

Negotiating ‘Turkishness’ in North Cyprus

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Abstract

Since the inception of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) in 1983, the TRNC government has attempted to construct and promote a collective national identity through various means, including but not limited to heritage projects, new place names, and the standardization of history textbooks used in public education. The TRNC government placed emphasis on ‘Turkishness’ in order to form a single and unified culture that had continuity with past historical ties to Turkey. Over time and in response to various external and internal political, economic, cultural and social events, the TRNC government’s construction of a collective national identity has been continuously redefined and reshaped to promote a more ‘Cypriot’ past, distancing itself from past historical ties to Turkey.

Turkish Cypriots, however, do not merely absorb the official constructions of national identity; they negotiate and construct their own more nuanced understanding of that identity. How do Turkish Cypriots negotiate understandings of ‘Turkishness’? Through ethnographic field research in the TRNC and secondary sources this dissertation illustrates the ways in which national identity is constructed by Turkish Cypriots, negotiated with state constructions of national identity, and reproduced through everyday practices. Through these constructions and negotiations, Turkish Cypriots fluctuate between rejecting Turkey as an outside oppressor and excluding people from Turkey as ‘other’, to accepting Turkey as the ‘Motherland’ and including people from Turkey as part of their national community.

This dissertation highlights the fabricated nature of ‘Turkishness’ and disentangles the ways in which understandings of ‘Turkishness’ are negotiated and reproduced by Turkish Cypriots. This dissertation posits that Turkish Cypriots are not shifting between Turkish nationalism and Cypriot nationalism, but rather these everyday negotiations of ‘Turkishness’ by Turkish Cypriots produce a distinct Turkish Cypriot demotic nationalism from ‘below’.

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Abbreviations

AKP	Justice and Development Party
ANAP	Motherland Party
CHP	Republican People's Party
DP	Democratic Party
EOKA	National Organization of Cypriots
ECtHR	European Court of Human Rights
EU	European Union
GKK	Turkish Cypriot Military Unit
MHP	Nationalist Movement Party
NEU	Near East University
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
RoC	Republic of Cyprus
TMT	Turkish Resistance Organization
TRNC	Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
UBP	National Unity Party
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Development Programme
UNDP-PFF	United Nations Development Programme, Partnership for the Future
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Section 1.1 Introduction

Shortly after my return to England from field research in North Cyprus, I reconnected with a Turkish friend who is currently completing his PhD in international law. He was very keen to discuss my research. I started our conversation by explaining that, “In North Cyprus there appears to be great tension between the Turkish immigrants and the Turkish Cypriots.”

He quickly interrupted me to question, “Turkish immigrants? They must not like that that very much!”

A bit perplexed by his reaction, I asked, “What do you mean?”

He replied, “You call them immigrants in their own country?”

This conversation provides a good illustration of the conundrum that Turkish nationalism presents in North Cyprus: How is national belonging constructed in North Cyprus? How do Turkish Cypriots and Turkish people living in North Cyprus define national belonging? The perspective voiced by my Turkish friend is not unique. Many Turkish citizens living in Turkey echo this perspective; they understand North Cyprus to be an extension of Turkey and see those living there as members of a larger Turkish nation. Their belief is exemplified by the Turkish phrase used to refer to North Cyprus, “Yavruvatan” (English: “Baby Country” or “Little Country”), implying that North Cyprus is the offspring country of “Anavatan” (English: “Motherland”) Turkey. In

contrast to this view, my field research in North Cyprus illuminated more complex and competing understandings of national belonging and national identity amongst and between the Turkish Cypriots and immigrants from Turkey in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC).

Part of the reason for this complexity can be illuminated by a review of the historical context of the island. Only a little over 30 years old, the self-proclaimed Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus was established in part as a result of the 1974 Turkish military intervention on the island. The new nation was built on the foundations of a shared Turkish history and the promises of a Turkish future. As championed by Rauf Denktaş, the first President of the TRNC, “There isn’t a nationality called the TRNC. We are Turks of the TRNC. We are proud of being Turks. The motherland [Turkey] is also our motherland, our nation. We are part of that [Turkish] nation that has formed a state in Cyprus” (Rauf Denktaş quoted in Navaro-Yashin 2012, 53). Today the Turkish state continues to attempt to nationalize the Turkish Cypriot community and to maintain their connection to “the motherland,” Turkey. These nationalistic connections are fostered through close political, economic, and cultural ties. Some examples include the celebration of Turkish national holidays, compulsory military service, mainland Turkish media channels, and the dispatch of Turkish imams to TRNC mosques. Although both Turkey and the TRNC maintain that the TRNC is a sovereign entity, the listed institutions and activities mentioned above blur the line between the domestic and the foreign and thereby render the Turkish Cypriots’ understandings of belonging ambiguous.

Initially, Turkish Cypriots¹ enthusiastically adopted Turkish nationalism. However, immediately following the 1974 Turkish military operation on the island, Turkish Cypriots were confronted with the realities of the control of the TRNC by the Turkish state and an alternative nationalism, Cypriotism, started to grow, creating a shift away from Turkish nationalism. While Turkish nationalism is characterized by attachment to Turkey as the motherland, Cypriotism is characterized by attachment to the island. As will be closely examined in Chapter 2, scholars have presented these two nationalisms as separate and competing. Each constructs alternative definitions of belonging, with Turkish nationalism fostering a sense of ‘Turkishness’ and Cypriotism fostering a sense of ‘Cypriotness’. Vural and Rustemli (2006) frame this dichotomy of national belonging to demonstrate that Turkishness is an ethnic identity and Cypriotness is a civic identity. Ethnic nationalism and ethnic identity are based on the belief of a common ethnic origin, while civic nationalism and civic identity are based on acultural definitions of citizenship (Brubaker 1998). Similar arguments have been made in the examination of Greek nationalism and Cypriotism in the Republic of Cyprus (Papadakis 1998; Peristianis 2006).

While this framework for understanding nationalism in North Cyprus acknowledges the complex layers of the negotiation of national identity, the clearly defined and neat separation of identities into categories of civic and ethnic implies that each of these identities excludes the other. Instead I argue that these national identities are more

¹ I use the term Turkish Cypriot for clarity in this introduction, but before they embraced Turkish nationalism they self-defined as the Muslim community of Cyprus (Bryant 2004; Michael 2014).

nuanced and should not be separated when examining the production of national identities in Cyprus. This thesis will reframe the discussion regarding the construction and imagining of a community in the TRNC by examining how national identity is continuously negotiated and changing depending on the given context. To examine the production of national identity in this way, I will use Cohen's (1985; 2001) notion of boundary. Cohen argues that the boundary defines the identity of a community. He argues that the community "...hinges crucially on consciousness" and that the "...consciousness of community is, then, encapsulated in perception of its boundaries, boundaries which are themselves largely constituted by people in interaction" (Cohen 2001, 13). In using this notion of boundary, this dissertation will examine the ways in which Turkishness and Cypriotness are negotiated within different contexts and demonstrate that they are overlapping and entangled identities.

To evaluate this negotiation, I will examine not only the production of national identity by the TRNC state, but also the ways in which these boundaries of national identity are negotiated and reproduced by the Turkish Cypriots. How do Turkish Cypriots construct, negotiate, and experience Turkishness in everyday life? In examining how Turkishness is negotiated in everyday lives, I will deconstruct Turkish and Cypriot nationalism to demonstrate that although these dichotomies exist in politics, they do not translate as dichotomies in everyday constructions of belonging. This dissertation's purpose is three-fold. First, to demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots construct and negotiate different understandings of their national identity and sense of belonging apart from the state constructions of national identity. Second, to demonstrate that this sense of belonging is

constructed by shifting and malleable boundaries through daily interactions. Third, this dissertation posits that these everyday negotiations produce a distinct Turkish Cypriot demotic nationalism from ‘below’.

1.2 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 will provide a review of the literature on nationalism in both Turkey and Cyprus and on the constructions and fabrications of national identity. The first part of this discussion focuses primarily on examining the competing forms of Turkish nationalism in Turkey, to include Kemalism, the founding ideology of Turkey. In this discussion, I specifically draw attention to the different ‘official’ constructions of ‘modernity’ underlying these competing nationalisms and the corresponding conceptualizations and constructions of ‘Turkishness’. The second part of this discussion examines the emergence of Turkish and Cypriot nationalisms in Cyprus. Following from this discussion, I will propose that a productive way to investigate how Turkish Cypriots construct notions of national belonging is by examining the ways in which Turkish Cypriots negotiate boundaries of Turkishness. In addition to the literature review, this chapter will also provide the methodology for this research. By outlining the relevant theoretical perspectives, this chapter will provide a framework for the examination of the construction and negotiation of national identity in the TRNC.

Chapters 3 and 4 will examine state constructions of national identity through institutions such as compulsory military service, national parades, and heritage projects. Chapter 3 uses an analysis of the 40th anniversary of the “Peace Operation” as an entry point into

understanding the relationship between Kemalist constructions of Turkishness and the military in the TRNC. Through this examination, this chapter will demonstrate a paradox that arises; although Turkish Cypriots have embraced Kemalism, they simultaneously have been deprived of their sovereignty and denied the promises of a modern Turkish future.

Chapter 4 will examine the shaping of national identities in the TRNC by looking at urban heritage regeneration in the Walled City. Specifically, this chapter focuses its analysis on the Asmaalti Project, an EU-funded, city-led effort to preserve the historic Asmaalti area of the Walled City in Lefkoşa. This chapter will demonstrate the differences in the desired function of this city space amongst the TRNC Lefkoşa municipality, the EU, the UN, and the residents of Lefkoşa. Through an exploration of the competing visions of the reconstruction of the Walled City by different agencies, one can gain insight into the competing visions of a future TRNC. This chapter will demonstrate that through these negotiations over the construction of the identity of the space, Turkish Cypriots articulate their longing for an unattainable modern future and simultaneously construct social boundaries.

Chapters 3 and 4 will demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots are ambiguous about their Turkishness. These chapters will highlight that Turkish Cypriots are constructing their own demotic nationalism from ‘below’, which privileges this ambiguity over state constructions of national identity. Chapters 5 and 6 will examine more closely the ways

in which this demotic nationalism is articulated by analyzing how Turkish Cypriots construct, negotiate, and experience Turkishness in the practices of everyday life.

Chapter 5 examines Dereboyu, a popular street in Lefkoşa, and argues that Dereboyu is a socially constructed place where Turkish Cypriots can perform their secular heritage. Through an analysis of the everyday life of residents and staged protests held on Dereboyu, I will demonstrate that this street is a place where Turkish Cypriots feel they can occupy a modern space. It is a place where their Kemalist constructions of Turkishness are embodied and alternative definitions of Turkishness are questioned as being out of place. It is also a space where boundaries of Cypriotness are constructed and negotiated through everyday practices. This chapter will argue that although Turkish Cypriots see Dereboyu as a place where their modernity is realized, they remain acutely aware of the limitations of this modernity due to their country's illegal status.

Chapter 6 will argue that a demotic expression of nationalism manifests itself through the practice of gambling. This chapter will examine both gambling in the home and in the casinos in North Cyprus by untangling and inspecting the differing practices of gambling within these spaces. This chapter will also examine the discussions about gambling and how they reflect the debates regarding different constructions of Turkishness. What can be realized through the examination of behavior in the casino is a better understanding of how Turkish Cypriots perceive themselves in relation to Turks and Greek Cypriots. While the activity of gambling works to construct and embrace a Turkish Cypriot

identity, I will demonstrate that it simultaneously acts as an activity that engenders the resurgence of Cypriotness.

Chapter 7 will synthesize the arguments made in these chapters to conclude that examining negotiations of ‘Turkishness’ by Turkish Cypriots provides for a more nuanced understanding of their construction of national identity and sense of national belonging. More specifically, by analyzing the pliable and shifting boundaries of ‘Turkishness’, it will be seen that Turkish Cypriots are not shifting between Turkish nationalism and Cypriot nationalism, but rather they are constructing their own demotic nationalism from ‘below’.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Methodology

2.1. Chapter Outline

The first part of this chapter (Section 2.2) will provide a literature review of the emergence and competing forms of Turkish nationalism in Turkey (Section 2.2.1) and their spread to Cyprus (Section 2.2.2). This discussion demonstrates that Turkish nationalism appeared in Cyprus not through imposition by Turkey, but rather evolved in response to historical events on the island. As such, this section will demonstrate that a very specific and unique Turkish Cypriot understanding of ‘Turkishness’ was constructed under these conditions, which included a specific Turkish Cypriot perspective of modernity. Following from this, Section 2.2.3 will illustrate the rise of Cypriot nationalism on the island. This section will demonstrate that although Turkish nationalism declined with the rise of Cypriot nationalism, Turkish Cypriots did not correspondingly abandon their Turkish identity. Intertwined with this literature review is the historical background of Turkey, Cyprus, and the TRNC necessary for understanding the body chapters of this thesis.

After this discussion regarding the emergence and contested negotiations of Turkish nationalism and ‘Turkishness’, Section 2.2 will conclude with a theoretical justification of why ‘Turkishness’ is used as an analytical lens (Section 2.2.4). This section will demonstrate that the choice to use ‘Turkishness’ arose specifically from the context of my field research, at which time post-Taksim protests and the election of Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan as President of Turkey led Turkish Cypriots to renegotiate the meaning of belonging to the Turkish nation. In conversation with the literature on nationalism and constructs of belonging in Cyprus, and drawing heavily on Cohen’s (1985) notion of

boundary, it will further be argued that that the use of ‘Turkishness’ as an analytical lens enables one to examine the continuously shifting social boundaries, rather than accept artificially constructed notions of ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ identity.

