal officials and members of the island's security force. Likewise, religious institutions and the organization of religious activities within the Orthodox Greek community were to be completely controlled by the local community. The only exception was educational institutions. All of the island's schools were tied to a central school administration and teachers and directors from mainland Turkey, who were mandated to teach the centrally devised curriculum, were appointed to replace local teachers.

Imbros' autonomous status did not lead to the concrete changes intended by the terms of the Lausanne Treaty. Rather, through purposeful administrative inaction and inertia, Turkey implemented a *de facto* central rule, stripping Imbriots of their internationally recognized rights as citizens despite its official commitment to the Lausanne Treaty. Consequently, Imbros remained under the Turkish government's radar until the end of the World War II. In 1950, during a brief period of ameliorating relations between Turkey and Greece due to their NATO partnership, Imbros and Tenedos were given some relief when permission was granted for local judiciary processes to be handled on the islands. However, more restrictive governing policies emerged in Imbros and Tenedos in the 1960s as part of a broad movement to securitize Turkey's borders with Greece and to cut their indigenous Greek communities' ties to Greek Orthodox communities in other centers.

Paralleling Turkey's nationalist policies towards non-Muslim minorities in other parts of the country, starting in the 1960s, Imbros and Tenedos were reinstated as border

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qualified candidates in the island for civil servant and service positions of the administrative organization that fulfill the requirements, then the position can be given to non-indigenous members and in the case that is not possible, any Turkish citizen.

territories of vital importance for national security. The geographical location of the islands served as grounds for the Turkish state to classify their indigenous rural Greek Orthodox populations as threats to national security, and accordingly, administrative frameworks formed in the 1920s were taken up and refashioned into an isolation, securitization and ethnic homogenization policy.

The policy justified mass appropriations of land, the elimination of livelihood sources for Greeks, and alterations to the island's landscape in conformity with border militarization. This all led to massive demographic changes and the forced migration of Greeks in the decades that followed, and had far-reaching consequences for the social and cultural landscape of Imbros and Tenedos.

Homogenization policy also required the state institutions to gather information about the geography, economy and socio-cultural life on the island in order to control the population, manage the resources and organize settlement. In the 1970s, the policy was complemented by a series of plans and reports that outlined in detail the life on the island and the possible ways to organize Turkish settlement. As the discussion of the reports in the next section will make clear, the optics of the state's gaze to island space shifted from representing the island only as a territory viewed from outside, to a more detailed look into what is happening *in* the island (see Figure 2). Thus, the making of Imbros an administrative unit of the nation-state did not only happen through annexation of the island administratively to the Turkish Republic. It was completed with the use of state generated knowledge about the island.

Figure 2. Topographical Map of Imbros from 1947 (Workshop Book 2014:30)²⁴

PLANNING THE PLAN

Leading to a period of increased pressure for settlement, in 1954, the State Planning Agency (SPA) released “A Report for Increasing the Turkish Population on Imbros and Bozca Islands” (Atik 1954). As its title implied, the goal of the report was to outline the policies necessary for giving “immediate attention to proceeding with Turkish colonization of the islands,” with a view to securitize one of the “most critical territories linking the most important action fields and centers in the world” (Atik 1954:3). It discusses in detail how the future settlement of the island by ethnic Turks will be beneficial and how it should be managed efficiently. Ultimately, the 1954 Report provides an important snapshot of the islands from the perspective of the state planning apparatus at the time.

²⁴ Workshop Book is the unpublished report on Gökçeada compiled by the students and the professors in Urban and Regional Planning Department at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University. Prepared for the first year course of the program in 2014, it contains inventories, maps, interviews, photographs, historical documents, as well as the analysis of technical planning data. It is available through the Mimar Sinan University.

In 1947, 25 families from Sürmene, Trabzon (a northern coastal region of Turkey), were settled by the government in central part of the island. The 1954 Report describes how the hardships they endured were the result of the government's poor planning and failure to adequately support the settlers. In light of these shortcomings, the report proposes that better economic support and infrastructure be provided for future Turkish settlers and argues that increasing their numbers will ensure that they are not "socially, culturally and economically isolated among a hostile and traditional Greek population" (Atik 1954:11).

For future settlement efforts, the 1954 Report recommends economic support for fishing and sponge farming rather than for agriculture, specifying that the climate and the quality of land on the island make agriculture an unreliable source of livelihood for settlers. Especially important are the report's estimations and conclusions regarding the economic potential of olive groves. It suggests that, given the amount of land owned by the state, the produce would only feed 6 to 7 families and notes there are only 3 families actively pursuing olive farming (Atik 1954: 10). The Report emphasizes that despite the island's high volume of olive exports, the long-term commitment and necessary know-how required for successful olive production would be hard for settlers to acquire short-term.²⁵ It further adds that the initial efforts of the settlers from Sürmene to grow olives were undermined by the Greek community, which either excluded them economically or refused to share their olive growing know-how (Atik 1954: 12).

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²⁵ The report talks about agricultural production in terms of "exports" and "imports" as if the island is a different country, which is interesting in terms of the territorial imaginary that these terms suggested when the report was written.

According to the 1954 Report, the most common type of olive on the island is the Trilya (Gemlik variety), an olive that is more suitable for curing than for olive oil production. Despite its list of ten active local olive oil pressing stations, it argues that the island's olives are highly acidic and thus used mostly for making soap, questioning their economic value and the usefulness of investing in olive agriculture for settlement (Atik 1954: 5). As the next chapters will make clear, the report's assessment stands in contradiction with current narratives about the value, variety, and economic viability of the island's olives. One marketing line about the endemic olive, the Ladolia, presents it as a unique local variety that produces good quality olive oil with low acidity. This casts doubt on the report's observations and shows how, since the very beginning, olives have not been seen as a crucial source of economic activity on the island. Yet, the report's declarations about the economic potential of local olives also overlap with the views of one of the Greek producers as she remembered the acidity of the oil being so high that some families used it for heating (Interview 22).

Interestingly, the Report suggests focusing on tourism as an alternative to agriculture as a source of income for future settlers, highlighting how the climate, archeological ruins, and the "wild beauty" of the natural rural landscape of both islands are conducive to tourism (Atik 1954, 19-20). This represents a compelling moment within the general flow of development policies for Imbros as this planning perspective was quickly replaced by a push for aggressive settlement and agricultural development in the late 1960s. It is also important because it shows that in the planners' minds, incorporation into the national territory and ethnic homogenization were not particularly incompatible with promotion of travel and tourism economy in the island. However, travelling to the island

would be one of the most regulated aspects by the government through a travel ban for non-Turkish visitors. The ban remained in effect until 1994 and foreign nationals were not allowed to travel to Imbros unless they had a special permit issued by the Turkish government until then.

As for land ownership on the island, the report suggests conducting a cadastral survey before the settlers' arrival in order to obtain more systematic data on land and properties and avoid the possibility of Greek claims to state owned land. However, a cadastral survey did not take place until 1996, when all but the last two settler villages were built and property appropriations were completed (Atik 1954: 25).

The relatively quiet period on Imbros would come to an end in 1963, when clashes between Greek Cypriots and Turks erupted in Cyprus. With more aggressive policies towards minorities underway, the government decided to reinstate a travel ban on Gökçeada, prohibiting non-Turkish citizens from travelling without special permits. It was around the same time, in 1960s, that settlement plans were devised with more immediacy. Especially critical was the National Security Council (NSC) decision (27.03.1964, No: 35) to officially assign different branches of government the task of facilitating the Turkification of the island.²⁶

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²⁶ This decision was later reinforced by a Cabinet decision (28.01.1975 No: 206), in 1975, to advance settlement of the island. The NSC's decision's content is still not publicly available from official sources in Turkey, but it was recovered by in 1988 and was subsequently published in the newspaper "Eleftherotipia" (Memorandum 2009: 4). The decision included national security measures, referred to in different judicial contexts as "precautionary decisions," resulting in prolonged bureaucratic background checks and steps for individual land and property sales and purchases on the island. However, during a court case about the increasingly slow processing time and bureaucratic hassles faced by a Greek Orthodox citizen of Turkey, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization officially declared the "precautionary decisions" no longer in effect as of 09/01/2012. The public access to information request related to the content of NSC decision No:35

According to the recovered document in 1988, NSC Decree No: 35 stipulates a “Dissolution Program” (*Eritme Programi*) and established the ground for the systematic ethnic cleansing in the upcoming decades. It stated that Greeks should be forced to immigrate through expropriation of cultivable land, Turkish education should be made compulsory, Greek citizens’ economic ties to Greece should be severed, state owned buildings should be renovated and new ones should be constructed and finally, public employees should be carefully appointed to make sure that they serve the best interest of the state. The Decree No: 35 specifically called for “legitimate but systematic expropriation of cultivable land belonging to Greeks” and “banning Greeks of buying back land from settlers opting for leaving the island.” The Decree also stipulated “strict compliance with the measures (...) for reducing tourist capacity.” (Memorandum 2009: Annex IV).

The extent of this decree, however, was made public only recently through the recovery of a report prepared for the NSC to support it (27.03.1964, No: 35).²⁷ This document, written by a mid-rank military member of staff in the late 1960s, is thought to be an intelligence report related to the NSC decision, which was not lifted until 2012, and

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was inconclusive. (Personal communication with Erhan Pekçe and Appeal case by the Bursa Directory of Title Deeds and Cadastral Services Document no: B.09.1.TKG.061-641-02-11-1003/1177)

²⁷ The report was recently unearthed by Erhan Pekçe, who has fearlessly worked to hold the Turkish government accountable for unlawful land appropriations on the island. The Human Rights Association of Turkey joined him in a public panel in 2014 to declare Gökçeada an ethnic cleansing “crime scene” based on the report and documents from the recent court case mentioned in the previous footnote. The report was recovered from personal archives by Pekçe and has received publicity because the suggestions it lists appear to provide reasonable grounds, by international laws, to accuse the state of crimes against humanity and of ethnic cleansing. The report is undated, but based on the demographic data it contains one can reasonably estimate that it was written in the late 1960s, after 1967. (IHD Public Panel: “Imroz: İnsanliga Karsi Suc Mahali” (6.9.2014) and Personal communication with Erhan Pekçe)

contains an appendix that further details the extent and scope of Decree No: 35's Turkification activities on the island. Its suggestions, which represent the pinnacle of nation-building on the island, can reasonably be considered a strategy of ethnic cleansing. In fact, the main purpose of the report is clearly identified as the "Turkification of the island, and the preparation of all the social, economic, and psychological conditions for migrants to prosper and for the elimination of Greek will." (Gendarmarie Report n.d.:3). To that end, it outlines the land expropriations carried out, including those necessary for building an Open Prison, a State-Owned Farm, and for the relocation of military and government personnel to the island.

The report further outlines each and every Ministry's duties and assignments related to the Turkification plan and suggests that a fund be set up for the Treasury of the State to facilitate land transfers. This fund would establish a legal basis for the transfer of land with absentee owners (owners no longer living on the island) to the state, in order to prevent those lands from later being claimed and to facilitate the establishment of settlement villages on these new state acquisitions.

A particularly interesting aspect of this document is that it recommends that settlers be chosen from the north eastern coastal region of Turkey, where the people "are known to have the capacity to resist the harsh conditions of the island and the negative feelings of the Greek community" (Gendarmarie Report n.d.:12). Moreover, it includes a list of all of the island's Greek residents with suspicious ties to Greeks in Athens or Istanbul and classifies their activities for future reference. The detail with which these names and activities were documented hints at the scope of Turkification efforts that imprinted the island and shaped its future. For example, the report contains a list of alternative Turkish

names that replaced Greek toponyms in 1970, including Imbros, which became Gökçeada (literally meaning heavenly, celestial island)²⁸.

Sıra No.	Eski Adı	Yeni Adı	Adı	Yeri
27	Gurna T.	Oğlak T.	Gurna T.	15-42
28	Gurna D.	Oğlak D.	Gurna D.	92-47
29	Askali T.	Yumurta T.	Askalyo T.	91-48
30.a.	Karayatodori Mvk.	Kayaçık Mvk.	Aydodoros Mvk.	" (d3)
31	Tervil Mvk.	Yakaçık Mvk.	Tervil Mvk.	92-41
32	Vuno T.	Aktaş T.	Vuno T.	92-40
33	Laka Mvk.	Çukur Mvk.	Lako Mvk.	92-39
35	Strovili T.	Çatal T.	İstrombolos T.	93-49 (d2)
36	Marmoros T.	Alataş T.	Marmaroz Tvk.	93-50 el
37	Marmoros Mvk.	Alataş Mvk.	Marmaroz Mvk.	93-49 m2
38	Stavropotoma D.	Yenice D.	Asırpodanı D.	93-48

Figure 3. Toponym Changes (sample page). The second column contains the Latin versions of the Greek names and the third column shows the Turkish alternatives (Gendarmerie Report n.d.).

İMROZA YERLEŞTİRİLEN GÖÇMENLERİN MESLEK DURUMLARI					
S.No:	Adı ve soyadı	Memleketi	Mesleği	Bugünkü işi	Verilen Toprağı Bilfiil işleyip işlemediği
1	Mustafa Vasfi Doğaner	Diyarbakır	P.T.T. Muta-kat memuru	Emekli Boş	Ortak işletiyor
2	Mehmet Ali Çırpanlı	Çırpan	As.Şb.Reis-liğinden mü tekait	" "	" "
3	Halil Fehmi Tokgöz	İstanbul	Tahrirat kâ tibi	Tahrirat kâ tibi	" "
4	Ömer Yiğit	Bulgaris tan	Hopa	Cami imamı ve çiftçi	Bilfiil işletiyor
5	Rıza Bıçakcı	Sürmene	Balıkçı	Amele	Ortak işletiyor
6	Mehmet Ali Sonbahar	"	"	"	" "
7	Hüseyin Hüsnü Çolak	"	"	Balıkçı	" "
8	Hasan Demirci	Rodos adası	Marangoz	Gece bekçi si	Bilfiil işletiyor
9	Mehmet Ali Yıldız	Hopa	"	Boş	Ortak işletiyor
10	Ömer Ege	Kırım	Rus ordus-unda Subay ve Berber	Berber	" "
11	Hamiz Ersoy	Hopa	Bir seneden beri burada yoktur	Fırıncı	" "
12	Dursun Solt	Sürmene	Kaptan	Kaptan	" "
13	Hasan Konyalı	"	Liman daire sinde odacı	Liman daire sinde odacı	" "

Figure 4. List of settlers on Imbros in 1954 (sample page), showing names, origin, occupation in place of origin, and current occupation. The last column is for checking

²⁸ Decree no: 8479 in July 29, 1970.

whether they use their land (Gendarmerie Report n.d.).

ADADAN İLİŞİKLERİNİ KESENLER				
Sıra No	Adı ve Soyadı	Adada iken ne iş yaptığı	Hangi tarihte nereye gittiği	Nasıl tanındığı
1	İstelyo Hilepo	Çiftçilik	1966 Yunanistan	Tehlikeli
2	Ustirati Popa	Tüccar	1966 Yunanistan	Enosisçi
3	Hristo Lada	Bakkal	1967 İstanbul	Normal
4	Kosta Cuhdi	Çiftçi	1967 Yunanistan	Tehlikeli
5	Kosta Palatlı	Çiftçi	1966 Yunanistan	Enosisçi
6	Diamindi amaklı	Tüccar	1966 Yunanistan	Enosisçi
7	Dimitri amaklı	Tüccar	1966 Afrikada	Şüpheli
8	İstelyo Kongo	Çiftçi	1967 İstanbul	Normal
9	Dimitri Humiş	Çiftçi	1967 Afrikada	Normal
10	Nikola Palanga	Bakkal	1967 İstanbul	Normal
11	İspiro Kaya	Çiftçi	1965 Afrika	Normal
12	Aristi Mahnal	Tüccar	1967 İstanbul	Normal
13	Yani Varka	Tüccar	1965 Kongo	Tehlikeli
14	Yani Mavrudu	Şün'erci	1965 Kongo	Tehlikeli
15	Sotir Cahil	Süngerci	1967 İstanbul	Normal
16	Mihal Panayot	Balıkçı	1965 Kongo	Tehlikeli
17	Telemahocano	Tüccar	1966 İstanbul	Normal
18	Niko Bingati	Tüccar	1967 İstanbul	Normal
19	Kasto Hlpo	Tüccar	1966 Afrika	Normal
20	Panayot Palih	Bakkal	1966 İstanbul	Normal
21	Dimitri Soydiyari	Tüccar	1965 İngiltere	Enosisçi
22	Kosta Çakuri	Çiftçi	1966 Limni	Enosisçi
23	Dimitri Hilep	Çiftçi	1966 Limni	Tehlikeli
24	Todo Tiryanis	Manifaturacı	Avusturalya 1965	Tehlikeli
25	Atanas alapoldis	Serbest	1967 İstanbul	Normal
26	İstelyo Mavres	Serbest	1967 İstanbul	Normal
27	İstelyo Vurli	Serbest	1966 Şüpheli imiş	Fransa
28	Yani İpseftel	Serbest	1967 Almanya	Şüpheli imiş
29	Apustol Apustolera	Serbest	1966 Yunanistan	Enosisçi
30	Andon Portokal	Bakkal	1968 İstanbul	Normal
31	Yani Arazurna	Manifaturacı	1966 İstanbul	Normal
32	Panayot Zunameç	Serbest	1966 Afrika	Tehlikeli imiş
33	Ağgir Voka	Bakkal	1966 Yunanistan	Enosisçi
34	Lefter Demirci	Serbest	1968 Himni	Normal

Figure 5. List of Imbriot Greeks and their suspicious activities (sample page). The first column contains names, the second column lists their occupation, the third column refers to where they were and when they left, and the fourth column categorizes the suspicious activity as normal (*Normal*), Enosis sympathizer (*Enosisçi*), Dangerous (*Tehlikeli*), and Suspicious (*Şüpheli imiş*).

With regard to agriculture on the island, the report provides a complete list of allocated crops along with the names of Greek landowners, outlines agricultural activities on the island, and describes the three (out of ten) active olive oil facilities. Like the 1954 SPA Report, this one mentions that the local olives are high in acidity and are thus more suitable for soap making than for oil production.²⁹

²⁹ According to the report, in 1967, 400 tons of olive oil was produced.

In 1974 another report was released by the SPA with the title “Views and Opinions on Gökçeada” (Bicentürk 1974). This report was mostly on economic life on the island and offers suggestions as to how to further develop the rural economy. Among the suggestions, the agricultural economy, olive farming and aquaculture, especially sponge farming, take the front line. It reviews the activities and the production levels of the State-Owned Farm and Open Prison and concludes that a better allocation of labor and resources is needed for these facilities to establish solid economic development on the island. Among the three reports, the 1974 Report is the only one that establishes olives as the main crop variety with an economic potential for future development.

The 1974 Report is interesting compared to the previous reports as it does not make explicit reference to the Greek community in the island. The only mention of the Greeks is on the demographic change section where it states that the Greeks have left the island in masses after the Cyprus crisis in addition to noting that the first Turkish mayor was elected in 1974 (1974:2). It does not mention educational or religious life either which occupies an important place in previous reports. It also mentions a community of 300 from the North coast of Turkey living at a settlement close to one of the Greek villages. This settlement should be Şahinkaya, the first settler village in the island established in 1974.

This shift in the narrative of the Report in 1974 is telling in the sense that it shows that the Greeks no longer pose a administrative or economic problem for the state by 1974 as there are not many left on the island at that point. Thus, the state treats the island as a land unproblematically empty and available for improvement. Replacing the Greek

presence and history of unlawful appropriation of land, the 1974 Report shows that the Turkification and settlement project has become the normative narrative on the island.

Just a year after the release of the 1974 Report, NSC adopted a new decree in 1975 (No: 206). Echoing the 1974 Report's suggestions for a better allocation of labor and resources for the State-Owned Farm and Open Prison, Decree No: 206 suggests that the farm should be reorganized and new Turkish settlers should be brought. This time, the decree calls for settlers from Çanakkale and Balıkesir provinces due to their assumed familiarity with the land and the climate of the island (Memorandum 2004:Annex IV). Compared to choice of the North coastal community for their resistance to Greeks, the shift in place of recruitment also reflects the new emphasis on economic development rather than support in ethnic cleansing. This choice of the state is also an important point in showing that the modern state power used its citizens just like any other resource: it classified them according to their purpose and strength and mobilized them based on the problem it wanted to address.

The Decree No: 206 called for closure of the Open Prison. It explicitly states that the prison has served its function and now has become a nuisance for the Turkish community. In order not to throw the buildings and facilities into waste, the decree recommends using the Open Prison as a new settlement for 300 Turkish families. Finally, the decree addresses the issue of alternative economies on the island for the settlers' extra income. It suggests tourism can be an alternative, like the 1954 Report, or aquaculture, as well as an establishment of a cement or gravel factory. The Decree No: 206 calls for further measures to completely erase Greek presence from the island, especially any Greek presence in commercial life and transportation. It ends with recommendations for a

flexible credit policy for the Turkish settlers to take over the commercial activities in the island (Memorandum 2004:Annex IV).

These three reports and two decrees are critical in highlighting the depth and breadth with which systematic tools are used by state for nation-building and settlement on the island. They show that regardless of the different approaches to rural and agricultural development, these have always been thought of as complementary to the project of ethnic homogenization. Land appropriations, the building of the Open Prison, and the establishment of the State-Owned Farm, all of which helped to reduce opportunities for Greek farmers and gave the advantage to Turkish settlers by controlling who was able to farm on the island, are corollary aspects of historically contextual settler projects on Imbros.

MANUFACTURING A LOCAL COMMUNITY AND A LOCAL ECONOMY

Government policies took a drastic turn in 1963 with the start of Turkey's conflict with Cyprus. As a retaliatory measure, the Turkish government curtailed the liberty of Greeks in Imbros, Tenedos, and Istanbul; this was the beginning of period of extensive Turkification. When the Cyprus crisis worsened in 1974, the Turkish military took over Imbros and changed its name to Gökçeada (as suggested in the intelligence report related to NSC Decree No: 35). The first settlement village, Şahinkaya, was built and settled in 1974. In this section, I will outline the demographic changes that took place between the 1970s and 2000s, which consolidated settlement and nation-building on the island and transformed settlement villages from rural developments intended as nation-building tools to ones that embraced the Quality Turn associated with organic production. In

addition to the island centre³⁰, there are ten villages: five settlement villages built by the state and five others that had been inhabited mostly by Greek residents. The former Greek villages now are either empty (with the exception of Kaleköy) or seasonally occupied as summer houses.

Greek villages

Figure 6. Map of Imbros in 1960 with Greek toponyms (Workshop Book 2014:30)

The five Greek villages on the island are all located in the hills along the northeast-southwest axis and are usually a short distance from flat areas reserved for agriculture and olives, making use of the best wind patterns and water resources. The buildings in the villages are similar, typically stonework houses with a space for animals and a kitchen on the lower floor and a communal area on the top floor. In areas surrounding the villages and on agricultural land, there are small units (*dam*) used for storage or

³⁰ The island centre used to have two Greek neighborhoods, Eulampion and Panayia. A new neighborhood, Cumhuriyet Mahallesi, was constructed by the state for a mass housing project in the 1990s populated by a majority of Turkish settlers.

temporary shelter during harvest time. There are also little monasteries spread around the island. Below, I list each village following the north-east, south-west axis and briefly describe its trajectory and place in history of the island.³¹

Kaleköy (Castro).

Located in the Northeast, Kaleköy is the oldest village on the island. With 139 residents in 2013, it is located between two ports and used to be the central area of the village before the 1920s. Its stonework houses have been relatively well preserved and Kaleköy now has restaurants, hotels, and residential buildings and operates as a main tourist destination on the island. The Greek residents of the village left for Greece, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand after the 1974 Cyprus Crisis and the current residents are voluntary migrants from different parts of Turkey, including Bingöl, Ünye, Artvin, and Çankırı. Kaleköy is also one of the villages on the island where Kurdish community lives.

Eski Bademli (Glikı).

Located right across from Kaleköy, Eski Bademli now has 75 residents, most of whom are back-to-the landers originally from mainland city centers. Located on top of a hill, the village is a conservation zone and has many historic buildings including a church and a school, as well as a coffee house and a communal laundry space. Most of Eski Bademli's buildings, however, are empty. A controversial hotel development, which violated local conservation regulations, was built in the village and has not yet been closed down.

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³¹ The compiled information here will be based on various references including Alexandris (1980); Aziz (1973); Babül (2004); Cengiz et al. (2009); Memorandum (2004); Ongan (2012); Özözen Kahraman (2005); Uçar (2010); Workshop Book (2014); Yurtseven and Dönmez (2004); Yurtseven and Karakaş (2013), unless stated otherwise.

Tepeköy (Agridia).

Tepeköy is located on top of a hill in the central northern area of the island. As of 2013, it had 129 residents and was the only village on the island without a resident Turkish or Kurdish population. The village went through one of the most comprehensive land and property transfers. By 2003, the Turkish state declared 77% of the ownership in the village and the surrounding land. The level of appropriation by the state is illustrative of the extent to which settlement policy violated the rights of the Greeks and has been used as an example by the Memorandum prepared for the EC (2009, Annex VII). Even after the appropriations took place, the remaining property was still exclusively owned by the Greeks. The village is considered to be a later Greek settlement that was first built as a *dam* (storage) area. Tepeköy is the host of the island's annual *Panaiya* festival in mid-August, during which the community gathers to celebrate with music and food in the village square. It is one of the island's touristic attractions especially enjoyed by Greek tourists.

Zeytinli (Aya Teodoroi).

With 124 residents, Zeytinli is located just east of Tepeköy. It has been regarded as the main village for olive and olive oil production. Most of the village land was appropriated at different times and majority of the Greek residents left. The Greek community's former primary school and junior high school buildings are still standing in Zeytinli, although they were both closed by the 1920s. The schools were reopened two years ago and started accepting students from the community. While there are few students because the Greek community is composed mostly of elderly residents, their revival is a sign of a new turn in the village. Currently, nearly all of Zeytinli's houses are

used as summer homes, restaurants, or hotels and the village has recently drawn the attention of foreign travellers, capitalizing on the symbolism of the olive to brand itself as a potential tourist destination.

Dereköy (Schinudi).

The biggest village on the island, Dereköy is spread over two hills across from each other. Down to 42 residents in 2000, from 1,824 in 1955, the village lost nearly half of its population between 1965 and 1970, after which it dwindled gradually until 2000. By 2013 the village had 303 residents. These population shifts correspond to the various settlement policies enacted on the island. In 1965, an Open Prison was built very close to Dereköy on land that had mostly been appropriated from the villagers and shortly after its construction, residents moved away. Dereköy remained deserted, like a ghost town, until the 2000s, when Greeks returned to claim some of the older properties and urbanites purchased houses as summer home or to provide accommodations to tourists. Despite the slight increase in Dereköy's population in the twenty-first century, the village is far from being a vibrant living place, especially in winter months.

As of 2014, most of the houses in the village are still empty and it is possible to see the belongings they contained—clothes, furniture, kitchenware, photos and personal paraphernalia—left behind by families. These houses are now in ruins, some of them sheltering free range lambs and other animals, while others disintegrate over time from neglect. The village gives the clear impression that the community's departure was sudden, unplanned and intended to be temporary. Oral history sources and memoirs from the period between 1965 and 1974 confirm this as residents recount their presumptions that they would later come back to their normal lives in Dereköy when things had settled

down between the Turks and the Greeks (Erginsoy 2006; Kavukçuoğlu 2013; Yurtseven 2006).

Figure 7. Dereköy from the western side of the valley. Photograph by H. Burkay.

Figure 8. Detail from a house in Dereköy. Photograph by H. Burkay.

Settler Villages

In 1973, soon after the island's name was changed to Gökçeada, the first settler village was constructed in the area north of Dereköy. At that point, except for ten Muslim-Turkish families brought to the island, there was no Turkish community on Gökçeada. However, mass land appropriations starting in the 1960s to meet infrastructural and national security needs and to build the Open Prison and State-Owned

Farm (Devlet Üretme Çiftliği - DÜÇ), had changed the island's social and cultural landscape as well as its land ownership patterns.³²

The 1954 SPA report reveals the detail with which the state kept track of the settlers brought in 1947 in order to understand their living conditions (see Figure 4). Among other points, it mentions that the 25 housing units built in Livunya (very close to Dereköy) at the end of the 1940s were still empty in 1954 (Atik 1954:14), and suggests that shared cropping (*ortak işletiyor*) is more prevalent than the active use of land (*bilfiil işletiyor*) by settlers. Such details are important for understanding how the planning of settlements relied on trial and error, as well as careful observation.

All of the five settler villages were built over a span of three to four decades (the last settlement village was built in 2000). These villages do not follow the northeast-southwest axis of the island and were established on flat areas previously used for animal grazing or agriculture. The villages share a common architectural style: concrete two-story houses, identical in shape and size, laid out in a grid. Four of the villages are built close to the coastline and agricultural land. Although some of the villages were settled by people relocated elsewhere on the island, they all have diverse populations originating from different parts of Turkey. Based on their use of space and the composition of their populations, these settler villages are not considered typical for the area (Bozbeyoğlu and Onan 2001:36). Rather, being built on fertile land suitable for agriculture rather than in the hills, like the Greek villages, some see them as evidence of poor development planning (Cengiz et al. 2009). However, the location of the settlement villages also

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³² More on the land relations will be in Chapter 4.

signals that land was only available in areas owned by the state, and their proximity to the coastline has been conducive for settlers to engage in summer tourism.

As settlers were moved from their original villages and offered land and housing in Gökçeada either as part of a development project or due to the threat of natural disasters in their hometowns, the settlement of the island was presented as a benevolent gesture made by the state (Babül 2004:5). The symbolic act of retaining the original mainland Turkish names of certain villages, Şahinkaya and Eşelek, for example, manufactured a sense of spatial continuity and prevented Gökçeada from being seen as a place of exile, as it had been by other communities. Some authors have questioned whether the selection of settler villagers overlooked aspects of social and economic integration, and were deliberately chosen by the state because they seemed likely to be compliant (Erginöz 2007:54). In fact, the new citizen body that settled on the island did have a much more complicated relationship with the state and, as the Plans mentioned in the previous section suggests. Their displacement to Gökçeada may indicate that the state considered them to be “disposable citizens” (Babül 2006). The following chapters explore this complicated relationship with a view to illustrate that despite the state’s fairly traceable logic, none of its preset development plans were executed without contestation and negotiation

Whether or not they represent typical Anatolian villages or were intentionally populated by people the state believed would be easy to control, each settler village is a nation-state project that aims to manufacture a rural setting, but that employs spatial and economic arrangements that are not conducive to the very rural communities it tries to foster. The grid street layouts, concrete and uniform housing, and precarious agricultural

economies of settler villages craft an alternative space.³³ It is the socio-cultural fabric of these villages that will later serve as the foundation for the Organic Project and for organic farming on the island.

Şahinkaya.

In 1973, 312 settlers in 61 families from Trabzon, Çaykara, a northeastern province of Turkey, were settled in the newly built village of Şahinkaya, just north of Dereköy, due to the risks posed by regular landslides in Trabzon. The village retained its name and is now the oldest settler village on the island. According to the website of the village, the residents of the original Şahinkaya, in Trabzon, which was built on a very hilly and challenging area, were subject to many different relocation schemes over the course of last century and were settled in various regions of Turkey including Hatay (an eastern province), Bayburt (central eastern province), and Gökçeada (ÇŞD 2015). All three of these places were known for having a substantial non-Muslim population at the turn of the century and have now been Turkified.

Upon their arrival in the new Şahinkaya, settler families received a flock of 46 sheep and 4.7 hectares (approximately 11.6 acres) of land. They were also given a low interest credit and settlement grant for two years. Later, Şahinkaya became a very central village in the island's political and economic life, having prominent citizens as well as

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³³ One of the interesting components of these new spaces is the choice of the street names. For example, in the neighborhood of Cumhuriyet, where a mass housing project was constructed in the 1990s in a similar grid fashion as the settlement villages, streets are named after flowers. These names stand in clear contrast to the aesthetic order marked by concrete buildings and asphalt roads with no green space in the housing site and create an alternative language of aesthetization based on the logic of replacement I mention in Chapter 1. MGSU Department of Urban and Regional Planning 1st Year Workshop students aptly drew my attention to the connections between new toponyms and how they order the space in Cumhuriyet neighborhood.

commercial businesses owners among its residents. Most of mayors of Gökçeada are from Şahinkaya since the 1980s, showing the influence of the village in the local politics.

Yeni Bademli.