This chapter will conclude with Section 2.3, which will provide a detailed account of the methodology and research methods used to conduct this research.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 Competing Turkish Nationalisms and the Construction of ‘Turkishness’

Turkish nationalism first emerged in the Ottoman Empire during the late 19th century in response to its disintegration (e.g., Akçam 2004; Azarian 2011; Balkılıç and Dölek 2013; Çınar 2005; Deren 2002; Kadioğlu 1996; Kasaba 1997; Keyder 1997). Fearing the total collapse of the Empire, Ottoman intellectuals and elites believed that the Empire’s only chance of survival was to adapt to more “modern” and “western” modes of governance. To achieve these more “modern” and “western” modes of governance, Sultan Mahmut II and his successors enacted a series of reforms, known as the Tanzimat (reorganization) reforms. These reforms radically changed the governing structure from one based loosely on theocratic principles, to one that was reorganized around the ideals of the modern nation state (Baran 2010). More specifically, these reforms abolished the Ottoman millet system and replaced it with a centralized government and additionally, reformed and constructed new government institutions. Baran (2010) argues that the emphasis placed on secularizing state institutions and on the “westernization” policies promoted during

this reform period set way for the early roots of Kemalism—the founding ideology of Turkey—to take form.

Some contemporary elites of the time believed these reforms put too much weight on European values and disregarded Islamic and Ottoman values (Ahmad 1993, 28-29).

These elites formed a political group called the ‘Young Ottomans’ (Turkish: ‘Yeni Osmanlılar’) and through pamphlets and journals protested against the monarchy and called for the creation of a modern nation state that was grounded more in Ottoman and Islamic values and less in European ones. These writings are best exemplified in the Young Ottoman, Namik Kemal, whose writings synthesized notions of ‘Westernization’ with Islamic principles. Namik Kemal’s writings popularized the word and concept ‘fatherland’ (Turkish: ‘vatan’), which he defined as the entire Islamic world rather than just the existing Ottoman territories (Mardin 2000, 331). Although the Islamic faith played an important role in his ideologies, his vision of the ‘fatherland’ was inclusive of non-Muslims. He promoted an inclusive Ottoman nationalism by creating an Ottoman citizenship in which all citizens would be considered equal (Mardin 2000, 329-331). The Young Ottomans also believed that the reforms were not enough to solve the problems of the Ottoman Empire and that it was necessary to have a constitutional administration.

Although the protests led by the Young Ottomans eventually led to the Empire’s first Constitution in 1876, Sultan Abdülhamid II soon restored his absolute monarchy and dissolved the parliament. However, the Tanzimat reforms and the Young Ottoman writings had already planted the seeds for debates about the nation and identity (e.g.,

Aktürk 2007; Baran 2010; Belge 2010, 28; Bozdağlıoğlu 2008). Al (2015) and Yeğen (2004) demonstrate that Article 8 of the 1876 constitution laid the framework for the debates about what the definition of ‘Turk’ should be in the later 1924 Turkish republic constitution. Article 8 of the 1876 constitution defines ‘Ottoman’ as, “...whatever religion or sect they are from all individuals subject to the Ottoman State, without exception, would be called Ottomans” (Al 2015; Yeğen 2004). Al and Yeğen note that when the definition of a national people was introduced into the 1924 constitution it said, “The people of Turkey regardless of their religion and race would be called Turkish” (Al 2015, 93; Yeğen 2004). “Citizenship,” Yeğen and Al state was only added later after a discussion on the differences between Turkish citizenship and Turkish nationhood (Yeğen 2004, 59; Al 2015, 11). Although Turkish citizenship was legally defined, in practice there was an observable difference between being a Turkish citizen and being Turkish; non-Muslims within Turkey could be Turkish citizens, but not Turks, while many living outside Turkey could not have citizenship but were considered Turks (Al 2015; Yeğen 2004).

After the dissolution of the 1876 constitution, a political reform movement, the “Young Turks” (Turkish: *Genç Türkler*; *Jön Türkler*), rallied around opposing the regime of Abdülhamid II to reinstate both the constitutional monarch and the 1876 constitution. In 1908, steered by the Young Turks ideology, the military restored the constitutional monarch and the 1876 constitution. The Young Turks united around the concept of Turkism as the way to modernize the Ottoman Empire. The concept of Turkism is best exemplified by the passionate writings of the Young Turk Ziya Gökalp. Through these

writings Gökalp promotes the cultural and political unification of all Turkish-speaking peoples (Gökalp and Berkes 1981). Turkism was an alternative nationalism to other ideas espoused at the time such as Islamism and Westernism. Differing definitions of a ‘modern’ Ottoman Empire brought forth new ways of thinking about Turkish identity, thereby laying the groundwork for Atatürk’s use and expansion of the term, ‘Turk’ (e.g., Baran 2010; White 2013, 28). While the term ‘Turk’ existed during Ottoman times, intellectuals and elites of the Ottoman Empire did not care to be called ‘Turk’ because of the negative connotation associated with the word (Azarian 2011; Kushner 1977; Lewis 1968). The efforts of the Young Turks sought to reclaim the word and take pride in being Turkish. Zürcher highlights that the Young Turks “...romantically idealized the Anatolian peasants as the ‘real Turks,’ whose virtues they believed should be rediscovered and adopted by the Ottomans” (Zürcher 2000, 154). The continued negotiation of Turkish identity will be more fully explored, but it should be noted that in Turkey today, the term “Young Turks” continues to define members who seek radical reform in Turkish society. For example, the organization’s name has been re-used for a popular online talk show, ‘The Young Turks’, which is hosted by Cenk Uygur and is known for its left-leaning views on Turkish politics.

Although the rise of Turkish nationalism during the decline of the Ottoman Empire brought about debates about what it meant to be a modern nation and what it meant to be a ‘Turk,’ it should not be construed that Ottomanism and Islam were gradually discarded for Turkish nationalism and secularism. The Ottoman Empire did not change from an ‘Islamic’ and ‘non-European’ Empire to a more ‘secular’ and ‘Western,’ nation-state.

Zürcher (2010) discusses in detail the debates held amongst Islamists and Westernists about the degree to which they wanted to ‘westernize’ the empire and points out that many Islamists would accept aspects of westernization, while many Westernists would also be willing to adapt their ideals with Islamic doctrine (Zürcher 2010, 216). Gülap (2005) further demonstrates that there was not a unilateral steady progress towards ‘secularization’ and illustrates that in many ways the new form of Turkish nationalism was less about incorporating aspects of ‘westernization’ and ‘modernization’ and more about being inclusive of ‘Islam’ and promoting a Turkish Muslim identity. These analyses allow for a complex reading of the emergence of Turkish nationalism by showing that not only was the ‘secular’ nationalism not purely secular, there were also multiple ideologies of Turkish nationalism emerging and competing for power.

In 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, aided by the army led by officers connected to the Young Turks, pushed out the European powers occupying the Ottoman Empire and established the Republic of Turkey. Atatürk and the new government believed the only way for the new Turkish state to be powerful and respected was to completely dispose of the Ottoman system and to move towards ‘modernization’ and ‘westernization’ (e.g., Ahmad 1993; Azarian 2011; Çağaptay 2006; Kadioğlu, 1996). To achieve this vision, Atatürk and the new government developed a reform program that was designed along six principles which are the foundation of Kemalism and the platform of Atatürk’s political party, the Republican People’s Party (Turkish: Cumhurriyet Halk Partisi, CHP). These six principles, known as the six arrows, are: republicanism (cumhuriyetçilik), statism (devletçilik), populism (halkçılık), reformism (sometimes also translated as

revolutionism) (devrimçilik), nationalism (milliyetçilik), and secularism (laiklik). These principles were incorporated into the Turkish constitution, where they have remained despite constitutional reform (in 1937, 1961, 1983, and 2001) (Glyptis 2007, 18). Employing these principles, Atatürk enacted a series of radical reforms that fundamentally changed the way people in the region were accustomed to living (e.g., Azarian 2011, 77; Pope and Pope 2011, 61). These new reforms revolved around the separation of religion from state affairs (e.g., the closure of Shari'a law courts, the abolition of religious schools, confiscation of property belonging to religious institutions) and also the enforcement of a more western, public lifestyle (e.g., the banning of the fez and other Islamic apparel, and the adoption of the Latin alphabet and western calendar). Public life was to be the space in which 'Turkishness' and Turkish culture was redefined (White 2013).

These reforms to construct a modern Turkey did not immediately take hold in the practices of everyday life. In particular, most citizens were not unified under the new Turkey because they still possessed various different cultural backgrounds and tribal loyalties (e.g., White 2013, 25; Kasaba 2009; Eissenstat 2004, 238; Pope and Pope 2011; Kadioğlu 1996). Atatürk and the nationalists sought to foster unification by enhancing the development of a new national identity—a new 'Turk' (e.g., Kadioğlu 1996; Baran 2010; Pope and Pope 2011; White 2013). This question of how this new national identity would be constructed was fiercely debated (Eissenstat 2004; Çağaptay 2007). Atatürk and the nationalists first had to instill a sense of pride in the term 'Turk,' since previously the term was thought of in a derogatory way by both Ottomans and Europeans alike (Baran

2010, 10). To achieve this, Atatürk used archaeology to construct a new Turkish historical narrative that would be both a source of pride in a Turkish past that a new identity could be based on, as well as aid in establishing validity to their newly formed state (White 2013, 26). Thus, as suggested by the Turkish scholar, Tanyeri-Erdemir and quoted by White, “...the purpose of constructing a new identity was to create ‘a common ground for all the citizens of the newly established nation-state’ and to help intellectuals ‘to imagine ‘Turkishness’ as a general inclusive concept’” (White 2013, 27). This entanglement between building a nation and building a national identity emphasizes not only the fabricated nature of both but their inseparability from one another. Almost immediately as it was attempted, there was an increasing inability of the state to control this definition of Turkishness and therefore shape what Turkish national identity would be. As will be explored later on (Sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3) this entanglement between national identity and nation building remains present today not only in Turkey, but in the TRNC too.

It is quite clear that Atatürk and other contemporary nationals of the time—scholars, poets, and journalists — manufactured the idea of the ‘Turk’ to promote a new unifying identity (e.g., Baran 2010; Kushner 1977). Early definitions of ‘Turk’ were based on a shared sense of history and territory. An early definition of ‘Turk’ written by Atatürk states, “The Turks are those people of Turkey who founded the Turkish Republic” (Pope and Pope 2011, 58). His definition was not based on religion and did not exclude non-Muslims so long as they, like Muslims, adopted the Turkish language, Turkish names, and accepted the nationalistic ideals of Turkism (White 2013). Within a few years,

however, this definition shifted from a more civic understanding to a more ethnic one and the focus became much more about Turkish lineage and blood (Pope and Pope 2011, 58; White 2013, 28). This shift became subject to public debate when in 1924 the Grand National Assembly legally differentiated non-Muslims speaking other languages as ‘Kanun Turku’ (English: Turks-by-law), thus “...opening an institutionalized gap between Turks-by-citizenship and Turks-by-nationality” (White 2013, 32). Even today, notions of Turkishness remain embedded within the law, with the most prominent example being Article 301 of the Turkish penal code. By this Article it remains against the law to insult Turkishness, although the official definition of Turkishness has undergone significant change since Atatürk’s time.

From the founding of the Republic of Turkey there was resistance to the Kemalist philosophical underpinnings of the nation. The resistance never dissipated, but it was not until the 1950’s when the first multi-party elections were held that the more conservative opposition groups gained position and power enough to have a significant impact on the design of the Turkish nation-state (Al 2015; White 2013). Political debates about national identity only increased between the 1960s and 1980s when three military coups took place in order to protect the Kemalist secular values from the leading parties of the time which supported more pro-Islam policies. The succession of military governments in these decades almost inevitably lead to an attempt to more uniformly define Turkish citizenship (Al 2015; White 2013). Article 66 of the 1982 constitution redefined the relationship of citizenship and Turkishness by defining all those holding citizenship as Turkish (Al 2015, 94). As such, Turkish scholar Ergun Özbudun (2012), as quoted by Al

(2015) argues that “...the most fundamental problem facing the present-day Turkish democracy is to reconcile this social pluralism with an authoritarian state tradition that seeks to impose an artificial homogeneity, even uniformity, on the society” (Al 2015, 94; Özbudun 2012:70).

Popularity for religious political parties grew during these periods and culminated in 2002 with the rise of the politician Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the election of the political party he created, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkıma Partisi, AKP). AKP promotes a new construction of Turkish nationalism that differs from the Kemalist vision. The primary difference is that in AKP’s reshaping of Turkish nationalism, Islam plays a crucial role in determining the identity of the Turkish nation (Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015, 306). To reshape an official construction of the identity of the Turkish nation, the AKP government has been more inclusive of its Ottoman heritage and has enacted more pro-Islamic policies to solidify a new nationalism based on Turkish Muslim values. While AKP supporters are enthusiastic about these new changes, the enactment of these policies and the heavy promotion of this nationalism has raised concerns by citizens and journalists that the AKP government and Erdoğan are ‘Islamifying’ the nation.

Kuru (2006) examines the complexity of secularism found within AKP’s policies and nation-building tactics to demonstrate that AKP is not ‘Islamifying’ the nation. Kuru (2006, 159) argues that AKP is not an anti-secular Islamist organization, but rather a “defender of an alternative mode of secularism”. Kuru (2006) defines this secularism as a ‘passive’ secularism that gives priorities to religious freedoms and allows them public

visibility, which is in staunch juxtaposition to the ‘assertive’ secularism promoted by Atatürk and Kemalists. In Kuru’s definition this ‘assertive’ secularism means, “...the state favours a secular worldview in the public sphere and aims to confine religion to the private sphere” (Kuru 2006, 137). Although I agree with Kuru’s making complex the notion of secularism, I think he downplays the important role religion plays in AKP’s policies.