As the second village settled on the island, Yeni Bademli (literally New Bademli) is built on the former agricultural plain between two Greek villages, Kaleköy and Bademli. It was built in 1984 to settle 92 families from four different villages in Isparta's Candir region. The region had remained under water after a dam was built in the area and thus the state offered to relocate all of its inhabitants. Some of the families in Candir remained in their villages while others moved within the region. Others, who opted to move to Gökçeada have been living on the island ever since. After the Isparta settlers moved in, some houses were still empty, so the government brought in 22 more families, this time from the northern coastal region of Turkey, including provinces like Ordu, Samsun, and Giresun. Although particular houses were assigned to settlers by draw, the former Ispartans were more interested in the houses on the far end of the village. The North Coast settlers therefore ended up with houses near the village road, which turned out to be more advantageous when the village later became a center for tourist accommodations. Currently, the village has the youngest population on the island and is the only village with a primary school.

The state provided families with two-storey houses with an upper floor for the family and a lower floor for animals and storage, and gave families a housing credit for 20 years without interest and grants for two years. The state also purchased two tractors for agricultural production, which were later sold as the community could not agree on how to use them. Similarly, the state purchased two boats to support the fishing efforts of

the North Coast settlers. Internal conflicts arose among the fisherman, however, and they were unable to repay the cost of the boats and the cooperative founded by the state.

There are still fishermen in Yeni Bademli, but they do not have a cooperative.

Uğurlu.

Uğurlu was settled in 1985 by 40 families from Burdur and 60 families from Muğla, both western provinces. Whereas the Burdur settlers came because their village remained under water after a nearby dam was built, the Muğla settlers left due to the construction of the Thermal Power Plant in the area. The settlers were provided with a two-storey house, 2 hectares of land (approximately 5 acres), half a hectare of vineyard, and 1 hectare of olive groves.

Uğurlu was built very close to the Open Prison, which was still active when the village was first settled in the 1980s. Like Dereköy's residents, Uğurlu villagers reported incidents and unrest between themselves and the convicts that discouraging them from going outside to farm. They also reported conflicts between the Burdur and Muğla communities.

Şirinköy.

Şirinköy was built in 2000 and was settled by 128 forcefully displaced Bulgarian families from Plovdiv, Shumen, and Kardzhali provinces and another 22 families from different regions of Turkey including the three eastern provinces of Hatay, Malatya, and Erzurum. It is one of the most recently built settler villages and has not yet been very active in terms of tourist activity on the island.

Figure 9. Şirinköy (Workshop Book 2014:56)

Eşelek.

Eşelek was built on the southeastern part of the island, near agricultural land and the southeastern coastline. Its residents were brought from the village of Eşelek in Canakakale due to the construction of a dam in their village. It had a total of 132 residents in 2013, who were mostly engaged in agriculture and tourism.

Year	1960	1970	1985	2000	2014
Greek Population	5.487	2.571	492	167	232
Turkish Population	289	4.020	7118	8727	8412

Figure 10. Greek and Turkish population changes by year (a more detailed population breakdown is in Appendix I).

Figure 11. Map of Settlement Areas, Forests, Military Zones and Tourism Areas, showing the old and the new settlements in Gökçeada along with forest areas, military zones, and tourism zones. (Workshop Book 2014:71)

Other Settlements: The Open Prison And The State-Owned Farm (DÜÇ)³⁴

Two of the most definitive and significant endeavors of the nation-state settlements, which were created before the settler villages were built and were instrumental in establishing agricultural, social and administrative patterns for years to come in Gökçeada, are the Open Prison and the State-Owned Farm (DÜÇ). Both were very influential in easing land appropriations and have continued to shape the island's landscape even after their closures.

³⁴ There is also an Istanbul University Hydrobiology Institute for Fishing and Sponge Farming founded in 1972 for researching aquaculture in the island (Aziz 1973:102–103). As fishing has not become an important aspect of the settler project, the Institute and its role have received much less attention. The Institute is located close to Kaleköy port and is still active.

The Open Prison.

The Open Prison was initially built in 1965 in the southeastern part of Gökçeada on land appropriated from the Greek community that was actively being farmed, especially by Dereköy residents.³⁵ It was designed as a correctional facility where inmates convicted of minor offenses were allowed to work in return for a wage and was part of a larger penal system transformation that sought to put convict labor to use and that viewed work as a correctional mechanism (Sipahi 2006).

With eight workshop units, seven dorm halls, a food hall, a mosque, and laundry facilities, the Open Prison was able to accommodate up to 1000 inmates. It operated at roughly two-thirds capacity (600 inmates) with approximately 13 guards. In the 1970s, the prison cared for 18,000 olive trees and produced around 45 to 50 tones of olive oil and 5-10 tones of soap. In addition to olives, the prison had fruit orchards, a winery, and livestock. As such, some of the tasks assigned to inmates took place temporarily outside of the prison facility.

The inmates received their accumulated labour wages, minus deductions for their expenses, at the end of their sentences. The Open Prison served as a way to first appropriate land from Greek farmers and then, using convict labour, to supply food to the military and other state institutions like schools and hospitals in order to prevent these institutions from buying food from Greek suppliers. During its operation, especially before the mass exodus of the Greek community, the prison served as a tool for intimidating the Greek community. Dereköy residents, in particular, recount horror stories of the inmates' abrupt and aggressive visits to the village to steal belongings and

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³⁵ The Prison was built on 2,255 hectares (5,572 acres) of land. It was then downsized to 1,600 hectares (approximately 3,953 acres).

animals and to harass the community (Erginsoy 2006; Kavukçuoğlu 2013). When the Open Prison was closed in 1991 and its premises were emptied, some of the convicts decided to stay on the island, eventually owning property and bringing their families to join them in Gökçeada.

While the other prison structures remain unused, its oil production plant has since been rented to a local organic company, Ekozey, which operates as an organic olive pressing facility where local olive growers bring their yearly harvest to receive their processed oil.

Figure 12. Open Prison empty buildings –Photograph by H. Burkay, 2013

Figure 13. Olive Oil and Honey Processing Facility in the former Open Prison building. Photograph by H. Burkay, 2013.

The State-Owned Farm (DÜÇ).

Started in 1966 on a total of 1344 hectares (3321 acres approximately) of state appropriated, actively used areas of Greek land in different parts of the island, the Farm is considered to be the leading cause of the termination of Greek subsistence farming in Gökçeada. With its roughly 16 000 olive trees located in the all around the island, the Farm predominantly produced olives in addition to goods derived from sheep farming.

It recruited a total of 81 permanent workers from different parts of Turkey, though they mostly came from Van, a Kurdish province on the eastern border. These workers stayed in the area after the farm was closed in the 1990s and constitute the foundation of Kurdish settlement on the island. In 2004, one of the Farm's largest plots (310 hectares or approximately 766 acres) was rented to Elta-Ada, the biggest organic olive producer on the island, for a term of 30 years. The company uses 100 hectares (247 acres) of land

solely for the production of fully certified olive oil and boasts 16,000 olive trees. Its products are distributed nation wide and Elta-Ada is one of the most well-known organic brands in Turkey.

Figure14. Elta-Ada Organic brand label

Elta-Ada, as a brand operating on land that was previously appropriated for a state operated farm, represents yet another facet of the transition of the island’s agro-food landscape from a paradigm of nation-building to one defined by the parameters associated with the “quality turn.”

Land Appropriations Summary

Land appropriation was the main tool by which the Turkish state transferred the land and livelihood resources of the Greek community over to new settlers, but it was also a mean of facilitating infrastructural development, military security, and conservation on the island. It is important to see the whole picture in order to fully understand the meaning and implementation of land appropriations on the island.

From 1964 to 1976, 60 per cent of the cultivable land on Gökçeada was appropriated by the state and the indemnities paid on it were low: 0.12 Lira per square meter at a time when an egg cost 0.10 Lira (Memorandum 2004:8). Whereas in 1964, Greeks owned 6,151 hectares (15,199 acres) of land, thanks in part to a new project initiated in 1977 that resulted in the appropriation of 2,500 more hectares (app. 6,177 acres), by 1990 the Greek community only had 64 hectares (158 acres) left. Moreover, part of the remaining unexpropriated land was reserved for forestation and thus was not available to the Greek community for farming. The memorandum prepared by Imbriot Associations for the European Commission Report also found that 70 per cent of the land expropriated for infrastructural purposes had not been used to that end by 2004. With the transfer of the Open Prison's land to the Organic Olive Factory and the State-Owned Farm's land to Elta-Ada Organics, as well as the conversion the military airport into a civil airport to provide flights for tourists during summer months, however, the government eventually made use of this expropriated land in accordance with the changing paradigm of its rural governance.

Figure 15. Map of Expropriated Land: Yellow and orange areas show the expropriated land. Green areas show the land reserved for forestation. This map was drawn based on data in the Memorandum (2004:Annex IX).

CHANGING POLITICAL CLIMATE AND CHANGING RURAL IMAGINARIES

The Imbriot Association's memorandum led to an EC Resolution (No: 1625), announced in 2008, on Gökçeada (Imbros) and Bozcaada (Tenedos). It was aimed at “preserving the bicultural character of the two Turkish islands as a model for co-operation between Turkey and Greece in the interest of the people concerned” (Gross 2008). Three important suggestions were made in the resolution, including the return of expropriated and unused land and, the return of community property, and the reversal of the Land Registry, which had taken place in 1996, and nearly completed the process of transferring land to its de facto owners.

The resolution came at a time when Turkey's EU candidacy was on the agenda and when the country's agricultural policy was taking a neoliberal turn. No longer considered a national security zone, complementary developments were underway in Gökçeada that helped it gain its reputation as the Organic Island rather than as a settler project. Among these developments was the designation of the island as a heritage zone, which prohibited any construction or change to the landscape in critical areas including the Greek villages, coastal lines, and some of the former military areas. This designation was a way for the state to maintain its control and governance of the island space, while at the same time, it prevented further disintegration of the area. At around the same time, following the recommendations of the EC resolution, Greeks were given the right to reclaim their properties in case they wanted to return to the island.³⁶

The island's new identity and rural development ethos harmonized well with Gökçeada's decision to become a member of the Citta Slow Consortium in 2011, which raised its touristic potential to more organized, institutional level. On the Citta Slow Consortium website, the island is described as having unique potential: "its own specific geographical and environmental conditions and protected, untouched natural resources."³⁷ The site's historical account of the island presents Gökçeada's past as a continuous path from ancient civilization extending to the Turkish Republic with no

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³⁶ Although this has created a climate of optimism in terms of the relaxation of national security measures and the rectification of systematic errors in the Land Registry, the restrictions and bureaucratic hurdles associated with acquiring property on the island or claiming a former property have recently taken a turn for the worse. That is why most of the elderly Greeks who have been living abroad for over thirty years decide to sell their property even after they gain ownership. (Personal communication with owners and Erhan Pekçe)

³⁷ The website contains brief snippets of information on the Slow City activities on the island (Citta Slow 2014).

mention of its long decades of conflict or the unlawful eradication of livelihood potential for the island's Greek communities. Despite conflicting opinions, the Network has significantly helped the marketing of the island as an Organic Island.³⁸ Several projects have been supported by Çanakkale University and the Citta Slow Convivium: an EU project, "Learning Organic Life on the Island," which ran from 2008 to 2009, which is complemented by "Traditional Recipes in Gökçeada" ran by Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University and Gökçeada Municipality in 2007.

"Learning the Organic Life in the Island" aims "to develop new fields of activity relying on tourism for the improvement and progress of Gökçeada (...) [and] to design a tourism strategy in order to make the island a centre of attraction in the agricultural tourism"(Yurtseven and Karakaş 2013:95). The project also seeks to train small-scale farmers in agrotourism and organic farming in order to assist with their economic development. A corollary to this project is the Organic Farming Festival organized by Terra Madre and the Gastronomy Department of the Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University's Gökçeada School of Applied Sciences, which opened in 2004 with the aim of educating the island population in rural development at the local level. The University also engaged in a project titled "Local Food in Local Menus: The Case of Gökçeada", in 2012, as well as the Turkish Sciences Academy's project, "Traditional Occupations in Gökçeada" (Yurtseven and Karakaş 2013:96).

These projects promise the increased participation of the local community, sustainable rural development, and entrepreneurship outcomes for women and youth.

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³⁸ In some of the interviews conducted for this thesis, producers expressed different opinions about whether Gökçeada was suited to membership in the Slow City Network and whether the Network was run as a project by a small group of neo-rurals in order to advance their own economic agenda.

Unfortunately, the outcomes of these projects are not accessible to the public or to the producers and their activities were not widely supported through the participation of the Organic Project's producers. These projects rely on an imaginary of the rural that is completely different from that of the previous period in which nation-building was the primary concern. Yet, the new dynamics of the island's development are built on its historical foundations. The new turn to sustainability on the island depends on the reckless cultural appropriation and commodification of the Greek community's symbols and ways of living. By appropriating the Greek countryside as the rural imaginary, the local is being re-crafted not as a national territory but as a harmonious, natural, and sustainable space where organic farmers and bountiful organic produce enrich island life.

THE ORGANIC PROJECT

As a continuation of the Rural Development and Settlement Project started in 1993, The Organic Project, initiated in 2002, aims to increase organic production and encourage organic farming by providing new subsidies to organic farmers.³⁹ Although, it has kept its original target of “establishing a permanent settlement on the island,” it added sustainability to its mandate, suggesting that the project sought to “make agriculture a sustainable subsistence method” and “increase the income levels of the producers.”⁴⁰ As

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³⁹ The official name of the project is “Göçeada and Bozcada Rural Development and Settlement Project” (Project Number 1993A020020). It is run by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock. Since the project added organic farming to its mandate in 2002, it is referred to as the Organic Project. The information on the Organic Project is compiled from a search of the Ministry's website, and reports prepared by different departments of the state and the Çanakkale University (Akdemir et al. 2008; Erginöz 2007; GMKA 2012).

⁴⁰ Full text of the document that stipulates the rationale of the Organic Project can be found at the Ministry's webpage (Ministry of Agriculture 2012).

this dissertation focuses on its context, activities, and participants, this section will briefly outline the Organic Project.

The Organic Project began as part of a larger adjustment plan adopted by Turkey in accordance with EU policies. Its main goal is to support organic agriculture on the island. In addition to olive producers, the Project supports organic grape producers, beekeepers, and some other fruit and vegetable producers on the island. However, over the last three years, the Project has focused more on organic olives than on other products.

Since its initiation, the Project's budget has varied considerably from 1,200,000 Turkish Lira in 2012 down to 450,000 in 2013 and then 800,000 in 2014. Its activities consist of providing fertilizers and pest management for producers; maintaining and pruning existing olive groves; planting and maintaining new olive trees; coordinating and monitoring a third-party, independent organic certification processes; providing guidance and consultation to organic producers through a third-party private consultation firm; organizing seminars, training, and meetings with producers on organic farming; and conducting annual report meetings with participant producers. The Organic Project is also responsible for buying, distributing, and applying the pesticides and fertilizers in accordance with organic standards; coordinating the site visits of the third-party certification and consultation firm representatives; and the regular control of the producers.

The island is 28,900 hectares, with only 3,000 hectares suitable for agriculture. Of this, 773.5 hectares are covered with olive groves, 500 hectares are used for growing cereal grains, and 315 hectares produce for fodder crops. Approximately 70 per cent of the olive groves on the island are part of the Organic Project. Olives constitute the most

important crop on the island and the number of organic olive producers has increased from 14 in 2002 to 125 in 2007 to 169 in 2013. There were 169 olive producers participating in the Project by 2013, representing the majority of the Project's 241 producers.

The average plot size, however, remained relatively similar over the years, only increasing slightly from 8.2 acres in 2004 to 9.5 in 2013. There are roughly 150,000 olive trees in the island, and their organic olive yield increased from 7.3 tones in 2002 to 135 tones in 2006 according to the data provided by the District Directorate of Agriculture (DDA). It estimated a yield of 236 tones of olive oil for 2013.⁴¹

There are three olive oil facilities in the island. Two prominent olive-oil producers, Elta-Ada and Ekozey, produce organic olives and olive oil, but are no longer officially recipients of subsidies from the Project. Elta-Ada is currently the only brand that has access to the bigger domestic market. In addition to these farms there have been two producer cooperatives. Ezey, a cooperative composed of 152 producers is now defunct, while Gökçeada Birlik has gone through some rough patches since its foundation in 2001. It started processing certified organic olives in 2002, but has been independently managed as of 2006. In 2008 Gökçeada Birlik requalified for state subsidies and has since had a presence in the supply market on the island.

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⁴¹ The most recent data on olive production yield is not available through the DDA and data gathered by the Turkish Statistical Institute is for the olive production of the entire island: 1,692 tones for olives suitable for oil for 2013. 236 tones is my estimation for the island, based on a 1:5 ratio of olive oil and 70 per cent of organic production. However, the quantities vary and might be different in local sources. How these numbers are determined with respect to both total production and production per unit is discussed in Chapter 5.

Producer demographics show the overwhelmingly ethnicized and gendered composition of the Project's farmers as a group. Out of 169 producers only 17 are women, 5 of whom are Greek. Although olive production and oil making are collective family activities, participation in the Project only reflects land ownership patterns.⁴² Based on the island's history of demographic engineering, it is possible to argue that this composition was manufactured by the state.

The Organic Project has taken place in the context of EU adjustments and the Turkish government's increasing attention to quality food production. It has also been complemented by other activities and projects related to local food and culinary culture on the island, most of which are run by the civilians and a small number of neo-rural producers. One of most important forces driving these complementary activities has been Gökçeada's membership in the Citta Slow Convivium (Slow City Network), obtained in 2011 and the ongoing projects mentioned in the previous section. The Organic Project is continuing its operations as of 2015 although, after 2010, local activity aimed at

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⁴²The Organic Project, on paper, takes the individual producer as the property owner and the organic farmer. However, the settlement projects coming before the Organic Project that determined the land ownership, treated the settler family (household) as the unit and created a regime of distribution of land, animal, housing and monetary support according to family size. Similarly, a gendered pattern of land ownership is a result of taking the family as the unit, and male family member as the head of the household. This distinction is important because it shows that the Organic Project no longer sees the family as the unit of rural development and takes the individual farmer as the entrepreneur/property owner as the unit. This shift however, does not change the fact that the land ownership is still on the basis of household and is legally registered to the male head of the family. As agricultural production patterns remained relatively stable since the 1970s on the island, the shift adopted by the Organic Project is a critical departure in how the state sees the rural. It does not formally endorse the family as the production unit and yet, perpetuates the unequal land ownership patterns. Also, the continuity of agricultural production in the Project requires family labor, rather than one individual entrepreneurial organic farmer, which remains unrecognized and invisible. I expand the making of the producer subject in more detail in Chapter 6.

sustaining the cultural components of quality food production on the island has decreased.

THE ISLAND AS A FIELD

Given the complexity of the historical, political, and cultural layers of the island, how should we examine the island space, as a field of study, in order to understand how the “local” is invoked and what it means when it is seen as a boundary, a cultural claim, a form of belonging, a production scale, or simply as a way of describing proximity? As I spent time in Gökçeada and as I wrote this chapter, I have persistently debated these questions of how to define the island as a field. This piece of land, which looks very small on a map, slowly reveals its vast and layered social life as one spends time there. Despite its clear geographical boundaries, the island space is in constant expansion as a field site. The villages are geographically dispersed, there is public transportation only to a couple of the villages, and the weather is extremely hostile during the winter months. There are social and cultural challenges as well: the island’s small central core does not do justice to the complexity of social life in the villages, although it does hint at what one might expect. The island is deeply fragmented, historically complex and it takes time to see through the surface to its dense entanglements.

For its residents, the island has many different meanings and identities. Even its name changes depending on which story one wants to tell. There is the usual touristic image, narrated by many residents to newcomers, of an idyllic and harmonious island, but those who “see like a state” describe the island as empty land, ready to be developed and improved. For producers and settlers alike, the island is a source of expectation; its

meaning escapes fixity, thereby challenging the security of their belonging on the island. Some of the settlers even describe Gökçeada as having a will of its own—it decides whether or not it will keep you. The winds, rain, and difficult transportation, combined with the unappealing aesthetic of the port, certainly prevent it from appearing very welcoming. I believe that the fragmented social and cultural landscape is also a factor in attributing such an agency to the island on determining whether one can remain on the island. The feeling of disconnection and isolation is tangible not only in historical narratives of exile and ethnic cleansing or quotidian concerns of a late ferry, but also in the imaginary of “Organic Island” constructed as a land detached from the rest of the conventionalized industrial production and represented as a neat, clean and aestheticized idyll.

The island is also occupied land. Similar to the unceded Algonquin territory that this chapter is being written on, the research presented here took place on colonized land taken away from its indigenous community. Although it is located 8000 km away from Ottawa, the shared history of colonization brings the island of Imbros closer.

For this researcher, the island has been a splintered, inconsistent, and surprising field site. My entry into Gökçeada was initiated by an acquaintance and was facilitated by stories about olives. As much as people, olive trees and conversations about olive trees have proven to be generous and revealing. At the same time, olives challenge how the island is defined as a field: their roots grow deep, their stories, histories, and meanings span over centuries. They contour the fields and spread over the hills. On the one hand, olives are seen as the most valuable market commodity, and on the other hand they are a flavorless and unforgiving crop. They were an integral part of the diets and landscape of

former islanders, but do not hold the same significance for those who live there now. Moreover, change in the ownership of olive trees and groves reflect ongoing injustices devised by a logic that rests on a twisted sense of national unity. Thus, olives are an intrinsic part of how the island is defined in ways that transcend its physical boundaries.

In order to meet the challenges of defining the island as field while situating myself as an outsider, as a researcher, and as an insider, as a Turkish woman, I chose to see the field through the lens of the olive. Looking at the island's entanglements and boundaries elucidated by olives, I worked with the stories and encounters they facilitated as well as the fractures and contestations they triggered. The next chapter will further explain the methods I chose to explore the configuration of the local on the island through the lens of olives, and how Gökçeada, as a field, molded the possibilities and limits of my interpretation.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD AND RESEARCH DESIGN: A SINGLE IN-DEPTH CASE STUDY

In this chapter, I outline the methodological concerns and questions informing the research design for the in-depth case study of Gökçeada and identify the multiple data sources drawn upon and produced in the course of the research. Before moving on to the specific methods employed, I begin with a methodology discussion intended to identify the general principles guiding the choice and use of particular research practices.

A constructivist-interpretivist methodology provides the foundation for this thesis research. As summarized by Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, interpretative methodology:

rests on a belief in the existence of (potentially) multiple, inter-subjectively constructed “truths” about social, political, cultural, and other human events; and on the belief that these understandings can only be accessed, or co-generated, through interactions between researcher and researched as they seek to interpret those events and make those interpretations legible to each other. (2012:4)

The logic of the research practice underpinning constructivist-interpretivist research is a relational, situated knowing with an emphasis on meaning-making as an interactive process for all actors involved in the research. This meaning-making includes the researcher as well as the researched, and is a co-constructed product of the relations between them.

The constructivist-interpretivist approach is a post-positivist research methodology that does not specify any particular research methods, although it lends itself more easily to some. Rather, it accepts any methodological tool as applicable, with the presumption that knowledge is never neutral. The approach has been refined and complicated by a

wide array of disciplinary perspectives that use it for diverse research areas (Creswell 2012; David 2010; Denzin and Lincoln 2012; Hawkesworth 2006; Nightingale 2003; Rallis and Rossman 2012; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012; Smith and Jenks 2006; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006).⁴³

Four complementary tenets of constructivist-interpretivist methodology ground its understanding of research as a knowledge producing process: the situatedness and relationality of knowing; actor-orientation and processual micro-social analysis; accountability and reflexivity; and the reliability of the research process. A core interest of my research is how everyday processes of meaning-making are embedded in the multiple and layered characteristics of socio-spatial relations in a local rural setting. These four principles shaped my choice of research tools and the constructivist-interpretivist approach informed my research practice by expanding my investigation and understanding of how the rural landscape—and the social relations it expresses and facilitates—comes to be as it is, and how this process shapes the lives with which land is entangled. A brief elaboration of the four tenets of constructivist-interpretivist research will help show their connection to my case-study research.

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⁴³ Geertz's original essay, "Thick description: Towards and Interpretive Theory of Culture" is still regarded as a very significant study on the value of description and the theoretical insights it offers (Geertz 1973). Robust literature in anthropology similarly defends the importance of narrative, which is critical for the descriptive, narrative aspects of interpretivist research and its representations of reality (White 1980). As I refer to it here, however, interpretivist research is a methodological inquiry into the relational aspects of knowledge production, which is embedded in the broader political project of constructing interpretivist research communities that produce alternative research practices.

FOUR TENETS OF CONSTRUCTIVIST- INTERPRETIVIST METHODOLOGIES

Situated and Relational Knowing

Premised on the belief that interpretive “truths” are accessible only through interaction, situated and relational knowing not only allows for a nuanced understanding of the different perspectives of diverse actors, but also shows that the data and analysis of research are products of inter-subjective meaning-making. This perspective situates the researcher within a living context of social relations positing that the knowledge produced through research is place and time specific. In addition, the idea that knowledge is relational and situated expands the sources and resources consulted in the research process, thereby permitting diverse narratives to exist and challenge each other (Haraway 2003; Nightingale 2003). Approaching knowledge as something that emerges interactively and inter-subjectively at the crossroads of different encounters helps to make these multiple narratives and multiple sources of narratives visible (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012).

This feature of the constructivist-interpretivist approach is especially important in the context of the current research in that it supports an examination of on-the-ground operations of the Organic Project that includes multiple narrators and narratives and goes beyond the single-layered truth claims of a top-down developmentalist outlook. Such a perspective relies heavily on the presumption that it is possible to plan and improve social life by applying policies irrespective of the particulars of context. The technicalizing and decontextualizing of development narratives are policy tools that disregard the co-existing multiplicity of different practical realities and the non-linear, unplanned, and unintended consequences of development interventions. Research that focuses on the

relationality and situatedness of knowledge, however, makes it possible to see the multiplicity of lived understandings and the interactive construction of these knowing, and analyses of everyday understandings and shifts in meaning help assess the enacted processes of development practice (Heley and Jones 2012).

The observation of meaning-making shows the political contexts in which meanings are contested and emerge as part of a process while the actor orientation of interpretivist methodology helps to reveal actors' worlds in their own terms, which is critical for understanding the power dynamics and local contexts in which development paradigms operate. A processual approach, in a complementary way, helps to shift the top-down, goal-oriented perspective of development projects by drawing attention to those dynamics that inform an outcome but that are not themselves necessarily considered a goal. Introducing the multiple narratives of any specific development project, for example, provides vantage points from which to understand all the flows and blockages that bring about the final outcome. These narratives are an alternative metric for judging the imperatives of improvements that can characterize development interventions, and do so without determining progress by measurable, quantifiable outcomes.

Accepting that no research method is neutral, but rather rests heavily on pre-existing knowledge about the research setting and question, constructivist-interpretivist methodology requires the researcher to unpack and account for the choices made throughout the research process. These choices are not considered limitations to the research. Instead, they illustrate how the research process has developed and how the final product was derived. Acknowledging that certain paths were accessible for a particular research process, whereas others were not, situates the final research findings

and addressing these choices is critical in accounting for the social and political dynamics that inform the research process (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012). Thus, constructivist-interpretivist methodological approaches make visible the power dynamics and relational meaning-making processes of the relations between the researcher, the researched, and the research practices. In this sense, the constructivist-interpretivist methodology does not situate the researcher in the privileged position of expositor of different actors and actions in the field of research, but asks the researcher to turn the interpretivist lens onto the research practice itself.

Actor-orientation and Processual Micro Analysis

Due to its emphasis on the relationality and situatedness of knowing, interpretivist-constructivist research methodologies open a critical space for understanding the micro settings in which social relations take place and everyday meaning-making happens, highlighting local power relations and their contours by looking at how the daily interactions of actors create frictions, contestations, or collective understandings. When research questions seek to understand how social dynamics are made, sustained, and sometimes changed, an interpretivist perspective encourages a detail-oriented analysis of the micro relations involved in these processes. Such an approach rests on the phenomenological extension of *verstehen* sociology, in which attention is directed towards everyday belief and action as a source of analysis. Using “thick description” and avoiding causal analysis, this methodology aims to reconstruct the meaning of actions and outcomes with an eye to showing the intended and unintended consequences of these actions (David 2010; Geertz 1973).

Actor-orientation is fundamental to understanding the effects and functioning of

larger structural dynamics within the context of everyday lives. It considers actors meaning-makers who willfully weave their webs of relations. This is an especially important approach for research on actors whose presence and meaning-making is not commonly accounted for.

Focusing on actors' own meaning-making processes enables us to understand their worlds in their own terms, which makes it possible to analyze even non-human actors such as animals, land, and plants—all sources of interactions in the development process. Actor-orientation also expands our understanding of meaning-making processes by alerting us not only to the verbally or materially accessible experiences, but also to actors' more sensory and spatialized experiences.

In research on socio-materiality of human-environment relations, actor-orientation has been widely adopted (Burton 2004; Long 1990; Long and Ploeg 1989; Scoones 2009; Van der Ploeg 2003). Specifically in rural studies, Van Der Ploeg (2003) developed a practice-based actor-oriented methodology in his research on the emergence of new peasant subjects. Following the cue of these two uses of actor-orientation, in my research I followed the experiences and narratives of the experiences of human actors.⁴⁴ Seeing actors' narratives as unfinished and changing projects of meaning-making, actor-orientation helped me to observe the situational and positional making of these narratives.

The constructivist-interpretivist methodology views social life as a mutable, intertwining series of processes rather than a static entity with a fixed outcome, and by adopting a processual approach, the researcher can explore the dynamics, meanings, and

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⁴⁴ I do not specifically pursue the non-human actors in this research. However, I address how olives change within the context of shifting relational domains of social and ecological connections if it is relevant for the bigger questions of the thesis.

practices of social interactions. Considering social life an ever-changing and dynamic realm of interactions is critical for analyses of meaning-making processes that emerge largely through the unfolding of power relations and local dynamics, such as dynamics at play in the social lives of the people of Gökçeada.

A processual approach is also essential when the research question explores the contestations, blockages, silences, and struggles that reveal the inner layers of social relations. Such a perspective is especially necessary in cases where these micro interactions inform outcomes but cannot necessarily be deduced from them—contexts in which local power relations are important factors and formal outcomes do not do justice to the complexity of the on-the-ground calculations and interactions of actors (Li 2007). In cases where social processes collapse into each other like the leaking narratives of nation-building into the Organic Project, a processual approach helps to untangle the social dynamics while still recognizing the importance of situated knowledges.

Accountability and Reflexivity of the Researcher

The emphasis in interpretivist-constructionist methodologies on context and the relationality of knowledge produced by research also leads to a consideration of the relevance of the research for the parties involved. The concept of relevance informs this approach in two ways. First, it involves acknowledging the partiality of perspectives in order to ground and situate the research claims and researcher in a realistic context of social interactions. This does not limit the value of the research. Rather, by being explicit about the different positionalities that the researcher occupies in different contexts, the power dynamics that the researcher generates, coopts, benefits from, or contests at different points in the research is acknowledged and becomes part of the analysis

(Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012).

Secondly, the relevance of a research project is an important aspect of accountability in constructivist-interpretivist methodological approaches as these bear in mind where and how research findings will be used, as well as how they will connect with other knowledge networks. Research accountability thus refers to the ways in which findings are made relevant for those parties whose participation is essential for the generation of the research data.

Rendering the research process, data, analysis, and the researcher accountable by adopting a reflexive approach highlights the politics of the research processes and the embedded institutionalized power dynamics at play. In this sense, accountability is especially important for the present research on rural development in Gökçeada, where a participatory framework is lacking in the design, implementation, and decision-making aspects of development projects—those producers who are most affected by development policies and their outcomes on a daily basis are excluded. The measurement of success of the Organic Project is not based on the feedback of the recipients of its policies, but on the commensurability of the project's outcomes with larger development goals. As the project disregards accountability in its operational logic, the views, experiences, and positions of producers do not enter into the picture, nor do they change any decision that are made. In this case, the researcher, being aware of such a deficiency, is accountable for bringing the perspectives of these groups into play as an intervention in the assessment of local development projects and as a source of information contributing to further debates about how local dynamics construct and are constructed by rural development.

Reliability and Generalizability of a Case Study

As a post-positivist research methodology, the constructivist-interpretivist approach uses different ways to establish reliability and trustworthiness. Reliability, in more positivistic research methods, refers to showing the replicability of research findings. By contrast, the constructivist-interpretivist approach constructs reliability as a measure of the trustworthiness of the research, including the criteria of transparency and accountability.