Islamism has been adapted to the Turkish context and plays an important role in AKP’s nation-building tactics. Yeşilada and Noordijk (2010) highlight AKP’s insistence that Islam be a central element of Turkish nationalism. Part of the reasoning for such insistence can be traced to Erdoğan’s source of inspiration, the writings of Fazıl Necip. Fazıl Necip promoted a Turkish nation constructed by both Sunni Islam and Turkishness, but prioritized the importance of Islam (Singer 2013, 85). A contemporary of Atatürk, Necip was very critical of Atatürk’s secular vision of Turkey and adamantly promoted a totalitarian view of the state embedded in Islam. As such, AKP has managed to maintain that Islam is an important element of Turkishness, which is opposed to Kemalist ideology that downplays the role of religion (Michael 2014, 22). White (2013) successfully tackles the dichotomy of the role secularism and Islam play by illustrating the ways Islam and secularism are negotiated by arguing that the AKP is promoting a Muslim nationalist vision that is “...focused on a structured relationship with the Muslim world in which Turkey takes a leading role, as it had in Ottoman times” (White 2013, 48). Through these more complex renderings of secularism and Islam, these scholars demonstrate that

Erdoğan and the AKP are not ‘Islamifying’ the nation, but rather through negotiations of secularism and Islam are ‘Turkifying’ it.

During the 2014 Turkish Presidential election, Erdoğan and the AKP government spoke frequently of creating a ‘New Turkey’. While the definition of this ‘New Turkey’ was vague, it was made clear that Erdoğan was presented to lead Turkey into this new era. The term ‘Neo-Ottoman’, first used pejoratively by the Greeks during the 1974 Turkish invasion of Cyprus to criticize the expansionist policies of the Turkey, has since been used by academics to characterize Turkish political ideology promoted by the AKP that seeks to return Turkey to the glory of the Ottoman era (Karpat 2002, 524). Under AKP rule, emphasis has been placed on embracing Ottoman heritage as seen through the incorporation of the Ottoman language classes in high school and grandiose celebrations of Ottoman historical events, such as the 1453 Ottoman conquest of Istanbul. This renewed focus on the Ottoman heritage is directly opposed to Kemalist ideology which sought to sever ties with its Ottoman past. AKP’s new historical narrative to unify Turkish peoples extends the concept of Turkishness to be inclusive of people beyond the national territory of Turkey. This, coupled with the fact that Islam plays a central role in Turkishness effects how the Turkish government relates to Turkish Cypriot peoples. While past Turkish governments promoted the concept of a ‘Turkish Cypriot’ identity through official discourse, the emphasis by the AKP government is now placed on redefining the TRNC population as ‘Muslim Turks’ of Cyprus (Michael 2014).

Although President Erdoğan and the AKP government embrace Turkey's Ottoman legacy, it would be wrong to say that this focus on utilizing the Ottoman legacy means President Erdoğan and the AKP party are distancing themselves from the nationalistic concepts of 'Turkishness' as Bozdağlıoğlu (2008) claims him to do. For example, Prime Minister Erdoğan recently changed part of state protocol by changing the colour of the welcoming carpets from red to turquoise in an attempt to imbue Ottoman characteristics to the Turkish state. The colour red has unmistakable nationalist connections to Turkey as it is the colour of the flag and is referenced in the Turkish national anthem. Turquoise, although it does not have the same recognizable associations as the colour red, is identifiable with the coveted Ottoman Iznik pottery and Iznik tiles that decorate famous mosques in Turkey. Given these colour associations, it could be argued that this changed state protocol is an example of fabricating a new Ottoman identity; whereby the replacement of the red carpet with the turquoise carpet is an attempt to erase the Turkish past to make way for an Ottoman future. Instead, I argue that this change in state protocol is an example of trying to fabricate a new Turkish identity, albeit a Turkish identity unified in a pride of an Ottoman past. Deputy Prime Minister Bülent Arınç said, "...A turquoise carpet instead of a red one is a better representation of our culture. The colour is unique to us, and well chosen" (Sunday's Zaman, 19 Nov 2013). This was not the only example of turquoise replacing the colour red. Additionally, the national football team now wears a turquoise and white jersey for away games (instead of the traditional red and white) and Turkish Airlines aircrafts are decorated with turquoise furnishings, including the stewardesses' uniforms. This seemingly innocent change in colour is one way in which the AKP government is changing the official perception of Turkishness; from one

in which Kemalists are closely associated with the red of the flag to an emphasis on the understanding of Turkishness with the turquoise colours of the Ottoman past.

The rise of the AKP presents an important moment in Turkish history in which another shift in Turkish nationalism occurs creating a tension between the Kemalist definition of Turkish nationalism and AKP's definition of Turkish nationalism. White has labelled this new Turkish nationalism, Muslim nationalism, which instead of being defined by a "...blood-based Turkish ethnicity and a defined territory, like Kemalism, AKP's redefining of Turkish nationalism is based on cultural Turkism and imagines the nation as having more flexible Ottoman imperial boundaries" (White 2013, 19). However, although Kemalist ideology is weakened in the government sphere, it has re-emerged in new ways. Özyürek (2006) and Senay (2013a; 2013b) argue that Kemalists viewed the entrance of political Islam into the public sphere as an Islamification of Turkey and in response Kemalism found a new place in the private sphere. Examining this fear, White discusses the way Turkish people negotiate social boundaries and illustrates that the maintenance of a national identity requires constant attention; "There is no neutral self. A sip of whisky, like a drop of blood, is a highly charged cultural marker of social class, lifestyle, and political values; it takes its power and meaning from the particular national narrative and accompanying cultural tradition with which the individual identifies" (White 2013, 132). It becomes evident that there is not a single fabricated definition of Turkishness, but multiple intersecting definitions (White 2013). These definitions are fluid; not only continuously re-negotiated over time but also negotiated in time.

AKP's 'neo-Ottoman' vision, which is looking to construct a future Turkey that resembles in part a renewed, modern, Ottoman Empire redefines the relationship between Turkey and North Cyprus. During the time of my field research, the relationship between the Turkish Cypriot citizens of North Cyprus and Turkey was quite strained. Much of this strain came from conflicting views on policies promoted by the AKP government and the TRNC government, such as the funding of the building of religious schools on the island and the construction of an undersea pipeline to supply water to the TRNC from Turkey. Examining the opposing views on these issues provides insight into the conflicting views about how Turkey and North Cyprus both see the future of the island. The government of Turkey views North Cyprus as part of the larger Turkish nation whereas most Turkish Cypriots desire a future more independent from Turkey. This point of contention speaks to greater issues about where North Cyprus is situated within this new framework of Turkish nationalism. The histories and policies promoted by Turkey and implemented by the TRNC government are either accepted or rejected by the inhabitants. Examining these acceptances or rejections sheds insight into how citizens negotiate understandings of their own national identity and negotiate boundaries of "Turkishness". These definitions are then negotiated between and among the inhabitants of North Cyprus.

This brief review of the emergence and continued negotiations of Turkish nationalism demonstrates that there are different and competing ideologies about Turkish nationalism. Thus far, however, much of this discussion about constructions of Turkish nationalism and Turkishness has been approached only from analyzing top-down constructions of Turkish nationalism which does not provide a complete picture. Exploring the everyday

practices that construct Turkishness gives greater voice to the people in the construction of their own nationalism and thereby gains greater insight into the ways that Turkish nationalism is constructed. One such approach to everyday practices in the construction of nationalism is Billig's (1983) theory of banal nationalism. In his book *Banal Nationalism*, Billig turns the discussion away from governments and elites to instead focus on the ways in which people construct nationalism through everyday practices, such as flying the national flag outside one's home. He suggests that nationalism is continuously 'flagged' through routine symbols and habits of language. An important aspect of banal nationalism that he stresses early on is that these everyday practices are not benign merely because they are banal. Instead, he echoes Ardent (1963) and argues that "...banal nationalism can hardly be innocent: it is reproducing institutions, which possess vast armaments. As the Gulf and Falkland Wars indicated, forces can be mobilized without lengthy campaigns of political preparation. The armaments are primed, ready for use in battle. And the national populations appear also to be primed, ready to support the use of those armaments" (Billig 1983, 7). Through this definition he gives weight to the everyday practices, making them as important as those of more official constructions of nationalism.

Although not as common as the state-centric approach, there are scholars of Turkish nationalism who use Billig's approach to nationalism as well as other grassroots approaches. White (2013), Özyurek (2006) and Senay (2013), discussed above, provide good examples of how nationalism can be reproduced in private spheres. Köse and Yilmaz (2012) explore the concept of banal nationalism by examining themes and

symbols found in the Turkish media that reveal the ways in which central attributes of the nation have been disseminated within the daily news. Their findings indicate that the constant transformation of nationalism is being reproduced in an unnoticed way every day. However, while this approach gives weight to the importance of everyday practices of nationalism and gives more voice to the people, its focus is on ways in which the official construction of nationalism has been filtered into everyday practices of nationalism. What if the people's construction of Turkish nationalism is different than that of the official construction? Çinar (2005) explores these variables thorough an examination of different daily practices in Turkey to argue that nationalism is negotiated between the people and the state.

Papadakis (1998) examines this negotiation of nationalism between the people and the state through his ethnographic research in Cyprus. Papadakis (1998) demonstrates how nationalism is internally contested among Greek Cypriots. He argues that there are two models of nationalism, the 'Greek' model and the 'Cypriot' model. Each of these models of nationalisms construct different definitions of belonging, with the Greek model fostering a sense of 'Greekness' and Cypriot model fostering a sense of 'Cypriotness'. Examining two political parties and their supporters he shows how 'grand narratives' are linked with personal histories. Through this examination he demonstrates that nationalism is not only inherently contested, but is a dialectical process between 'above' and 'below'. Focusing on this dialectical relationship he critiques both top-down approaches to nationalism and those approaches which assume nationalism from below,

such as Smith's (1986) view that nations are based on primordial cultural groups, which he defines as *ethnie*.

Askew (2005) through her research on musical performance in Tanzania also highlights this dialectical approach. She argues that the construction of nationalism is a negotiation between the state and the people, rather than being enforced by the state and passively accepted by the people. In her own words, "Rather than an abstract ideology produced by some to be consumed by others, nationalism ought to be conceptualized as a series of continually negotiated relationships between people who share occupancy in a defined geographic, political, or ideological space" (Askew 2005, 12). Askew argues against state-centric constructions of nationalism by demonstrating that this approach gives too much power to the nation-state and downplays and neglects the voice of the people. While the influence of political groups in power, foreign and domestic policies, and reform laws should not be overlooked or disregarded, it is important to also consider the active voice and actions of the people. By making this argument, her theory both emphasizes the continually changing nature of nationalism and avoids the top-down approach to nationalism by instead considering the construction of nationalism as a dialogue.

Performance is central to Askew's theory of nationalism. Analyzing the works of performance theorists she constructs a theory on the politics of performance to argue that "...performance is actively employed in the negotiation of power relations" (Askew 2005, 21). She further argues that this performance is dialectic, whereby both the

‘performer’ (the state) and the audience (the public) are active performers in the performance (the production of culture). This dissertation will employ Askew’s (2005) and Papadakis’ (1998) understanding of the dialectic relationship between the people and the state in the negotiation of power relations.

2.2.2 Emergence of Turkish Nationalism and defining of “Turkishness” in Cyprus

As a product of the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus a new group of people, the Turks, settled on the island. As demonstrated by Nevzat (2005) Turkish nationalism was only able to emerge because this group of people were on the island. There are controversies surrounding the actual ethnicity of these settlers, which is a subject for later discussion. Regardless of whether they were of Turkish descent, the belief that these settlers were Turkish formed a “...powerful basis on which to later form the “imagined community” of the Turkish “nation” in Cyprus” (Nevzat 2005, 49). At the end of the Ottoman Empire’s rule in Cyprus the ideas of Turkish nationalism and notions of Turkishness were widely circulated. As in Turkey, these ideas were spread via books and conversations. Nevzat gives examples of the book, “Turkification,” by the Turkish nationalist, Alp Tekin, read in the Nicosia-based Turkish club, “Birlik Ocağı” (Nevzat 2005, 100).

Although the seeds of Turkish nationalism were planted prior to British rule, it is generally argued that Turkish nationalism grew stronger during British colonial rule in Cyprus (1878-1960) and was heightened during the early days of independence (e.g., Hatay 2008; Killoran 1998; Kizilay 1989). Turkish nationalism emerged and grew during this period due to a combination of interrelated historical processes. One reason

for the passionate embracing of Turkish nationalism by Turkish Cypriots was the parallel growth of Greek nationalism on the island. Greek nationalism taught through Greek Cypriot educational institutions promoted the idea of *enosis*. Enosis is the desire for the unification of Cyprus with Greece that served as the impetus for a Greek Cypriot movement that emerged both in response to colonial rule as well as part of the larger ‘Megali Idea’, a PanHellenic movement aimed at unifying Greek people in lands that were historically considered to be Greek. After negotiations with the British to achieve enosis failed, the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (Greek: Εθνική Οργάνωσις Κυπρίων Αγωνιστών, EOKA), under the leadership of General George Grivas, was established with the aim to end colonial rule and achieve enosis (Novo 2012, 416). The British administration condemned the new EOKA organization for its violent approaches to achieve enosis. Seeing this violence, the Turkish Cypriots became increasingly fearful of the possibility of living under Greek rule.