This approach to reliability is grounded in the situated research practices discussed previously. As knowledges are considered situated—produced in a particular place and time—the power of analysis comes from tracing the unfolding and solidification of their complexities. Therefore, a constructivist-interpretivist methodology focuses less on the replicability of findings from one case to another. Instead, it challenges the logic of transferability by not aiming to produce repeatable, generalizable models but by illustrating non-repeatable contextually contingent dynamics and processes.

When the logic of power relations being studied includes claims about the viability of universal, repeatable models regardless of context and local relations, research that focuses on the particularity of processes of micro social relations is especially critical. By adopting a methodology that illuminates situated processes, the micro interactions that trouble the one-size-fits-all language of development policies become visible. The reliability of results becomes a question of the accountability of the research process and the integrity of the interpretations vis-a-vis the specifics of the case concerned.

Interpretivist research has benefitted from the burgeoning post-positivist critique of

assessing the validity and reliability of research based on its universal applicability, its causal explanatory claims, and its conflation of objectivity with detachment. Positing a more dialogical approach, post-positivist methodologies offer a theory-building perspective in which empirical findings are thickly contextualized to deepen existing theoretical insights. (Creswell 2012; David 2010; Denzin and Lincoln 2012; Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012; Yanow and Schwartz-Shea 2006).

In the interpretative research methodologies scholarship, this perspective is significant for orienting research practice towards a more nuanced understanding of generalizability. Scholars discuss “generalizing theoretically” (Luker 2008:127), being “context-bound and self-correcting” (Rallis and Rossman 2012:49) and incorporating the “complexity of the interaction” (Hawkesworth 2006:67) when generalizing, and “the interpretations embedded in, rather than, abstracted from, the settings of the authors studied” (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012:47).

These ideas suggest that the generalizability of in-depth case studies is not tied to the universal applicability of their findings. Rather, the contribution of engaging in one example in a detailed way rests on providing “concrete, practical and context-dependent knowledge” (Flyvbjerg 2001:70). More specifically, in a post-positivist methodology, the aim is not to find a rule-based pattern of social life, but to provide a nuanced, thick narrative that explains the specific complexity of apparent similarities and patterns. In this sense, single case studies are more interested in finding and understanding the detailed workings of multiple co-existing dynamics that, at first, seem antithetical. Different from studies that seek formal generalizations, in which scientific inquiry flattens details and differences, single case studies look in-depth at these differences.

The value of detail and depth in case studies is not only empirical. Rather, as Flyvberg (2001, 2006) posits, the “power of example” comes from its contribution to theory-building. An in-depth case study has the potential to provide information in two important respects. One is through critical case studies. The texture and layers of information provided by critical cases allows analysts to develop stronger “generalizations to theory” (Ruddin 2006:803) that challenges the formulaic structure of typical, representative cases. As such, critical cases are useful for dislocating the center of the problem and providing a more sophisticated lens to unpack the parameters of formally generalized frameworks.

Alternatively, there are what Flyvberg calls “atypical or extreme cases” (2001:78). These types of cases reveal much more information as they highlight the interactions of more actors and more complicated contexts. They are important for analyzing not only the symptoms and frequency of the problematic at hand, but for providing data for elaborating on the deeper mechanisms and processes at work. Extreme cases thus allow for a more vertical engagement with the material, and mobilize multiple theoretical tools to address diverse questions, which leads to a more horizontal engagement with other areas of inquiry.

Both critical and extreme cases allow the research to unfold in accordance with the parameters of the case. This encourages exploration and learning, rather than the proving of pre-existing frameworks. It is possible that some cases do not neatly fit in one of the in-depth case categories. When a case falls somewhere between critical and extreme, in-depth scrutiny even more significant.

For both critical or extreme cases, narrative plays a critical role in conveying the

complexity and contradictory aspects of real-life situations (Flyvbjerg 2001:84).

Narratives speak to general knowledge claims, yet they are hard to reduce to applicable rules. As such, in-depth case studies share a common characteristic with stories. The moral of a story is poignant and targeted in a way that speaks to the whole.

All in all, the general framework and perspective of a constructivist-interpretivist methodology fits very well with the main concerns of the rural development project research that is the core of this thesis. It helps, more aptly than any other methodological outlook, to focus attention on how knowledge of local agricultural production is produced and contested. It also requires an accounting of the multiplicity of experiential realities embedded in the everyday interactions cogenerated throughout the Organic Project. Finally, it challenges the researcher and the reader to ask further questions about the exclusionary top-down, technicalized development discourses and practices that frame the Organic Project itself.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The dissertation is a single in-depth case study of the making of the local in Gökçeada. Combining fieldwork comprised of participant observation and in-depth interviews with document analysis, it seeks to generate data that leads to a complex understanding of the on-the-ground implications of rural development, meanings and practices of organic farming, and the complex construction of the “local” in rural settings. This section details the research design and tools and explains how they helped in answering particular questions as well as how they addressed the methodological concerns outlined in the previous section.

Mapping: Exposure and Intertextuality

My choices of, and approach to, different sources of data are informed by what Schwartz-Shea and Yanow describe as “mapping” (2012:85–86). Mapping, as a research tool, has two complementary components: exposure and intertextuality. Exposure implies familiarizing yourself with, and collecting, as much data from as many sources as possible without discriminating and/or hierarchically prioritizing any specific intents. It is a way to ensure that the researcher is exposed to a multiplicity of meanings and meaning-making attempts either by direct interaction or textual exposure. In contrast, intertextuality refers to a close reading and thick description of the narratives of selected sources, including how they speak to and with each other. It aims to see how the narratives build on, challenge, or refer to each other (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow 2012:86). Reading data intertextually means being alert and open to seeing the transfer and leakages between narratives, documents, and experiences, as well as their silences and disappearances.

These two mapping tools (exposure and intertextuality), complemented by the transparency and accountability of different sources, constitute the main research practices of the research outlined below.

Single In-Depth Case Study Method

As mentioned, this research was conducted as a qualitative case study, combining participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Research was completed in three stages over the course of two years. In Stage One, I made an initial contact and visited Gökçeada in early 2013 for two weeks, where I built a network of contacts through an acquaintance, became familiar with the surroundings, and introduced

myself to officials at the District Directorate of Agriculture (DDA). Stage Two took place later in the summer and involved a total of four months of fieldwork, which consisted of 39 face-to-face interviews with agricultural producers and public officials overseeing the Organic Project. At this stage I also participated in three group conversations with producers; in one of them, I had a chance to participate by asking questions. I was able to take notes during these group conversations during the meetings. While these informal group conversations were not planned, the topics that emerged from them and my observations of group dynamics were very informative and helped with the individual interviews, later on. In addition, Stage Two included accessing and assessing historical and policy documents related to the island, its agricultural and population history, and the details of the current Organic Project. In Stage Three, in the summer of 2014, I returned to the island for approximately two weeks in order to verify some of the DDA's findings by compiling newer data and accessing reports. I also completed two key interviews in Stage Three: one with a consultation firm representative and one with a certification firm representative. When the fieldwork was completed, I had conducted a total of 41 interviews.

During the Summer 2014, I also followed an event (and its media coverage) about Gökçeada, organized by the Human Rights Association in Turkey in Istanbul. The event presented recently recovered official documents regarding ethnic cleansing on the island to the public, and was attended by Greek and Turkish communities from Gökçeada and Istanbul. Through contacts I established during this event, I was able to access Land Registry documents, oral historical data, official reports, newspaper coverage, and material pertaining to the history of ethnic contention on the island.

As I mentioned above in detail, my approach to case study research was informed by Flyvbjerg's perspective (Flyvbjerg 2001, 2006), which valorizes the use of in-depth case studies in the social sciences. Challenging the presumptions that social science research is only relevant if it is capable of generating generalizable models, Flyvbjerg highlights the critical importance of the single case study's deep engagement with context-dependent knowledge (2006:3). For my research on Gökçeada, my approach was to focus on the complexity of the local contexts within which development project rules were negotiated, as well as on outcomes that could not be charted as instances of the straightforward application of project rules. Flyvbjerg's (2006) understanding of case study research also contends that social events and interactions are not repeatable, and thus, are usually somewhat unpredictable. This is true for my Gökçeada research—a single in-depth case study generated knowledge about interventions in rural development that is grounded in the island's history, present context, and dynamics of social relationships, and that can be interpreted as knowledge about ethnic conflict, sustainability, rural development and place-making.

As an intersection of these diverse factors, the making of local development in Gökçeada represents both a critical and an extreme case that calls for a methodology that can incorporate the complexity and contradictions in the island's historical and cultural context. It is a *critical case* (Flyvbjerg 2006:14) because the research subject was previously unexplored in case studies and literature, and because the research process unfolded in ways that were unexpected. Flyvbjerg also defines critical cases as having the characteristic of revealing dynamics that can be relevant for many cases. I identify Gökçeada as a critical case because if a small rural island with small-scale subsistence

producers is laden with many levels of uneven, diverse and historical inequalities that challenge the achievement of rural development goals, then the deep complexity of the local revealed by this case is likely to be present in other cases. At the same time, Gökçeada is also arguably an *extreme case*. As such, it can reveal elements and interpretations in the sense that it crystallizes processes allowing for more direct and intense observation that may speak to other such instances and cases.

More specifically, on the one hand, the Gökçeada research expands the scope of questions asked about the implementation of rural sustainability and organic movements to incorporate the interrogation of action frameworks beyond the individual will to push for social change and the construction of “local” as “unfinished” in relation to such projects. On the other hand, with its history of political economy of land and space use, Gökçeada complicates the unlikely articulations and transmissions between nation-building and local food, in the context of an umbrella of sustainability. Thus, as a place with a contentious and conflicted ethnic history, Gökçeada, as a case study, pushes the morals of the stories into the conceptual tools we use to understand the dynamics of ruralities and localness.

Fieldwork: Participant Observation and Interviews

After a preliminary, two-week visit in May 2013 to establish contacts, I returned to Gökçeada in June. My initial contacts on the island were the officials from the DDA and a local acquaintance, who became quite influential in securing further connections for me in the area. He, who was a part-time olive producer from a settler village, put me in contact with small business owners and some local administrators, most of whom also had plots of olive groves and were olive growers.

I chose to conduct the fieldwork during the summer and early fall of 2013 and 2014. This choice was due in part to my own scheduling and financial limitations, but also because it is in the summer months that olive producers start preparing for the harvest and engage most with the administrative aspects of the Organic Project. Training sessions, conferences, and workshops are held from June to August and the application of fertilizers and pesticides is done around the same time. It is also a time when producers are more available to meet and be interviewed. Any fieldwork research that engages with agriculture has to adjust to the cyclical patterns of production that shape the daily lives of producers.

My field visits in the summer and fall of 2013 lasted a total of four months: June, July, September, and October. During the first two-month visit, the island producers had not yet harvested their yearly yield and had time for interviews. The trees and groves were also being treated with pesticides and fertilizers, which increases the number of interactions between project officials and local producers, and lead to many opportunities for me to observe their encounters and exchanges. The second portion of the first stage of visits, in September and October 2013, occurred just before or at the beginning of the harvest season. These are critical months in the cycle of olive production and the Organic Project as producers are much more attuned to the details of their harvesting processes and the functioning of the Project.

Participant observation.

During my fieldwork visits to Gökçeada, I regularly spent time at the DDA, a small office from which the Organic Project operates. I sat in on meetings and spent time with the officials as they conducted their everyday work. During that time, the DDA office

was always a busy place full of producers coming in and out with questions and petitions. I was there when there were conflicting opinions about how to apply pesticides and where to find fertilizers. I was also in the office during period of the producers' annual reports in September 2013. For the most part, I was an observer of the conversations and interactions, but during the busy time of annual reports, when producers came to the DDA to renew their memberships, I also became a participant. One of the officials asked me to help out, and I began doing paperwork and coordinating office work. I was not involved in an official capacity and the expectations and scope of my work there were unclear from the beginning. Rather, my position in regard to the implementation of the Organic Project and in my own research switched from that of observer to participant. For the DDA officials and the producers, my position was considered to be something between a student and an office secretary. Thus, just as different actors' positions changed over time and space within the Organic Project, my position was mutable and depended on where I was and when I was there. This dynamic continued throughout the fieldwork; I participated and observed at the same time, with one ear open to conversations and interactions about Project-related topics.

In addition to the encounters at the DDA, I joined certification firm representatives on field visits where they collected samples from trees and talked to the producers about their questions related to the year's yield and their thoughts about the implementation of the Project. Beyond the Project office, my participant observation activities included visiting village coffee shops when possible and allowed; these opportunities were limited and was granted only when I was in the company of men due to the gendered structure of local coffee shops in Gökçeada. Also, I sat in on meetings with the certification firm

representatives and counseling firm representatives in Uğurlu, Şirinköy, and Eşelek (three settler villages), in which the producers mostly voiced their concerns about the Organic Project.

These moments of participant observation had two important consequences for the research, both of which proved to be useful. First, it allowed me to see the connections between different groups and how ideas about the Organic Project and rural development circulated within the community. This, in turn allowed me to develop concepts that emerged from these observations, which were critical in understandings how the producers' experience of local food contradict the logic of development. It also revealed how past experiences and knowledge related to land transfers from Greeks were mobilized in different narratives and with different terminologies in different settings—something that I believe it was only possible to observe as a participant either in encounters and in-group discussions.

Second, due mostly to the gendered characteristics of certain places (the village coffee shop) and the composition (mostly men) of the producer groups and DDA employees, observing group meetings gave me privileged access to otherwise inaccessible conversations. My presence was facilitated by DDA officials, who introduced me to the group as a researcher. Although I will discuss this further in the section on reflexivity below, it is important to mention that in the context of participant observation, my participation was channeled through how the group positioned me in relation to the discussion or topic at hand. While in certain settings I was seen as being associated with the officials who were visiting villages, in other contexts my participation was mediated through participants' views that I was close to the officials but not

necessarily bound by their same limitations—a position they thought would allow me to voice producers' concerns.

Interviews.

During phase two of the fieldwork in 2013, I conducted 39 interviews. 27 of these were conducted in September and October. I joined the project officials and certification firm representatives during their visits to villages and was able to conduct interviews right after the producers finished their paperwork. Most of these interviews were conducted in public places such as village coffee shops, the front yard of the DDA building, or at a pastry shop on the island. Two interviews were conducted while walking as the producers had suggested that we visit their groves and conduct their interviews in those settings.

All the interviews, except five, were with men. The gendered outcome in participant selection was not my own choice, but rather, reflected the gendered distribution of property ownership and the names the Organic Project documents and files. I did not interfere with the gender distribution, as the aim of the research was to ascertain the views of producers, whoever they may be. There were a total of 165 olive producers participating in the Organic Project, the vast majority of whom are men. This is an outcome of the gendered land ownership patterns on Gökçeada that does not reflect the role of other groups (women, children, and also animals) in the labor processes. I mention how these gendered property patterns render other groups invisible at different points throughout the thesis, mostly in Chapter 6. Women property owners on the island are very rare, but the three women I interviewed were property owners and official participants in the Organic Project. Other two women did not own property but handled

the project related paperwork. All five of their interviews started in a local village coffeehouse during annual meetings and three of them led to a subsequent house visit to conclude the interviews.

I was able to record most of the interviews; two participants did not consent to being recorded but let me take notes during the interview. These participants expressed concerns about the potential impact of a recording on their public stature on the island. One of them also added that the stories handed over to me in the interview would be too emotionally intense, in terms of their narratives of settlement, migration, and ethnic conflict, to store as a recording for extended periods of time, and that bearing that responsibility was too much for them. Two of the interview recordings were corrupted and in irrecoverable state.

The interviews took between forty minutes and two and a half hours. I used a biographic-narrative interpretive method for the interviews, which is suitable for research that focuses on the experiences emerging at the intersection of “the particularity of the individual experience” and “unique historical and societal relations and processes” (Wengraf 2004:2).

The interviews started with a life-story narrative initiated by the question “Can you describe how you first settled on the island?” This was followed by questions about participants’ experiences with land acquisitions on the island, their relations with the state, and their thoughts about and experiences with the Organic Project, olive farming, and other economic activities. A complete list of questions and a description of the interview sample are provided in Appendix IV and Appendix V.

Starting with a single life story question was essential to understanding participants’

experiences with the Organic Project in their own terms. First of all, this is because rural development has had a long and violent history on the island—one that is deeply connected to the most of the biographical narratives of the producers' relation to olive farming and to the island, as a place. Second, this interview method enables a conceptual openness, does not test any hypotheses, and allows for an uninterrupted narrative course during the interview. These two traits were necessary in a research methodology in order to identify not only the material-economic outcomes and functioning of the project on the island, but also to bring forth the silences and cracks in the producer's narratives, which inform how sustainable development operated within the worlds of the Project's participants.

Consent and ethics.

My research ethics clearance from Carleton University's Ethics Review Board (Project no: 11652 13-0016) allowed me to seek written and oral consent, however, this proved to be much more complicated and layered with my group of participants than the formal procedural steps in ethics guidelines led me to anticipate. Although I sought written consent when circumstances and interactions allowed, most of the interviews were started with verbal consent. In a setting where written documents and records have lower credibility than verbal promises and informal relations, seeking verbal consent was a very effective way to maintain a trust relationship. In some of the interviews I made the deliberate choice to seek consent only after trust was established between the research participant and myself.

When I first noticed that seeking consent would require a more nuanced execution than the usual explanation at the beginning of an interview about the research, scope,

purpose, and use of the interview, I was able to draw on this challenge to also understand how participants attribute meaning to written documents and performances of signing. Among the locals of Gökçeada, most of whom rely on agriculture for a living, papers, stamps, and signatures are part of a lexicon that belongs to the realm of the state. As discussed on Chapter 4, which examines the administrative functioning of the project discusses, paperwork operates as a technology of power, translating the layered and sometimes contradictory experiential knowledge of the producers into a series of standardized categories and into the language of the state and the experts. Most of the research participants clearly associated signing a paper with bureaucratic formalities and power asymmetries. They sometimes questioned why we would need to both sign a paper if we trusted each other enough, or saw giving written consent as contradictory to the already established informal trust. At other times, signing a consent form was interpreted as a mechanism through which what they said and how they expressed themselves might later become a burden to them. Thus, seeking written consent became a stage in the relationship that changed how participants related to me and to the interview in general. The meanings attributed to signing the consent form thus become an important layer to understanding how research participants related to research and written documents. Taking this into consideration, I either sought oral consent at the beginning of an interview or, depending on the interaction and context of the interview, I carefully planted the idea and purpose of seeking written consent in the informal introductory conversations, especially in the beginning of the interview. I did seek written consent from public officials and from those participants who felt comfortable reading and signing the form, the information from which I orally repeated for them.

Document Analysis

Following my two-week Stage One visit in early 2013, I was given access to some of the Organic Project documents and started my archival research about the history of development on the island and in the region at the Prime Ministry Archives in Ankara. The archival document search is not featured in this analysis, although the process was informative and helped to locate sources that later became important, including petitions from islanders to the local administration about some of the economic problems they have faced due to increasing military activity on the island, especially in the 1960s.

In addition to the reports, policy plans, and social and economic data about rural development, maps and inventory tables produced during the planning stages of the current and past projects identified through government and other project-related website and database research, the documents compiled by different Imbriot associations in preparation for the European Commission report were crucial in uncovering some of the dynamics of land and property relations on the island. The Imbriot folder included Land Registry documents and maps as well as government issued orders and by-laws that established the development regime on Gökçeada.

My reading of the documents applied the intertextuality and exposure techniques I mentioned earlier. That is to say, I did not interpret the documents as transparent testimonies of their time and purpose, but as embodied material manifestations of power relations. This approach allowed me to juxtapose different documents in terms of the narratives they sustain and, in so doing, to understand the different processes of meaning-making at work, from the perspective of the producers as well as the administrators.

It is important to note that, contrary to the common practice in other modern state

contexts, development in Gökçeada does not operate exclusively through documented quantification geared towards efficiency and productivity. Except for general policy outlines and records of property ownership, the Organic Project itself does not regularly produce publicly accessible documents or records about measuring its outcomes or progress. Thus, its training sessions, workshops, and meetings do not consistently produce archival documents available to the researcher. Quantified data related to the production process and efficiency measurement are also not closely recorded or kept by the state. In this context, document analysis can only partially and superficially suggest how policies work, how they affect people's lives, and how they formulate the Program's goals and assess its achievements. While development practice is partly shaped by poor record keeping habits, which are observable in other policy contexts in Turkey, it is also affected by the prevalence of informal relations and the common acknowledgement that informal and face-to-face interactions are still more important in making things work. The lack of record keeping on the one hand makes tracing the activities of the project, as seen by the Project officials themselves, impossible, because records are their language of narrative construction, and on the other hand it prevents formal accountability. Acknowledging the incompleteness of documentation, my research nevertheless relies on document analysis to uncover the narratives of the state, policy makers, and development officials about the Organic Project.

RESEARCHER POSITION, VULNERABILITY, AND REFLEXIVITY

I came to the topic of rural development in Gökçeada through a series of inquiries related to the changing landscapes of food and agriculture. I was led to Gökçeada, as a

field of research, through different aspects of my social position. As a young, single woman born and raised in Turkey, with a university degree in Canada, my existence in the field inspired curiosity among the locals, but also led me to be seen as an outlet for voicing some of their contradictory opinions. Being a native speaker of Turkish allowed me to smoothly conduct many interviews and interactions, while not speaking Greek closed off the possibility of establishing trust and intimacy within the Greek community.

Interestingly, my name, as a marker of my identity, had quite unexpected consequences during my research. Coming from an assimilated Kurdish family originating from the South-Eastern border of Turkey, I was raised culturally as Turkish. My first and last names, Helin Burkay, however, are Kurdish. This usually leads to different attributions about my ethnic and cultural positionalities in the field to be made, giving rise to tensions and curiosities, and sometimes opening up spaces for intimacies.

As the previous chapter set out, olive producers are a diverse group in terms of cultural background, ethnic origins, and socio-economic status. As part of the process that forced Greeks off the island, not only Turkish settlers, but also Arabs from the Siirt region and Kurdish families from Eastern Turkey were settled in Gökçeada. In addition, a group of settlers of Kurdish origins, ex-inmates of the Open Prison facility on the island, have stayed and reunited their families on the island. For each group, my position as a researcher was met with different attitudes. As the national ideology of Turkey has been partly realized in the containment of Kurdish groups in Eastern Turkey, my categorization was at times met with, and forced me to work within, a set of expectations about my political views on the lasting ethnic conflict and its impact on the forced migration of the families to the island. As a sensitive subject, comparable to that of the

Greek presence in Turkey, my attributed Kurdishness made conversations with some participants inaccessible to me. Yet, in other instances my name was met with a generous openness that gave me access to other narratives about the history of settlement of the island, especially among Kurdish families.

Additionally, gender dynamics manifested themselves quite often. Olive farming is a family business, but most of the Organic Project participants are male due to property ownership patterns. The majority of administrators and project officials are also male. I was required to consider and work with the gender dynamics of this male dominated field to inquire about how a women researcher is positioned, what types of resources are made available to her, and what that says about gendered power dynamics on the island. An episode in Dereköy proved that a gendered positionality makes a researcher capable of telling a much deeper story about the history of a space.

When I arrived in Dereköy to interview one of last elderly Greek producers, it was early afternoon and the sun was high in the sky. Having walked past the abandoned ruins of stonework houses along the narrow, dusty trails of the main road contouring the village, I found V. sitting in a shadowy corner of the village coffee shop. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, Dereköy used to be the biggest and the most vibrant village (not only by Gökçeada's standards, but for the entire country) for a period, until the 1970s. It was known for its lively neighborhoods, community life, and economic prosperity, Dereköy is now a ghost town full of empty houses and, recently, increasing tourist facilities like a small coffee shop and a hotel. Abandoned Greek houses still contain everyday items testifying that the community had to leave abruptly and had hopes of coming back. Stories of looting, harassment, and robbery in Dereköy are commonly told and the

collective memory of inmates of the nearby correction facility coming down to the village and harassing women under the watch of gendarmeries (whose post is also very close by), are very much alive.

As I was sitting and chatting with V. about his olives and how he gets his olive oil, he introduced me to his young helper T. Due to V.'s old age, T. and his family were doing most of the work in V.'s olive groves. As I turned my attention to T. and learned his story, he offered to show me around the village and the groves. With plans to meet up with V. later in the afternoon, I accepted. As we walked along the narrow trails and jumped over little ponds to explore the village, about which T. was quite knowledgeable, what from afar appeared to be fascinating, beautiful rolling hills became ghostly houses, haunted by their history of violence and ethnic cleansing, as we got closer. Visiting the abandoned houses and chatting along the way about how T. and his family ended up in Dereköy, I found out that T.'s father was a former inmate who had brought his family from Van after his release. They lived off helping with the olive harvest, but their main source of income came from commissions they earned buying and selling abandoned houses to entrepreneurs or as urban vacation houses.

As we kept exploring the village, I realized that we were diverting from the trails normally used by the residents of the village. T. was showing me around by using back streets, passing under fences, and squeezing through and jumping off of walls. As we walked around I remember him telling me about how Greek women would gather in certain houses when men would "visit" the village and would pretend that they were not at home to avoid being harassed. I came to realize T.'s route corresponded in an uncanny way to those taken by inmates who had plundered houses and harassed people. We went

through the back yards of houses, ending up facing kitchen windows, or we jumped through fences to find ourselves at a back door entrance. As I was getting ready to finish our tour, T. suggested that we see one last house. He insisted that I should stay the night in the village to get more information, offering me stories of his rabbit hunting with V. at night in the military security zones. I was thinking about transgressions and spatial histories of violence when our tour abruptly ended at the last house we visited. I remember holding T.'s wrists and trying to push him outside as he shoved me against a wall. I tried to reason with him, to get myself out of the empty house and convince him to return to the coffee house to talk. When nothing worked to calm him down or change his mind about what he was trying to do, I finally managed to distract him with a fake fiancée story and ran away from the empty hills, where not one soul would hear me—or him—if there was further conflict. After recovering from the shock and long conversations with friends and family about what to do, I realized that the history of harassment and abuse was very much alive in Dereköy. The empty houses are witness to women's rushed escapes and the routes T. had walked me along had generated an eerie sympathy feeling with their experiences of invasion and transgression.

This episode in Dereköy led me to negotiate my curiosity and my gendered existence in the island space with a new lens. I was able to recover from the attack quite unharmed, but I was not able to pursue further stories in Dereköy, as much as I wanted to. My ethnic identity and researcher position had other implications during the research process, and I try to acknowledge their particular workings throughout this dissertation. It is important to note, however, that each aspect of my position was negotiated at the local level with the very real local actors. Although it was a learning process and the mutual measurement

of positions continued as interactions went on, my aim is to be as transparent as possible about the limitations and possibilities of the nested power relations operating on the ground.

CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the four tenets of constructivist-interpretivist methodology that informed the research design: situatedness and relationality of knowing, actor-orientation and processual micro-analysis, accountability, and, finally, reflexivity. Tackling the question of how to understand multi-layered, complex, and sometimes contradictory historical, spatial, and practical dynamics of rural development, these tenets serve as guidelines for making decisions and choices pertaining to research practice.

This chapter also outlined the research design and tools used to generate data. As a single in-depth case study combining interviews, participant observation, and document analysis, the research design promoted my exposure to intertextually constructed positions and knowledge. The practice and design of the research project reflects the aim of discerning not only the planning rationale but also the implementation of rural development and organic farming.

CHAPTER 4

REORDERING THE SPACE: LAND REGISTRY AND LOCALIZING THE OLIVE

The aim of this chapter is to locate the emergence and the conditions of possibility of the Organic Project within the recent history of land politics on Gökçeada. Focusing on how different narratives and technologies of space inform the imaginary and practice of rural development, in this chapter I illustrate the processes through which the island has been endowed with qualities suitable for organic farming, and the imaginaries of belonging invoked in the making of organic olives as a local commodity. I examine, on the one hand, the mechanics of land politics, with a focus on olive groves within the context of the 1996 Gökçeada Land Registry Survey. On the other hand, I follow the changing meaning and value of Gökçeada as a place, through the examination of historical and contemporary narratives of olive growing on the island.

This chapter argues that the Organic Project on Gökçeada is not a stand-alone pursuit that reinvigorates the connections between the land, the product, and the producer in the name of local sustainable development. Rather, the Organic Project builds on the foundation established by previous attempts at development and the impact these have had on the spatial organization of the land. The Organic Project selectively invokes narratives about the meanings and value of Gökçeada as a place, making land an important nexus between the various tools and technologies that configure organic olives and rural development on the island. The process of ascribing olives with a locality naturalizes the political technologies of the island's articulations and fragmentations of

physical space, as well as Gökçeada's changing meaning as a place, and operates through romantic pastoral imaginaries of the island, inscribes romantic place-based narratives on ethnicized land politics to make organic farming a development alternative. I aim to illustrate the key elements of the spatial logic of state-led rural development that have been continuously changing the island's landscape, and to identify how these leak into the current Organic Project, both through the technologies of land distribution and narratives of space.

Accordingly, this chapter is organized in two interrelated sections. The first section addresses Land Registry in order to understand the changing taxonomy and ownership status of olive groves, and examines the consequences of these practices for the spatial organization of the land. In particular, it focuses on the Land Registry records for the Greek village of Tepeköy (Agridia). The second section looks at the narratives of planners, producers, and development practitioners, which draw connections between the value of olive farming and the island's place-based qualities. It further delves into narratives of spatial belonging based on the demographic history of the island that have been constructed by those invested in rural development and examines how these historical narratives reconstruct Gökçeada as a space of pastoral purity and ethnic harmony and locate the olives on the island as symbols of the permanency and natural harmony of the relationship between the community and the land.

GOVERNING LAND RELATIONS: LAND REGISTRY ON GÖKÇEADA

The Land Registry on Gökçeada that started in 1996, almost six decades after the adoption of Cadastral Law by Turkey and after a series of systematic land appropriations

from the Greek community, led to a fine-tuning of property relations on the island. This process is still not fully completed due to many pending court cases by the Greek property owners whose properties were wrongfully registered. However, it represents the starting moment of a critical attempt to reconcile land relations, and enable a better understanding of the current configurations of property and the simultaneous making of land politics and local olives on the island. This section accounts for the technologies of land governance on Imbros by looking at their spatial consequences and examining how these attempts to manage land relations have been critical in understanding the conditions of possibility for making olive groves a natural resource for the island's development, enabling the organic olive to become the locus of the imaginary of the island both as a place and as a commodity.

As Chapter 2 describes in detail, land appropriations that occurred since the 1960s have been the main anchor for a particular vision of rural development on the island. Briefly, decades of seizures and unlawful property acquisitions and settlements, including those conducted under the pretext of providing “infrastructural needs” as well as “rural development,” functioned as a means to engineer the ethnic composition of the island in accordance with other Turkification attempts throughout the country (Memorandum 2004). The local Greek population was seen as a potential threat to national security and spatial politics were initially mobilized through the elimination of particular sources of livelihood, which, it was hoped, would help push the Greeks off the island.

History of Land Expropriations

Politics of space is a crucial component of the development schemes. Rural space, seen as the natural environment by planners, is an object of improvement and resource-

making, either through top-down policies or more local based initiatives. State-led development has a long history of turning rural spaces and communities into organized administrable units by using different modernist economy and land technologies (Peluso and Lund 2011; Vandergeest and Peluso 1995). The politics of land administration, ownership, and land taxonomy, (along with other schemes targeting changing community's economic activities), rely heavily on an ideology that is geared first and foremost to rendering spaces legible and administrable in the eyes of planners by defining them as economically valuable and usable units (Latour 2004; Scott 1995). As Scott (1998) points out in his account of how the logic of development operates at the intersection of the politics of classification and of space in rural areas:

[U]tilitarian discourse replaces the terms “nature” with the term “natural resources,” focusing on those aspects of nature that can be appropriated for human use. A comparable logic extracts from a more generalized natural world those flora and fauna that are of utilitarian value (usually marketable commodities), and in turn, reclassifies those species that compete with, prey on, or otherwise diminish the yields of the valued species. Thus, plants that are valued become “crops,” the species that compete with them are stigmatized as “pests.” Thus, trees that are valued become “timber” while the species that compete with them become “trash” trees or “underbrush.” The same logic applies to fauna. Highly valued animals become “game” or “livestock” while those animals that compete with or prey upon them become “predators” or “varmints” (1998:13)

As I suggested earlier, the logic of previous transfers and expropriations on Gökçeada relied on mechanisms of replacement and reordering, and sought to create a governable citizen body from the settler communities brought in from different parts of Turkey, while administering the Greek community's departure from the island. The need to secure and police Gökçeada, as a nation-state borderland, was the principle guiding the division and redistribution of the land to the settlers.