Lacher and Kaymak (2005) argue that Turkish Cypriots embraced Turkish nationalism in response to the Greek Cypriots’ cry for enosis. Fearing that what happened in Crete would happen in Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots rallied behind a movement called *taksim*, which sought the partition of Cyprus into Greek and Turkish sides (Loizides 2007; Kizilyurek 1999).² Slogans such as “Partition or Death,” (Turkish: ya taksim, ya ölüm) were used to build support for the cause (Isachenko 2012, 39). The rise of the Taksim movement had implications for how Turkish Cypriots understood and perceived their

² Under Ottoman control, the protests for enosis were stopped, but after Crete gained their autonomy, the European powers safeguarded the ‘Greek majority rule and the Turkish minority rights’ by agreeing to the union of Crete with Greece after the first Balkan War (Markides 1998, 2001).

relation to Turkey. This nationalistic attachment to Turkey imagined the island as Turkish. Turkey too promoted this viewpoint, with PM Adnan Menderes calling Cyprus an “extension of Anatolia”. The December 1949 demonstration, wherein 15,000 islanders demanded that Cyprus be returned to Turkey if Britain decided to leave the island, was a historical event illustrating this passionate nationalistic attachment to Turkey (Loizides 2007, 175).

Attalides (1979), Markides (2001), and Killoran (1998) argue that the British used the divide-and-rule strategy to cultivate and encourage the nationalistic division between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. While the Greek Cypriots supported the political goal of enosis, many initially disagreed with EOKA’s violent tactics, most notably, the Greek Cypriot communist party, The Progressive Party of Working People (Greek: Ανορθωτικό Κόμμα Εργαζόμενου Λαού, AKEL) (French 2015, 114). On 1 April 1955, EOKA launched attacks against British military targets, radio transmitters, and police stations, starting what is known today as the Cyprus Insurgency (1955 to 1959).³ In order to put a halt to the EOKA insurgency, the British expanded the numbers of the Cyprus Police Force (CPF). Against the advice of senior colonial officials, recruitment for the

³ The Cyprus Insurgency predominantly consisted of a military campaign led by the EOKA to end British colonial rule so that enosis could be achieved. In the beginning EOKA’s primary targets were military installations and British soldiers. The Greek government was alleged to have clandestinely supported EOKA with arms, money and propaganda. The EOKA was also supported by the Greek Orthodox Church through financial support, recruitment, and campaigns garnering international support (Novo 2013).

CPF consisted predominantly of Turkish Cypriots⁴, which only served to deepen tensions between the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. Eventually, because of the Turkish Cypriots' disapproval of enosis and their support of the British, EOKA declared Turkish Cypriots an enemy. In response, Turkish Cypriots, with the support of the Turkish government, organized their own resistance movement, the Turkish Resistance Organization (Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı, TMT) to protect both their ideals and their people. It was during this period that authorities erected a barricade to divide Greek and Turkish neighborhoods. Throughout the following year more violence, bloodshed, bombings, and lootings continued. As a result, many Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots fled from their homes to separate protected enclaves, thus widening the division of the two communities with a physical separation. This line of demarcation was known as the "Mason-Dixon Line," which preceded the 1963 "Green Line" that divides the island today (Hatay and Bryant 2008, 444).

While these events certainly played a part in the embracing of Turkish nationalism by Turkish Cypriots, this argument renders Turkish nationalism as something imposed from above and adopted by Turkish Cypriots in response to external forces. Bryant (2004) also cites the British colonial rule as the point for emergence of Greek and Turkish nationalism in Cyprus; however, her reasoning for citing the British colonial rule is very different. Instead of arguing that these nationalisms developed as a result of the divide-

⁴ To quote Novo, "By 1958, of the approximately 4,900 men in police uniform, less than one-fifth were Greek Cypriots, although they represented almost four-fifth of the population" (Novo 2012, 427). It is also worth noting that many of these Turkish Cypriots were available to join the auxiliary forces because EOKA had put pressure on Greek Cypriot employers to hire only Greek Cypriots (Bryant 2012, 6).

and-rule strategy, she contends that, “...the ideologies of freedom that emerged under British rule allowed Cypriots to imagine a better future for themselves and their children were necessarily imagined in nationalist terms” (Bryant 2004, 3). She argues that these nationalisms did not merely develop as a result of Turkish and Greek nationalistic propaganda, but developed in conjunction with the Cypriots’ encounter with modernity under British colonialism. This perspective gives more empowerment to the Turkish Cypriots in imagining their own political community, rather than making Turkish Cypriots victim to the political will of the British colonists.

The belief that the Turkish government could rule over Turkish Cypriots gained momentum. The Turkish Cypriots, although predominantly Muslim, were also greatly influenced by the Kemalist ideologies being promoted by Atatürk and the Young Turks. Turkish Cypriots enthusiastically adopted Atatürk’s ideas about the separation of religion and state, and implemented his restrictions on religion (Killoran 1998, 187; Kizilyurek 1989, 25; Volkan 1979, 74). Atatürk was not only seen as Turkey’s leader, but a leader for Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots kept close track of developments in Anatolia through their press and reported enthusiastically about Atatürk’s military successes (Nevzat 2005, 344). Nevzat gives one example of an image of Atatürk printed in a journal with the caption “Our Commander-in-Chief Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa” (Nevzat 2005, 267).

The adoption of Atatürk’s reforms coincided with the reformation of educational institutions in Cyprus. During this time, although Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots

retained control over their own schools, British administrators repeatedly tried to reform different aspects of the school such as advocating for the instruction of the student's 'native' language (Bryant 2004, 140). Bryant argues that although this was an important part in the nationalization of Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots, it's not all that was at work in creating the different national communities (Bryant 2004, 140). To make this argument, she makes the distinction that schools were not sites for production where one acquires knowledge, but rather schools were sites where one became a "master of a body of knowledge that had come to represent the traditions of the community" (Bryant 2004, 141). This argument highlights the way in which the emergence of nationalism affected the imagining of the political body and the resultant social and cultural boundaries that were constructed and negotiated. The implications of this nationalist movement re-shaped the Turkish Cypriots' understanding of national belonging and helped in the construction of a new identity. More specifically, Turkish Cypriots started to identify themselves primarily as 'Turks' and placed less emphasis on their Muslim identity (e.g., Bryant 2004; Killoran 1998).

To return to the historical narrative, on 16 August 1960, the independent Republic of Cyprus was formed under the guarantor-ship of Greece, Turkey and Britain, with Archbishop Makarios elected as its first president. The new constitution was framed by the ethnic composition of the island, requiring a Greek Cypriot President and a Turkish Cypriot Vice President—each to be elected by their own community and each guaranteed equal veto powers. The government and civil service would be set at a 7:3 ratio, with Greek Cypriots guaranteed 70% of the positions and the Turkish Cypriots guaranteed

30% of the positions. Although this constitution embodied these consociational principles of guaranteed group representation, by 1963 disputes over separate municipalities caused tension in the newly formed government between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots (Markides 2001). That same year, Makarios proposed to revise the constitution with thirteen new amendments. Turkish Cypriot leaders rejected these amendments, arguing that they favoured the Greek Cypriots and only served to weaken the Turkish Cypriot wing of the government. As a consequence of the tensions, violence erupted again on the island on 21 December 1963, a date today known by Turkish Cypriots as ‘Kanlı Noel’ (English: ‘Bloody Christmas’). Thus was set in motion a series of violent events that eventually resulted in the deployment of the United Nations Peace Keeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICP) (March 1964) to act as a buffer between the two communities.⁵ Subsequently, more Turkish Cypriots, some 25,000 in number, fled their homes and moved into military-protected enclaves, which were dispersed across the island (Trimikliniotis 2012, 35).

On 21 April 1967 a military junta seized power in Greece and applied more pressure on Makarios to achieve enosis. Although Makarios desired enosis, he realized it was not an attainable goal given the current internal political problems on the island (Papadakis 1998). Believing Makarios to have completely abandoned enosis, Grivas, with active support from the military junta in Greece, established the ultra-right wing organization EOKA-B with the intention of overthrowing Makarios and achieving enosis. Although EOKA was supported by the majority of Greek Cypriots during the fight for

⁵ To this day, the UNFICP is still active on the island.

independence, EOKA-B did not garner that level of support, with the population instead rallying behind Makarios. Unexpectedly, Grivas died of a heart attack leaving EOKA-B under the control of the military junta in Athens. On 15 July 1974, the military junta in Athens, the EOKA-B and the National Guard were successful in carrying out a military coup, thereby overthrowing Makarios and replacing him with Nikos Sampson⁶. In response to the coup, on 20 July 1974, Turkey invaded the island, claiming their action was compliant with the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee. Internationally, this invasion has been interpreted as both legal and illegal; however, the second-wave of Turkish invasions on 14 August 1974, is internationally regarded as a clear violation of the Treaty.

In the present-day, these years of inter-communal fighting have been placed in different historical narratives by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot governments. Papadakis (1994) illustrates how these differences are expressed through the exhibitions in the two national museums, located on each side of the divided city of Nicosia (Papadakis 1994). Both named ‘The Museum of National Struggle,’ the museums date the beginning of these struggles at different moments, with the museum in the RoC focusing primarily on the period between 1955 and 1959 and the museum in the TRNC focusing on the events between 1963 and 1974, as well as other events after 1974. The Museum of National Struggle in the RoC valorizes the EOKA’s military campaign to free Cyprus from colonial rule while simultaneously demonizing the British and their Turkish Cypriot

⁶ Nikos Sampson was an EOKA member known notoriously throughout Cyprus for his participation in multiple assassinations during both the Cyprus Insurgency and the period of intercommunal violence. Today, his historical legacy is disputed within the RoC, with many Greek Cypriots seeing him as a hero for his unwavering dedication to the struggle for independence, while others view him as a traitor for his involvement in the military coup carried against Makarios.

collaborators. The Museum of National Struggle in the TRNC, however, devotes most of the exhibition demonizing the atrocities committed by the EOKA and valorizing the TMT and their protection of the Turkish Cypriot peoples. Papadakis (1994) illustrates that while these museums contest the historical narratives, they are simultaneously depicting contested perceptions of the island's future. The narrative as told through the RoC museum's exhibition denies the legitimacy of the TRNC and makes the argument that their government is the only true, legal political entity, whereas the museum in the TRNC emphasizes the right of Turkish Cypriots to their own government.

While the official history of the intercommunal years is contested between the Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots, it is important to also illustrate that this history is contested internally within the TRNC. Navaro-Yashin (2012) demonstrates that in 'official' representations the TMT fighters are presented as unconditional heroes who saved the Turkish Cypriot people from the violence of the EOKA military. These official constructions of TMT fighters as defenders of Turkish Cypriots and champions of Turkish Cypriot nationalism as well as promoters of tighter bonds with Turkey are contested by some Turkish Cypriot people that lived through those times. While actions of the TMT are generally regarded as positive among Turkish Cypriots, Navaro-Yashin discovered through her personal and informal conversations with Turkish Cypriots that many "...would recount stories of Turkish Cypriots murdered by the TMT or speculate that their official "martyred" relatives had in fact been assassinated by the TMT and not, as officially claimed, by EOKA or by Greek-Cypriots" (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 64). Through her conversations with Turkish Cypriots, one can see the way in which the

history of the TMT organization is internally contested between the “official” narrative of the state and the “unofficial” private histories of the people, and also between peoples along political divides of left and right.

Although initially Turkish Cypriots saw the 1974 “Peace Operation” as the motherland Turkey aiding in the transformation of “...the Turkish Cypriots from a marginalized minority to a secured people with a ‘state’”, this soon changed (Loizides 2007, 177). It is argued that enthusiasm for Turkish nationalism decreased almost immediately after the self-proclamation of the TRNC (e.g., Hatay 2008; Killoran 2008; Bryant 2004). The confrontation of Turkish Cypriots with the reality of being an unrecognized state and the heavy reliance on Turkey to make their own decisions economically and politically continued to grind away the nationalistic feelings that diminished over the years as a result. In addition to their international isolation, scholars list economic stagnation (Loizides 2007), Turkey’s interference in Turkish Cypriot community affairs (Navaro-Yashin 2012), and the colonization of Cyprus by Turkish settlers (Hatay 2008; Navaro-Yashin 2006) as other factors in the decline of their once unwavering allegiance to Turkey. In this way, Turkish nationalism declined because of an increasing failure to gain external recognition and a wide-ranging skepticism as to the quality of the TRNC’s sovereignty (Kaymak and Lacher 2005).

To summarize, Turkish nationalism was not merely implanted onto Cyprus by Turkey, but it arose and adapted in response to historical events on the island. As such, very specific understandings of ‘Turkishness’ developed that included very Turkish Cypriot

perspectives of modernity. These ideas were heavily influenced by Atatürk's ideals of secularism as well as by notions of British modernity (Bryant 2004). As will be argued in the next section, although Turkish nationalism declined, reified constructions of secularism retained a central role in the construction in the nationalist imaginings of the Turkish Cypriots.