I also suggest in the previous chapter that this same logic has organized the

transfer and reorganization of the means and resources of livelihoods such as animal husbandry, fishing, and grape and olive farming, either by banning them altogether (fishing and husbandry), by taking away land, or by curbing demand (for olive and grape products). Through the creation of military security zones, the land has been treated as empty territory and scrutinized by the state's national security authorities. As a result of appropriations 70 per cent of the arable land was transferred by 1996 to the state for infrastructural development needs and later redistributed to the settler communities (Memorandum 2004:5).

In Gökçeada, the expropriation and state ownership of arable land has been particularly important for establishing settler communities and for infrastructural needs on the island. Two important plateaus for farming, one used by residents in Schinudi (Dereköy) and the other one by residents of Glikı (Bademli), Panagia (Centre) and Aya Teodoro (Zeytinli), were expropriated for the Open Prison and the State-Owned Farm (Pekçe 2013:12). Even before their closure, some of the land expropriated for the State-Owned Farm and Open Prison had been distributed to settlers by 1996. Settler villages were built on the arable land: Yeni Bademli on the State-Owned Farm land and Şahinkaya, Şirinköy and Uğurlu on the land expropriated for the Open Prison. However, most of the land that remained in the hands of the state was unused or left empty by the settlers. The EC Report by Andreas Gross mentions that areas intensely cultivated before the expropriations started taking place were empty even ten years later (2008:9).

The redistribution also involved a destruction of former livelihood resources through the reordering of the spatial epistemes. The 20 *donum* rule, as came to be known among the settlers, is one example of a destruction scheme that reflects a logic of rural

development operating under the guise of national securitization of a borderland. Starting with the first wave of settlers, as part of a rural development plan in effect at the time, each settler household was given approximately 20 to 50 *donum* (5 to 12 acres) of cultivable land (Uçar 2010). The redistribution strategy did not rely on a functional distinction between different types of agricultural land and disregarded the existence of any produce land had already grown. Rather, the logic of redistribution divided land into equally sized plots, as determined by survey instruments, and distributed it to settlers either by drawing names or through negotiations with local authorities. This operation was the undoing of a previously uneven and heterogeneous attachment of value to different parts of land. Thus, by replacing the knowledge of the land based on its properties and functions (use, location, quality, number of trees), the expropriations reduced the land into its size.

In terms of olives, the settlement plan resulted in the mass scale appropriation of groves by the government, as olive trees occupied most of the land. The logic of redistribution, however, did not take into consideration the spatial distribution of the various olive groves, nor their subsistence capacity, productivity, nor any other important factors. Rather, based on the 20 *donum* rule, when the groves were divided and distributed, some settlers were left with as little as five trees while others were given lots covered with olive groves.

Figure 16. A drawing by a Greek farmer of his land in advance of its expropriation in 1965 (Memorandum 2004: Annex V)

Although this strategy ensured a more organized and coordinated redistribution of land, while properties, particularly housing owned by the Greek community, remained intact, forcing new settlers and old residents to make a living side by side every day, knowing which settler family owned whose former land. The processes of expropriation and redistribution by the state had brought the island's remaining ethnically Greek citizens of Turkey face to face with the new owners of their lands, especially settlers in Şahinkaya in 1973, leaving both sides without an intermediary mechanism or buffer. Some of the settlers remember how these transfers escalated inter-group conflicts and bred mutual hostility until the majority of the Greek residents left the island by mid-1970s (Interview 11).

Analysis of Land Registry

The most recent attempts to reorganize property and land on the island through Land Registry in 1996 has mobilized a different array of tools and tactics on the ground than did the previous expropriations and mechanism of standardization that 20 *donum* rule illustrated. Much less attention in the literature on Gökçeada and the political economy of nation building, however, has been given to the impact of Land Registry than to the initial phases of land expropriations.⁴⁵

The Land Registry reordered property relations while at the same time creating the conditions of possibility for a new grammar of space on Imbros, and the context in which it was formed is significant. The 1990s were a relatively quiet period for Imbros in terms of the attention it received from the state. The Greek community was mostly gone, leaving their property and remaining land free of official ownership claims. The demographic and ethnic composition was such that the island was mostly composed of settlers in Şahinkaya and Yeni Bademli. In 1990, of the 1947 residents of the island, only 329 were members of the Greek community, and by 1997, their proportion and absolute number had dropped even further to 249 Greeks of a total population of 8578 (Özözen Kahraman 2005:47). The travel ban for non-Turkish citizens, in effect until 1993, made it practically impossible for the Greeks who left the island to return as they lost their citizenship due to not completing the mandatory military service. The island was a security zone, a consolidated border of the nation state, in which military officials and

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⁴⁵ In terms of land politics, rural land transfers have been widely covered by the literature on nation-building from the late Ottoman to the Early Republican period, or roughly from the mid-eighteenth to the early twentieth century. See Kasaba (2009), Dündar (2006) and Ülker (2008). More recent dynamics of land transfer and registry politics have mostly been discussed in terms of urban land markets, with a view to explaining the dynamics of illegal housing (Buğra 1998).

settlers constituted the majority of the population by the early 1990s.

Turkey's involvement with Greece was, however, increasingly internationally scrutinized. Occasional international conflicts between Turkey and Greece in the 1990s created an instability that justified further securitization and ethnic homogenization attempts in Imbros, while at the same time bringing the island's military presence to international attention. Consequently, there was an increasing demand from the international community to normalize relations between Greece and Turkey and stabilize the conflict in Imbros (Karakatsanis 2014).

As a result of these pressures and the fact that Greek community was no longer a threat to nation-building, the state's vision of the island started to shift from active pursuit of policies to push Greek residents out to rural development for settlers. Within the spirit of this shift, as mentioned, the Open Prison was closed in 1992, the decades-long practice of not allowing non-Turkish citizens to the island without a special permit was abolished in 1993, and the Land Registry was initiated in 1996.

The Land Registry did not only function as a way to record the ownership of land and property, it also created a new taxonomy of land. It skillfully legalized unlawful acts of expropriations and the ethnicized division of property ownership in various ways.

First, it used the Cadastral Law⁴⁶ (No: 2644) that required owners to provide witness

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⁴⁶ The official purpose of the Cadastral Law (No: 2644 of 1934) is to modernize the titles from Ottoman Empire that are in Arabic script and to allow the rightful owners to have access to Ottoman Archives. Access to existing records in Ottoman Archives requires a tedious and counter-productive bureaucratic procedure including knowing the serial number of the title and proving relationship to the original title owner. In addition, in Gökçeada even for those who can claim ownership with witnesses, there is yet another exception to private ownership of the land that is under protection with the Law 5226/2004 (amending Law 2863/1983) "Preservation of Natural and Cultural Wealth" that constitutes 80% of the island (Gross 2008:10).

information that they are the rightful owners and users of the property for the last 20 years. For Greek owners, this was almost impossible because their witnesses (neighbors or friends) had either left or was no longer alive. The Land Registry applied this rule even for those Greek properties where there was previous ownership title or proof, or property tax receipts from a tax survey carried out in 1936 (Gross 2008:9). Even in the cases where the rightful owners were able to claim ownership for 20 years, Land Registry authorities dismissed claims on the grounds that the land was not “used” without taking into account the reasons why the owner could not use the property.

The second strategy that the Land Registry mobilized was through the law that stipulated only Turkish citizens are allowed to inherit property in Turkey. Thus, rightful owners from the next generation of most of the deceased owners of the Greek property were deprived of their property. It was transferred to the state because the older generation had lost their Turkish citizenship (especially through not fulfilling mandatory military service). Since then, European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) decided that Turkish inheritance laws should not discriminate based on citizenship. It remains to be seen how the Turkish courts, which are legally bound with ECHR’s decisions, will decide the many pending court cases (Gross 2008:10).

The third tactic that the Land Registry resorted to in transferring property was the registration of community owned property as *mazbut*. This is a category that puts religious and ethnic minority foundations’ properties under the Directorate General of Foundations. In Gökçeada, the properties, including school buildings, parishes, and fields belonging to a parish, were declared *mazbut* although some of them, like Eulompio (Yeni Mahalle), had Orthodox community members still using the property (Gross 2008:11).

With these three strategies the Land Registry made it impossible to Greek residents who left the island to claim rightful ownership of the property.

In addition, the Land Registry also invented new categories to record the property. Looking at Tepeköy's Land Registry records we can see how these categories worked. First, it introduced an *owner unknown* category that was used when a property owner was not on site at the moment of land registration and when there was no one else to legitimately claim its ownership. In these cases, land was directly transferred to the state and added to the records for the State Treasury (*Maliye Hazinesi*). As it was mostly land owned by Greeks that did not have owners on site at the moment of the Land Registry, a good portion of this land and property was registered as *owner unknown*. Although legitimate absent owners were openly known to the community, the category of *owner unknown* not only marked a property's legitimate owners as absent, but also rendered them invisible in the eyes of the state. Rumours as to how the whole process took place suggest that members of the community knew the missing owners and some claimed *de facto* ownership or had access to channels of long-term tenancy on some of the properties.

The second important category was the classification of some land as *vakfi*. Any *vakfi* status land was basically a donation from the Ottoman sultans to the local community and its ownership rights were determined by the principles of usufruct, which allowed the community to use and profit from the land, but denied the possibility of its private ownership and inheritance (Terzibaşoğlu 2001). As the EC Report suggests, there have been *vakfi* lands in Imbros since the Sultan's decrees of the seventeenth century (Gross 2008). However, when a land is registered as *vakfi* under the laws put into effect

in 1996, the owner's rights to ownership and inheritance are taken away, allowing inhabitation of the premises, but not its sale. There was a chance that *vakfi* status land could be transferred to heirs after death through *ab indivisio*, but in practice at the time of the Land Registry, if there was no Turkish citizen heir to claim the land, it was taken back by the state. Similar to other categories, as most of the heirs to Greek lands and property were men who had either lost their citizenship status for not completing mandatory military service, or who were absent, the state claimed these holdings after registering them as *vakfi* property. The Memorandum (2004) draws attention to the fact that *vakfi* is not a status of property recognized by the Turkish state for registration purposes in other contexts. It has, nevertheless, become a handy taxonomic tool to stop the continuity of ownership claims by Greeks.

Finally, as a third category, some of the land, houses, and other types of property were recorded with the name of the individual owner and the note *deceased*, without mentioning any heirs for further claims purposes. The category deceased disrupted transfers by inheritance and created a legitimate ground for the state to register the land as its own property.

The whole process of land registration and its taxonomic tools did not operate evenly throughout the island. For example, after the completion of the Land Registry, Eski Bademli (Glikli)'s records were suspended due to "topographic errors." The Memorandum (2004) points to the fact that Eski Bademli was the only village where 70 per cent of the land and property was registered to its rightful, legitimate owners. After local records were sent to the Land Registry and Zoning Office in Ankara, the on-site evaluation was still deemed invalid, but the "topographic errors" have not yet been

resolved and disputes about the use and ownership of land continues to this day.⁴⁷

Scott offers a valuable interpretation of how the logic of taxonomy operates and changes the ownership landscape in land registries and cadastral maps:

The value of the cadastral map to the state lies in its abstraction and universality. In principle, at least, the same objective standards can be applied throughout the nation, regardless of local context, to produce a complete and unambiguous map of all landed property. The completeness of cadastral map depends, in a curious way, on its abstract sketchiness, its lack of detail, its thinness. Taken alone, it is essentially a geometric representation of the borders or frontiers between parcels of lands. What lies inside the parcel is left blank –unspecified- since it is not germane to the map plotting itself. (1998:44)

Scott's arguments helps a great deal in understanding the logic of land registries and addresses how the specific variations and on-the-ground operations of the actual actors creating real outcomes within the limits of these strategies are mobilized, especially when it comes to "rationalizing and standardizing what was a social hieroglyph into a legible and administratively more convenient format." (1998:3) He does, however, point out that the process of translation is not straightforward and that the logics of reconfiguring land and property relations sometimes go in opposite directions, generating different rationalities and relations.

Following Li's (2005) argument that there is no fixed logic to the set of tools a state makes available to itself, the Land Registry of 1996 illustrates the creative, dynamic

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⁴⁷ Disputes about land ownership and status sparked recently during the renovation of the village school in Gliki as a touristic facility. Opposing the use of school building as a hotel, current residents of Gliki claimed that allowing it represents a continuation of land appropriations by the state for venture capitalists. The argument made the national media when a dinner for island officials was given by the hotel administrators as the formal opening of the facility (Radikal 2014). The dispute continued as Gliki residents, most of whom are urban elites who have purchased stonework Greek houses as vacation residences, see the school's repurposing as the extension of the conservative government's construction drive and as a destruction of the natural and cultural landscape. The irony of the actors' positions was missed by both sides of the dispute.

scheme of development embedded in the continuation of expropriation. The strategy of seizing the land from the local community and distributing it to the settlers was no longer needed by 1996, nor was it possible in the political climate of the 1990s, with Turkey under pressure from the international community. Instead, with the pretext of registration, the state was not only able to make a *de facto* situation *de jure*, but it also designated categories that did not exist or were not legally valid when the available categories did not serve its purpose in *spirit* (Akçam 2014).

Calculated decisions to legitimize and legalize *de facto* ownership were inconsistent and contestations to the operation of the Land Registry are apparent in the suspension of records due to “topographic errors,” such as those for Gliki (Eski Bademli), where the community maintains that property was registered to its rightful owners. The state’s strategy was devised on the go as contestations unfolded and resources became accessible. Transfers were made to those who were available and able to claim a space when the ownership of property or land was debated. Reflecting the level of contestations from the Greek community, the EC Report in 2009 reported an increasing number of court cases appealing the Land Registry. These include 114 cases pending by a single individual, those waiting in front of ECHR, and cases of vineyards “being suddenly declared as ‘forest areas’” (Gross 2008:10).

Thus, a scattered legalization of some of the *de facto* ownerships was made possible, especially for those who were not brought to the island for resettlement, some of whom were former inmates of the Open Prison. Different from the regulated, ordered, and disciplined settlement schemes of previous expropriations, the 1996 Land Registry’s

plan, it seems, had enough flexibility and impunity built into it to leave an impression of randomness.

Records vs. Memory

While the state was using the Land Registry as a tool for consolidating unlawful property transfers, the memory of incorrect and unlawful record keeping was kept alive through gossip within the settler community. During the interviews, settlers were able to account for the names and ownership status details. These community memories are obviously incomplete and scattered compared to official state records, but villagers still profess clear knowledge and experience of land or property acquisition by *de facto* occupation. This living memory is dynamic, changing, and adaptive; it escapes fixation to a specific person and space. It does not allow for direct connections of land and property ownership and responsibility. Rather, this fluid remembered knowledge functions as a rumour that can be judiciously employed within the scope of existing dynamics of power. Sometimes it was used by settlers who were not in a position to take advantage of acquiring ownership during the registry to highlight the arbitrariness of expropriation, while at other times, it was invoked by as a comment by back-to-the-landers about how easy life was for previous settlers and how they had been complicit with the ethnic cleansing of the island.

Adding to the state's rewriting of the ownership landscape of the island through the Land Registry, for the community, the absence of legitimate property or landowners made daily interaction impossible and responsibility invisible. As the Greek community had left the island in previous decades, record keeping functioned as a mechanism for registering the absence of the rightful owners of vacant buildings such that the Land

Registry legalized the *de facto* owners of the remaining property. Whereas previous expropriations were made as direct transfers of land, the Land Registry claimed land that was of particular use and value based on the type of property it contained bringing the mechanism of replacement and reordering to culmination.

In addition, as Greek owners were not physically present to lay claim to most of their buildings, the basis for confrontations and relations between Greeks and the settlers were often unclear. Although the partial, gradual, scattered, less centralized approach to land expropriations might have prevented the eruption of immediate ethnic conflict, it also made knowledge transfer impossible, especially in regard to methods of farming and tending olives. Compared to previous periods, when the Greek community had still been present on the island, after 1996 there was a deep rupture in the transfer of local knowledge and fewer opportunities for encounters between old residents and new settlers.⁴⁸

The collective memory of the actual moment of the Land Registry is also very much alive in the minds of the settlers and comes up frequently during conversations. Land transfers prompted settlers to come up with coping strategies for what they knew to be unlawful appropriations of Greek property. Past experience with the Land Registry has attached a feeling of immediacy and emergency to the actual moment of registrations, leading to a sense of irrevocability and *fait accompli*. One of the settlers who lived in a former Greek village recounts the visit of officials and the momentariness of registration:

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⁴⁸ The invisibility of Greek owners allowed for the creation of idealized, romanticized “ghost owners,” whose artifacts, knowledge, and experience are open to representation and cultural appropriation. This also accounts for the rise of a touristic objectification and commodification of the island that is grounded in a discourse of cosmopolitanism and co-existence in the absence of the Greek community (Interview 18).

“They were in and out. There was no one around to call. They didn’t wait for us to call people to let them know” (Interview 18). A similar sense of immediacy is also identified by Scott, in relation to understanding the function of mapping by the state:

The cadastral map is very much like a still photograph of the current in a river. It represents the parcels of land as they were arranged and owned at the moment the survey as conducted. But the current is always moving, and in periods of major social upheaval and growth, a cadastral survey may freeze a scene of great turbulence. (1998:46)

Local alliances were also an important aspect of the memories of the land transfers that happened during the Land Registry Survey. Some accounts mention how settlers or ex-inmates brought in their friends as witness for them when Land Registry officials were present. Similarly, other accounts suggest willfully not letting the officials know the rightful owner. These informal strategies were carried out with the officials being complicit in the process and turning a blind eye to these informalities. Such local alliances illustrate how the Land Registry as a tool of standardization of land records operated as a mechanism to legalize replacement and the reordering of space.

The figure displays two pages of a Land Registry document from Tepekey. Each page features a table with multiple columns, including 'TAKSIT NO.' (Tax Lot No.), 'MÜLKİYET DURUMU' (Ownership Status), 'MÜLKİYET SAHİBİ' (Owner), 'MÜLKİYET NO.' (Ownership No.), 'MÜLKİYET ALANI' (Ownership Area), 'MÜLKİYET DEĞERİ' (Ownership Value), 'MÜLKİYET KURUMU' (Ownership Institution), 'MÜLKİYET TARİHİ' (Ownership Date), 'MÜLKİYET YERİ' (Ownership Location), 'MÜLKİYET DURUMU' (Ownership Status), 'MÜLKİYET NO.' (Ownership No.), 'MÜLKİYET ALANI' (Ownership Area), 'MÜLKİYET DEĞERİ' (Ownership Value), 'MÜLKİYET KURUMU' (Ownership Institution), 'MÜLKİYET TARİHİ' (Ownership Date), 'MÜLKİYET YERİ' (Ownership Location). The tables are filled with handwritten entries, and some rows are highlighted in blue and pink. The pages are signed at the bottom by officials.

Figure 17. Sample pages of the Land Registry in Tepekey. Highlighted by the committee preparing the Memorandum, the tables shows the land registered to the *State (Maliye Hazinesi)*, owner unknown or owner deceased. (2004:Annex VII)

OLIVE GROVES

The Land Registry in 1996 is the final and most recent stage of expropriations. It closely follows the logic of land transfers enacted between the 1950s and 1990s, but uses different techniques. It has, while changing the configuration of property relations, initiated the processes through which olive groves have sometimes been left outside of this new arrangement, considered redundant or seen as wasteland.

Looking closely at the records from the Land Registry in Tepeköy (Agridia), it is possible to see the spatial effects of the Land Registry on olive groves. Tepeköy as previously described, is a Greek village where property was owned exclusively by the Greek community. Records show that the 1996 Land Registry attributed more than 90 per cent of the available olive groves in Tepeköy to their rightful owners, while registering less than 10 per cent to the State Treasury. Although groves constitute around 13 per cent of the total village land in Tepeköy, and more than two-thirds of the total land was registered as belonging to the state treasury, the 1996 Land Registry indicate that the property of the Greek community consisted mostly of olive groves. The state's registered properties were categorized as demolished sheds (*yıkık dam*), fields (*tarla*), houses (*ev*), uncultivated lands (*ham toprak*), orchards (*bahçe*), and fields with olive groves (*zeytinli tarla*) (Memorandum 2004:Annex VII).

The role of the olive in the making of new spatial divisions on the island was two-fold. On the one hand, the majority of the olive groves and most of the cultivable land had already been expropriated before the 1996 Land Registry; it had been divided and distributed to the settlers through appropriations between the 1950s and 1990s. So, during Land Registry of 1996, olive groves were minimal in the transfers compared to housing

and built property. Besides, by 1996, the expropriation of land from a community was not as easy as in the previous waves of land transfers in the 1970s and 1980s, when the international community was less sensitive about non-Muslim minorities' property status in Turkey and Greek community was no longer on the island (Kurban and Hatemi 2009). Land Registry in 1996 provided the state with a legitimate framework for the continuation of reordering land ownership, but was more suitable as a tool for rearranging built property ownership.

Additionally, olive groves had lost their potential as leverage as a resource in comparison to when the first settlements were being made and olive groves were valued as resources and distributed to ensure that newcomers had access to cultivable land for of their livelihood. Not only did the state any longer need olive groves to strengthen its hold on the island, but olives did not seem worth the effort to transfer.

Besides, the closure of the Open Prison had left a very big portion of it land—olive groves expropriated from the Greek community in the 1970s—in the hands of the state.⁴⁹ As a facility that profited from the economic products of convict labor, olive oil production was one of the main activities of the prison. After its closure, the land became the State-Owned Farm, and the land remained unused until the early 2000s. Former prison buildings now serve as an olive pressing facility for another organic olive company, Ekozey (see Figures 12 and 13 in Chapter 2).

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⁴⁹ Although a story of the Open Prison still needs further investigation to bring out its history in Gökçeada, a brief description is in Chapter 2.

**REGISTRATION RESULTS OF LAND REGISTRY IN THE VILLAGE "AGRIDIA"*
(RENAMED TEPEKOY) OF IMVROS (RENAMED GOKCEADA) AFTER 23-06-03**

TOTAL SURFACE AREA RECORDED BY TURKISH LAND REGISTRY

Category of property	Pieces	Size (m2)	ON INDIVIDUALS	ON TURKISH STATE	TOTAL
Olive groves	308	871.300	91,93%	8,07%	100,00%
Fields	394	1.564.000	23,47%	76,53%	100,00%
Groves	123	71.700	79,08%	20,92%	100,00%
Vine yards	35	55.225	74,65%	25,35%	100,00%
Almond groves	9	19.500	100,00%	0,00%	100,00%
Non cultivated land	50	3.384.000	0,00%	100,00%	100,00%
Plots of land	11	1.787	51,32%	48,68%	100,00%
Buildings	385	106.660	93,69%	6,31%	100,00%
TOTAL	1.315	6.074.172	22,82%	77,18%	100,00%

* Being, until recently, a village where all the properties were owned by Greeks.

REGISTERED ON INDIVIDUALS

Category of property	Pieces	Size (m2)	Percentage of total land (%)
Olive groves	284	801.000	13,19%
Fields	87	367.000	6,04%
Groves	92	56.700	0,93%
Vine yards	22	41.225	0,68%
Almond groves	9	19.500	0,32%
Plots of land	7	917	0,02%
Buildings	354	99.926	1,65%
TOTAL	855	1.386.268	22,82%

REGISTERED ON TURKISH STATE

Category of property	Pieces	Size (m2)	Percentage of total land (%)
Olive groves	24	70.300	1,16%
Fields	307	1.197.000	19,71%
Groves	31	15.000	0,25%
Vine yards	13	14.000	0,23%
Non cultivated land	50	3.384.000	55,71%
Plots of land	4	870	0,01%
Buildings	31	6.734	0,11%
TOTAL	460	4.687.904	77,18%

Table 18: Land Ownership after 1996 in Tepeköy (Memorandum 2004:Annex VII)

How can we interpret the process through which olives are invoked as an agent of development and connected to the island and its people, after having been disconnected through a similar process? How does the Land Registry of 1996 help us to understand the logics of spatial imaginary behind the Organic Project and organic olive agriculture on Imbros? It is crucial to highlight the multiplicity of tools through which the state authority reduces land to administrable, extractable resources and how olives and olive groves have been differently located within the socio-spatial configurations on the island.

The 1996 Land Registry provided the last step in the erasure of Greek presence from the island. However, unlike in previous attempts, it did not replace the Greek community with new settlers. Rather, it enabled more unpredictable, yet disputed, transfers of land and property. As I mentioned earlier, most recent transfers were conducted by local alliances rather than through top-down orders and state apparatus. Thus, the allocation of resources was not based on a master plan created by policy-makers; it twisted and responded to the short-term profit making drive of the local community. In the absence of the rightful landowners, impunity was stronger and more visible. Olive groves were rendered useless for a Greek community deprived of property and the right to sell or inherit.

On the other hand, the 1996 Land Registry did not create a clear-cut distinction between the losers and winners of the registration process. Rather, it made the ground on which negotiations between the state and the community took place shaky and unpredictable. Power asymmetries were played out and different interests and privileges were negotiated. Olive groves were not direct targets of the state's control and regulation through the Land Registry in 1996, yet the fact that their redistribution was not the primary aim generated the conditions of possibility for the groves to be targets of future control and regulation through the Organic Project. In the absence of their Greek owners, olive groves had become a negligible part of the land—a waste of wild varieties on the hills and of no interest to the state (Figure 20). They were left alone, considered unworthy of further regulation, and thought to offer no value to the bigger plans and improvement schemes of the state; their categorization and spatial presence was not an administrative priority for the state. The olive's later re-inclusion in the development scheme, as a

commodity when olives acquired the value of spatial belonging, would lend great support for the emergence of the island as a space of authenticity and intact nature.

Tracing the trajectory of olive groves during the Land Registry allows us to see the full spectrum of tools and schemes that have spatially redesigned the island. It also highlights the uneven and multi-directional process of localizing the olive and re-planting it on the island as local produce. Interestingly, Land Registry records show that olive groves were negligible in the process whereas they were the main components of redistribution in previous appropriation periods. Paradoxically, this negligence prepared the ground for the Organic Project, which took hold on Imbros in less than a decade, ascribing the olive grove with a symbolic place-based value albeit stripped of its existing ties to a particular social and cultural life.

Reading Land Registry records to trace the ownership status of olive groves reveals a spatial logic that operates through disconnecting and reconnecting olives with the socio-cultural landscape. First, leaving olive groves on their own, without rearranging their ownership status, led to the unintended preservation of older trees and an endemic variety of olive on the island, the *Ladolia*. Hillside groves have been mostly left intact through neglect, either because they were hard to access or because the communities that had once lived off them were no longer present (Interview 22). Consequently, and somewhat ironically, the *Ladolia* olive has become a symbol and rationale for preservation and a local commodity through Organic Project.

NARRATIVES OF PLACE

This section aims to unpack the narratives of local space planners in order to understand the discursive construction of the island's space and how this contours the dynamics of olives' belonging to the island.

A 2012 Report on Gökçeada, prepared by the Southern Marmara Region Development Agency, a regional public planning agency under the European Union Ministry of Turkey, stated:

As a result of the research made, it has been observed that the psychology of the people living on Gökçeada and Bozcaada are very different from the normal. Those who live and who have to work on the islands do not feel safe. They are concerned about what they are going to do in situations of emergency. This feeling is much more palpable in Gökçeada because it was home to a semi-open conviction facility and has been an exile place in addition to having longer access to mainland. It can be seen that public service officials (teachers, academics, doctors and other professionals working on the islands) want to leave the island one way or another. Local population on the islands is not able to adopt the island culture. (GMKA 2012:39)

The report outlines the history and social structure of Gökçeada and Bozcaada to assess their potential for local development, and is a significant document in that it reflects planners' vision of the island. Organized as a typical development plan, it is most comprehensive, compiling regional perspectives on economic development and social conditions. It also considers the island's local dynamics and space to be critically important actors in the development potential for tourism, agriculture, and culture.

When the planners suggest that the local population is not adapting to island culture, what is the local that they are invoking, and what is the island culture to which they are referring? The planners' statement is emblematic of how the state sees the local population and of its strategy to develop Gökçeada. The problem, according to the report's findings, is related to the feeling local residents have about the island. The 2012

Report echoes the concerns of the previous reports mentioned in Chapter 2 with respect to understanding the dynamics of the local with a view to controlling what makes the settlers willing to stay in the island. The solution of the 2012 Report is to come up with a plan based on a sociological data—one that would, ironically, “focus on negative and positive aspects of the life on the islands and definitely not mention anything related to the ethnic origin, religion or language” (GMKA 2012:42). In other words, a study that would ignore major aspects of social life. The report’s statement illustrates nicely how the state is invested in reordering the island, as a place, without acknowledging its history. Planners are stumped, with only sociology as a tool for understanding the paradox of why the local population is unable to adapt to its own “island culture.”

In order to solve this problem and render the island’s social and cultural landscape legible, the 2012 Report suggests tackling the issue of development in less political and historically controversial terms. Thus, to “focus on (p)ositive and negative aspects of the life on the island” essentially refers to telling a narrative of the island that does not threaten the status quo in regard to settler presence and the politics of land. That way, not only would the history of ethnic violence, appropriations, and militarization be erased, but the historical continuities, leaks, and overlaps in actors’ positions and the island’s landscape would be made invisible. This position is not only voiced by policy makers in official narratives, but it is shared by civil society actors, land owners, business owners, and academics.⁵⁰ The 2012 report is just one of the many documents, including policy papers, reports, plans, and academic articles about Gökçeada published between 2003 and the present, and the majority of these are equally concerned with highlighting the value of

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⁵⁰ For a different example of retrospective constructions of historical narratives, see Akdemir et al. (2008).

the island's local resources. In this way, they participate in crafting narratives of space that render Gökçeada legible and administrable in the aim of its "improvement".

The olive occupies a crucial place within these narratives, both as a potentially lucrative commodity to be developed and as a product that is used to embody the characteristics of a place. As discussed in the previous section, whereas olive trees were once used to encourage settlement or neglected, they recently become of interest for local resource development. Organic farming projects began to claim olives as a local natural resource belonging to the cultural and historical landscape of the island. This association re-localized the olive as part of the island identity and brought forward different imaginaries of space.

Among these different imaginaries, historical narratives of cultural and ethnic diversity are dominant. The very same 2012 report summarizes the island's cultural landscape thusly:

Gökçeada offers a very rich social structure where diverse cultures coexist and citizens with different ethnic backgrounds live together (...) In addition to citizens with Greek origins, there are people from Bulgaria and different corners of mainland Anatolia living there. Co-existence of different peoples from different regions has enriched the island socially and culturally. (GMKA 2012:4–5)

The planners' vision of Gökçeada, such a seemingly obvious statement about the demographic structure of the island, takes on a wholly different meaning when it is read against the island's history of settlement, appropriation, and ethnic violence. Not only does it ignore the fact that the Greek population of the island has been reduced to a miniscule number, but by simplifying the presence of Bulgarian and other communities as a sign of coexistence and diversity hides the forced and top-down aspect of the developmental history that brought these communities to the island in the first place. It

also brings these communities together in a level-field cultural diversity narrative, locating them side by side, without any attention to the different landscapes and spatial politics that form the basis of their presence on the island (Ahmed and Swan 2006). By erasing their different histories of settlement and migration, the statement becomes part of a depoliticized history of diversity on Imbros.

Another report from 2007, prepared by Industrial Research and Development Directorate⁵¹, identifies:

Unique historical and architectural fabric, coexistence of different cultures, being an island, virgin nature, clean air and sea, olive groves and cuisine of Gökçeada have been important for development (Erginöz 2007)

This statement, like the previous one, clusters natural landscape and social life elements together. It replaces conflicts between different groups and contestation to development and settlement policies with permanence, harmony, and naturalness in its description of the island. Not only does it invoke an imperial cosmopolitan nostalgia (Türeli 2010), but also it presents harmonious social life as a permanent natural feature of the island life. Thus, the statement is crucial in highlighting how superficial diversity discourse is not only a depoliticizing strategy, but also partially connected to turning the island into an administrable resources for the planners. For example, the 2007 Report also suggests that:

Greek citizens who used to constitute the majority of the island's population migrated from the island due to economic factors whereas there has been a continuous immigration to the island from other parts of the country.(Erginöz 2007:20)

Again, ironing out some of the unpleasant details of how island space has become

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⁵¹ The unit which prepared the report is a research unit within the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology under the General Directorate of Strategic Development.

a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural place, the eradication of the Greek presence is omitted, simplified, and sterilized as a marketable feature of the island. According to the report, the island's long history of demographic landscape changes and corresponding reassignment of functions to spaces, are simply the result of voluntary and smooth economic choices, implying that Gökçeada's current ethnic composition was formed without conflict, harm or opposition.⁵²

In contrast to the outlook of previous development plans, the most recent development planning considers the market one of the tenets of successful economic development and selects its tools accordingly to increase the island's commercial appeal. Thus, cultural difference, which would have been seen as a problem to be solved by development plans prior to the 1990s, when the island was a security zone governed by territorial logic, is now considered an asset for market leverage. Without any acknowledgment of the multiple histories of belonging or the power asymmetries that exist between different groups living on the island, the latest planners' vision of Gökçeada denies the erratic and uneven landscape of its communities, choosing to imagine life as unproblematic and harmonious on the island.⁵³ This vision of its cultural and social identity, of course, supports the effort to transform Gökçeada into a tourist destination, and the island's naturally existing resources are given a similar role. In this context, olives, as local produce, become markers of place, adding to the island's touristic potential and economic development. The manufactured cosmopolitanism and invented

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⁵² For very similar processes in other contexts see Cloke and Thrift (1994) and DuPuis and Vandergeest (1996).

⁵³ Both the 2007 and 2012 Reports, as well as other documents on the Organic Project claim that the only way the island can integrate into the market is through organic production.

imperial diversity on the island blankets a reactionary localism shaped under market pressure.

Sustainability as Unintended Consequence

As much as the narratives found in recent development documents reflect the manufacturing of an island space based on selective spatial histories, they also reveal how elements of past practices have leaked into the current discourse from unexpected points, disguised in the economic development framework. Reports and other documents illustrate the continuities and adaptations of the spatial logic of development plans that operate on the island today through their general framing of sustainable development, as well as their suggestions as to how this can be achieved via organic agriculture and tourism. The 2012 Report, for example, succinctly explains the current predicament of sustainable development on the island from the perspective of state-led development plans:

Both of the islands [Imbros and Tenedos] have always been territories to which our state has showed special sensitivity and implemented policies due to their strategic importance and political significance. Most of these policies are aimed towards protecting the islands, however some of them prevented the island's resources to be fully utilized. This situation has become an obstacle in front of the development of the islands as the time passed (GMKA 2012:37).

This paragraph is emblematic of the state's perception of the island and frames its approach to Gökçeada's sustainable development. It also illustrates a paradigm shift in the development perspective and points to the need for policy revision in light of changing economic parameters and development imperatives.

In the 2007 Report, planners similarly identify the purpose of the Organic Project and link it to previous development projects on the island:

Gökçeada and Bozcaada Rural Development and Settlement Project has been put

into effect in order to support the settlement activities on the newly developing settlement villages, providing agricultural support to the new settler peasants for overcoming their problems in addition to looking for ways to making agriculture, the most important activity on the island, a sustainable source of subsistence (Erginöz 2007:14).

The idea that sustainability is a necessary part of settlement development and demographic engineering also leaks into other narratives. In a symposium on the development of the island, organized by the city, Çanakkale University, and the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, one of the papers highlighted that the aim of economic sustainability is actually demographic sustainability through the creation of “a conscious, wealthy, and productive island population that is also freed from feelings of isolation.” (Atabay 2008:19)

Complementing the perception of sustainability as a continuation of spatial interventions to the island, the 2012 Report explains the rationale of organic farming as a source of sustainable development as follows:

The island, included within the scope of transition to organic farming, is assigned as organic farming pilot area considering that rural areas are easy to control and for extended periods of time there was no use of harsh pesticides and fertilizers in agriculture. Thus, it was prepared for agro-tourism as “organic agriculture island” (GMKA 2012, 10)

This quote suggests that the island space is considered suitable for organic farming due to its easily controlled, relatively untouched natural landscape. It also reveals how organic farming on the island has been devised as a top-down project prepared by policy-makers and based largely on the administrative and environmental aspects of a resource evaluation Gökçeada.

The social implications of the Organic Project, however, are only brought to light as facilitators of settlement policies. In the eyes of the planners, previous development

project goals have not necessarily differed from those of the current project, which focus on sustainability. They see sustainability as an instrument that is compatible with existing parameters of land ownership and settlement, but they do not consider the place of long-term social and cultural sustainability and fairness in their sustainability framework. Rather, the spatial parameters created by nation-building and modernist development prior to the 1990s are seen as the preparation for current sustainable farming practices. Like the narrative tools that promote the idea of sustainability, agricultural subsidies and other measures used to encourage settlers' rural development—remnants from the period when Greek communities were pushed from the island due to security concerns—continue to be at the disposal of the state.

Tracing Leaks in Narratives of Place

Similarities can be found in the rural development approaches presented in historical and more recent reports and policy documents. A 1954 Report prepared by SPA, which I covered in detail in Chapter 2, questions how to devise a plan that will keep settler communities on the island, while simultaneously encouraging Greek communities to leave (Atik 1954). It remarks that rural development is one of the most important tools for achieving this goal and offers solutions for Turkish settler families' experiencing failure with olive farming. Based on a clear logic of ethnic homogenization aligned with Turkification and border securitization practices that were actively implemented from 1950s, the report's focus and discourse reveal a very telling story about the continuing logic of rural development on the island. Sustainability, in this sense, refers to the maintenance of those tools and technologies of power that are at the state's disposal for reordering space.

The details of proposed development solutions also show the continuity of the idea that the island can be improved via interventions to spatial organization. In the 2007 Report, for example, planners point to the potential use of valuable land owned by the State for touristic development; the use of these designated tourism development areas close to the sea was at the discretion of the Ministry of Tourism. The report identifies 12 plots in Uğurlu village, near Gizli Liman, and 8 plots at Dereköy village, near Pirköz, that could benefit from tourism development. It also mentions other potentially suitable areas in Aydıncık, Lazköy, and Kaleköy—areas owned by the Treasury but not yet designated as tourism development areas—and recommends their development by the private sector (Erginöz 2007:17–18).⁵⁴

Another example that shows a similar concern for the island's development through spatial reorganization is found in the 2012 Report about the mud bath area of the island, which is considered to have a high potential for tourist appeal. Presenting the health benefits and economic potential of the area, the report points to the fact that the area is a military security zone with no public access, thus making its economic development impossible (GMKA 2012:35).

Military security zones are common on the island due to its border status and history of securitization; these zones cover big portions of land across the island, especially in coastal areas, and make the land inaccessible to communities (see Figure 15 in Chapter 2). However, the 2012 Report is not concerned with inaccessibility to locals or the impact of a military security zones land's removal on the social, economic, and

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⁵⁴These areas represented spaces that were transferred to the Treasury through the 1996 Land Registry Survey and that had, therefore, become available for sustainable resource development.

cultural lives of the islanders. Rather, without challenging the logic of the securitization and militarization of island space, it suggests that certain areas with touristic potential ought to be made accessible through a modification (instead of a full scale change) to the making of space on the island, as part of an economic development plan. The report's suggestion to transfer these areas to private tourism entrepreneurs reflects the fact that the securitization that once determined the parameters of rural development on the island and were a necessary component of nation-building became an obstacle to the realization of the new development vision based on the Quality Turn. Gökçeada's military security zones, with their access restrictions, prevented much of the island from being utilized for the tourism development planners thought would bring it closer to meeting the economic parameters of the market.

Consequently, the 2012 report not only renders the politics of land appropriation invisible, but also demonstrates that the implementation of sustainable development on Gökçeada, in particular, is based on an economic development logic that disregards the social and cultural history of the space. It seeks a new order, framed by a seemingly neutral and depoliticized narrative of economic development, to render the land and its purposes legible and exploitable.

RE-LOCALIZING OLIVES

Suggestions and discussions about olive farming and the development of the olive's culinary culture act as other illustrations of the narratives used in the island's rural development process. Not only are olives important because they are a natural resource, but the olive's relation to Greek culture and its significance in the island's history

represent anxieties and concerns with which developers and entrepreneurs must grapple. Reports therefore present the olive in more technical terms, referring to the local climate and the qualities of the *Ladolia* olive that make this indigenous variety an ideal natural resource. Moreover, identifying the transition to organic farming as one of the primary purposes of the project, planners present olives as a natural resource that has been discovered and wisely utilized through state policy rather than as a resource made available for development through the destruction of communities and social relations that had been sustained by olive farming in the past (Erginöz 2007:14-17).

The discovery of olives as a development tool grounded in a marketing strategy anchored in spatial belonging and connection to cultural landscape comes with its own problems. How can a narrative, facilitated by the same institutional actors and using similar development technologies, be reframed to sidestep the history of appropriations and ethnic turmoil on the island? In a 2008 conference attended by officials from the city, academics, local entrepreneurs, and some NGO representatives, which was organized to discuss the island's development, one of the presenters, Naci Kaynar, identified the problem of olive groves belonging to "people who live outside the island." He suggested that these groves should be cared for and included in the economy, further elaborating that this was necessary because the *Ladolia* variety is an economically valuable local variety and that remaining groves are very important for the island's economic development. Thus, according to Kaynar, the groves of absent owners should be appropriated *de facto* as part of the island's economic development imperatives (2008:95-96).

Another presenter, Nusret Avcı, the owner of a local winery, suggested that

despite the natural abundance and unique quality of *Ladolia* olives, their maintenance, pruning, and processing are problematic due to community negligence (2008:86). Yet another presenter pointed to the need for detailed studies to record and transfer the olive growing knowledge of the last remaining members of the Greek community to the new settler communities, before they pass away (Atalay 2008:19). The quality of olive oil becomes an important point of intersection in touristic and economic development visions, both hoping to turn the island in to a center for agro-tourism (GMKA 2012:10).⁵⁵

This argument was, however, contested. One presenter, concerned about the role of the Greek community in the island's development, suggested that it would be pertinent to hear from them only on the condition that they were "well-intentioned." (Arduç and Genç 2008:33). Another presenter then mentioned the mafia-links of the Greek diaspora community and warned others to be vigilant about their interactions with the Greeks (Akdemir 2008:38). Despite all of these negative fragments and narratives, the conference concluded with a statement about harmonious relations between the island's Turks and Greeks and the high level of citizenship consciousness expressed in the Greek community.

The planners' and entrepreneurs' perspectives on strengthening the olive's presence in Gökçeada is informed by examples set by other Greek islands; the 2012 Report describes how the Greek islands have built a successful model by tapping into the connection between land, resources, and quality food products. Suggesting that this model is necessary for drawing a higher income tourist crowd to the island, planners are invested in the olive's place on the island (GMKA 2012:14). Consequently, they have

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⁵⁵ For studies on olive's cultural, economic and political meanings, see Braverman (2009), Meneley (2004) and Sharif (2014).

constructed narratives about how olives are crucially embedded in the local landscape—narratives that are neither complete, coherent, nor stable. In crafting the relation between the space, the product, and the producer, along with the cultural skills that are tied to a place, these narratives illustrate a multiplicity of cracks and concerns encapsulated in the discourse of development. On the one hand, developers see a lucrative business opportunity in the market potential of the local olive variety and understand that the marketing strategy has to include its connection to the land and the people. On the other hand, the history of development and settlement policies of nation-building that sought the ethnic Turkification of the island gives them little room to maneuver. While Gökçeada's symbolic fault lines remain, the discourse and the practice of development have reordered the island's space, reconfiguring its historical narrative and rendering the space legible within framework of the market imperatives of the current development ethos.

CHAPTER 5

ADMINISTRATION OF LOCAL OLIVES: BUREAUCRATIC INTERFACES OF ORGANIC FARMING

This chapter outlines the premises and operations of the ongoing Organic Project in Gökçeada, focusing on activities related to organic olive production. Started in 2002, the Organic Project brings together state and local authorities in combining their efforts to assemble an organic olive production network on the island. Funded by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock in Turkey, the project aims at creating sustainable local rural development by supporting organic industry, and seeks to increase the market advantage of olives. Locating the emergence, operation and outcomes of the Organic Project within the broader framework of the Quality Turn in agricultural production and the re-construction of the state's active role in the rural development on the island, this chapter interrogates the social and political dynamics of the institutional and administrative milieu in which the project operates.

Given the scope of the Organic Project, which was covered in Chapter 2, and the contentious history of olives on the island, this chapter claims that the project functions as a tool for the state to reorder the rural and reconstruct the local by attempting to control farming knowledge, resources and practices. While the state fosters efficient, organic quality production by changing and controlling farmers' production practices through subsidies, coordination and education of farmers, as well as complementary questionnaires and surveys, this is not all that makes the organic olives of Gökçeada profitable in the eyes of the project makers—the project also relies on marketing olives as

a produce with cultural value. Thus the project not only re-organizes rural relations through the distribution of the benefits it provides, but by presenting a particular image of the olive, the project also re-constructs the *local* by ignoring producers' actual relation to the crop and replacing it with an ideal relation that it sees as more marketable (Blake, Mellor, and Crane 2010; Delind 2006; Wilson and Whitehead 2012).

In this context, the chapter looks at how and by what means this re-organization and re-construction takes place. It tells the story of this process, as a form of reconfiguring the state's relation to producers and land by molding and intervening in its citizens' relations to their environment and livelihood. Following the path set by Li (2008) in her critique of rural development, I argue, from the perspective of neoliberal developmentalism, that the organic olive project consolidates the state's presence and its logic of governance on the island. I examine the logic and design of the Project and argue that olives make such an intervention design possible due to their economic value, market potential and cultural-historical status on the island and that they become an object of the redesigning of the rural on Gökçeada, as well as of the relation between the state and its subjects.

Building on the previous chapter's focus on the emergence of olive groves as a local resource, through an intertextual reading of documents, conversations, in-depth interviews and observations, this chapter locates the administration of local olives within the parameters of organic farming. First, focusing on the Project, it delineates how the project sets out its goals, activities and outcomes. Second, focusing on two forms—the Farmer Inspection Report Form and the Farmer Registration Form—it positions the activity of filling in the forms as a lens to analyze the contestation between different categories of knowledge on farming. Lastly, it examines two new bureaucratic positions:

independent certification inspectors and consultants, as new agents of the relations between state and local producers.

THE ORGANIC PROJECT: RATIONALE AND OPERATIONS

On the island of Gökçeada, multiple projects are happening simultaneously. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, development projects have historically been part of the island's political and economic life, and have been continuously put into action, one after another. The Organic Project is no exception and most of its activities date back to 1993, when the Gökçeada and Bozcaada Rural Development and Settlement Project started. Like the development projects before it, the 1993 Development project was devised mainly to provide subsidies to new settlers on the island and to facilitate economic development to ensure their permanent settlement. As the most recent plan, the 1996 project included the settlement of two new villages in Gökçeada: Şirinköy, for Bulgarian migrants, in 1996, and Eşelek, for residents of the original Eşelek village, relocated to Çanakkale, in 2000.

The 1996 project was expanded in 2002 to include generous subsidies and certification support for organic producers with the main goal of increasing the market competitiveness of the natural resources and local produce of Gökçeada, as well as providing sustainable livelihood opportunities to small scale farmers on the island. The Organic Project mainly provides support and subsidies to producers who are willing to switch to certified organic production. In addition to organic olive production, the larger plan also supports local honey, animal husbandry, fruit and vegetable producers, as well as the protection of local culinary culture and varieties.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the olive production project's operations

include direct subsidies to olive producers for production related costs such as the provision of new trees and organic fertilizers, full subsidies for organic certification through an independent accredited agency, annual pest control of the land and trees and monitoring of the yield and sales, in addition to providing consultancy, support and training for participants of the project. The aim, as it has been repeatedly stated by reports and project plans, is to achieve rural development in Gökçeada by helping olive producers to yield high quality organic olives and olive oil and to encourage farmers to protect the local variety of olive not only for their livelihood, but for a potential market share in the growing organic food market (Akdemir et al. 2008).

Olives are a critical component of the project as they are one of the most prominent and widely available types of produce with a commercial potential that grow on the island. The local variety of olive, *Ladolia*, is an endemic type of olive that grows in a very limited area in the Mediterranean basin. It is suitable for extraction and development plans estimate a good chance for its commercial success in the organic olive oil market. Additionally, policy makers emphasize the historical and cultural value of olives in Gökçeada, as they have traditionally been a staple of the Greek community embedded in the culinary culture of the island. Thus, along with its marketing potential, planners underline that *Ladolia* is one of the products that can claim similar to *terroir* status within the increasingly growing niche market for local food.⁵⁶

As the Chapter 2, on historical and geographical context outlined, Gökçeada has always been a frontier, marking the inside and the outside of the nation, and it has so far been the object of numerous attempts to securitize and discipline the living and non-

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⁵⁶ The term, *terroir*, has not been used by the policy makers per se, but key components of the policy invoke the concept (Black and Ulin 2013; Hinrichs 2003).

living on the island. Thus, the current organic farming project is not only a continuation of preceding development projects that legitimized the appropriation of land and resources, but it is also part of the demographic politics of rural development geared towards settling Turkish farmers on the island and making sure that they continue living there as safeguards against the existing Greek community.

Gökçeada occupies a peculiar place in defining the power that the state wields with respect to land, development and people. Historically, the Organic Project fits seamlessly into the already existing grammar of the state's presence on the island. Not only has Gökçeada seen several "development" plans, some of which admittedly failed in the hands of the planners and the policy makers, but the land itself and the island as a whole have been treated as laboratories for testing different social and economic projects for nation-building and state-making. Until recently, the overtly vocalized rationale for the plans was to enhance Gökçeada's military importance due to its strategic geographical location.⁵⁷

Recently though, rural development in Gökçeada is thought of less as a nation state's evidence of its strength and independence, or as a thickening reflex at its border areas to support its unifying ethos. Rather, the language of rural development is now imbued with free-market development language that aims at creating tourist attraction, fostering interaction among different groups and commodifying the Greek presence that was largely eliminated from the island, except for a very small remaining community.

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⁵⁷ This is almost a leitmotif of every policy document. A recent change though has been after the publication of the EC report in 2008. The Report emphasizes that, at this time and age, Turkey no longer has grounds to claim strategic military importance of the island due to its proximity to Greece and to the mouth of the Dardanelles to continue development policies and property expropriations that generate human rights violations (Gross 2008:4).

The Organic Project is not only nested in the rural development milieu of Gökçeada; it is also situated within the broader changes of agro-food relations in Turkey. Built in accordance with the neo-liberal ethos of development, the political-economic rationale of the policy makers was to establish programs based on the premise of quality-oriented free-market integration and as part of a new foundation for national agricultural policy (GMKA 2012). The Government in Turkey has initiated organic farming projects in several regions, experimenting with development and organic farming to tap into new niche markets and turn the low productivity and high labor intensity of small scale farming into a potential market advantage.⁵⁸ Thus, the government initiated projects and joined the quality turn by claiming specialized, artisanal local production as leverage in the complex industrialized food market, with the aims of reaching international food markets.

This tendency was evident in reports and other documents initially prepared for the project and its terms were later elaborated to align with the logic of changes around IPARD. The Organic Farming Project clearly reflects this trend. As I have already mentioned, farmers receive direct subsidies, per hectare, from the government for participating in the project. Additionally, in return for their participation and commitment to farm organically, producers receive free weed and pest control and non-chemical fertilizers as well as consulting services. Moreover, after three years of production in compliance with Turkey's organic standards, they gain the right to receive organic certification. So the Organic Project works by providing direct subsidies to farmers and

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⁵⁸ In addition to small Mediterranean cities like Seferihisar and Aydın, Southeastern Organic Agriculture Development Project is also another big state undertaking in an area that has a long history of state-induced ethnic violence (Harris 2008).

steering them to the “free” market.

As outlined in plans and other policy documents, the idea and the hope of the policy makers is that with these direct subsidies, small producers in Gökçeada will gain a market advantage, find a niche market for their produce, and finally become independent, wealthier producers. During my conversations with both of the Directors of DDA, the emphasis on “independence” was clear. Without much hope for its realization, yet with a justification of their survival-of-the-fittest free market selection technique, they indicated that the Organic Project was never intended to run long term, but was meant to offer short-term, initial support to help the farmers gain an independent foothold in the market.

As a corollary to the economic imaginary of the on-paper life of the Project, another dynamic in the recent agricultural turn, which demarcates the conditions of possibility for the Project, is the lucrative business opportunity that organic production promises. Keyder and Yenal highlight that this policy change led to increasing importance being placed on quality of production, as well as incentives for producers to specialize in niche consumption markets (Keyder and Yenal 2011). As a response to a larger quality turn in agriculture at national and regional levels, organic production, along with artisanal, local and other specialized production methods is now a widespread approach taken up as a remedy for preventing the extinction of small producers in an increasingly competitive free market food production environment (Buller and Morris 2004; Higgins, Dibden, and Cocklin 2008).

It is more than plausible to see the existence of this project as a part of a larger dynamic that has been sweeping the countryside on a broader and deeper scale (DuPuis and Goodman 2005). The reports also make it clear that the economic rationale of market

advantage for quality produce is an important factor in the design of the project. In this context, the project and its operations shed a new light not only on the changing configurations of the relation between the planners, farmers and the state, but it also reveals the changing subjectivities of officials and farmers, which are built around power relations at the local level (Marsden and Smith 2005; McDonagh 2013). There is a constant emphasis on the necessity to ‘brand’ produce, to ‘promote it’ in order to have a share of the widening global market for organic produce. That is also how olives become a prominent and promising product, and how Gökçeada becomes a marketable place. As economically valuable produce, according to the policy makers and economic planners, Gökçeada olives have a market potential at the global scale (GMKA 2012).

The reality of how the Organic Project runs, however, is different from its goals and promises on paper. While echoing the official script of the policy documents about creating wealth for the small producers, using the island’s resources efficiently and making the farmers independent and strong producers, some officials cautiously added a ‘but,’ followed by the reasons why they, personally, thought that ideal outcomes are not realistic for Gökçeada. They are doing what they’ve been told, trying this out to see if it works, but they didn’t think much would work for the island. According to an often-repeated narrative, the officials explained that the producers are *ignorant* and only *looking for the money they will get* and that there is nothing to keep them on Gökçeada and make them produce ecologically sustainable produce without the subsidies. All of this is because the farmers supposedly have *no knowledge* and do not want to learn. In fact, it is more than likely that they will *cheat* on organic regulations because they do not know how to exist outside their relation of dependency with the government and that they

are *taking advantage* of what has already been given to them.⁵⁹

When I prompted the conversation further by asking why, then, did they think the state supported this project and had been adamantly implementing it for the last 8 years with no definite end date, one official replied with disinterest and indifference “you know the state, right? It has to create projects.” Apparently, for the people working on the ground in Gökçeada, the future wealthy, happy, independent land of small producers, despite the promises of the crispy white loads of papers, reports, plans and policy documents was not a realistic hope. The feeling of futility is shared among the producers and the officials, although it is not voiced in solidarity. Independent, wealthy farmers and ecologically sustainable entrepreneurship exist only on paper. The prospect of a lucrative future is only challenged by how Gökçeada’s image is repackaged by the very people who are implementing the project: *If only branding was done properly and the producers knew what kind of opportunity they had. If only small farmers were able to come together and make it work. They could earn so much money and the whole island would be better off. Not like now. But that’s not the people of Gökçeada.*⁶⁰

The Organic Project has branched out as a tool to continuously subsidize the island, mainly to encourage the permanent settlement and success of Turkish settlers. Although

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⁵⁹ Italics are used to denote phrases that I heard repeatedly in the field. Unlike direct quotations, italics represent emergent categories of defining relations and subject positions at a collective level. Parts in italics also represent a position different than the official narrative and help in identifying the positions of the participants that disrupt the flow of the official discourse.

⁶⁰ This part is from the field notes as well as from several interviews. I decided to go with a composite narrative for two reasons. First, it helps to protect the anonymity of the public servants who voice personal opinions that are not in line with the official discourse. And second, the narratives showed such a remarkable similarity and commonality of expression that I found creating a composite narrative appropriate. I have not use quotation marks to avoid implying that these are the exact words of one person (Solórzano and Yosso 2002).

situated in the discursive ethos of sustainable development on paper, the difference of the official narrative and the officials' narratives reveal, the Organic Project maintains the same relations as previous rural development attempts while being at odds with their imperatives. The next section will highlight the moments of contestation and negotiation between these different imperatives by examining how the Project activities designed to regulate farming practices according to organic standards take different forms on the ground.

OF FORMS AND MEN

There is unusual activity in the small, single-story premises of the DDA in Gökçeada on a sunny September afternoon. Olive farmers are going in and out in groups; some are taking a smoke break in front of the building while they wait for their turn to enter. There is a loud rumble of noise inside the building—farmers chatting about the low yield this year and complaining that they are not very happy with how things have turned out. Plenty of tea is being served, mostly in one of the offices at the end of the hallway, where a cloud of noise and farmers form a straight line to the door.

An olive producer in his fifties, comes out of the room holding a freshly printed paper, spending a few seconds giving it a quick read until he is distracted by his fellow farmers and me. He lets the sheet of paper linger in his hands for a while. His short and direct encounter with the document is nuanced by his changing expressions of disinterest, contempt and futility at the bureaucratic task he has just completed. He is not the only one showing this range of emotions, invoking the Sisyphean nature of the bureaucratic encounters happening in the room. As farmers exit the office, there is something that

renders their new confirmation documents out of place. He feels uneasy about where to put the paper, finally placing it where serious documents go, along with a pen and his identification card, in the front pocket of his shirt.

These crisp white papers are the reason behind the unusual buzz in this otherwise calm and quiet government building. Each year, farmers who participate in the Organic Project come to the DDA for an annual meeting with a committee composed of officials from the DDA, organic certification firms and consultants. Each farmer meets with the committee individually, reports their activities, updates their information in the system and confirms their participation for the upcoming year. They also declare whether they have acquired new land and sign a consent form so that the organic certification firm can collect samples from their field. In return, they receive a document confirming their continued participation in the program and completion of the annual meeting. Each year, the DDA announces the annual meeting schedule for each group of producers. For olive producers, meetings take place in mid-September, followed by field visits later in the month, just before the harvest starts in late October. These meetings are for following up on producers' participation in the Project and identifying and helping with challenges they might have in transitioning to organic production. Or at least that is their intent, as outlined in the Project's reports and plans. As I will discuss below, what appears on paper rarely resembles what happens on the ground in Gökçeada. Although the types of actions taken follow the steps listed in the formal requirements, the discrepancy between the idea and the actual implementation of these actions can be grotesque, ridiculing the logic of the development plan and teaching a lesson about the limits of top-down policy making without true understanding of the local situation.

I am sneaking in, passing through the lineup to a small office inside the Directorate, finding the corner chair spared for me, and I start writing down my notes. My job is not to fill in the blanks but to register them, to put them together and to understand what they stand for, what they categorize or render invisible or irrelevant. In earnest, I start jotting down as much as possible of some of the conversations because my recorder is not always allowed in the room. Farmers who come in sometimes mistake me for a DDA official and I explain that I am writing a dissertation on organic olive farming on Gökçeada and that I am there to observe how the project is working. I feel a creeping self-consciousness as I say “observe.” Each time I get the question, I try to deemphasize the word “observe”, while at the same time making sure to give them all the information they need. It is only over time that I notice how this question and my struggle to answer it are indicators of my physical and epistemological position in the room. Not only do I feel comfortable taking the more visible middle chair when I’m offered it a week later, but I also start making small talk, having tea and getting to know the farmers and helping with the paperwork. But at the end of the day, I am still sitting in the corner of the room, buried in my notes, which make my process all the less transparent and more intriguing to others.

One day, a farmer jokingly asks if there’s anything to be studied about this place and the Project. His rhetorical question hangs in the air until someone picks it up to continue the joke: “Well, we told her there’s nothing new for us, but apparently we are interesting to Canadians!” They share a common feeling that nothing is new or changes, that nothing can be done to improve their situation, stuck as they are in the big machinery of filling in the blanks and printing documents, all for the Organic Project. They remind me of the

distance I represent with my notes and questions. I nod with an anxious grin and go back to my notes to write down what they have just said. They know I am recording what they say.

As the inspection committee moves in to the premises of the DDA for the annual meetings with the olive farmers, occupying a small office with two desks, they pull out the previous year's folders from the shelves, stock up on empty forms and make sure that the Xerox machine is working properly and that their stamps are by their sides. It is their job to go through the information provided by the farmers, to make sure any necessary additions and changes are made, to enter the information for the current year and confirm that the participating farmers showed up for their annual inspection. The tedious work of filling in forms and gathering information takes place throughout the committee's interview, lasting roughly twenty minutes with each farmer. It is a semi-structured, poorly executed process, as it is not unusual for the interviewer to jump in during awkward silences and suggests an answer when the interviewee cannot come up with one that fits in the boxes on the form. The silences, blanks and I-don't-knows of the farmers that I find so telling are rendered irrelevant. They are overwritten as forms need to be filled out and cannot be left blank. When information is lacking from the farmer, it is generated through further questioning or guess work. In the end, the forms steer the conversations.

Forms are required to be filled out every year to ensure the continuing membership of the producers in the Organic Project. It is the single document that certifies farmers as recipients of the project's benefits and records their activities within the scope of organic production. Although participation in the program is voluntary, it is also almost the only

way for small-scale farmers to gain access to free fertilizer, and thus, to survive.

Forms also function as pedagogical tools, teaching the farmers what they should know and what answers they should provide to the state. The process is sometimes rushed, taking place under the gaze of other farmers waiting in line impatiently, and with committee members who are anxious to make the farmers say whatever is supposed to be said. It is not unusual for both sides to feel frustrated—either because the farmers have not collected the information needed by the committee, or because the committee does not realize that most of the information required by the DDA and the certification firm does not correspond to how the farmers operate on a daily basis. Shared frustration always stems from the questions asked on the form, whether there is a lack of documentation or an outright disinterest on the part of the producer that prevents them from being easily answered. The onus is always placed on the same person in the room—the farmer—who tries to fill the blanks in accordance with the requirements of the program’s discourse. Producers’ experiential knowledge is challenging to translate into the language of the forms, and this problem is audible in the complaints of the committee members, who are primarily responsible for the work of converting farmers’ experiential knowledge into official information.

Moreover, voluntary participation in the Project does not guarantee that the participating farmers automatically share the same ethos of rural development logic and ecological sustainability as the planners and policy makers. Sometimes farmers find that the projects’ aims create unnecessary obstacles and bureaucratic redundancies in place of more essential and basic benefits, like direct subsidies and provision of fertilizers. They instrumentalize the project as a means to continue receiving its benefits for their

livelihood on the island and adapt to the discourse of organic and local food only as much as it helps them to successfully navigate the system. As such, the rationale behind the project is unevenly adopted by the farmers and is sometimes treated simply as an extra step in their process of accessing subsidies.

I will discuss the position of the farmers with respect to the discourse and rationale of organic local food in the next chapter, but it is important to note here that the project operates predominantly as a continuation of previous projects that have been providing small scale newcomer farmers with the necessary tools for ensuring their permanent settlement on the island. These tools have been numerous, ranging from grants of appropriated land and housing to direct agricultural subsidies and fertilizer provision, and the Organic Project extends how the state articulates itself to the rural space and promotes a new ethos about local food.

Farmer Inspection Report Form

In the small office of the DDA, buried under folders and forms, there are four officers working. Two of them are representatives of the certification firm and they are responsible for filling out the inspection forms. Administered by one of the major organic certification firms in Europe, IMO, the inspection procedure is in line with the EU standards. The form, in addition to land and property owner information, includes an evaluation of farming practices and an assessment of the land's risk of contamination. A completed inspection form is required for each participating farmer, and depending on the result of the inspection, their land's stage in the transition to organic farming is determined. If there is no external contamination and the farmer abides by the organic standards, such as not using chemical fertilizers or conventional pesticides, the inspector

signals that the producer is progressing properly in the transition, which is completed in three years.

The form itself is designed to meticulously track the use of fertilizers and weed control methods, asking the farmer to list detailed information about the date, place, dosage, record, reason and method, as well as the source of chemicals used for each fertilization and weed control action taken. The purpose is to document and register every single action undertaken or material added to the soil in order to determine the possibility that organic production was compromised for the plot under inspection and any surrounding plots. In another section, the form asks about the land's productivity, including expected yields and the previous year's harvest with supporting documentation. The inspector is also responsible for determining whether the land is suitable for crop rotation and animal grazing. All in all, the form is a document that maps every single interaction between the land and the farmer or the outside world.

The image displays two pages of a 'Farmer Inspection Report' form, specifically the '25.04.01 C-e.tr' version for Turkey. Both pages are marked with 'IMO' and 'TR Part II 044428z'.