2.2.3 Rise of Cypriot Nationalisms and “Cypriotness”

After the events of 20 July 1974, different structures were established to govern and administrate the Turkish Cypriot community, the Autonomous Turkish Cypriot Administration (1974) and the Turkish Federated State (1975). After eight years of failed negotiations, on 15 November 1983, the north self-proclaimed their independence under the name of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (Turkish: Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti, TRNC), with Rauf Denktaş elected as the TRNC President (1983-2005). To this day, Turkey is the only state to recognize the TRNC, with the rest of the international community viewing the territory as a Turkish militarized occupied zone and relegating the President's status to that of a Turkish Cypriot leader.⁷ Since its inception the TRNC has in many ways been seen as an extension of the Turkish state. Nowhere was this imagined nation more visible than in the rapidly changing landscape. After 1983, geographical place names were changed into Turkish names, Atatürk busts and statues were erected in public squares, Turkish flags were flown on buildings, slogans such as

⁷Citing the *Loizidou v Turkey* [1995] (No. 40/1993/435/514), the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR) in the *Cyprus v Turkey* [2001] (No. 25781/94) ruled that Turkey was responsible for 14 violations of the European Convention on Human Rights and its Protocols. Through these court cases, the ECtHR held that due to the large number of troops engaged in active duty on the island, that the Turkish army exercises effective control over northern Cyprus.

“how happy to say I’m a Turk” were engraved on the hillsides, and a large Turkish and Turkish Cypriot flag was drawn onto the side of the Beşparmak (English: Five-finger) mountain range (e.g., Hatay 2008, 150; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Ramm 2006). All of these national symbols reflected the ideology that the new TRNC was Turkish. The Turkish Cypriot leader, Denktaş, further perpetuated this ideology by frequently referring to both Turkish Cypriots and those from Turkey as ethnically and culturally indistinct from one another. Most famously he remarked, “The only true Cypriots are the wild donkeys of the Karpaz peninsula” (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 155).

Educational institutions taught the history of the TRNC alongside the official historical narrative of Turkey (Papadakis 2008; Navaro-Yashin 2012). Navaro-Yashin demonstrates through her research that when Turkish Cypriots learn about the founding of their nation, they are presented with contradictory references to their ‘state’ with the foundation being referenced to as either the ‘TRNC,’ the ‘Republic of Turkey,’ or the ‘Republic of Cyprus’ (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 112). To quote Navaro-Yashin, “On the one hand Turkish Cypriots are taught to revere the ‘independence of the TRNC,’ but on the other hand they encounter ordinary references to ‘Turkey’ as their ‘state’” (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 112). This ambiguity surrounding the nation’s founding is exemplified by the TRNC’s celebration of both 29 October (Declaration of the Republic of Turkey) and 15 November (Declaration of the TRNC) as national public holidays.

Papadakis (2008) demonstrates that before 2004, Turkish Cypriot textbooks not only promoted a connection between Turkey and Cyprus, but also distanced the island’s

history from its Greek connections. This historical distancing from Greece both delegitimizes the notion of enosis, as well as fosters a distancing between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. One excerpt from a pre-2004 history textbook quoted by Papadakis states, “for Greece, Cyprus has no significance at all neither from a historical nor from a strategic perspective.” (Papadakis 2008, 13). Further, these books refer to the Greek Cypriots as ‘Rum’ (the Turkish word that also denotes present-day Greeks living in Turkey) instead of ‘Yunan,’ (the Turkish word for Greeks living in Greece), thereby denying the Greek Cypriots their proclaimed Greek identity and delegitimizing their political desire for enosis (union of Cyprus with Greece) (Papadakis 2008, 13). These pre-2004 text books denied the Turkish Cypriots any relationship with Greek Cypriots by both distancing them from Greek Cypriots and by fostering a connection between the Turkish Cypriots and Turks from Turkey.

In order to jumpstart the state’s new economy, the TRNC needed people who could work the lands and the factories and as a result thousands of settlers from Turkey came to Cyprus in promise of land, work, and citizenship (Hatay 2008, 150). The facilitated migration ended by the late 1970s, but by that point approximately 25,000-30,000 persons had resettled on the island (Hatay 2008, 150). Initially the Turkish Cypriot community welcomed these settlers without any protests against this facilitated migration orchestrated between the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot governments. Over time the increasingly large number of Turkish immigrants migrating to the TRNC left many Turkish Cypriots feeling that they were being culturally overhauled with an added fear that they were outnumbered by settlers from Turkey (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 58). While

the TRNC was officially promoting the cultural and ethnic unity of Turkish and Turkish Cypriots, privately Turkish Cypriots were creating boundaries against the Turkish immigrants. ‘Othering’ the settlers from Turkey by emphasizing differences in their appearance and using pejorative names such as ‘Kara Sakal’ (English: Blackbeard) Turkish Cypriots pejoratively classified Turks as inferior to Turkish Cypriots (Hatay 2008, 165; Navaro-Yashin 2012, 57). Even the more ‘objective’ term ‘Türkiyeliler’ (English: person who comes from Turkey) contributed to ‘Othering’. When Turkish Cypriots use this word to label Turkish settlers who are citizens of the TRNC, it denies them access into the imagined community of the TRNC.

Loizides (2007) and Lacher and Kaymak (2005) have shown how this process led to alternative forms of imagining the political community, giving rise to Cypriotism or Cypriot nationalism on the island. Cypriotness is characterized by an attachment to the island rather than Turkey. The Turkish Cypriot poet Mehmet Yaşin highlighted this concept by describing the situation on the island as, “We have never been able to adopt Cyprus as our motherland, instead of having a feeling of Cypriotness we feel like a nomad minority dropped somehow on this island” (Ramm 2006, 528). As will be demonstrated, it was not until 2004 that Cypriotism could be pushed as a state ideology in the TRNC because up until that point parties and politicians promoting an explicitly Turkish nationalist agenda dominated the government (Ramm 2006, 527).

With the rise of Cypriot nationalism, Killoran (1998), Loizides (2007) and Lacher and Kaymak (2005) demonstrate that national identity underwent a transformation whereby a

Turkish national identity encompassed both notions of ‘Turkishness’ and ‘Cypriotness’. Killoran (1998) in her research on women’s gender identity in Turkish Cypriot society raises interesting points about the complex negotiations of national identity in North Cyprus. She argues that the “...complex negotiations over a national identity (Cypriot and/or Turkish), a modern identity (Eastern and/or Western), and a religious identity (Muslim and/or secular) result in contradictory messages about gender and sexuality for Turkish Cypriot women” (Killoran 1998, 183). Although she recognizes identity to be multi-faceted, within each ‘identity’ she examines each as if it was a binary construct (i.e., Cypriot/Turkish, East/West, and Muslim/Secular). The use of binary constructs as a way to engage with Turkish nationalism is actually quite prominent in the studies of Turkish nationalism. Samuel Huntington (1993) famously stated that modern Turkey is a ‘torn country’ divided along and between binary lines—‘secular’ and ‘religious,’ ‘east’ and ‘west,’ ‘modern’ and ‘backwards’. Even today, although prominent scholars on Turkish nationalism have dismissed Huntington’s theory about Turkey, these binaries between ‘secularism’ and ‘religion’, ‘east’ and ‘west’, ‘modern’ and ‘backwards’ still remain a way of engaging with Turkish nationalism and Turkish identity. The problem is not so much that these binaries exist, but rather it is a question of how productive it is to continue using such binaries as entry points into understanding Turkish nationalism and Turkishness.

Vural and Rustemli (2006) categorize different understandings of ‘Cypriotness’ and ‘Turkishness’ into academic categories of civic and ethno-national identities. They state that Cypriots categorize their Cypriotness civically, whereby being ‘Cypriot’ is only

experienced as a civic identity. Turning to Sekulic, Vural and Rustemli define this civic identity as one which “is based on well-defined territory, a community of laws and institutions, a single political will, equal rights for members of the nation and common values, traditions or sentiments that bind people together” (Sekulic 2004: 460; Vural and Rustemli 2006: 335). They claim then that Turkish Cypriots construct their Turkishness along ethno-national lines of identity whereby they base their cultural, ethnic, or national characteristics on a common Turkish ethnic background or Turkish culture. However, based on my field research, I would argue that these categorizations are no longer, if they ever were that neatly packaged. Many Turkish Cypriots, especially when comparing themselves vis-à-vis Turkey argue that they are Cypriots ethnically. Likewise, there are Turkish Cypriots who see TRNC as a Turkish colony and thereby see themselves as civically attached to Turkey. I would argue this is a minority, but a grouping nevertheless.

Both Killoran (1998) and Vural and Rustemli (2006) construct very clear binary groupings of identity and as such do not allow for fluidity. Constructions of national identity are continuously changing and binary constructions do not allow for this variability. As will be argued more in-depth in Section 2.2.4, a more productive way to examine the negotiation of these national identities is by using the idea of boundaries as defined by Cohen (1985), who examines these fabrications along an analogue spectrum set apart by defined boundaries that are movable with changing conditions. Cohen argues, “...the boundary may be perceived in rather different terms, not only by people on opposite sides of it, but also by people on the same side” (Cohen 1985, 12).

Lacher and Kaymak attempt to allow for more fluidity to the negotiation of national identity by arguing that not only has Turkish Cypriot national identity come to incorporate elements of both a “Turk” and a “Cypriot”, but more importantly this transformed notion of the self became “...the basis for an increased willingness to abandon demands for a more formal sovereignty in exchange for a more substantial form of self-determination” (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 158). They continue to illustrate how the construction of these nationalisms were then “...not elite and state-sponsored projects, but rather were formed against the seemingly overwhelming apparatuses and resources deployed on behalf of the “nationalist” conception of political continuity” (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 159). In making these arguments Lacher and Kaymak (2005) argue that identity is something that is continuously being constructed within the context of a changing political, cultural, social, and economic scene. Lacher and Kaymak (2005) argue that this transition prevailed after the 2004 Annan Plan, as its failure caused debates about the nature of the political community.

The UN drafted the Annan Plan with the hopes that the island could be reunited before becoming a full member of the EU. In 1998, Cyprus’ consideration for membership within the European Union (EU) led to a series of UN-sponsored negotiations between the ROC and the TRNC to reunify the island. Although the Cyprus conflict has been on the international agenda, this EU proposal sparked new discussions. Through these new discussions the international community agreed on and endorsed the following parameters for a Cyprus solution: the “...creation of a federal state; bi-zonal in terms of

territory and bi-communal in terms of constitutional aspects; based on political equality of the two communities; having one international personality where sovereignty is shared between the two communities...” (Sözen and Özersay 2007, 125). Using these parameters as guidelines, it was agreed that the Annan Plan would only be put into action if both communities supported it. As a result, on 24 April 2004, two referendums were held in the ROC and the TRNC asking whether or not they approved of the Annan Plan’s proposal for reuniting the island. The TRNC agreed to the referendum, with 65% of Turkish Cypriots voting in support; however the ROC disagreed to the referendum; with 76% of Greek Cypriots voting against the Annan plan (Sözen and Özersay 2007, 125). While the Annan Plan was ultimately rejected on 1 May 2004, the ROC became a full member of the EU. However, only the ROC was granted EU membership status, while the TRNC was not recognized.⁸

The 2004 Annan plan changed the political imagination of the Turkish Cypriots. That same year saw the rise of the left-wing CTP (Republican Turkish Party). The CTP promoted a new historical narrative through a revision of the TRNC history books (Papadakis 2008, 17). Papadakis (2008) and Mavratsas (1999) examine the change in rhetoric and images incorporated in these new history textbooks. These new textbooks placed emphasis on the Cypriot character of the island by using an image of an undivided Cyprus on the front cover and using terminology such as “our island” instead of teaching that Cyprus was part of Turkey. This new narrative emphasized the similar “Cypriot”

⁸ However, if a Turkish Cypriot citizen can prove that they, or their family, was a residing citizen of the ROC before the partition of the island then they are entitled to a ROC passport and therefore EU citizenship rights.

background of the Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots living on the island by using the words “Kıbrıslı Türkler” (Turkish Cypriot) and “Kıbrıslı Rumlar” (“Rum” Cypriot) to refer to each population respectively (Papadakis 2008, 18; MEKB 2005, 59). In doing so, these schoolbooks distance both Turkish Cypriots from Turkey and Greek Cypriots from Greece. This shift in the TRNC historical narrative highlights the internal contestation of history between right-wing political communities, who promoted a deep connection with Turkey, and the left-wing political communities, who promoted a narrative of a Cyprus which is more independent from Turkey. These different internal understandings of the past were deeply embedded in current understandings of the political future of North Cyprus. The post-2004 textbooks in the TRNC promoted a reunified Cyprus. The new textbooks even went as far as to criticize the older textbooks for “teaching that Cyprus was a Turkish homeland” and instead changed the narrative to focus on Cyprus as the homeland by using the terms “our island” or “our country” (Papadakis 2008, 17; MEKB 2005, 65). Although this was the “officially” promoted view in the contemporary Turkish Cypriot textbooks, the pre-2004 narrative is still active and found within the Turkish Cypriot society.

As 2004 created a new way of conceiving and understanding the self and political community, this dissertation will argue that another understanding of the self and of political community has been negotiated and continues to be negotiated in North Cyprus since AKP rose to power, particularly after the Gezi Protests when debates about the nation’s identity were inflaming the Turkish Cypriot public. As said previously, the AKP reconceptualised Turkish nationalism and Turkish national identity by minimizing the

legacy of Atatürk and redefining and embracing Turkey's Ottoman heritage. During my field research, events in Turkey were closely followed because Turkey had great influence over the affairs of the TRNC. This thesis will demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots have embraced Kemalist values to such a degree that they feel it necessary to defend them against AKP's perceived assault on secularism. Turkish Cypriots interlace their understanding of Kemalist secular values with their vision and construction of modernity. By examining the ways in which boundaries of Turkishness are negotiated this dissertation will highlight the nuances and complexities of Turkishness and its relationship with modernity in North Cyprus. Critically engaging with the ways in which Turkishness is continuously and actively being negotiated between the people and the state will highlight the internal contestations of Turkish nationalism.

2.2.4 Why 'Turkishness'?

While this chapter has thus far outlined how notions of Turkishness have been constructed and shaped over time in Turkey and North Cyprus, what remains to be questioned is why 'Turkishness' should be used as a frame of analysis for exploring how Turkish Cypriots negotiate understandings of belonging. In what ways will examining Turkishness be a productive lens through which to explore and deconstruct notions of nationalism in North Cyprus? I will argue in this section that Turkishness is a dynamic and constructive way to frame the argument of this dissertation because the term enables one to examine the continuously shifting social boundaries rather than accept artificially constructed social identities, such as 'ethnic' and 'civic' identities, as proposed by Vural

and Rustemli (2006). Furthermore, I will argue that this choice of analysis arose through insights gained during my field research.

The existing literature on nationalism in Cyprus has centered primarily on notions of conflict and the ‘Cyprus Problem’. Through the examination and deconstruction of nationalism, this literature has sought to explain how the division of the island came about, and the reasons why that division continues to be perpetuated and remains in place today. Part of this discussion centers on the ethnic and cultural divisions between the Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots through an examination of the emergence and construction of separate Greek (Cypriot) and Turkish (Cypriot) nationalisms (e.g., Bryant 2004; Loizides 1998; Papadakis 1998). Examining these constructions of Turkish and Greek nationalism on the island, scholars demonstrate the ways in which these nationalisms promote closer ties between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots with their respective ‘motherlands’ of either Greece or Turkey.

Peter Loizos (1975) conducted what is considered to be the first anthropological examination of the dialectal relationship of the micro-politics of the village and the macro-scale politics of the state, thus setting a foundation on which later research on the island would be built. Through the ethnographic field research he conducted both before and after the 1974 invasion, he delved deeper into the question of how Greek Cypriots formed and imagined their political communities. Specifically, he examined the political platform of enosis and illustrated how an ethnic Greek nationalism was cultivated amongst the Greek Cypriots (Loizos 1974). His analysis highlighted the ways in which

Greek nationalism “meant very different things, at different times, to different categories of people...,” as well as revealed the ways in which Greek Cypriots constructed notions of national belonging built on the notion of a Greek ethnic identity.

This focus on the construction and reproduction of an ethnic nationalism based on ethnic ties to the motherland continued to be an area of active research in Cyprus. Through comparative analysis Papadakis (1994) illustrates the ways in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots constructed ethnic notions of belonging. Through his examination of the two Museums of National Struggle situated on either side of the buffer zone in Nicosia, Papadakis (1994) demonstrates how the different historical narratives articulated in each of these museums are framed as *national* struggles. As such, Papadakis (1994) elucidates how these museums articulate the histories of Cyprus as the histories of the “Greeks in Cyprus” and the “Turks in Cyprus”, respectively. Analyzing the different narratives presented in these museum exhibits, Papadakis (1994) demonstrates how notions of belonging are formed around ethnic and cultural ties to Greece and Turkey, respectively.

Social scientists (e.g., Lacher and Kaymak 2005; Loizides 2007; Peristianis 2006 Mavratsas 1997) have also problematized notions of a monolithic ‘ethnic’ identity by shedding insight into alternative modes of belonging experienced by Greek and Turkish Cypriots by examining the emergence of civic nationalism on the island. As noted in the previous section (2.2.3), Lacher and Kaymak (2005) demonstrate through their political examination of North Cyprus that this alternative mode of belonging was structured around a collective ‘Cypriot’ identity, wherein Turkish and Greek Cypriots were

territorially tied to the island, not to an ethnic past. Loizides (2007, 178) illustrates the ways in which this alternative form of belonging was conceptualized and promoted by the political elite as a more ‘peaceful’ and a less exclusive way of imagining the community compared to the ‘ethnic’ identities promoted by Turkish and Greek nationalism. While ethnic nationalism provided researchers with a lens to examine the conflict and division of the island, and the ways in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots created exclusive communities of belonging, examinations of civic nationalism gave researchers insight into the ways in which Greek and Turkish Cypriots re-imagined their respective political communities independent from their respective motherlands and constructed notions of belonging based on notions of a common ‘Cypriot’ identity.

Recent research has been critical of the monolithic narrative constructed about Cypriotism by deconstructing notions of Cypriotism to demonstrate that it is not always necessarily as inclusive as it is purported to be (e.g., Hatay and Bryant 2008a; Panayioutou 2006; Ramm 2006). Hatay and Bryant (2008a, 431) show that Cypriotism is not a monolithic concept by showcasing how it is conceived of in different ways by the Greek Cypriots in the south and the Turkish Cypriots in the north. They demonstrate that both communities understood Cypriotism as a way to critique what Greek and Turkish Cypriots interpreted to be the imperialist nationalisms of Greece and Turkey, respectively. As such their constructions of Cypriotism also did not necessarily imply a common ‘Cypriot’ identity for the island. Additionally, Panayiotou (2006) demonstrates that ‘Cypriotism’ was even constructed differently internally within the Greek Cypriot community. Through an examination of the rhetoric used by two RoC leftist political

parties, AKEL and CTP, during Annan Plan referendum debates (pp. 45-46), Panayioutou (2006) illustrated the different underlying strains in their construction of Cypriotism. AKEL's rhetoric about Cypriotism was anti-imperialistic and promoted a 'no' vote because they wanted to defend the "hard-won independence of the island," while CTP endorsed a 'yes' vote through the promotion of bi-communality and ethnic pluralism (Panayioutou 2006, 278). It follows from these findings that notions of community based on 'civic' identities can be just as problematic and divisive as 'ethnic' identities.

With these new insights into the existence of two forms of nationalism on the island, subsequent research was conducted to examine the way in which Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots try to negotiate different forms of national belonging (e.g., Peristianis 2006; Vural and Rustemli 2006). These discussions have mainly centered on ways in which Cypriots 'fluctuate' between their 'ethnic' and 'civic' identities. For example, Peristianis (2006) explores the way Greek Cypriots try to balance loyalties by fluctuating between 'Greek' ethnic identities and 'Cypriot' civic identities through an examination of survey questionnaires about identity, supplemented with in-depth interviews. However, while he successfully articulates a more nuanced understanding of nationalism in the RoC and a more nuanced understanding of the construction of national identity by arguing against a singular dominant concept of 'ethnic nationalism' and 'ethnic' identity, to do so he constructs the notion of a binary national identity that hinges on a dichotomy of 'civic' and 'ethnic'. Similarly, as stated previously (Section 2.2.3), Vural and Rustemli (2006) also attempt to illustrate the ways in which identities 'fluctuate', however, to do so they

separate ‘Cypriotness’ and ‘Turkishness’ into categories of ‘civic’ and ‘ethno-national’. Thus, while these efforts acknowledge the fault of a singular concept of identity, the concept of fluctuating between ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ identities uses a binary construct to describe a multifaceted experience. Further, their analysis offers little to explain how ‘Turkishness’ can be constructed as a ‘civic’ identity, or ‘Cypriotness’ can be constructed as an ‘ethnic’ identity.

While the large scale political projects of nationalism in Cyprus are fashioned with constructs of ethnic pasts or attachment to island territory, the ways in which they are (re)negotiated and (re)produced by Greek and Turkish Cypriots are not along these binary lines. Thus in order to understand how Turkish Cypriots negotiate and construct notions of belonging in everyday life, I argue that categories of ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ identity are unhelpful. Instead, in order to move beyond this binary focus, I argue that examining the everyday negotiations of ‘Turkishness’ will provide a more productive way to shed insight into how notions of belonging are formed. I will argue that by using ‘Turkishness’ as a lens it can be seen that not only are the boundaries between ‘ethnic’ and ‘civic’ identities more blurred than often assumed because rather than fluctuating between the official constructions of ethnic and civic nationalism, Turkish Cypriots are constructing a demotic nationalism from ‘below’ which privileges an ambivalence towards their Turkishness.

The choice to use ‘Turkishness’ as a lens developed as a direct result of my field research, which took place in the atmosphere following the May 2013 Taksim protests in

Turkey. During this time, the inhabitants of the TRNC were hotly debating the influence of the AKP government in the TRNC, with most articulating frustration over the AKP government's policies while others praised that same government's strength. These debates were not only conveying the people's opposition to or support of specific projects financed and or promoted by the AKP in the TRNC, but were also displaying their concerns and desires regarding the future of the TRNC. Through these debates Turkish Cypriots were actively questioning what it meant to belong to the Turkish nation under AKP's governance in Turkey, especially considering the impact of that governance on daily life in the TRNC. Thus, as in the occasions of the 1974 invasion and the 2003 checkpoint openings (Bryant 2010), these protests and the seemingly growing power and influence of the AKP government in the affairs of the island sparked a catalyst for questioning the meaning of belonging in the TRNC under a Turkey governed by the AKP. What became clear is that although there are different political and religious orientations amongst and between the Turkish Cypriot citizens, Turkish immigrants, and Turkish migrant workers residing in the TRNC, and although their perception of Turkey is ever evolving, their 'Turkishness' itself is never in question. However, depending on the varying historical, political, cultural, and social contexts, the definition of Turkishness changes and new boundaries with Turkey are negotiated and constructed. To clarify this point, it is necessary to return to the previous discussion regarding Cohen's notion of boundary (p. 35) and address how examining the negotiations of boundaries are productive in understanding how Turkish Cypriots construct notions of belonging.

Cohen argues that it is the boundary that constructs a shared sense of identity; “...the boundary encapsulates the identity of the community and... is marked because communities interact in some way or other with entities from which they are, or wish to be, distinguished” (Cohen 1985, 12). He continues to demonstrate that while some boundaries are more tangible, such as geographical boundaries and those established by law, other boundaries are less so as they reside only in the imagination of the community. As such, the boundary may be constructed and negotiated differently by people on either side of the boundary, as well as amongst those on the same side (Cohen 1985, 12). Through this definition of boundary, Cohen contends that a shared sense of identity is primarily a process of distinguishing oneself from the ‘other’. His emphasis on ‘othering’ differs from the notion of a communal identity being tied to a sense of common solidarity, as argued by Arensberg and Kimball (1965) (Cohen 1985, 20).

However, this does not mean that Cohen argues that the possession of a common identity by the community is unimportant. It is just that for Cohen it is the perception, not the actuality, of what he emphasizes as the ‘*commonality*’ that is important (Cohen 1985, 20). The community’s perception of having communal ways of behaving is necessary, rather than the community actually being uniform in its understanding of varying behaviors and ideas. Perception is the key to negotiating boundaries, which are created by people in interaction with one another. It is this continuing process that shapes the identity of the community. Through this discussion, Cohen debunks the argument that to ‘belong’ there requires a uniform idea of shared values within a community. Instead Cohen points to the idea that someone can be considered a member but have different political and cultural

values. For this dissertation, utilizing Cohen's definition of boundary enables one to analyze the different negotiations of Turkishness in order to examine and understand how national belonging is unremittingly being shaped and perceived.

The meaning people give to the boundary is what Cohen terms the "symbolic aspect of community" (Cohen 1985, 12). Although the symbolism may be unambiguous, it does not follow that the meanings given to it are shared; instead, individuals negotiate their own understandings. In this way, symbols are not inherently imbued with meaning, but rather they offer the flexibility of differing conceptualizations. As such, the orientation an individual has to the varying symbols provides their specific understanding and experience of their community. It follows that the fluid and ambiguous nature of social boundaries allow for a variety of associations and meanings to be imagined and constructed by members both inside and outside the community. In Cohen's own words, "...it is the ambiguity of symbols that makes them so effective as boundary markers of community" (Cohen 1985, 55). He contends that the ambiguity allows members to communicate to one another about their own community and in doing so shape and create a sense of belonging and shared identity.

With this definition, Cohen demonstrates that this symbolic process of boundary maintenance constructs a sense of belonging (and simultaneously a difference from others) for the members of a community. This notion of boundary allows for fluidity in the construction of identity and belonging, whether in the form of 'ethnicity' or of 'locality' (Cohen 1985, 108), which differs from the dichotomous notion of 'civic' and

‘ethnic’ identities. The caged definitions of ethnic identity (belonging assumed through blood, national loyalty, or both) and civic identity (belonging assumed through acultural definitions of territory (Brubaker 1998)) do not illustrate the fluid ways in which belonging is constructed in everyday life. As stated by Cohen, “It is not our task to define ethnicity, but only to see if its various analyses offer us any clues to people’s inclination to give primacy to their community memberships over their higher-scale attachments” (Cohen 1985, 107).

In Cohen’s discussion, ‘higher scale attachments’ refer to state administrations and governments. Cohen illustrates that scholars such as Paine (1985) argue that communities define boundaries and assert an ‘ethnic’ identity when they feel that their cultural integrity is at stake due to the dominant nationalisms promoted by these higher scale attachments (i.e., the state) (Cohen 1985, 104). While Cohen sees some validity to Paine’s argument, he reasons that there must be more than (what he terms) ‘ethnic activism’ motivating communities to construct boundaries (Cohen 1985, 104). As such, Cohen (1985) turns towards Gellner (1978) and Burgess (1978) to demonstrate the influence of the scale of the government and its effects on the assertion of one’s identity and boundary maintenance. Cohen (1985) argues that due to the large scale of the government, it can only operate in one of two ways. Either it operates at such a level of generality that it fails to represent small interest groups, or it only represents small interest groups and as such alienates a large group of the population. In either situation, the majority of people feel that their government is not meeting their needs and

consequently these people turn towards a more relatable level of society with which they can identify (Cohen 1985, 106-107).