The left page (front) is titled '25.04.01 C-e.tr ÜRETİCİ TEFTİŞ RAPORU TÜRKİYE'. It contains several sections for data entry, including:

- 1.1. ÜRETİCİ BİLGİLERİ (Producer Information)
- 1.2. ÜRETİM ALANI (Production Area)
- 1.3. ÜRETİM YÖNÜ (Production Direction)
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The right page (back) is titled '25.04.01 C-e.tr Farmer Inspection Report Turkey'. It contains several sections for data entry, including:

- 1.1. ÜRETİCİ BİLGİLERİ (Producer Information)
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Figure 19: Farmer Inspection Report Form (scanned image)

Like all forms, the Inspection Report Form creates imagined relations between the producer and the land. It establishes these relations as the foundations of the organic standards and lays out possible points of interaction, classifies them with respect to their utility and creates new connections. Not only does the form itself create an otherwise nonexistent connection between the farmer, the land, the inspector, and the DDA (as well as the other people in the room where the form is filled out), but it also reminds the producer what it is meaningful and what is dismissible within the scope of the farmer's interaction with the land. The categories on the form outline and explain what it is necessary to do in order to manage the land and to certify that it is organic.

Here, the label “organic” operates as a means of determining of the proximity of the state of a piece of land to what is taken to be its natural point of origin. In other words, land does not inherently possess the quality of being organic. Land only becomes organic through its certification, which is preceded by a series of human processes, including those of experts, who fill out inspection reports, collect samples and report on laboratory results that certifying its organic-ness. That is to say, land is made organic through forms, laboratory samples and certificates; it does not become organic on its own, nor through farmers' designation (Alkon 2013).

As aptly examined by Marsden (2006), Woods (2010), and Hatanaka (2005, 2008), organic, as a global standard of food certification, is also the political-economic management of the regime of the relation between things, humans and land. Like all makings, the creation of value through organic certification on Gökçeada imposes a certain type of imagined interaction pattern for the sake of controlling and managing things and connections.

In addition to all the processes involved in rendering land organic, the form itself configures another set of connections between the farmer and the experts who oversee the filling in of the form, conduct the meetings and collect the samples for the certification laboratory. It is the process of documentation, testing and certification that adds value to land that would otherwise remain idle and unmarketable. The processes, conversations, actions and connections are all part of the active, collective making of the land's value through organic certification. As with many standardization and management regimes, collective making of the land's value through organic certification is challenged by the pre-existing topography of connections and relations. Taking the imagined relationship between the land and the producer that is embedded in the forms as a telling example, one can understand the categories that the forms map on existing relationships.

A deeper look at the detailed questions in the form about weed control and fertilizer application shows that control of external contamination and chemicals has been formulated as one of the most important tasks of the producer. It is the job of the producer not only to be vigilant about the contamination risk, including that from surrounding plots, and to actively ensure that the land remains organic according to the established standards, but the relationship of the farmer to the land also demands documentation of those activities. All of the detailed information provided by the producer to outline the year's activities—every single act, time and reason for any interaction with the field and the crops is important in order to protect the purity and organic quality of the land.

The imagined relationship of the farmer to the land thus involves a double mediation process. In order to make their land suitable for organic farming, producers now have to

actively mediate their actions through the lens of organic standards. Additionally, the very documentation of all of their activities as a record of their relationship to the land constitutes a second level of mediation. In an ideal situation, a producer keeps track of all of these activities for the sake of making the information comprehensible within the framework set by the experts and the certification company.

In this sense, for certifying that the natural state of the soil is certified as organic, thus natural, the certification process requires that everyone involved interacts with the soil within the framework of its rules and regulations. The making of organic becomes a process of knowledge production about the land by the producers and the certifiers, who use it as a management tool. Besides, the source and function of that knowledge is not defined in relation to the producers' and lands' needs, but according to already existing standards of what makes land organic. Such a definition foregrounds the process of certification and standardization rather than the quality, usage or other locally relevant aspects of the soil.

As certification experts ask questions, based on the form at hand, about the details of the relationships between farmers and their land, the answers of the producers reveal the gap between their lived realities and the standards invoked by these very questions. Producers show frustration and impatience when they are asked about the exact date and time of their application of fertilizers and weed control measures. Most of them reply mockingly and try to remember or estimate how and when they treated the land. They sometimes make calls to their family members to ask for specific details about a treatment but in most cases, they end up giving a vague answer. This is the point where the inspector steps in, asking further questions to get a more accurate answer, inquiring

whether the producer remembers picking up stuff from the DDA during the year or recalls DDA engineers visiting the plot. Both the producer and the inspector are engaged in the long and tedious work of translating a long year of memories about the land into the language of the little empty boxes on the form. In most of the conversations, there are long awkward silences that are indicative of the uneasy translation work in which both parties are engaged. A conversation between a producer (P) and an official (O) is an example:

P: Did you use any *ilaç* (pesticide) to the soil?
O: No son...Not at all. I mean, H's son had brought this bag of *ilaç* a few months ago. But I didn't touch it.
P: What was the name, do you remember?
P: ... Well it has a blue bag, you know... like a big sack.
O: You know engineers from DDA are coming to apply *ilaç*, right? They were on the field last week.
P: Nobody came to my land. I didn't see any *ilaç* on my trees.... They are not doing well.
O: Did you use anything other than that?
P: No, I didn't get anything... You tell me not to use anything and you ask me what I use.
O and P: (Laughter)
O: We have to ask, you know. So okay you didn't use anything (...)
P: The bag is sitting there, you can come and look at it if you want.
O: You don't remember the name?
P: No, I swear son (...) They said it is good for the olive fly but we did not put it.
O: H's is the one just beside your trees right?
Yeah, just my land ends his land starts towards the village side.
O: Do you know if he used the *ilaç*?
P: Well (...) I cannot say anything. It would be a *lie*, whatever I say.

On another occasion, a producer got a pesticide that is not allowed by the organic certification standards based on a recommendation from another producer on the mainland.

P: [*showing a piece of paper with the name of the pesticide on it*] I did this to olives this year, but it didn't work.
O: Where did you get this?
P: I've got a friend who does organic in Çanakkale (*the city*), he used it last year. Said it was good for the flies.
O: This is not good for organic. Did you do it this year?

P: Yes. Did it last month. It worked good at first but then all the olives fell off.
 O: How did you find this? I don't understand how you have your hands on this...
 P: My friend used half the bottle and he gave me the rest. I got it from him. Mixed it with water and sprayed the leaves. I didn't get it from the store. It is my friend...
 O: [*interrupts*] What do we tell you here? We keep telling you that you can only use the things that are good for the organic. Now your organic is ruined. What are you going to do?
 P: It didn't work, I am telling you, my olives fell off...
 O: This is not an *ilaç* we do. This should not have come to the island. It is toxic. You wait for DDA people for the *ilaç*, don't get your own stuff from places you don't know. If you are so keen, you come here and we give you the correct *ilaç*. You cannot just go around and pick up this friend's or that friend's thing. This is not organic...
 P: My friend does organic too, everyone over there does organic now. His son applied it last year and he said it worked. How am I to know which stuff works for what. All *ilaç* is the same *ilaç* after all. You say one thing one year and another thing the next year.

The interaction of the producer with the official shows an example that the standards, despite being very clear to the officials, are not equally clear and stable for the producer. It is not only vagueness of the producers' answers that challenges the standardization and certainty that the form requires. It is also the fact that for most of the producers' settler experience does not lend itself readily to knowing and working with the ethos of organic agriculture. These two dialogues also illustrate the performative aspect required by both the producer and the official in a context where standards are to be enacted through verbal communication as much as through the paperwork.

Farmer Registration Form

In addition to the Inspection Report Form, the Farmer Registration Form needs to be filled out during annual meetings. Producers need to be registered in the online national system in order to receive any subsidies or to apply to government programs. While the Organic Inspection Form places land and its treatment as the object of management, the Farmer Registration form focuses on property relations. Each year, farmers are required to report any change in the property status of their land along with the amount of produce

they got from the land to the DDA. The form also requests information about how much they expect to produce over next year. Although filling in the form is generally a straightforward process for most of the producers, questions about yearly production and expected yield can lead to a strange guessing game for both the farmers and the officials. With the notable exception of the younger generation of producers, who are used to record keeping requirements of the Organic Project, these questions reveal an old tension between the state and the farmers, one that runs deeper than neoliberal strategies of productivity can reveal. A typical conversation between the producers and the officials filling out the form involves a back and forth of mutual estimations.

O: So how much was the produce last year?

P: It was okay. Last year was good.

O: How much do you think the yield was? Was it close to one tonne?

P: What? No way, it is impossible.

O: Do you think you can give us an estimate like 750 kg or something like that? Like here I am seeing you have...

P: Well fine, you can write 750 kilos. It was more or less 750.

O: Okay I am writing down 750.

P: Okay that's fine.

O: And how much do you expect this year?

P: This year? I expect nothing this year!

O: Like 500 kilos?

P: Are you joking? I am lucky if I have 100!

O: Did you have a bad year?

P: I don't know. They said there is a disease or something. My trees are empty this year.

O: Well everyone says that. DDA came to apply *ilaç*...

P: I know they did. They sprayed from the road and went away. Is that the way to do *ilaç*? With that *ilaç* that's what I get.

O: So what should I write?

P: Write 100 kilos.

O: 100?

P: Yes that. I am serious that's what I will have this year. We'll all have to eat last year's oil you know.

Tarım İşletme Formu¹

Üretici Adı, Soyadı, TC Kimlik NO: Mürşehhisi ile sözleşme tarihi: İşletmenin ekolojik kısmının sorumlusu kişi: Adı, Soyadı:	Mürşehhisi ve program adı: Adres: Telefon: Faks:

1. İşletmenin Yapısı

a) İşletmenin ekolojik birimi	Toplam ekolojik alan: _____ ha Toplam ziraat yapılan alan: _____ ha	Ekler ☐ alan ☐ alan
b) Kontrol Sistemi	Daha önce bir başka kontrol organı tarafından denetlenmiş mi? ☐ evet ☐ hayır Evet ise: kontrol organının adı ve hangi yıllar arasında denetlendi? _____ yılı arasında Lütfen bu forma ziraatçı olduğunuzda dikkat (başka bir programda yer almadığınızda dikkat) bir açıklama (lave edin) ☐ şu anda İMO-CONTROL dışında bir başka kontrol organı tarafından denetlenmiyorum ☐ şu anda _____ adlı kontrol organı tarafından denetleniyorum.	☐ denetlenen ☐ denetlenen ☐ denetlenen ☐ denetlenen ☐ denetlenen ☐ denetlenen ☐ diğer
c) Genel tarımsal uygulama şekli	Tarımsal işletmeniz ve komşu alanlarda yapılan ziraat ve hayvancılık (sığa ve dana) ürünleri için ne tür ilaçlar ve zararlılar kontrol amaçlı kullanılıyor? Yabancı otlar ile mücadele nasıl yapılmaktadır? Gübreleme-toprak verimliliğini artırma uygulamaları hangi tarhlerde ve nasıl yapılmaktadır?	☐ tarımsal ilaç ☐ tarımsal ilaç ☐ tarımsal ilaç ☐ diğer

¹ Bu form programı kaydeden üretici için ilk kontrolün önce, programı denetleyen üretici ve üretici tarafından bir defaya mahsus olarak doldurulur.

Versiyon 03.2011

Figure 20. Farmer Registration Form, front page (scanned image)

The uncertainty surrounding records of productivity is one of the most salient issues raised in most of the studies in Turkey. By its definition, the breadth of rural activities escapes certain registration attempts and defeats the purposes of classification as officials and academics constantly generate newer categories or measuring sticks to identify the myriad of different activities it entails (Van der Ploeg 2009).

However, the vagueness of the numbers points to a much deeper thread in the Turkish countryside. It reveals the persistent contestation and configuration of power relations between the state and small-scale producers. Although the conventional wisdom of the modern state demands that meticulous record keeping and calculation of productivity is undertaken in order to manage spaces and the people and things within them, for small scale producers, whose relation to the state has been formed by arbitrary exposures to top down planning and seemingly uncontested processes of subordination, numbers do not represented certainty. Numbers are negotiable when it comes to reporting to officials. It

has long been the practice of rural communities to organize their relations with the government cautiously, always looking for ways to create spaces for agency and the manipulation of truth (Navaro-Yashin 2007, 2012).

Similar to performances of poverty during late Ottoman Empire, through which peasants sought to avoid treacherous taxation, disclosing the exact amount of produce yielded is carefully avoided by the farmers of Gökçeada, who operate under an unexplained fear of letting state know everything (Erdoğan 2000). Similarly, answers to the questions on the Farmer's Inspection Form are negotiated in the moment. The farmers tend to ensure that the numbers they give are neither so high that they grab the attention of officials, nor so low that they appear untruthful. The producers are invested in that moment of vagueness, in the uneven topography of micro level power relations.

Nevertheless, producers' calculated responses to these questions are not only caused by lack of documentation or record keeping. Although it has certainly been of long standing debate among sociologists of rural Turkey, there is now a consensus about the low levels of productivity of Turkey's small scale farms. Small yields have long been seen as a symptom of systemic obstacles caused by the development of capitalist agricultural production relations. Generally, the argument suggests that, as a result of small plot size and the prevalence of subsistence farming among Turkish producers, productivity has never been high and thus marketing and commercialization of agriculture has always been an incomplete process (Köymen 1999). Adding to the systemic obstacles, many experts on Turkish agriculture have noted a lack of investment by farmers in the idea of increasing productivity for a long time (Birttek and Keyder 1975). Even in crops that are commercially produced, one side of the debate posits that

the state's price guarantee, until very recently, has been detrimental to the intensification and standardization of agricultural production, and has thus further lowered productivity as well as governments' or regional actors' capacity for long-term planning (Burrell and Oskam 2005).

While these explanations make their way into academic literature with some notable exceptions, it is commonplace by planners, policy makers and civil society to moralize producers' attitudes based on long-sightedness, which is epitomized by the status given to entrepreneurship, rational calculation skills and record keeping (Parliamentary Commission 2008; TUSIAD 2008). According to this view, record keeping and documentation activities demonstrate a more scientific and efficiency-oriented view of agriculture. These activities are regarded as traits belonging to the more educated and more invested producers—as qualities that are embodied in a reinvigorated image of the ideal farmer, which aligns with the image of entrepreneurial subjectivity.⁶¹ Thus, producers in Gökçeada, who treat the numbers as negotiable, are considered not invested in improving their own conditions.

Producers' use of productivity indicators as negotiable terrains of power relations, however, is mirrored in the state's attempts to gather its own data. When I asked why it was necessary to ask about expectations for next year's produce, or whether any comparative analysis has been made of these numbers with actual productivity levels, the answers I heard were indicative of another technology of vagueness. No one seemed to know why future yield estimates were being requested, nor whether they meant anything. There have also not been any attempts to gather and analyze data about productivity at

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⁶¹ I will further discuss the elements that make up the entrepreneurial producer ideal in the following chapter.

the local level. Given the fact that most of the reports and plans at the national level, as well as sectoral conversations, evolve around the question of productivity, the local officials' participation in that conversation was oddly limited in terms of providing an informed perspective of questions of productivity at the local scale. Contrary to the expected practices of a full-fledged modern government, which thrives on tediously gathering, archiving, classifying and interpreting numerical data, the behaviors and motivations of the local officials did not indicate much interest in gathering produce totals or analyzing productivity levels.⁶²

Ahiska (2006), in her research on the archives of the National Radio Company and nation-building in Turkey, aptly engages with the challenge of not being able to find the perfect Foucauldian state in the archives. Instead what she comes across are scattered, messy, unprotected and abandoned piles of paper dumped in a room without attention to their organization and classification. Similar to Ahiska's challenge, the possibility that the yearly amount of produce totals for Gökçeada are unreliable poses a challenge to making sense of the neo-liberal obsession with productivity and standardization of agricultural production.

In stark contrast to production level records, the flow of information at the local level regarding property and land ownership is meticulous. The certainty with which the plot size and location of land were accurately identified and matched the existing records

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⁶² Gathering data on productivity and documenting levels of production are enacted on regional and national scales. At the local level, however, state institutions do not provide accessible data to the local officials or producers. Data informing regional and national scales are also compilations of information gathered in the ways that I describe throughout the chapter. Here the issue is not only about reliability, but also about how a lack of participatory frameworks stimulates a chain of reactions around the truth in other scales.

illustrates the strategic prioritization of the state's collection of data. At each step of the way, during subscriptions, annual reports, new requests or petitions by the producers to the DDA, the property ownership status of the producers is registered. Most of the time, producers did not hesitate, nor were they vague in their responses to what they owned. Property ownership was transparent and unambiguous, and the corresponding paperwork ensured that it was so.

The collection and registration of changes in property relations were also carefully registered. For any transfer, new acquisition or loss, the Land Registry documentation and accompanying maps were required. Similarly, regional and national reports and other sectoral documents included accurate numbers of plots and owners participating in the project, average plot sizes, and estimated total production. The numbers related to productivity were derived either from property distribution data or regional averages rather than from local information provided by the producers. In that sense, the state and the local officials had a very different understanding of the necessity for property relations' records. It was not only a corollary to the Project that the officials had a record of what land belonged to whom, but it had also become an essential part of the implementation practices of the project.

It is possible to suggest that a lack of proper documentation of productivity levels and yields per year might have become irrelevant within the logic of organic production. After all, organic production emphasizes quality over quantity, as embodied in the promotion of long-term sustainability over short-term profit making. Olive trees on Gökçeada might seem perfectly suitable for this framework, as historically, the island has been kept far from market influences by being physically isolated and consequently

securitized by the military. Olive groves on the island are old, soil is free from chemicals, and the olive variety, *Ladolia*, is suitable for niche marketing and artisanal production. However, if this present moment is taken as a cross section of the longer and deeper meanings associated with land, property and olives, then the historical making of olive groves, as resources of economic and cultural livelihood, into plots of land transferable by the state, is accomplished through the thickening ethnicization of property relations.

PERFORMING STANDARDS: INSPECTORS AND CONSULTANTS

The DDA office, the room where I spend most of my time writing down notes and observing daily interactions, is actually where most of the Organic Project happens. Not only do activities like registration and meetings take place here, but also the distribution of organic seedlings and fertilizers, as well as information sessions. It is only the application of pesticides allowed by the organic standards (applied by DDA officials) and the collection of soil samples by the certification firm that need to take place in the field, neither of which require the producer to be present. Thus, the room where the annual meetings take place is a key place that brings the officials and the producers together in a face-to-face interaction.

The logic of developmentalism inherent in rural planning on Gökçeada creates interlocked scales of development between former and current plans and creates a continuous state presence on the island. However, these points of continuity and change rarely leak into conversations or policies. The transition from nation-building and ethnic homogenization development plans to a sustainable organic local food project seems smooth, uncontested and natural. There is a silent agreement about congratulating

someone when they register a new olive grove they acquired on Gökçeada. There is also an overtly celebratory and surprised tone to the voices of officials when the last remaining Greek producers finally visit the DDA to complete the annual report showing them as examples of cultural diversity in Gökçeada.⁶³

Maybe one of the most telling aspects is the spatiality of these encounters. After a week of receiving farmers at the DDA, the committee usually tours the villages, one by one, to reach out to producers who have not shown up for their annual controls. When they visit a village, they set up a table at the local coffee shop, take out the forms and continue the annual controls in the village with those producers who did not come to the DDA office. During the three years that this research was conducted, there were visits to many villages to finish the annual reporting, but none to any of the Greek villages. This is not only because the microscopically small numbers of Greek producers left on the island cannot justify a visit to a village; it is also because all of the Greek producers show up to the annual meetings. If they do not come, they are telephoned individually and reminded of their annual meeting.

One way to look at this special attention is to see it as a result of the continuing memory of the state on Greek villages. The state's presence has always been accompanied by the forceful appropriation of land and property from the Greeks, and visits from officials generate a violent memory of loss and expulsion for Greeks. I am curious whether the DDA Committee silently and purposefully avoids showing up in the village square with forms and stamps in case it reminds the Greeks of past conflicts—whether these memories are still floating around, not verbalized, but acted upon.

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⁶³ I locate these moments of different emotional responses with respect to different groups within the settler-colonial imaginary of the rural landscape of the island.

The silences are also telling in other contexts during encounters between officials and farmers. During the annual meetings at the DDA, conversations are disrupted with long uncomfortable silences. These are sometimes indicative of moments when power differentials in the room become tangible; the room itself and the interactions within it bear the weight of existing uneven terrains of power between the state, officials and settler producers. The representatives of the certification firm, although not public servants, blend into the bureaucracy of the DDA and their presence is treated with a similar attitude as that of the DDA officials. When producers enter the room and sit down to answer the questions asked by the inspectors, the power relations are easy to detect despite the laughing and chatting.

The producers do not constitute a homogeneous category and their status (mostly determined by how much land they own and the quantity of olives they produce) can be an important factor in their interactions with the officials in the room. However, it is not rare for the small landowner, settler producers, to bow slightly, buttoning their jackets when they enter the room. Their meetings are often shorter, not allowing for prolonged small talk unless the producer has a question to ask or story to tell. The power differential between the producer and the inspector also become apparent when the producer tries hard to remember the information that they think is expected of them.

Unable to fulfill the requirements of the form, they first let silence make the room smaller, then adopt a different attitude, mocking and ridiculing themselves. Faced with their inability to produce the expected information for the authorities, they invoke what Scott (1985) refers to as the “weapons of the weak” and express their confusion with the regulations, ridicule the rules and, just to add further vagueness, provide information that

the form does not request. They perform in the liminal places where fact and fiction are enmeshed and the power of the truth is challenged. It is not through overt resistance or confrontation, but by imbuing the forms' questions about straightforward unmediated reality with a sense of mystery. Going back to the conversation from the previous section, maybe H. used the *ilaç* in the big blue sack, maybe he did not. Whatever was said, we are reminded that truth is always ambiguous.

On the other hand, interaction with the state officials takes different forms for different producers. A retired military officer who purchased olive groves on the island recounts his first interaction with the DDA Director at a meeting with other producers.

I am waiting for others to ask my question. You know I know this state inside out. I know who they are going to let talk and who they will not be pleased to hear from. I am a humble producer after all. But I educated myself on olive farming. You see me coming to DDA, right? I am trying to get these people to the field, to ask questions, to learn. But they are not interested. I am not like the others who have big plots of land but know nothing. So at the meeting, towards the end, I just jump in and say to the Director, 'I am retired colonel Y, pleased to meet you sir. I am a new farmer. I am seeing that the water is being wasted on the island and the roads are not in good shape.' Of course, the big wigs are all upset when I complain about this. Why? Because they are the ones doing it. They look at me like saying who the hell is this new guy? I know all these because I worked in the military, I am an expert in psychology. So what do I say to the Director? I say 'Sir, I am wondering if I need to be as rich as some of the producers to be heard?' See, what I did there? I know these officials inside out. (Interview 16)

His account is revealing the performances of state power claimed by both of the parties involved depending on how they position themselves vis-à-vis the project officials.

Power differentials in encounters, whether at the DDA premises or in the field, are further complicated by the introduction of two new categories of officials within the state-producer relationship: the certification firm representatives and the consultant firm representatives. Each of these has two members on the DDA Committee responsible for

annual reports. Thus, producers' relations with them are critical in terms of understanding how the Organic Project operates on the ground.

Third party certification and farm consultations have been two important administrative innovations in the quality agricultural production. As independent institutions, the role and responsibility of these non-state actors in regulating (standardizing, certifying and guiding) production is a highly contested issue (Guthman 2007; Hatanaka and Busch 2008). As Guthman and others suggest, these institutions do not usually end up serving the best interest of the small producers but rather, act as representative of a regulatory framework that benefits large scale quality producers (Guthman 2004; Ilbery and Kneafsey 2000). These institutions claim an independent and neutral status and, on this basis, they separate themselves administratively from the bureaucratic apparatus on the state. Yet, their detachment from the context is different from the form of detachment exhibited by the state officials who have to negotiate with the local actors on a daily basis. Certification and consulting firms are detached from the local context and they are not required to negotiate the terms of their regulatory framework even if creates bad results for the community. This kind of detachment is key to understanding the new regime of control and standardization of agriculture on the island.

The status of the representatives of the certification firm is ambivalent in the configuration of the power differentials in this setting. They blend in like the other public servants and are treated as such, although they are representatives of a private firm contracted by the government for inspection and certification purposes. Their responsibilities are limited to monitoring and controlling the producers' conformity to

organic standards and are seemingly technical, but as they operate in a context of power relations, their liminal status (between public and private) is always palpable. Although they are not primarily responsible for the operation of the project, they are the ones that usually end up intermediating questions and conveying answers to the producers. They are the point of contact for the producers and their difference in authority and responsibility is often interpreted as if they represent the state. Although they are constantly being treated as an extension and the representatives of the DDA (and thus the state), I observed that certificate inspectors were very careful about asserting that they are definitely not part of the DDA and rather, are employees of an independent certification firm. However that distinction gets blurred when the inspectors purchase land with the expectation that it'll become valuable in the future (Interview 39).

A similar ambiguity characterizes the status of the two representatives of the consulting firm. Starting in 2013, a consulting firm was contracted to provide supervision and assistance to producers who might need help with organic procedures. In 2012, two representatives from the firm came to the island, making preliminary visits along with the DDA officials and certification inspectors to familiarize themselves with the implementation of the project. Their main roles are to be available to the producers during the visits and annual meetings, to provide information and supervision during the transition to organic farming, to provide information on organic agricultural procedures, to explain regulations and to facilitate a smooth transition.

During my time at the DDA, their position was unclear to the producers. They were indistinguishable from the public servants and were hesitant to act as a contact point for producers, who might have questions. Adding to the confusion between the role of the

DDA and how the auxiliary actors fit into the picture, in practice, in the small cramped office, two representatives from the consulting firm practically did what the DDA officials were responsible for doing. They updated the Farmer Registration Forms and entered data into the online database, neither of which is within the job description of the consulting firm representatives. The task of the consultants is to help the producers with their questions and facilitate their navigation within the bureaucratic machinery. Farmer Registration Forms are the responsibility of DDA officials. Not only do they contain producer and land information, they record productivity and other features that are collected as important data.

These new agents definitely complicate an already strained relationship between producers and the state officials. The blurred lines between responsibility and accountability show how the administration of local organic olive production relies on the performances of technical bureaucratic procedures.

CONCLUSION: LOOSE ENDS OF A TIGHT PROJECT

This chapter explores the dynamics that make the implementation of the Organic Project both possible and challenging. I discuss different aspect of the vision of the state and officials about how the olive producers and land should be is challenged and reconfigured in different ways. Through the design of the project, the use of forms and the positions of experts, this chapter suggests the uneven terrain of the state's quality turn in Gökçeada. I locate the Organic Project within the historical development of shifting rural relations on the island crafted by nation-building and show how technicalizing and standardizing the local olive is embedded in previously existing relations.

Building on the analysis in the previous chapter, this chapter further develops how the Project operates through multi-vectoral repertoire of ruling tools and ambivalence as a strategy for ordering relations of agricultural production, land, the citizens. I illustrate how the tools of bureaucracy (forms, folders, stamps etc.) acquire a life of their own that do not have any reference to the life they seek to manage. Finally, examining the double role that the bureaucrats play within this complex politics of reordering, I suggest that, despite their role to render the relations between the land and the producer more transparent, their actions blur and shift their own positions.

The next chapter will focus on the producers. It will further elaborate on the fragmented terrain of the local rural relations and look closer at how different subjectivities of producers shape the making of these fragments on Gökçeada.

CHAPTER 6

FROM SETTLERS TO ORGANIC FARMERS: CRAFTING THE LOCAL PRODUCER

Following the previous two chapters on the spatial and the administrative logic of the Organic Project, this chapter focuses on the organic producers and their role in making the “local.” It discusses how producers, coming from diverse backgrounds and harboring different expectations, experience the changing agro-food landscape at the local level. My aim here is to once again use a key facet of organic olive agriculture to illustrate how rural development through organic farming is negotiated on the ground, with a view to show the ways in which planners’ visions encounter producers’ everyday realities and how producers craft their own positions.

I juxtapose the category of ideal producer that the Organic Project assumes with the subject positions of the producers. The Project, and the ethos of organic farming and sustainable development, rely on crafting a specific type of local producer. Ideally, this is an entrepreneurial, independent producer subject whose farming is grounded in traditional knowledge and who also has a market orientation. I argue that due to the configuration of the terms and expectations of the Organic Project, which promotes a very specific model of organic producer, the Project aims to mold the cultural and economic parameters of local producers accordingly.

At the same time, the ideal organic farmer category provides fertile ground for contestation, negotiation, and failure. It is one of the zones in which the “local” is

contested. A closer look at how organic producers see themselves and interpret organic olive farming leads to a rich view of how they actually negotiate this ideal category and selectively work around its parameters.

In this chapter, I present a discussion of how and why producers' views of their participation in the Organic Project require attention to two different languages, positions and relations that the state and the producers mobilize. I tackle different facets of these positions and relations in four sections. The first section examines the meaning of being an "organic producer" for the participants of the Project and how they relate to the practice of organic farming as regulated by the Project. The second section looks at the role of the traditional producer ideal in the Organic Project and juxtaposes this category with how producers perceive tradition in their own production story. The third section looks at how branding and labeling are used to represent and market producers, and explores how these tools affect producers' narratives. The fourth section shifts to the producers' stories of becoming settler or back-to-the-lander farmers and aims to show how their different positionalities are based on their reasons for coming to the island. The fourth section also focuses on producers' perceptions of olives, not only as a commodity but as a food product and as an important factor in the meaning of place on the island.

ORGANIC: UPSIDE DOWN

Producers' experiences with the changing landscape of the local agro-food relations bring empirical depth to the analysis presented in this thesis. Also, looking at their experiences conceptually challenges common presumptions about the organic producer within Alternative Food Networks (AFNs). In the scholarship on AFNs, as well as in

Peasant Studies, there has been a growing attention to new forms of subjectivities among farmers who are part of alternative local food networks. European and North American settings provide a wide breadth of examples in small and large communities organized around alternative food production. The scholarship presumes that alternative food networks, including local food initiatives and small-scale organic production, are mostly self-initiated projects that reflect the moral and political beliefs of individual farmers. The producer is thus seen as a pro-active actor with free will, whose motivation is to create an alternative type of food production beyond the constrictions of market imperatives (Harris 2009; Maye, Holloway, and Kneafsey 2007; Van der Ploeg 2003; Willis and Campbell 2004).

Taking producers' political and moral relation to AFNs for granted is not limited to analyses that are more sympathetic to its politics. Prominent critiques of the alternativeness of these movements also rely on the self-motivated, rational individual actor or group as their unit of analysis (Almaas et.al 2002). In most of the cases, the depiction of self-motivated individual as the smallest unit of the collective is an accurate representation of the members of AFNs; they are active agents with alternative visions of how food should be produced, provisioned, and distributed. They might have varying degrees of commitment to the social justice dimensions of production relations or they might have a more romantic and idealized view of the connection between producers and food—which can be examined through a historical analysis of the repertoire of the social construction of value and meaning in food production—but most of the producers in AFNs in Western contexts uphold some version of a belief in an alternative to conventional food networks (DuPuis and Goodman 2005; Lockie 2008; Sbicca 2012). As

such, the implicit “methodological individualism” held across the spectrum in the AFN scholarship is an insightful entry point into the subjectivities of the members of these groups.⁶⁴

There are also movements and groups in non-Western contexts that share similar values and political visions about alternatives to conventional food relations. As a result of the efforts of these movements and groups, a growing interest in the political dimensions of food relations has led producer cooperatives, student run gardens, and small independent farmers to take hold (Kalland and Persoon 2013; Peritore 1999). Similar to their Western counterparts, these groups occupy different spots in the political spectrum and individual actors see themselves as agents of the change that they envision as an alternative to existing political and moral choices about food.

Looking closer at the perspectives and experiences of producers in Gökçeada, however, challenges and complicates how organic producers generally locate themselves vis-à-vis the alternative food landscape. As participants of a state-led organic farming initiative, producers relate to food alternatives differently and much more diversely in Gökçeada. Their positions and experiences show the complex ways that particular historical and cultural dynamics can configure the producers’ relation to farming activity

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⁶⁴ Taking stock of the long and persistent debate on the term, by “methodological individualism” I refer particularly to methodological choices based on the presumption that an individual actor is an active and rational agent, fully aware of available choices and limitations and equipped with a will and capacity to make an individual choice. Crucial to this definition is the link between intention and action at the individual level and the motivation of individual values in directing these intentions. From a critical angle, “methodological individualism” has similarities with the concept of an ideal rational actor. Scholarship on resistance, especially, tends to favor “methodological individualism” when explaining alternative social movements and resistance, whereas its emphasis shifts to structural factors when it comes to understanding subject positions and conditions of oppression. For a more detailed discussion of methodological individualism, see List and Spiekermann (2013).

within the context of small-scale organic food production, and trouble simplistic and romanticized notions of farming alternatives by thinning the line between conventional and alternative production practices. Organic farming on Gökçeada also illustrates the limits of “methodological individualism” because the complexity of local contexts and the history of spatial power relations must be brought back into the picture in making subject positions.