As previously stated this does not mean that all people relate identically with the community. Instead, the community provides them with a platform for the political formulation of their interests and aspirations. This platform is constructed not only by the people, but also negotiated with the state and or higher authorities' conceptions of how such a platform should be designed (Cohen 1985, 108). To elaborate, Cohen (1985) provides an example of how the UK government recognized 'official' Welsh interests by forming such agencies as the Welsh Office and the Welsh Tourist Board. In forming these agencies, the government provided those who desired to increase local control over Welsh affairs with a framework to further control and define their own local interests (Cohen 1985, 108). In this way, although community appears to be a grouping of individuals with identical views, this construction actually provides a platform for individual members to communicate an assorted array of ideas to one another.

In the context of North Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots invested themselves in the ideas of Turkishness as espoused by Atatürk, but Erdoğan and the AKP's new constructions of Turkishness and his new vision for Turkey (and relatedly the TRNC) have given them pause. They are actively questioning the values of AKP's new Turkey and whether or not this new Turkish nationalism adequately represents their national identity. Turkish Cypriots feel that they have no voice in their current affairs because Turkey brushes aside their legitimate concerns with the rationale that the TRNC is economically dependent on

Turkey. As discussed in this chapter, while political agents in the TRNC promoting and supporting Cypriot nationalism call for a rejection of the Turkish identity and an embracing of a Cypriot identity, and political agents promoting and supporting Turkish nationalism emphasize Turkish Cypriot ties to Turkey and fully embrace a Turkish identity, Turkish Cypriots themselves are constructing and imagining their own community defined by the continuous construction and negotiation of boundaries. It is important to understand how Turkish Cypriots actively construct boundaries of belonging in everyday life; this insight will allow for comprehension of how they understand and craft their own sense of belonging. Using Cohen's definition of boundaries, this thesis will examine why and within what contexts the boundaries of Turkishness are renegotiated depending on different situational contexts in order to understand how Turkish Cypriots actively construct, reconstruct, and understand notions of belonging.

To summarize, rather than accept an artificial distinction between 'ethnic' and 'civic' identity, this thesis will use the term 'Turkishness' as it enables one to demonstrate that the boundaries of a shared identity can be either 'ethnic' or 'civic', depending on the varying contexts. It should be reinforced that this analysis is not an attempt to define Turkishness, but rather to exemplify the ways in which Turkishness is multifaceted and continuously being negotiated in the present to illuminate how Turkish Cypriots understand their national belonging in a 'liminal' state that is de facto controlled by a Turkish state governed by the AKP. Examining how Turkishness is constructed and negotiated allows one to understand precisely how the boundaries of community are changing in the present and demonstrate that it is contextual and situational. Illustrating

and examining these boundaries will showcase how a demotic nationalism is being produced. As will be demonstrated in the following chapters, this demotic nationalism privileges an ambiguity concerning Turkishness.

2.3 Methodology

I spent one year conducting field research in North Cyprus from September 2013 to September 2014. While I travelled all over North Cyprus, I lived in the city of Nicosia and conducted most of my daily interactions there. My apartment was situated above a rock bar directly across from the TRNC parliament with a view to the entrance of the Walled City from my balcony. On the first night in my apartment I quickly realized that the proximity of the bars nearby meant that my home would be anything but quiet in the night. Over the following days, I also realized that the busy street of Dereboyu below filled my spacious apartment with the cacophonous soundscape of Dereboyu including, but not limited to, protesters, techno music, televised football matches, drunk street fights, feral cats, Turkish Cypriot musicians, car horns, circumcision celebrations, national ceremonies, construction work, and political gatherings. Previously, I had been spending my days going to the Walled City because the literature I had read prior to my arrival had focused on the official heritage sites in that sector. It came to me that life was being lived right under the balcony of my own apartment, life I had barely taken the time to notice because I was so concerned with going to the “official heritage” sites. Then and there I decided to pay more attention to Dereboyu as a place of study. Nationalism is not only constructed and imposed from above, but also consciously and unconsciously

practiced in everyday life. As a result, this dissertation explores multiple ‘locations’ within the ‘small,’ ‘bounded’ north side of Nicosia. In doing so, this dissertation will engage with the microcosm to reflect wider debates.

My field research, like all field research, is also bounded by the time in which I was working. The autumn of 2013 to the autumn of 2014 was a time of flux in Turkey and as a result also in North Cyprus. This period of time was on the heels of the Gezi protest in Turkey, in which the people turned out on the streets of cities around Turkey to challenge the AKP government, which provoked a national debate about what it meant to be Turkish and what it meant to be part of a Turkish nation. During the period of my field research, Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan was elected to President and proposed policies of the AKP government continued to prevail over the opposition. Thus, although the voices of those in Turkey had been heard in a way they had never been heard before through the Gezi protest, those participating in and supporting this protest felt that they had ultimately lost in many ways with the re-election of the very government they were resisting. These events were not only very closely followed in North Cyprus, but also supported with similar protests in Nicosia (See Chapter 5). The population of the TRNC was very invested in the outcome, as Turkey has enormous political, economic, and cultural influence on the island. Debates about the future of Turkey were equally about the future of North Cyprus. Primary data about how Turkish Cypriots negotiated social and cultural boundaries from my time “in the field” should be understood within this historical framework.

During my time in North Cyprus, I carried out participant observation and semi-structured interviews. The method of participant observation allows the researcher to observe things that one cannot gain from interviews and in many cases might even contradict that which is said in the interviews; what people say is not as informative as what people do. However, although participant observation allowed me to gain better insight into the nuances of everyday life, it is important to reflect upon dialogical approach to fieldwork. Therefore a critical approach to my position in the field is necessary in order to understand the ways in which my data may have been influenced.

It is not unusual for anthropologists researching in the field to be “othered”, but the responses by the inhabitants in each of those places are uniquely contextualized by the political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of their country and the personal background of those with whom the anthropologist engages. For centuries the island of Cyprus has been successively ruled by expanding empires; Greeks, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Ptolemies, Romans, Byzantines, Franks, Venetians, Ottoman Turks, and most recently Brits. When discussing the political relationship between Turkey and the TRNC, Turkish Cypriots frequently refer to this by inserting this historical detail into the fact that they have always been ruled by ‘outsiders’. The stamp of illegitimacy upon the government of the TRNC amplifies this feeling of being ruled by outsiders and makes them feel as if they have no real say in their own governing. With this context in mind, my position in the field was viewed in a very particular way. On one dimension I was viewed as an American, and therefore seen as untrustworthy. This feeling of distrust stemmed from their negative feelings about the role the United States

Government has played in the continued division of Cyprus. The involvement of the U.S. government in the Cyprus issue was frequently mentioned to me, amplified by conspiracy stories, and as such, I was originally perceived by many Turkish Cypriots to be a CIA agent and was told half in jest by one Turkish Cypriot to “Go home, Yankee”. In this way, I was both untrustworthy and I was perceived as an agent of power. Yet, on another dimension I was seen as “young female student” and perceived to be non-threatening. Turkish Cypriots are well aware of academic interest in their country and many commented that they were used to people studying them. The need to build trust is crucial. Over time I was able to secure the trust of many, make good friends, and gain trustworthy informants. Though I nevertheless felt welcomed into the community, my identification as an American had methodological implications on the collection of my data. Even amongst my friends and informants there was a continual awareness on their part that I was an American, a fact that they made clear through jests and jokes in conversation with me.

My initial referrals in North Cyprus came from a friend, who also helped me find an apartment in North Cyprus. From there, I primarily used the snowball technique to gain further informants, which on a small island where “everybody knows everybody” is very effective. To explore casinos in North Cyprus, I asked friends if they knew anyone working in a casino in order to obtain informants. These informants would have to agree to meet outside the casino on their own time, as they are explicitly forbidden to discuss the casinos while at work and could have lost their jobs had they been discovered. This is just a single example of the sensitivities that are implicated within any research. Cross-

cultural complexities abound in Cyprus, where issues of self-determination and frustrations about immigration are present in everyday situations. Through the snowball technique, I was able to engage with people from a variety of political, economic, cultural, and social backgrounds, ranging from senior government officials to illegal Turkish immigrants. The common thread that bound all these peoples together within my research is that they were all working or living in Nicosia. Following Risbeth and Powell (2012) and Schiller and Caglar (2009), rather than reiterate a common ‘ethnic lens’ in this research, which can emphasize bounded ethnic identities, I engaged with participants from a range of national and cultural backgrounds, but all living in the same geographic area.

I employed a relatively open-ended research design. I overtly inserted myself and participated in the daily lives of the inhabitants of Nicosia. I performed consented informal interviews and recorded my daily observations. I used the snowball technique to find my sampling of interviewees; however, practical matters affecting access also informed this process. For example, my knowledge of Turkish was minimal and not sophisticated enough to conduct in-depth interviews. Therefore the majority of people I chose to interview had knowledge of English. However, for those who I interviewed that did not speak English, I used the aid of a translator to help me.

With regards to the form of interview, I chose an unstructured method over a structured method. The unstructured interview followed the format of a conversation and allowed the interviewee to be in conversation with me, instead of merely answering a checklist of

questions. However, as noted by Hammersley and Atkinson “...they are never *simply* conversations, because the ethnographer has a research agenda and must retain some control over the proceedings” (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995, 126). Likewise, though each interview was unique, it does not mean that each one lacked boundaries, agenda, or intention (Andrews 2010, 103). Consent was obtained before recording these interviews. Where possible interviews were audio-recorded rather than written to more completely capture the full details of the conversation. However, in many cases I was unable to obtain consent for an audio-recording because those I asked were wary of being recorded and thus I had to write a record of the interview. For some, such as government officials, it had to do with the fact that I was American and they feared that I was a CIA agent. For others, they were wary of having their opinions recorded on tape.

During field research, a good deal of emphasis was placed on gaining rapport with the interviewees. This required a sense of intimacy in the conversation to maximize the details and the information gained to be able to detect and understand the nuances within the conversation. This ethnographic method accurately gives a sense of the everyday life of the people being studied. While one can gain insight into the design of the officially promoted nationalism by examining the official discourse, in order to understand that nationalism as experienced by the people, with their own needs and value structures, one must use a grassroots approach and examine nationalism from the ground up. While in some cases, it is necessary to refer to more “knowledgeable” informants on particular topics (for example, obtaining key informants working in casinos, or business owners in the Walled City), I focused predominantly on examining interactions between a variety of

people who engaged with the various locations of study (e.g., Dereboyu, the Walled City) because in order to understand the grassroots interpretation of these events and the impact of the official dictates of the government on everyday life, one must engage with the men and women that live within the environment. Choosing not to be exclusive of whom I interviewed and or engaged with, I sought to capture the spectrum of people in society. Doing so enabled me to see how Turkish Cypriots opinions differ and has informed my understanding of the ambiguity of nationalism in North Cyprus.

If I am proposing that national identity is neither constructed from ‘above’ by state institutions, nor ‘below’ from the people, but rather a continued negotiation amongst and between, then where do I ‘locate’ these negotiations? Here I employ Navaro-Yashin’s notion of “public life” (Navaro-Yashin 2002). She sets the term as distinct from notions of “public sphere,” “public culture,” and “civil society,” all frameworks of which she demonstrates assume a distinction between domains of “power” and “resistance”. She moves beyond a dichotomy of the “people” and the “state”, by using the “public” to represent both the people and the state simultaneously. She continues to demonstrate that public life is not a “site” but, “...a category that would allow the study of the political in its fleeting and intangible, transmogrified forms” (Navaro-Yashin 2002, 3). Therefore, she examines the production of the political, not in a specific institution, but in its multiple transformations. To examine the production of the political she does not categorize her informants into groupings of people, but rather captures the sense of movement in public life (Navaro-Yashin 2002, 15).

I found early on in my time spent with Turkish Cypriots in North Cyprus that a working knowledge of the news stories of the day was essential to understanding my informants when they discussed politics, and how public events and policies were reflected in their lives. For that reason there is significant reference to newspapers and the stories they contained. The citizens of Turkish Cyprus have a keen interest in the news of events of the day in Turkey as well as North Cyprus. The sources of their information about current affairs are television programs, newspaper articles, social media, and conversation. I was ever mindful that televised media and newspapers were often biased in their reporting by the fact that they were either government institutions seeking to direct their particular narrative, political organs seeking to sell an ideology, or private organs intent on increasing their advertising sales. Some could be said to be a mixture of all these factors. The culture of news is an essential component of the study of a people in a city that must be used critically. Navaro-Yashin (2002) in her examination of the production of the political examines newspapers and media "...not as an object of study, but one important agent in the making of public life" (Navaro-Yashin 2002, 6). In this context the veracity of the story told by the media does not matter as much as understanding how that content is interpreted and repeated by the intended audience. The interplay of these elements is a large portion of how boundaries of national identity are negotiated.

For such a tiny island, the diversity of newspapers is impressive. Three of these newspapers were in circulation before the Turkish invasion in 1974: Halkin Sesi, Bozkurt, and Zaman (Şahin 2008, 75). All three newspapers supported the Turkish leadership at the time and gave no space to opposition voices (Şahin 2008, 75). As the

multi-party system arose, more newspapers were published allowing different political ideas to spread (Şahin 2008, 75). Different politicians and religious interest groups used these organs of communication to distribute their ideas and communicate with their followers. Readers of the newspapers in North Cyprus are well aware of these biases. Some Turkish Cypriot newspapers cloak their stories in an attempted objectivity, such as Kibris, although it presents pro-government news, while other newspapers embrace the subjectivity of their content as their selling point, such as the newspaper Afrika, which is known for its anti-Turkey editorial bias.