I want to illustrate this point with an example. One morning in early October, I am at the village square in Uğurlu with a group of certification firm representatives and two consultant firm representatives, waiting for olive producers to show up to file their annual reports. In the afternoon, the certification group will visit fields and collect samples for certification and talk to the producers. As the village head (*muhtar*) makes an announcement from the mosque, calling all the participants of the Organic Project to bring forth their documentation to finish filling in the annual reports, our group finds a shadowy corner of the village coffee shop already filled with local men chatting and having tea. We pull out the folders, pens, and papers to start the work. Everyone is ready except for the producers. A second call goes out on the mosque speakers while, at the same time, the *muhtar*, himself, asks the crowd in the coffee shop if there is anyone participating in the Project. He says: “After all, these people came to your door, don’t make the state wait for you. Come and get the forms filled out, sign the papers, and go on with your daily business.”

The hesitation breaks as one elderly man approaches the group and asks if they are there about the Organic Project. As he sits down with one of the certification firm representatives, other men start to show up and in ten minutes there is someone at every

table, filling out their forms. The paperwork procedure is the same as that described in Chapter 3 on the administration of the project.⁶⁵

Figure 21. Producers and Officials at the coffee house. Photography by Helin Burkay 2013.

Replicating an office environment with tables, folders, and stamps, the producers line up to answer the questions on the form, sign their papers, and get a copy of the documentation. Some of them bring a little notebook given to them by the DDA for keeping records of their activities so that, when they are asked about which fertilizers or pesticides they have used, they can provide the details requested on the forms. Not unexpectedly, only a few producers show up with completed notebooks. One official

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⁶⁵ This visit was necessary to the village because Uğurlu producers did not have a high turnout in the office and most of them were registered organic producers, so DDA officials asked the certification firm and the consultant firm to visit the village on their way to the field visits.

asks:

Well, gentlemen, why are you bringing notebooks that are empty? Didn't we let you know last year that you are supposed to write down what you do to the olives in the notebook? Now you are struggling to remember answers to some of the questions on the form. If you had filled out the notebook, we would have a much easier time filling out these forms here.

A brief murmuring is accompanied by anxious grins until, finally, one of the producers says that he did not know he was supposed to fill in the notebook. "Ask everyone here, nobody fills out the notebook. What are we going to write?" he then adds.

It turns out that, much like the Form I described in Chapter 4, the notebook is a mystery for the producers. Other formal aspects of the documentation process and the program are confusing as well, including the very rationale of the Project: that they are organic producers. Amid the complaints of the DDA officials, certification and consulting firm representatives expressed in the car, in the office, and in solo conversations with me, arose the recurring theme of the producers' reluctance to appreciate the value and meaning of organic farming for their own benefit. The officials would say that, after all the training opportunities (for which there has been a very low turn-out), all the announcements, talks, and subsidies, not to mention the Project paying for the certification, it is the very short-sighted, short-term profit-making drive of the producers themselves that leads to the lack of interest and seeming indifference towards the project. As one of the DDA officials put it:

Our producers do not own the project. They do not take care of their own land, they do not take care of nature, they do not care about the development of the island. They only think about how much they make at the end of the season. (Interview 36)

I brought this up in Eşelek, in one of the informal group conversations in which certification firm representatives came together with organic producers, and asked the

producers why they wanted to participate in the Project and why they thought that organic farming worked for them. Soon into the conversation, I realized that some producers were not fully aware that the forms and paperwork were related to organic farming and its certification. There was confusion about what organic meant and what being an organic producer entailed. In a stark contrast to some other producers, who were actively following organic farming protocols, smaller producers, especially those from settler backgrounds, expressed that they had not known that the annual form filling, field visits from the certificate firm, and so forth were for getting an organic certificate. When later, during my fieldwork interviews in Uğurlu and Şirinköy, I included a question about what an organic certificate meant, it was evident that a lot of confusion about it persisted among the producers. Some of the producers were just going along with what the Project demanded of them, never picking up their certificates or realizing that an organic certificate was actually something they were entitled to receive. To their knowledge, organic meant “natural,” not contaminated, and small scale. It did not refer to a series of steps leading to their certification as organic producers. As one producer voiced in a succinct version of a commonly repeated answer: “Organic means natural, what we have here is all natural anyways. There is nothing unnatural here. Our island’s air and water, it’s all natural” (Interview 26).

Some producers thought that the paperwork and field visits were about subsidies, pest management, and the fertilizer that the DDA distributes. They had a vague idea about the emphasis on not using chemicals other than those allowed by the Project, but they rarely had a chance to follow up on the reasons behind this requirement. Some of them had not picked up their certificates; some did not know that they were part of the Organic Project.

When I asked them what year in the transition process they were currently in, most of the producers told me, instead, how long they had been farming olives. When the conversation allowed, I inquired further, asking them if they knew that one of the forms they fill out every year is for organic certification and that the field visits are part of the annual controls by the certification firm. Some of the producers told me that they thought the annual controls were only related to subsidies and fertilizers, which have been part of farming on the island through different rural development projects over the last three decades.

I immediately wondered why they were unaware of such basic, core facts. How was it possible for the producers to have never encountered any kind of information from other producers, project workers, or certification firm representatives about their enrollment in the Project's specific purpose to certify organic olive production? Where was this information lost? How was it possible that these producers kept filling out the forms, doing all the paperwork, and reporting to the DDA without knowing that they were supposed to be engaged in a transition to organic farming? What, then, was their understanding of the Organic Project? Apart from the willful ignorance and indifference the project officials so readily ascribed to the producers, what could explain their confusion, and how does this affect our understanding of the subjectivity of the small-scale organic producer?

The rest of the chapter will use these concerns as grounds for interrogating the producers' complicated relationships to olives and state-led organic farming with a view to understanding the layers, processes, and relations that allowed for such a gap in knowledge to exist. Before moving on, I will describe the profiles of those people

identified as olive producers in the Organic Project as this group is diverse and composed of subgroups with different motivations.

Broadly defined, there are three different categories of producers on the island, based on their stories of settlement. The first group consists of settler producers—residents who have come to the island through settlement at different times since the 1970s. The second group, although smaller in number, is made up of back-to-the-landers or neo-rurals (Calvário and Otero 2014; Verinis 2011). These are people who came to the island voluntarily from cities, a migration they saw as part of a return to a simpler, more natural lifestyle. The third group comprises the Greek producers, a very small number of whom had stayed on the island, while others had to come back to it, after living in Istanbul or abroad for long periods, when the Turkish government loosened the terms of their return.⁶⁶ In addition to their stories of settling on the island, there are other axes that differentiate the farmers, such as the number of olive trees they own, the olive varieties

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⁶⁶ Some of this change is accounted for in Chapter 2, where I talk about the property regime and political economy of land on Gökçeada. Starting from the mid-1990s, partly due to pressure from the international community and partly due to the changing regime of the state's relations with minorities, Greeks who had been forced to leave the island were allowed to come back and claim some of their property (with the proof of documentation). Despite the reversal, the bureaucracy of claiming and successfully acquiring property is prohibitive and tedious. In addition, until very recently, if a Turkish citizen member of the local Greek community wanted to acquire new property on the island, the regulations required its approval by the head office of the Deeds and Cadastral Office within the Ministry of Settlement and Public Works. This level of approval is not required for other Turkish citizens living on the island. This was recently made public through a court case brought by a Greek resident against Turkey, which found that approval by a higher authority in the case of a Greek resident acquiring land from a Turkish resident had been part of National Security measures in place since 1964. As these cautionary measures were brought to light, they were found to be unconstitutional due to the principle of equality, and the Ministry announced that it would lift the application of precautionary security principles against Greek residents' property acquisitions in the meantime. The final verdict in the case is still pending as of 2015 (Personal communication with Erhan Pekçe).

they grow, the location of their land.⁶⁷ These same criteria of differentiation also apply for the back-to-the-lander producers, some of whom have small plots and engage in mixed crop production whereas others acquire large plots of olive groves. This differentiation based on background and scale is important in locating each producers' position vis-à-vis the meaning of becoming an organic producer.⁶⁸

Not surprisingly, the neo-rural community is much more knowledgeable and forthcoming about organic production. Among the settler producers, a sub-group of a few big producers, with their large number of trees obtained either through the initial plot assignment process or by subsequently planting more trees on newly acquired land, also have a better sense of what organic means and what the Project is all about. It is the smaller-scale settler producers that constitute the majority of the participants in the Organic Project, and they are the ones who express ignorance of the fact that organic certification is available through the Project, and who have much less information about what organic production entails, apart from it being what they vaguely call "natural." Interrogating the subjectivities of these smaller producers, with respect to olives and the Project, allows us to see a multiplicity of positions and relations that producers craft in their daily lives, which can help to explain the discrepancy in knowledge between the three producer subgroups.

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⁶⁷ Although land size is considered an important indicator of socio-economic difference, the number of olive trees on land is a much more significant criteria for olive producers in Gökçeada. I discussed how size replaced other types of knowledge about the land in Chapter 4.

⁶⁸ See Appendix IV for a distribution of the number of trees owned by those interviewed.

TENSIONS OF TRADITION: LOCATING THE PRODUCER

One of the first dimensions that can be closely studied to help unpack producers' positions is the tension generated by the Project's claims about traditional olive farming. In addition to promoting adherence to the organic regulations, as described in Chapter 5, the discursive framework of organic farming refers the island's traditional olive farming as an important temporal asset for organic agriculture. Here, the Organic Project's discourse locates the production of olive oil and olive farming within Gökçeada's history and local culture; it imbues organic olive farming with authenticity by reinvigorating those values that come to be associated with more traditional ways of producing, preparing, distributing, and consuming food. However, most of the producers and participants of the Project are settlers who have not engaged in the type of traditional olive farming described by the Project. The methods of production have changed. If anything, the social and economic landscape of the island are examples of how the state manufactures a new local by severing ties with old local and traditional elements. As such, resorting to an ideal of "tradition," as a discursive justification, comes with its own tensions.

Parallel to the ethos of alternative food movements, including slow-food, sustainable rural development, and local food, the Organic Project does not only perceive organic as a farming technique, but constructs the concept of sustainability in reference to supposed traditional knowledge of the land. These movements revive an idea of time and place in which the connection between land, people, and food developed through the preservation of ancient knowledge and technique. Thus, in contrast to mass produced, standardized, fast food that relies heavily on the detachment of production and consumption processes

and that reduces food to a product and eating simply to a need, these movements value slowing down production and consumption at every step of the food production process. This usually involves reviving older techniques, recovering traditional knowledge, or re-localizing products with the idea that it will create a much more harmonious and sustainable existence between people, land, and produce (DuPuis and Vandergeest 1996; Guthman 2008; Harris 2010).

Critics argue that the focus on traditional production creates another level of standardization related to idealized notions of the connection between land and people in farming and social conditions that are typically diverse and historically situated. Moreover, by fixing tradition as an aesthetic marker of authenticity, it caters only to a group of consumers that seek meaning along with food in a market environment that sometimes prioritizes market imperatives over producers' sustainability (Harris 2010; Hinrichs 2003).

How, then, is the traditional olive farmer ideal constructed on Gökçeada, where the communities of olive farmers were destroyed? How do different actors recover and reinvent sources of knowledge about the material and cultural aspects of this tradition? What are the narratives that sustain this reinvention? What is lost and what is recovered? Publications and historical accounts of the island reveal a patchwork of different narratives about what traditional olive farming entailed (Erginsoy 2006; Kavukçuoğlu 2013; Saygi 2010; Yurtseven 2006). In addition to written resources, transfer of knowledge through oral channels was also cut due to the enforced segregation and lack of trust between communities. As acknowledged by current producers, most of the knowledge related to olive picking and olive farming-based livelihood strategies on

Gökçeada was destroyed with the Greek exodus to such an extent that it has not been recovered by newcomers.

In the case of Gökçeada's small-scale organic producers, the connection between land and people through tradition is problematic, if not ironic, because it was the state itself that deliberately eradicated traditional olive farming through rural development plans. Within the Organic Project, the meaning associated with the olive's place on the island is highly idealized and rests on the imagination of an idyllic Greek past. Thus, Gökçeada's olive producers experience the tensions that arise from the temporal location of their practices of production, which have changed over time due to modernization and changing techniques of olive picking and pressing, as well as the particular history of resettlement and ethnic cleansing that destroyed most of the island's traditional olive-growing knowledge. Although some producers aspire to uncover and implement what they consider to be more traditional olive growing and olive oil making practices, most of the producers do not share the Project's vision of the temporal meaning of olive production. For them, there is a sense of the present moment in Gökçeada that defies the imposed association of olives with tradition that exists in the minds of some consumers, researchers, or other actors implicated in the island's olive production.

The discourse of tradition is also supplemented by the discursive replacement of what constitutes the authentic and the local in Gökçeada. Echoing the Quality Turn, the olive has been culturally appropriated and reinvented as a symbol of the island. Olives were already implicated in the discourse of nationalism as a trope of strength and rootedness because of the longevity and endurance of olive trees. With their connections to Greek antiquity, olives also represented what the Turkish nation aspired to in terms of

Westernization and modernization, as well as permanence and civilization.⁶⁹ Herzfeld points to the nation-state's desire to claim its permanence and eternity within an origin story. Even modernization and narratives of social change are accompanied by what he calls "the semiotic illusion of cultural fixity" and "construction of timelessness" (2014:21–22). The olive tree, as a symbol, thus also speaks to the nation-state's "structural nostalgia," based on "a longing for an age before the state, for the primordial and self-regulating birthright that the state continually invokes" (2014:22), which shapes its national narrative.

Accordingly, the symbolism of the olive has been infused into current narratives about the value of local olives in Gökçeada; it has been used to reinforce claims of cultural longevity and belonging, and to romantically depict the island's idyllic cultural landscape. Appearing on product labels, in brochures, booklets, and tourist pamphlets, as well as in reports and in official discourse, olives have functioned as a symbol of the island.

This appropriation of the olive is characteristic of what Tuck and Yang refer to as inclusion as "enclosure" and the "domesticating colonization" (2012:3) of a cultural symbol. Furthermore, ownership (and the economic value) of olives on Gökçeada is claimed by the state through its promotion of particular organic olive growing and maintenance procedures, which are aligned with the Quality Turn.⁷⁰ In this sense, while

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⁶⁹ Özkan (2013) observes a similar symbolic role for verdure in the Turkish national imaginary: trees, forests, and green landscapes have been associated with the reconciliation and harmonious coexistence of nature and civilization. In contrast, the savanna, desert, or steppes never became part of nationalist narratives of nature, as they were associated with unruliness and the Orient.

⁷⁰ What is especially significant is that possession of knowledge about local olives (varieties, growing techniques and so on) and about the cultural politics surrounding their

olive trees have been claimed as resources for economic development due to their valuable produce, they have also occupied a symbolic place within the imaginary of the local.

Hart (2011), in her ethnographic account of a small weaver's cooperative in rural Turkey, talks about a memory paradox that is experienced by the community when the commercial value of the rugs they produce is tied to the proximity of their crafting to traditional weaving practices. She shows vividly that the weaver cooperative has a very strong connection to their craft, but refuses to identify what they do as traditional. Instead of being categorized as relics of the past, the weavers position themselves as full members of contemporary modern society. For those researchers and tourists who look to tradition as the main indicator of how a community relates to past, the cooperative's insistence on disassociating themselves from a particular past while at the same time commercializing traditional weaving practices seems like a paradox.

The reconstruction of a connection between past and current olive production is, understandably, full of paradoxes. Producers on Gökçeada face a similar "memory paradox" caused by the friction between their identities as olive producers and the history of olive production on the island. The olive's links to Greek culture and livelihood are very well (though superficially) known, and are constantly drawn upon to connect olive growing to the island. This association of local olives with Greek traditions and culture also works as a romantic motif that aims to invoke feelings of connection and permanence in the relations between the producers, the land, and the olives (Herzfeld

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production is a marker of difference on the island; cultural knowledge of the history and value of certain olive groves distinguishes back-to-the-lander settlers from those who were brought in by the state.

2014). The history of that connection is, however, marred by the eradication of the Greek community from the island. In most of the project documents and rural development booklets about the island, the emphasis is on how the olive is part of the historical and natural landscape of the island. Although the demographic transition and ethnic-religious homogenization process of Gökçeada is mostly described as a voluntary economic migration, the Greek presence is not completely removed from the narratives in these documents. In Gökçeada, narratives about the Greek population leaving the island echo the trope of vanishing indigenous people by continuously referring to the island's impossibly harsh economic conditions and the underdevelopment of rural space as push factors leading to their mass migration. It disguises the bureaucratic harassment, land appropriations in the name of infrastructural development, random break-ins, and continuous assaults on Greek property, as well as the prohibitions on fishing, quotas on meat prices, and banning of all sorts of educational and religious activities of the community under the blanket of economic underdevelopment to make Greek migration seem voluntary rather than forced (Memorandum 2004).

It is the idea of voluntary displacement that legitimates the settler subject's argument that the land was empty (or was available prior to their settlement and then given to them by the state, and not taken directly from the Greeks,) and that it was through their hard work in isolation and under precarious conditions that the land and the island space were transformed into an habitable place. Moreover, Turkish settlers on Gökçeada were ordered by the state to leave their former villages because of construction, development projects, or natural disasters. Thus, while on the one hand the Greek community's mass exodus has been normalized and naturalized, on the other hand, the settlers' position is

legitimized and represented as both earned and deserved (Erginöz 2007; GMKA 2012; Şahin 2015; Tunçcan Ongan 2012).

At the same time, the state's official discourse frames the history of replacement and settlement as history of diversity and harmonious coexistence. The rhetoric of economic migration is accompanied by the promotion of histories of the island that are exclusively focused on the early classical period and on archeological findings and that seek to establish a Turkish presence on Gökçeada that predates that of the Greeks (Akdemir et al. 2008; Saygi 2010). These studies recall the island's imperial importance for the Ottoman sultans and present themselves as valuable narratives of the island's Turkish culture. Consequently, the history of the Greek population is further dislocated from its recent political predicament, and despite the physical and demographic remnants of the Greek community, which are visible in the living environment, new narratives that emphasize the island's Turkish past attempt to erase the Greek population's contribution to Gökçeada's culture. These dynamics contribute to the emergence of different and competing narratives of the local in Gökçeada. Thus, the inclusion of this incomplete and altered historical narrative does not constitute a complete denial and rewriting of history. Nevertheless, most of the official narratives recount the legacy of the Greek community and olives as nostalgic elements of a romantic, pastoral island past.

However, for the producers and residents, the relationship is much more complicated. This is especially true for producers from the first settler villages, like Şahinkaya and Bademli, or for earlier settlers who were on the island before the expulsion of the Greek community; they have vivid memories of the Greek community's relationship with olives and olive oil. Consistent with how current producers position themselves vis-à-vis the

olive's social and cultural economy, farmers' accounts suggest how the influence of the island's Greek past on their current economic situation is paradoxical. This is evident in the cracks in narratives, when the Greek past comes up as an important factor in understanding the presence and cultivation of olive trees on the island. Attempts to bridge the gap between the individual memories and narratives of the past and current situations are troubling and rather inconvenient for some residents. Digging deeper into this formative aspect of how producers understand and account for their relationship with the olive led to some uncomfortable moments and defensive narratives. Although the knowledge and the experience of property acquisitions and appropriations are still alive in the memories of the settler producers, most of them do not associate themselves with these transfers of land, nor with the island's Greek past, despite their common and vague acknowledgment of the role of the historical Greek population in planting and caring for the existing local olive trees.

This is best illustrated by accounts of how olives were picked in the past by the Greeks and how they are picked now by the settler producers. One young producer's story of how he and his family pick their olives is especially telling. During harvest season, they choose to hand pick their olives as they have a total of only twenty trees. When they are asked by other producers to pick olives in return for produce, however, they use what they call a *sirik* (a type of wooden stick) to get the olives more quickly. Compared to any other method, hand picking is a much slower but more sustainable way of olive picking as it is the least harmful to the tree. The young producer added that they knew that hand picking was better for the quality of the olives and oil and they were aware that Greeks used to pick by hand. However, given the time constraints and the

amount of trees they need to pick for others at harvest time, this technique is impractical. He said he was not interested in doing things in the “traditional” way; he is more interested in getting the olives picked on time (Interview 9).

Interestingly, what traditional olive farming entails is not included in the Project documents. Nor was it accessible through interviews with officials. The notion of traditional olive farming is a place-holder in that its meaning as an actual farming practice is not elaborated in either official documents about the Project or in Project-related discussions about farming practices. The only place I encountered some knowledge of the elements of what might constitute traditional olive farming as practiced by the original Greek inhabitants was in interviews with current Greek producers and with the very early settler producers.

The same young producer who told the story of olive picking also spoke about what they knew about traditional olive farming.

So they were here, the Greeks. They took good care of the trees. We cannot do the same that they do. Our folks used to be foresters, they knew how to cut the trees when they arrived not how to grow olives. Greeks had everything set up, they had wells in the fields, small sheds to put your stuff. It is obvious that they did good (...) We see those things but do not pay attention, to be honest. (Interview 9)

The producers and officials are all very aware of the history of the island, built as it was on the destruction of the Greek farmer subject, whose imaginary informs the present configuration of its traditions. Current producers attach completely different meanings to the olive based on their histories of coming to, and establishing residence on the island. These knowledges and associations cannot be easily overwritten and create splits in the narratives of tradition at all levels.

On the other hand, a Greek producer who returned the island in 2013 after almost

three decades in Istanbul, claimed the family house and purchased olive groves after a long tedious three years to register the land in his name. As he started olive farming as a retirement project, his wife recounted how olive farming used to be done back in the day. As she remembers it, olives on the island used to be tart, bland and highly acidic. She maintains that no one would do olive farming if they did not have to as the oil was too acidic and they did not know how to press it properly. She said there were some who did it well but they usually relied on butter for eating and used the olive oil for heating (Interview 10). Her account challenges the traditional olive farmer and authentic olive oil picture that many have with regards to the agro-food landscape on the island when Greeks still used to be farming. Thus, what olive production and olive-oil mean and how a series of activities including picking, maintaining, selling, and so on are perceived as embodiments of history and tradition seem to be of more interest to researchers, tourists, and experts than to the producers themselves, which is a common thread expressed in the scholarship of local food (DuPuis and Vandergeest 1996).

The particular history of the island is significant for understanding one of the many ways that the reconstruction of traditional practices and tapping into producers' existing relations to the land are part of a political process of invention that creates tension, contestation, and negotiation. Its documents and plans rarely refer to the fact that the very traditions the Project is attempting to recreate were destroyed by previous development plans. Instead, repeated references to the tradition and history of olive farming on the island, prompt present producers to mobilize the invented image of the ideal, traditional, Greek producer for marketing leverage. Thus, the ghost of the historical Greek farmer haunts the planners, and yet, his reinvention to make organic olive production more

marketable does not resonate fully with how small-scale producers see themselves.

BRANDING AND LABELING: MARKETING THE PRODUCER

The traditional producer ideal not only creates a temporal tension between the past and present by attempting to impose a romanticized historical identity on contemporary producer-owners, but it also positions the ideal producer as an entrepreneur. This drive becomes more apparent in the contentious debates about the roles of labeling and branding as manifestations of entrepreneurialism. In keeping with their belief that branding is important for marketing and, particularly, for accessing niche markets, some development project officers voiced their concerns about the ineptitude of current producers in utilizing the history of olive production on the island to their advantage. From the officials' perspective, missing or poor branding and labeling are a symptom to be cured through a value-adding strategy that relies on the imaginary of the island's olive production traditions. According to the officials, it is not only that current producers do not properly embody the traditional olive producer ideal that prevents the officials' vision from being fulfilled, but rather that they lack the market-orientation skills that would maximize the value of their produce.

Economically speaking, labeling and branding are necessary both for identification purposes and to represent the product, which is an especially important aspect of the marketing strategy for artisanal and niche consumption items. Labels and brands function as the aestheticization of the connection between the produce and the producer, who is always positioned as the subject embodying this connection through practice, ethics, and knowledge of the land. With local foods, the producer's connection to the product is

critical in appealing to consumers' preferences (Bowen and De Master 2011; Bruwer and Johnson 2010; Guthman 2007; Warner 2007).

In a comparative regional context, the branding of olive oil produced in the small village of Adatepe, located in the Ida Mountains on the mainland, around the Dardanelles region, is a very significant example of how branding and labeling show that the producer is constructed through the aestheticization of tradition. The label of Adatepe brand olive oil features the face of a young woman relic (Figure 22). The colors and details of the figure are reminiscent of females portrayed in Greek mosaics and material culture recovered in the area, associating the brand's origins to the Greek history and tradition of olive oil production. Adatepe's label includes the story of the young woman, supposedly a Greek woman who lived in Adatepe until she was forced to move to Greece. The story goes:

She used to sing at the weddings and she used to dance. Making a name for herself with her talent, she was very well known in surrounding villages, as well. Especially during harvest season, farmers around the groves where she used to work would pick the olives as they listened to her songs. (Adatepe 2015)

The narrative provides customers with the comfort of an origin story that successfully connects the local Greek producer to the land and the tradition of the village by drawing on the gendered trope of the dancer/singer woman. The end of her story in Adatepe is recounted as a source of great sadness for the village community as they lost track of the woman after she left; it is a rendition of a forced migration story that neatly glosses over the history of ethnic conflict in the area. Overall, Adatepe's branding is a very good example of how Greek tradition and the ideal Greek producer figure are invoked as part of a marketing strategy that makes a claim about the producer rather than about the product itself.

Figure 22: Adatepe Olive Oil Label detail (ADATEPE 2015)

The producers in Gökçeada, however, see things differently. Not only do they consider labeling and branding to be unnecessary for their producer identity, but they also feel that they do not have sufficient cultural or social resources to undertake proper branding and labeling for their produce. Labeling has primarily a functional purpose for them: to show the product itself. Aesthetics and packaging style, in their experience, do not change the outcome of what and to whom they can sell. As long as the produce and the product are visible and there is trust between the consumer and the producer, they say, labeling is unnecessary. As one producer commented:

You can see the olive oil, it is obvious that it is oil. Why the label? I write it on paper to put in front of the stand. Our customers are regulars anyways. Tourists who visit here every year are our customers. Then they send their family and relatives and they buy from us again. (Interview 30)

Mostly along the sides of the streets and at the entry of the villages, some producers set up modest stands where they choose to sell their produce in transparent plastic bottles. Although some of the producers also have a stand at the weekly farmers' market in the central part of the island, the main connection to customers for the majority of small-scale olive producers is made through these small side road stands (see Figure 23).

Sold at around 8 lira (about 4 CAD) per liter by 2014, the bottles, which are recycled soda or water bottles without any markings that identify either the producer or the product, are the main packaging used by most of the small producers for selling locally available organic olive oil in Gökçeada. Despite concerns about the quality of the olive oil stored in transparent plastic bottles in the hot sun, producers operate on the basis of functionality and simplicity, choosing not to aestheticize their produce with labeling and branding. Furthermore, by being present, themselves, at the stands, producers establish a direct link with consumers, cutting out the need for the representative aesthetic of the label. The transparency of the bottle is complemented by the transparency of a direct interaction with the producer. In addition, transparency exists in how consumers make the decision to purchase: by tasting and smelling the oil on site.

Figure 23. Olives and olive oil at a sidewalk stand. Photograph by H. Burkay (2013)

The lack of labeling and branding, on the one hand, makes identification of a product impossible when the item is transferred from its original production site to another setting. On the other hand, as is the case in Gökçeada, it also creates a more spontaneous, direct, and unmediated sensory interaction with the producer and the product, replacing the need and function of a narrative on a label. In other words, the experience of buying olive oil from clear, unmarked bottles facilitates a one-time, untransferable, performative knowledge about the oil and the producer, in contrast to the replicable, legible information provided on a label.

Market logic, however, is based on the standardization and commodification of different aspects of products, including the producer and the place of production. Commodification through the aestheticization of branding is thus seen by some of the participants of the project as a necessary part of becoming an organic producer. One of the small-scale producers, who moved to the island alone after leaving a high paying white-collar job in Istanbul, sums up this perspective very well. During a conversation about how he decided to become an olive producer and about his relations with other producers on the island, he differentiated himself on the basis of his understanding of the value of the natural landscape and the tradition of olive growing on the island. Labeling, he explained, is critical in understanding whether a producer knows and appreciates the traditions on which this island is grounded. Pointing also to the function of labeling as measure of control, he suggested:

Packaging and labeling is how you should do it. Without the label there is no story, no history, no identity. The label shows my labor too, as a producer. It shows the value I add to the product and it shows how my perspective is different with respect to olive oil and its significance in the history of the island. Also, without the label

there is no control of the product. It is not only for marketing, you know, it is for making sure that consumers are buying the product they are paying for. In a place like this, where some other producers sell oil on the sidewalks with no labels, consumers do not know if they are buying oil from the field of the producer or recycled oil from somewhere else. (Interview 6)

Different positions and practices around how the product is presented identify different subject positions that producers enact in terms of how they value their product as a market commodity and how they situate themselves as organic farmers. As a contested activity at the intersection of cultural politics and market-orientation, branding and labeling is an important interface between the producers and the customers. As with the appropriation of tradition, producers' attitudes vary in embracing or rejecting this aspect of marketing olive oil on Gökçeada.

BECOMING AN OLIVE PRODUCER

As the ideal producer imaginary is troubled by the practices of settler producers, the Organic Project's shortcomings in crafting the ideal organic producer become further apparent during encounters between the Project officials and producers. Faced with the need to solve the problem of what one official called "dependent producers," and create market-oriented, independent producers, the researchers and project workers joined to find ways to identify the weaknesses of the Organic Project (Interview 36). According to their perspective, the failures of the Program are grounded in the short-sightedness of the producers, essentially their general lack of long term economic planning. Some officials suggested that in order for the producers to become independent, they have to learn to survive when "the benevolent state's helping hand" is no longer there to provide subsidies, fertilizers, and certification support (Interview 37). The idea of using the

Project as a pedagogical tool to educate producers about the benefits of the market and about sustainable local production was raised throughout the Project by officials who see it as their role to show the producers that the “state cannot take care of them all the time” (Interview 37).

With few exceptions, development officials posit that the producers are failed entrepreneurs. This perspective is based on an understanding of agricultural activity as a solely economic enterprise. Thus, according to the officials, olive producers should be using resources as efficiently as possible and ought to take advantage of state subsidies. They cannot recognize the cultural, social, or political facets of olive production, nor do they see how these embedded aspects influence the producers’ experiences. At the heart of the conflict between official’s expectations and the actual functioning of the Program lies the experience of settlement; uprootedness complicates the process of becoming an olive producer, which requires a land-based olive farming know-how.

For state officials, settlement practices and land ownership conditions created a culture of convenience and expectation on the island discouraging producers from seeking economic opportunities on their own. They argue that the olive producers operate under ideal conditions with the most valuable resources: property, land, and ancient olive trees. As one of the development project workers said:

These people are already farmers. They do the same job. And in worse conditions, you know, their situation was not better in places like Isparta than here. Here the climate is good, the land is giving, and they will just do the same job, take care of the land. (Interview 37)

Stories about becoming an olive producer are rather different when told from the perspective of the producers themselves. Their narratives are interwoven with memories of settlement, isolation, uncertainty, and local power relations; their life stories and

experiences unfold around their relationships with the previous places they have lived, how they settled onto the island, how hard it was to first get used to the conditions of being far away from home. One producer, sitting at a seaside for our interview, looking at the island of Samothrace from the northern coast of Gökçeada said:

They say these are the mountains that Poseidon tied his horses to when he was going to war. Tourists and visitors come and tell us that it is all history here, the Greek civilization and all that... Do you know what I imagine looking at these mountains? I see the mountain that our village in Isparta rested on. I imagine the village I grew up looking at... (Interview 1)

Another producer from the same village talked about his experience of arriving on the island by invoking the settler-normative narrative of settlement as hard-earned and deserved:

There was nothing here when we arrived. They brought us here and (the ship) left us in the middle of the sea. There was no ferry back then. They leave you in the middle of the sea and you come to the island with small boats. We were like little beads on a rope. There was no road, there was no housing. It was a construction site. These houses were divided in half— upstairs was for living and downstairs for animals. Well, God protect the state, they've done a good job at the end. But we made this place better, we took care of the yard and we made the downstairs a guest-house (...) The land the state gave us was okay but we did not know what to grow on it. I didn't know if the soil would give us food. So I brought my own seeds from the village. I brought wheat seeds (...) They say Greeks used to live here but they were not here when we came. (Interview 1)

A producer, from the village of Eşelek, relocated from Can, in Çanakkale, due to the construction of a dam in their village, remembers how they negotiated with the local politicians about new conditions that would await the villagers in Gökçeada:

We didn't come here all happy and willing. A committee visited our village, they told us about their plan. We gathered amongst ourselves, chose a few representatives. Back then we had an MP of Çanakkale from DYP (*Dogru Yol Partisi / Rightous Path Party*), we sent him to the Parliament, our village worked really hard to get him elected. We got together and went to Ankara to talk to him. We told him that, well, you are going to settle us there, but we want to make sure that everyone gets a fair share and a decent place. He promised us. Then we came to Gökçeada to check the place where they will construct the village and see who gets what. They showed us

here, but we did not like it. It was far from the center, far from the sea. They convinced us, saying it will be a good site for tourism and we can make money from it. But we have the elderly and children. So we checked the land. I told everyone back then that olives are going to be important. But we knew that not everyone was going to get the same number of trees in their plots. Some had only three, some had twenty trees. We asked for a readjustment of tree distribution, but they told us that they cannot change it. We wanted to know who will get which house to avoid problems later. They didn't let us participate and our MP did not do anything either. He didn't support us. We came and settled here in the end. But there are still ongoing problems between families from back in those days about who got to settle where. Like you got the nice house, mine is up on the hill, and things like that... (Interview 30)

This story is an illustration of how local political struggles and power relations are an intrinsic part of producers' stories of settling into life on the island and later becoming olive farmers, and are very much embedded in the producers' memories of coming to the island and negotiating their future living conditions. Producers' relation to the land is located neither within narratives of the ideal farmer nor within those about ignorant peasants on the receiving end of the state's benevolence. Their stories show that, in contrast to the other narratives that locate the producers as passive recipients of information and resources in a way that erases their agency in the process of becoming olive producers, current olive producers have been much more complexly engaged in local dynamics and power asymmetries.

At the same time, back-to-the-lander producers' stories show another dimension of how producers locate themselves within the social and cultural landscape of the island. A retired mid-rank military officer who took up olive farming as his retirement hobby recounts his process of becoming a farmer as part of his intelligent use of the resources and experiences he had in the military.

When I was retired I didn't know this island at all. But I know this country by heart, I have served everywhere under every circumstance. I am not afraid of anyone or anything. So I came here, looked around, checked it out. Immediately I realized that I would be fine here. I know how this works, this is the State. I worked for it for thirty

years (...) I purchased a small olive grove from a *Madame*. She was selling it for cheap but I paid the fair price. Why? Because I know how this works. I establish my name by paying more than what is asked by a Greek. It is respect. Everyone, all other big wigs, underestimated me (...) But do you know what a friend told me? He told me, you will be fine. You will get along with the Greeks. You know there are two groups in this country who know each other so well: Greeks and the Military. We know each other's language (...) I purchase one plot, and then I waited for a year. Madame had two other really well located plots. She did not want to sell to the others, she sold it to me. Why? Because I did not negotiate. I paid what she wanted. I never negotiate with the Greeks here (...) Then I bought another one. I bought one for my daughter. It is smart, you know. At this age, I cannot become rich with the pension the state is paying me. I think the land here, and the organic business, will be very profitable. Even now, land is getting more expensive each year. (Interview 16)

His narrative of becoming a producer, different from the others, shows the imaginary of land appropriations. He situates himself as grasping a lucrative economic opportunity, while using the lexicon reminding that this opportunity is tainted by historical conflict between the Greeks and the State.

This story shows how some producers negotiate their position as new farmers. It is also an emblematic narrative for understanding how the micro processes of nation-building are nested in the current paradigm of organic agriculture and local politics in Gökçeada.

Coming back to my initial question regarding how producers might have missed information about organic certification, producers' narratives show how this is related to practical knowledge about olive farming on the island. Most of the producers in Gökçeada, especially in Şahinkaya, Yeni Bademli and Şirinköy, are settlers from areas where the people do not typically rely on olives for their livelihood. They knew little about olives when they arrived and did not feel the need to learn more as they were actively engaged in farming other produce.

A critical question to ask is why the producers do not think it is necessary or

worthwhile to engage or learn, themselves, in organic production. Certified organic farming is a very expensive practice that some farmers cannot afford by themselves (although they may believe in its importance and benefits), but, given that there is a full state subsidy for certification and pest-management, what are the other factors and difficulties that have made it possible for producers in Gökçeada to dismiss organic farming? Ultimately, why, from the perspective of the producers, has their self-definition as organic farmers not worked out, despite the efforts of the state-led Organic Project? Perhaps the answer lies in looking at how producers diversified their economic activities and established their own relations to the land and to olives, which is the topic of the next section.

Officials' Olives versus Producers' Alternatives

As I mentioned earlier, producers' lack of adequate information about what the Organic Project entails is partially explained by their practice of only selecting information they consider to be practically relevant, such as when the pesticides are applied or what documentation is needed as a proof of property ownership. Given that some producers originally from Milas, Yatağan, and Çanakkale had previous experience with olive growing, a lack of practical knowledge also only partly explains Gökçeada's producers' disinterest in organic production. Besides which, olive growing skills are easier to pick up compared to the techniques used to farm other produce, like grapes. Clearly, a closer look is necessary to understand why organic farming was not widely adopted as a project, although it was seemingly followed in practice. In other words, it seems to be the case in Gökçeada that producers undertake most of the required steps pertaining to organic protocols, but did not adopt its performative, aestheticized aspects,

nor pursue its corresponding marketing benefits.

Examples from the most recent settlement village, Şirinköy, help to look closer. In Şirinköy, the most recently built village on the island, there were 189 residents in 2000, most of whom had fled from the ethnic assimilationist policies of the Bulgarian government targeted towards its Muslim population in the 1990s. The majority of these producers is elderly and live half of the year in other places with family members in Istanbul or Çanakkale. During a meeting at the village coffee shop, they seemed to have more interest in understanding in the details of the Project. As I sat at the bench outside the coffee shop just as the annual controls with the producers were finishing, everyday chatter quickly turned into a discussion about the potential burdens of olive growing. A producer who owns around 40 trees exclaimed that he usually does not know whom to hire to pick his olives and that he does not care about the olive oil anyway. He was also frustrated that he was expected to grow produce that he did not care to eat, himself. Describing why he finds the whole process unnecessary, he explained that his family does not consume olive oil at all as they are used to butter.

Most of the producers however, do consume the oil they produce and eat the cured olives they make. It is now one of their staples, but it has not always been so. As one of the producers from the same village said:

We didn't use to eat olives back in the past. During Soviet times there was only butter in our village. We learnt what olive oil is after coming to the island. And we did like it. They say it is healthier too, my son used to love it. (Interview 32)

These two different attitudes provide an important insight about how we can understand olives within the context of the settler producer in Gökçeada. As a food item that was not part of the most of the settlers' prior diets, the quality of olives and olive

trees was not a significant factor in their estimations of economic benefits. One of the producers accounts with regret that they used to cut down olive trees for lumber, as this was what they used to do back in their original village (Interview 9). With such contrasting values attached to olive trees, the only reason the Organic Project made sense to many settler producers was because of the subsidies it provided—something that is reflected in the selectivity most producers used in regard to information about the project.

In Gökçeada, the olive has rarely been considered a produce that extends beyond its economic function, except when it is thought to be necessary for marketing purposes. The meaning and value attached to olive growing have not influenced the livelihoods of producers in the way that the Organic Project and local food discourses imagined they would. As the above quote highlights, olives have not become a dietary staple for some participant producers, and have only been seen as something found on the land they settled that could entitle them to benefits. This is not to suggest that olives have been completely rejected by the whole community. Rather, it hints at how heterogeneous and adaptive the community's adoption of olives has been, and how olives have not yet acquired a collective meaning grounded in their daily use, which would enable the conditions of possibility for a continuous transfer of meaning and practices related to olives.

If olives are negligible both in diet and as a source of livelihood, what alternatives do producers rely on to earn a living? A producer's wife from Yeni Bademli recounted how they decided to turn their settler housing into a hotel for tourists during summer months. Doing most of the work related to accommodations, cleaning, and food provisioning for hotel guests, she said that tourism provides a much more independent and lucrative living

compared to farming on the island. She mentioned that it allows for more contact with people, it is easier—except in the very busy summer months—and gives her family more flexibility in terms of their mobility during the rest of the year. She also added that she had been a farmer all her life, until she moved to Yeni Bademli, and would not want to go back to farming on the island. (Interview 7)

Her points resonate with those of many other producers who divide their time between tourism and agriculture. Tourism seems more viable, easier, and more lucrative. It is also something that the settlers can do using their own facilities and without much help from others. In settler villages, the houses are built as two-story, single-family dwellings with an upper floor designed for residential use and a smaller main floor intended for sheltering animals and for storage. Initial settlement and rural development projects had envisioned the settlements as rural communities and housing designs in the villages reflect that vision. However, as the island started to become a tourist attraction, the layout of the houses served other purposes. Some of the settlers redesigned their storage spaces as bed and breakfast hotels that operated during the summer months, sometimes living there with extended family or renting the space to students during the winter. This shift in the function of the house's main floor, some producers claim, makes much more sense as a more stable primary source of income and that this alternative to agriculture also gives them more control over their use of space and their livelihood.

Trusting the Olive

The feeling that it is beyond the reach of the ordinary producer to make living from organic agriculture is important in understanding the relation between the producer and olives. As one of the producers stated during an interview:

They should advertise this organic business to others. It is not for us. It is for others, you know (...) It would not benefit us (...) What do we understand about organic? When did you see that such a thing benefitted the peasants? (Interview 26)

Another reason why olives have not acquired a shared meaning that would bolster community identity and collective practice is related to the mechanics of olive production. Hand picking, for example, is a highly labor-intensive, collective practice that brings families together to help each other. As one settler producer suggested: “We don’t have unity. No one trusts his tree to another. No one asks the other. If we had that, maybe we would have done it, but we don’t have unity.” (Interview 15) The lack of cooperation and trust among the producer community is illustrated in stories that circulate locally about aborted olive oil cooperatives. The cooperative, as a story of failure, has been adopted and retold widely by different producers and development project officers. Bringing together various parts of the story line, this shows how the producers’ experiences have been shaped. In the last five years, there have been three attempts to set up a producers’ cooperative for improving the quality of olives and empowering producers to gain better access to the market. As described by one of the project officers, the Organic Project sought to provide initial leverage to the community of producers to enable them to come together to create a brand and sell their produce collectively for collectively shared profits. Alas, the cooperative did not survive long. The first attempt was made in 2006 and soon after, in 2009, it had terminated its operations and interest in the cooperative petered out (Interview 15). The commonly-held presumption was that the cooperative had suffered from a lack of faith in cooperation in the community; it was a self-fulfilling prophecy.

There are different accounts about how long the cooperative operated and what led to

its closure. Although some of the very small producers did not know about the cooperative at all, most of the olive growers from Eşelek had vibrant memories of the experience, as they had participated actively in founding the cooperative, led by a couple of young and enthusiastic producers in the village. Project officials had also been involved and their accounts diverged from each other as well. When I asked if it was possible to access the records of the cooperative for the period in which it operated, their location and the person responsible for keeping them changed from narrative to narrative. At one point, unable to locate any official documentation of the cooperative, except for a couple of newspaper articles announcing its opening, I decided to work with the diversity of stories and experiences related to the cooperative. This inconsistency in narratives was a means to highlight certain critical areas of local politics and the relationship between olive production and producers. The multiplicity of stories and lack of official records have proven to be fruitful sources of the multi-layered lived experience of how an attempt at collective action failed and how the people related to this failure.

An elderly producer from Şirinköy vividly remembers the cooperative attempts as an important step towards having more leverage in the market, especially for organic consumption. He recounts how he was discouraged by the lack of transparency about how financial resources were used, how top-down decision-making operated, and expressed how he had felt excluded from the whole process and soon lost interest in it.

A settler producer in Eşelek narrates a similar experience of uncertainty and concern about corruption in the cooperative's administration. The translated text does not do justice to the feeling of frustration relayed in her voice, but her words do express a shared disappointment with the cooperative's failure: "Everyone is after the same thing.

No one thinks of the other.” (Interview 32)

The experience of producers with the cooperative illustrates that collective action on behalf of the whole community is perceived as beyond their reach. When I probed further about why the producers thought that it did not work, the reasons they gave were emblematic of local power relations and feelings of distrust.

No one trusts the other here. A person from this village does not know the other one from another village. Only if they have a store or run a hotel (...) No one asks the other. If you ask me, there has been no helpfulness between one another there so how can we expect the cooperative to help? (Interview 32)

Disconnection among the community is felt in almost every conversation and encounter. Self-interest is taken for granted, and although it is not a trait that is praised, it helps to explain one of the levels at which producers relate to the land, their community, and the politics of marketing organic olives. The community’s frustration does not motivate empowerment or push producers to seek alternative relations with the land or farming. Olives remain within a space of state-producer relations that is structured and layered by different local dynamics of decision-making. However, as shown by their engagement in tourism activities, some producers actively shape their relation with land, going beyond the passive imaginary of the producer. Focusing on the perspective of the producers, themselves, reveals how alternatives like tourism are active responses and creative solutions to the mutable meanings of place. More importantly, it provides crucial insight into how producers contest the imaginary of the ideal organic producer and adapt it to their own realities and lived experiences.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I outline the key tensions that organic producers experience in

Gökçeada. I suggest that the perspectives of organic producers are critical because of their key position in olive production and their contribution to the changing agro-food landscape. A closer look at producer narratives shows how the simplistic, instrumentalized concept of the ideal organic producer is challenged. It also reveals the uneven ground of organic food production, as small-scale farmers compete with larger and more conventional organic producers. This complicates the moral and political narratives of sustainable, local, and organic food.

Based on the experiences of the producers' in the value and the meaning of the local organic olives on Gökçeada, this chapter suggests that the current local agro-food politics on Gökçeada relies heavily on the vast array of political lexicon taken over from the development of nation-building.

I also show there is a discourse identifying the “failure” of the Organic Project and designating the “ignorance” of the settler producers as its main cause. Voiced primarily by the project officials and some of the back-to-the-landers, this discourse perpetuates the status distinctions that mark the settlers as dependent, backwards and passive recipients of State benevolence. It renders the multiplicity of independent economic activities and resourcefulness of the settler producers in engaging in new commodity relations (like tourism) invisible, and discounts the significance of how they choose to manage the terms of the Organic Project. By labeling the Project’s failure as due to a technical incapability of the producers, the “failure” discourse of the Organic Project renders a political process a matter of incapacity on the part of project recipients.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

As a small island between Greece and Turkey at the entrance to the Dardanelles, Gökçeada is unlikely to have an impact on the bigger picture of organic agriculture and sustainable development at larger scales. However, walking around the island's olive groves and villages, one gets the sense of deep, stubborn and comprehensive changes that have morphed the social and ecological topography of the island in ways that seem disproportionate to its small size. These changes hint at many interconnecting threads actively shaping the island as a microcosm of the multiple and contradictory dynamics changing landscapes, livelihoods and state-society-environment relations.

Reflecting these multiple intersections, the analysis presented in this dissertation is located at the crossroads of different conversations taking place in rural, agro-food, and development studies. The analysis traces the contours of the possibilities and contradictions the local holds for the future of agro-food politics in rural areas. This dissertation shows that there are multiple different and interlocked imaginaries of the local. These imaginaries are shifting fantasies that have the capacity to generate various tangible and intangible consequences for deciding who and what belongs to a place, and who and what does not.

More specifically, this dissertation contributes to an understanding of the different meanings and values attached to the local by attending to the micro-processes that shape the enactment of different locals as a discourse and a socio-material reality. It does so by focusing on the cultural politics of the olive, a fruit that has gained many different

meanings, and received many different treatments, over the course of its making as a market commodity, dietary staple and cultural symbol. Looking at concerted efforts to define, use, exploit, change, distribute and certify the olive, this research takes the continuous interventions around the olive as a lens to understand the past and present of Gökçeada as an object of rural development. As a result, it contributes empirical depth to studies of contemporary understandings of the rural and the various ways in which organic is appropriated within the context of current agro-food relations. This dissertation also contributes to debates about the state-society-environment nexus, in particular by extending the manifestations of a settler-colonial imaginary of land into contemporary rural development practice. Looking at the discourses and practices of settlement as part of the reconfiguring of the local, the research reveals how the legacies of settler narratives are used to justify multiple interventions into land relations.

In its contribution to these issues and debates, the thesis makes three claims. First, it argues that spatial reification and a simplistic association of the “local” with quality, safety, fairness and sustainability is problematic because it assumes that the local in rural settings is homogenous and straightforward with harmonious, intimate and stable social relations. As a corollary to this, local food is neither essentially progressive nor positive. As the Gökçeada case shows, if the conditions of possibility for the emergence of local food networks are not attentive to and reflexive about local dynamics, local food is capable of embracing existing inequalities.

Further, for the local to emerge as an added value in agro-food relations, inequality and unevenness is sometimes a *necessary* condition in order to distinguish itself from the non-local. Thus, the new agro-food movements’ focus on associating the

local with a possible future hope of a more democratic society needs more careful consideration of the actors, political economies, power relations and histories involved in these imaginaries.

Second, the standardization and commodification of agricultural practices due to market pressure generate a reactionary localism that is paradoxically based on a nostalgia of imperial cosmopolitanism that blankets competing settler narratives. I trace these competing narratives of the local through the making of local organic olives. I suggest that the discursive replacement of Greek producers with narratives of the economic value of the olive is critical to understanding the unevenness of the local. The symbolism of the olive (permanence, longevity and civilization) has been infused into current narratives about the value of local olives in Gökçeada. It has been used to reinforce claims of cultural longevity and belonging, and to romantically depict the island's idyllic cultural landscape. This nostalgic narrative is adopted differently by different actors on the island. It serves as a strategy that actors might use with different purposes in different contexts. This is relevant not only for settings that are imbued with a contentious history of ethnic conflict but also for anywhere where land and its symbols are colonized resources.

Third, this dissertation claims that the gap between development plans and their implementation allows ruling through ambivalence. I argue that the proposed rules and plans are imbued with a *margin of ambivalence*. This margin is not necessarily reflected in the *word* of the law, but is embedded in its *spirit*. That is why changes and modifications made during the implementation of the plans are political interventions. One of the ways that the modern state intervenes in the local is by mobilizing the margin of ambivalence through local alliances.

I develop these claims by using the organic olive as a lens to unpack the making of the local on the island, and by framing this analysis with by two major processes, nation-building and the Quality Turn. I suggest that the local is invoked by the territorial and militarized logic of the nation-building and by the market-oriented, aestheticized constructions of the Quality Turn. These are two different and key imaginaries of the local that help us understand the socio-cultural morphology of the local on Gökçeada. I regard the efforts of both the settlement and Organic Project as unfinished, incomplete and mutable series of negotiations and contestations between these two imaginaries that take place on a daily basis and involve different actors. By doing so, I locate the discourse and practice of organic agriculture within the complex machinery of rural development showing the material and discursive foundations of rural change, and its impact on the everyday experiences of the people it targets for change.

In order to further understand how these two different understandings of the local operate in concert or in contradiction to each other, I identify four mechanisms: replacement, reordering, standardization and commodification. Replacement encapsulates the settler narrative of naturalizing and normalizing the occupation of the land and the eradication of local Greek population. It also refers to the process of cultural appropriation of the symbols of the Greek culture through claims of local authenticity and belonging. Reordering is a mechanism where the meaning and value of the island as a place is reconfigured through the politics of settlement by nation-building and by labeling the island as the Organic Island. The mechanism of reordering denotes different claims and contestations on the knowledge and relations of space. Standardization refers to the attempts and plans to create a homogenized and uniform social body and natural

landscape on the island. It refers to the demographic and social engineering of nation-building, as well as the rendering of political processes as technical matters through the rural development on the island. Finally, commodification is a mechanism that helps unpacking the local in its relation to marketability. It refers to tangible and intangible commodities that both the nation-building and Quality Turn processes have shifted and transformed.

These four mechanisms, sometimes in concert and sometimes in contradiction, configure the local on Gökçeada. They are different facets of the local enacted by a variety of actors including the officials, planners, settler producers, back-to-the-landers, and natives who actively negotiate the values and the meanings of the local on a daily basis. I argue that these four mechanisms help us to further understand how the land and property relations, administrative practices of organic farming and local producers are crafted as part of the changing imaginaries of the local and the rural. These four mechanisms are the conceptual tools that crystallize the ways in which the two different visions of the local, nation-building and the Quality Turn, create uneven and unexpected outcomes on the island.

I examine how these four mechanisms are involved in the configuration of the local in three sites: the olive, by technicalizing, bureaucratizing and regulating growing practices through organic standards; the island space by changing land regimes along with aligning the discursive connections between the land and olive through selectively mobilizing narratives about the history and the culture of the island; and the producer-subjects by fashioning a new entrepreneurial, market-oriented, organic producer imaginary as the ideal producer. These mechanisms are challenged, contested and

redesigned on the ground as the Organic Project moves along due to the complex historical, social and political positions of the local actors, histories and natures. Focusing on the encounters and relations within the three sites shows that the administrative, discursive and material technologies mobilized by the experts in implementing organic agriculture as a development tool rely heavily on the enduring repertoire of historically configured power relations.

In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the local organic olive on Gökçeada, as an object of rural development, is deeply embedded in the history of settlement and an ethnically contentious politics of land. Its current value and meaning in the Organic Project is configured through a series of attempts that normalize and naturalize this history, and generates uneven and heterogeneous consequences for the producers. I argue that the politics of local olives show that the island's socio-symbolic orders of market-oriented local production, and its history of an ethnicized political economy of agriculture, create challenges for sustainable and fair agro-food relations by preventing producers from crafting autonomous, empowered, and intimate connections to the land, farming, and other producers. Thus, what the local means and how it is enacted and promoted as a value in agro-food relations should, therefore, be carefully considered to avoid perpetuating assumptions about inherent value and positivity. I develop this argument in three chapters.

In Chapter 4, *Reordering the Space: Land Registry and Localizing the Olive*, I locate the emergence of the Organic Project within the political economy of land relations. I offer a closer look at the history of the Land Registry in 1996 to understand how state tools of categorization and standardization operated. I show how the Land

Registry recorded land and property ownership on the island by creating legal categories that allowed legalized property transfers by using categories of cadastral surveying and also relying on local alliances and categorical ambivalences of land ownership.

In Chapter 5, *Administration of Local Olives: Bureaucratic Interfaces of Organic Farming*, I focus on the premises and the operations of the Organic Project. Looking at the interactions between the producers and the officials, I show how the implementation of the Organic Project attempts to reorder and control the knowledge, practice and benefits attached to olive growing on the island. I argue that, in the Organic Project, the bureaucratic tools (such as forms, reports, files) acquire a life of their own that does not necessarily resonate with the lives they attempt to manage. The position of Project officials follows a similar path. As they seek to harden the lines between categories in accordance with the bureaucratic requirements of the organic certification and property registration, they must negotiate a shaky terrain of power relations.

In Chapter 6, *From Settlers to Organic Farmers: Crafting the Local Producer*, I focus on the experiences of local olive producers as the third and the final key site of the configuration of the local on Gökçeada. I demonstrate that the Project officials position themselves as actors facing a failure of the Project attributed to the “dependant” and “ignorant” small producers. The ideal local producer is, for them, is a market-oriented, entrepreneurial, independent farmer who appreciates the knowledge and value of the traditional olive on the island, and knows how to turn it into an economic opportunity. However, based on producers’ experiences – both as settlers and producers- it is clear that the organic olive has an uneven role in their economic and socio-cultural calculations. Focusing on producers’ troubling experience with the Organic Project, and

how they creatively find market alternatives (like tourism), I explain how the settler olive producers' experience challenges the happy small-scale organic farmer ideal. I argue that local producers, based on how they engage in the local politics of settlement and look for opportunities within the tourism economy, reveal a different level of agency. They contest and negotiate expectations of the ideal producer on their own terms, and use the uneven cultural politics of the local as a resource to do so..

Overall, these three chapters locate the state as a set of relations mobilizing a multi-vectored repertoire of ruling tools and identify the moments and encounters where ambivalence (of categories, citizen, land, bureaucracy etc.) is a strategy of ordering and governing. Furthermore, these three chapters show how the efforts of the state are contested and negotiated on the ground by the producers' own priorities and calculations. As such, the two broad processes of governing the local, through nation-building and the Quality Turn, come together through processes of resettlement, land appropriation, securitization and militarization of the island on the one hand and processes of branding, marketization, ecologizing and value-adding by organic farming on the other hand. These two contradictory processes and technologies exist *in friction* generating tensions in the dynamic and complex manifestations of the local.

Bringing together the threads from the analysis of the three sites, I argue that there are many strategies available for crafting a local that attempt to contain this friction through, for example, naturalizing historical inequalities, and normalizing current bureaucratic and technical standards. However, strategies of naturalizing and rationalizing often produce contradictory narratives. While sometimes textual, these narratives are also manifested in different spatial and material connections and

disconnections. This analysis of the island of Gökçeada reveals the complexity of local rurality, and the stabilities and instabilities generated at the intersection of these dynamic processes.

Appendix I

Population in Gökçeada by Village (1927-2013)

Settlement	1927	1935	1940	1945	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1997	2000	2007	2013
Centre	2099	1856	1991	2004	2000	1936	2845	2721	4549	4470	4802	5434	6074	7008	7278	6801	6554
Old Bademli		463	438	443	420	419	401	293	199	61	43	47	51	28	28	48	75
Kaleköy		153	136	121	150	176	132	110	75	24	128	94	105	86	89	75	139
Zeytinli		825	830	817	802	801	691	640	533	388	271	238	155	84	88	86	124
Tepeköy		1062	1064	1075	1076	1078	979	681	507	277	195	216	77	39	44	125	126
Dereköy		1989	1987	1899	1878	1824	1727	1496	742	781	539	705	336	228	196	214	303
New Bademli												416	660	639	581	656	762
Sahinkaya																	
Eselek															152	131	132
Sirinköy															189	173	217
Ugurlu												460	490	477	401	363	498
Total	6762	6348	6446	6359	6326	6234	5776	5941	6605	6001	5978	7610	7948	8670	8894	8672	8930

(Cengiz et al. 2009:53)

Appendix II

History of Settlement by Origin and Year

Destination	Origin	Year	Number of Settlers	Cause for Leaving the Settlement of Origin
Centre	Greek Islands	1921	23	World War 1
Centre	Black Sea Region	1945	45	Forced Migration (Returned)
Centre	Sürmene, Trabzon	1947	10	Forced Migration
Open Prison		1965-91	659 inmates and 28 staff	
Şahinkaya	Şahinkaya, Çaykara, Trabzon	1973	61	Mud Slide
Yeni Bademli	Şehler, Bayduç, Selimler, Melikler (Çandır, Isparta)	1984	92	Dam Construction
	Samsun	1984	7	Filling Vacancies
	Ordu	1984	5	Filling Vacancies
	Trabzon	1984	5	Filling Vacancies
	Giresun	1984	5	Filling Vacancies
Uğurlu	Karacaoren, Kızıllı (Bucak, Burdur)	1985	40	Dam Construction
	Sek Milas, Eskihisar Yatağan (Muğla)	1985	60	Thermal Plant Construction
Eşelek	Eşelek, Çan, Çanakkale	2000	55	Thermal Plant Construction
Şirinkoy	Plovdiv, Shumnu, Kardzhali (Bulgaria)	2000	128	Forced Migration
	Erzurum	2000	16	Filling Vacancies
	Hatay	2000	5	Filling Vacancies
	Malatya	2000	1	Filling Vacancies

(Alexandris 1980; Aziz 1973; Babül 2004; Bozbeyoğlu and Onan 2001; Tunçcan Ongan 2012; Uçar 2010)

Appendix III

Usage Plan of Tepeköy

Map shows the cultivable land with light green and green lines along the hilly areas.
(Workshop Book 2014:112)

Appendix IV **Interview Sample**

Interview #	Age	Gender	Position	Group	Other Work	Trees Owned
1	60+	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	Under 20
2	40-60	M	Producer	Neo-rural	Store	20-50
3	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	Under 20
4	40-60	M	Producer	Neo-rural	Tourism	Under 20
5	40-60	F	Producer	Neo-rural	Store	20-50
6	Under 40	M	Producer	Neo-rural	-	20-50
7	Under 40	F	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
8	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
9	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
10	60+	M	Producer	Greek	-	20-50
11	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	-	20-50
12	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	-	Under 20
13	Under 40	F	Producer	Neo-rural	Tourism	Under 20
14	40-60	M	Producer	Neo-rural	Store	Over 50
15	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	-	20-50
16	60+	M	Producer	Settler	-	20-50
17	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
18	60+	M	Producer	Settler	-	Over 50
19	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	-	Under 20
20	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	-	
21	40-60	F	Producer	Settler	-	Under 20
22	40-60	M	Producer	Greek	Tourism	20-50
23	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	-	20-50
24	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
25	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
26	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	Under 20
27	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	Under 20
28	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
29	Under 40	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
30	60+	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
31	Under 40	M	Producer	Neo-rural	Tourism	Under 20
32	60+	F	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
33	40-60	M	Producer	Settler	Tourism	20-50
34	60+	M	Producer	Neo-rural	Tourism	Under 20
35	Under 40	M	Official	-	-	-
36	40-60	M	Official	-	-	-
37	40-60	M	Official	-	-	-
38	Under 40	F	Official	-	-	-
39	Under 40	M	Official	-	-	Under 20

Appendix V

Sample Interview Guide

Use of the Interview Guide

These interview guides provided a general framework for the interviews. Not all questions were asked of every participant, nor were the questions always asked in the same order. The guides served as a mental checklist and helped me to be attentive to the details provided by the participants and to prompt further if a participant's narrative provided openings to other issues. By not following the questions strictly, I was able to actively listen to the narratives as directed by the participants, and to better understand the significance of connections and associations made during the interviews..

Sample Interview Guide with the Producers

Biographical Information

Name, age, family size, village, occupation (if there is anything else in addition to being olive producer)

The Island – Life story

Can you describe how you first came to the island?

Can you describe your experience living on the island?

Have you always lived here? What made you decide to come?

How was your life before coming to here? Or when you were not here?

How has your experience been with the migration on the island?

If you had to move to/from somewhere, can you describe your experience?

Have you always lived in a village? How has your experience been similar or different?

How have been the relations between different villages? Has it changed? What's your experience of the relation between the Greek villages and settler villages?

Has the island changed as you can observe? How?

Are there any other economic activities that you are engaged with? Can you describe your experience with the other activities you are engaged with?

Do you plan to stay here in the future? Why/ Why not?

Experience with The Organic Project

Can you describe your experience with the Organic Project?

How long have you been a participant?

What made you decide to participate?

What benefits are you receiving as a producer?

What are the steps that you need to take regularly as part of the Project?

Where do you receive the information and support?

How do you communicate with the Project officials?

How has your experience been with them during the field visits and inspections?

Experience with Organic Farming

Can you describe your experience with organic farming?

When did you start to switch the organic farming?
What difference has it made it your practice?
How do you find the requirements of organic farming?
When you have a question/problem about organic agriculture, how do you solve it?
Would you keep producing organic if the Organic Project stopped subsidizing it?
Why/Why not?
Do you think certification is important for organic farming? (Added later – what is your experience with organic certification provided by the Organic Project?)

Experience with Olive Growing

Can you describe your activities as an olive producer?
How long have you been growing olives? Where and how many trees do you have?
How did you start? How did you acquire your land and when?
Did you have olive groves since the beginning or did you decide to plant them later?
How would you describe the quality of olives on the island?
Can you describe how you collect, process and consume the olives? Has it changed since you started? Can you describe your harvesting activities?
How much of it do you use for yourself and the family? If you have more than you can consume, what do you do with it?

Sample Interview Guide with the Project Officials

Biographical Information

Name, age, position and time in the Project

Role in the Organic Project

Can you describe your roles and responsibilities within the Organic Project?
How long have you been involved?
How would you describe the Organic Project's reception by the producers?
What are the most common problems you come across? How do you solve them?
What are decisions that you can make at the local level? What are the organizational requirements of making decisions about the Project?
What has been your experience with the producers on the island? What is working well and what is not? Why/ Why not?

Experience on Gökçeada

For how long have you been on the island?
How has your experience been working in the Organic Project?
How do you find the Organic Project's contribution to the social, cultural and economic life on the island?
How do you describe your experience working on the island and in this project?
How would you describe your experience with different groups on the island?
Do you own land on the island? Where and when did you acquire land?
Do you grow organic? What's your experience as a producer?
Are you planning to stay on the island? Why/Why not?

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