The display of overt bias resulted in serious and sometimes fatal consequences for some Turkish Cypriot journalists. The murder of Kutlu Adalı (journalist for Yeni Düzen) and the odyssey of Şener Levant (editor-in-chief of Afrika) provide two well-known examples. Kutlu Adalı was a journalist well-known for his contributions to Yeni Düzen, a left-wing newspaper in the TRNC. He was very critical of Turkey and the right-wing establishment in power (Navaro-Yashin 2012, xv; Loizides 2007, 180). On 6 July 1996 he was assassinated outside his home by unidentified machine-gunners. Although unidentified, they were assumed by many to be Turkish ultra-nationalists or militants associated with the ‘deep state’ in Ankara (Loizides 2007, 180). To-date, no one has been arrested or prosecuted.

Another well-known Turkish Cypriot journalist who has been quite critical and blatant in his critique of the Turkish Cypriot regime and the Turkish occupation of North Cyprus is Şener Levent. His criticisms of the Turkish state and the Denktaş administration in the

TRNC caused him to be repeatedly threatened by those governments in various ways in attempts to silence him. Levent, who was the first to use the term “Occupation” for what the Turkish propaganda called “Peace Operation” was ultimately stripped of his newspaper, *Avurpa* (Europe) and its property was confiscated (Argyrou 2006, 217). Levent’s response was to found a new newspaper, which was ironically named *Afrika* (Africa). In 2002 he, along with his colleague, was arrested, convicted of espionage, and sentenced to several months in prison. This lead to an international hue and cry spearheaded by Greek Cypriot journalists. Under pressure from international bodies, including the EU and the United Nations, the Turkish Cypriot government set these two men free later that same year.

It needs to be stressed that Kutlu Adali’s assassination and the imprisonment of Şener Levent are extreme examples of suppression of the freedom of the press contextualized by the events that occurred in the mid-1990s and early 2000s. During this time there was a rise in conflict between the PKK and Turkey and as a result terrorist activities by Turkish ultra-nationalists and organizations associated with the ‘deep state’ in Ankara increased significantly in the TRNC (Loizides 2007, 180). However, during the time of my field research over a decade later, though newspapers continued to be subjective and continued in their promotion of particular views of their specific affiliating political parties or blocs, the TRNC press was quite free; journalists could and did say pretty much anything. The press was definitely more liberated than in Turkey, and some might argue freer than in the RoC.

Chapter 3

Performing Turkishness: Military Service and the Nation

3.1. Remembering 20 July 1974

Replete with episodes of foreign powers treading its shores, the history of Cyprus underwent another turning point on 20 July 1974. The significance of the arrival of the Turkish Army on that day has been hotly debated across the world and remains in the eye of a continuing political storm. The official historiography of the RoC promotes the narrative that on 20 July 1974 Turkey invaded the RoC which resulted in the deaths of many Cypriot citizens and the creation of a Turkish militarized occupied zone in the north of Cyprus that remains to this day. This interpretation of events is formally endorsed through actions and decisions made by international organizations such as the UN and the European Court of Human Rights; with the exception of Turkey, this interpretation is also supported by all the world's national governments.⁹ Conversely, recalling the harsh treatment the Turkish Cypriots received at the hands of the Greek Cypriots, the Turkish government and the TRNC do not see the military actions of 1974 as an invasion, but instead describe these events as a “Peace Operation” (“Barış Harekati”) or even a “Happy Peace Operation” (“Mutlu Barış Harekati”). As advocated by TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu at the 20 July celebration, the military actions of the Turkish Army during the “Peace Operation” are rendered as “heroic” actions that saved their “Turkish brothers” from the hands of the overwhelming Greek Cypriot majority (Eroğlu 2014). Within this narrative, the outcome of these “heroic” military actions resulted in the creation of a new independent nation, the TRNC.

Although these narratives oppose one another, both are fabricated to justify the political agenda of each respective government. The historical narrative that recognizes Turkey's

⁹ Please refer to footnote 8, p.39.

actions as an invasion validates the continued legitimacy of the RoC and renders illegal the existence of the TRNC, relegating the territory to a militarized occupied zone. The contesting historical narrative recognizes the independence of the TRNC, thereby representing a distinct political separation from the RoC and the end of its role as the sole government of the entire island. These narratives and the political implications constructed around the terms “Invasion” and “Peace Operation” are subjective and, as such, there can be no ‘neutral’ understanding or description of the event. Because there is no ‘neutral’ understanding, the date of 20 July becomes a canvas on which images of national identity can be painted.

Referring to Goubert’s (1969) analysis of French society, Gillis (1994) illustrates how the French revolutionaries constructed an “Old Regime” in order to break from the past and create a new beginning. Similarly, it can be seen that in these constructed narratives about 20 July both historiographies fabricate a division of time between ‘before’ 1974 and ‘after’ 1974 in order to form a clear distinction between the past and the present. After the “Peace Operation”, the Turkish Federated State of Cyprus (1975 – 1983) and later the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (established in 1983) set about circulating their historiography through textbooks, museums, and commemorations. For example, although already a local museum in 1967, the new and subsequent TRNC administrations nationalized the home of Turkish Cypriot Major Dr. Nihat Ilhan as the Museum of Barbarism. It was in this home that Greek Cypriots murdered his wife and three children during the period of inter-communal violence. A portion of the museum is preserved as a crime scene with the original bloodstains on the wall and black tape outlining the bullet

holes. The museum serves to remind citizens of the atrocities committed against the Turkish Cypriots before 1974. As stated previously (Chapter 2), the new administration also constructed divisions between past and present by creating new maps and re-naming all the cities and streets in Turkish (Navaro-Yashin 2012). Applying Gillis' argument (1994) it can be seen that through these different mediums past injustices suffered under the RoC administration were emphasized in order to justify the 20 July "Peace Operation" and look forward to a new beginning under the TRNC. Thus, while the museum highlights past injustices, the creation of new place names exemplifies the ways in which the TRNC administration attempted to erase the past in order to make way for new beginnings.

To use the term coined by Hobsbawm and Ranger (1983), the TRNC administration also created new "invented traditions". According to Hobsbawm and Ranger an invented tradition is "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, 1). The TRNC government made 20 July an official public holiday in 1984 (one year after the TRNC declared its independence) under codified legislation to honor and observe this new beginning. According to Law 49, 20 July became a national holiday in the TRNC along with twelve other holidays¹⁰. In addition to the three Muslim

¹⁰ New Year's Day (1 January); National Sovereignty and Children's Day (23 April); Labor Day (May 1); Commemoration of Ataturk, Youth and Sports Day (19 May); Peace and Freedom Day (20 July); Social Resistance Day (1 August); Victory Day (30 August); 29 October (Turkish Republic Day); 15 November (Republic Day); Mawlid; Eid al-Fitr; Eid al-Adha.

holidays, four more of these holidays were also Turkish public holidays. These national holidays were proclaimed both as measures of nation building and to promote closer cultural ties between Turkey and North Cyprus. With the creation of a new annual calendar commemorating Turkey's involvement in the birth of the TRNC, in conjunction with the changing of street names and creation of new museums, the TRNC administration airbrushed over the 'Cypriot' past to paint a more Turkish historical narrative.

Three of the established public holidays – Peace and Freedom Day (20 July), Victory Day (30 August), and the Turkish Republic Day (29 October)—are celebrated with military parades on Dr. Fazil Küçük Boulevard because each of these days celebrates the anniversary of a military victory. Although not codified into law until 1984, the celebration of the anniversary of 20 July by a military parade has been in place since 1975. According to a Turkish Cypriot who was present at these early parades, they were very well attended. Turkish Cypriots cheered and celebrated the coming of their Turkish rescuers. These military parades are still choreographed with as much grandeur and spectacle, but are received much less enthusiastically by Turkish Cypriots. Although the official discourses regarding 20 July 1974, as espoused by the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot governments, are still unified in their promotion of the day as the "Peace Operation" that saved the Turkish Cypriots, the Turkish Cypriots' understanding of the day is much more varied. Not everyone in North Cyprus subscribes to the official narrative propagated by the governments of Turkey and the TRNC.

While the majority of Turkish Cypriots are grateful for Turkey's military intervention in 1974, the continuing presence of the Turkish military in North Cyprus has become a highly contested issue. When referring to the continued presence of Turkey's military on the island, many Turkish Cypriots reinterpret the past actions of the Turkish armed forces. Through this position, they view Turkey's action on 20 July as an invasion (Turkish: *iştila*). The term 'invasion' starkly contrasts with the official term 'Happy Peace Operation' and denies the unifying promotion of Turkishness found in the actions the latter name signifies. These Turkish Cypriots do not see the event as a rescue by their "Turkish brothers," but instead view the event as an invasion by a foreign other. This contestation over the continued Turkish military presence has challenged the historiography and commemoration of 20 July and questions the message that Turkey saved the island with its military strength. As such, the idea of being saved by Turkey is becoming increasingly less welcomed by the people of the TRNC. The understandings and constructions of the historiography and commemorations of 20 July focus on the military events and as a result they become interlaced with the constructions and understandings of the Turkish military.

Researching the Turkish armed forces in Turkey, Jenkins (2001) and Altinay (2004) have illustrated the way in which Turkish military values are deeply embedded within Turkish society and demonstrate that because of this, these values play a significant role in the ways Turks define what it means to be Turkish. Through an analysis of the ways in which the military is presented in the educational institutions and an analysis of the history of military interventions in politics, Jenkins (2001) and Altinay (2004) make convincing

arguments about the relationship between the military and the Turkish identity. They argue that what makes the Turkish military unique is the belief that their purpose as soldiers lies in protecting ‘Turkishness’ as defined by Kemalism, the principles laid out by the father of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. In this way, the military’s perception of its role is not only to protect Turkey from outside forces that threaten Kemalist legacy, but also from those forces that threaten this legacy from within. However, while Jenkins (2001) and Altinay (2004) have argued that the military is a distinct and unique feature of Turkish nationalism and has been internalized as part of the Turkish identity, questions remain.

While Altinay (2004) critically examines the ways in which the Turkish people resist and contest the military power and authority in Turkey, she offers little to question the internal contestations of the ‘authoritative’ discourse about military authority by the government. She does illustrate how the Turkish military lost some of its power with the rise of political Islam, but her focus remains on questioning how the authoritative discourse has been resisted from ‘below’ and demonstrating how the ‘myth of the military nation’ is a product of an authoritative history. However, the authoritative discourse is internally contested as demonstrated by the policies of the AKP which try to scale back or sever the close ties between the military and the state and to weaken the Kemalist vision of the strong bond between the military and the state, also termed the ‘Military Nation’ (Altinay 2004). Such actions include the passage of a law reducing the number of military parades and the government’s conduct surrounding the Ergenekon Trials. In the latter, approximately 275 former generals and active duty officers were

charged and convicted with running a covert terrorist organization and for plotting a military coup to destroy the AKP government. It would be interesting then to explore the relationships between notions of Turkishness, the military, and the state, given the recent contestation of this ‘authoritative’ discourse promoted by AKP against long-standing Kemalist discourses. Understanding these relationships is necessary in order to explore how the military presence is understood in terms of Turkishness in the TRNC.

The palpable presence of the Turkish military in Cyprus is often encountered in everyday life. Whether driving by one of the many Turkish military bases, seeing the many Turkish soldiers milling about the Walled City, or passing by any of the military monuments, the presence of the Turkish military cannot go unnoticed. Turkey commands three of its own military units on the island of Cyprus and is in *de facto* command of the Turkish Cypriot military unit (Güvenlik Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı, GKK) and the TRNC police force. This control of all military and police personnel on the island was originally seen by Turkish Cypriots as necessary for security, but has been increasingly questioned over the past two decades. Turkish Cypriots have been giving more public voice to their disapproval of the continued presence of the Turkish troops on the island, emboldened by the increase in protests in Turkey against the policies of the Erdogan and the AKP as witnessed by the Gezi protest both in the TRNC and Turkey. Turkish Cypriots’ negotiations and constructions of Turkishness, I argue, reflect the wider political negotiation of the Turkish military presence. More specifically, the Turkish Cypriots’ constructions of the Turkish military are a way in which Turkish Cypriots define themselves *vis-à-vis* Turkey. However, how the Turkish Cypriots relate to the military presence on their island is

ambivalent and can be used as a metaphor to represent their relationship with Turkey through their constructions of both secularism and their sovereignty. To make this argument, this chapter will examine the relationship between the military and Turkishness in the context of North Cyprus.

To examine the relationship between the military and Turkishness within the context of North Cyprus, this chapter will be divided into four more sections. Section 3.2 will illustrate the close relationship between Kemalism and the military. In doing so, this section will demonstrate the significance of Atatürk for the Turkish Cypriots and highlight the problems that arise with the attempts by the AKP government to dismantle the close relationship between Kemalism and the military. Following from this, Section 3.3 engages more closely with the military structure and culture in the TRNC and by this examination will demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots believe they have been denied the promises of sovereignty that by their interpretation of Kemalism should be theirs. With a better understanding of the relationship between the military, Kemalism, and sovereignty, Section 3.4 examines in-depth the 20 July military parade. An examination of this military parade illustrates the ways in which the official construction of Turkishness is embodied through spectacle. Although Turkish Cypriots assert a ‘Cypriot’ identity to contest this official narrative of 20 July, Section 3.5 will conclude that rather than an outright rejection of the official constructions of Turkishness, Turkish Cypriots are actually much more ambivalent about their Turkishness.

3.2 “We are the Foot Soldiers of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk”

July 20, 2014. It is 8:30 on a Sunday morning and armed policemen line Osmanpaşa Street in the TRNC to both protect and stand witness to one of the day’s first ceremonies—the Wreath Laying Ceremony—commemorating the 40th anniversary of the “Cyprus Peace Operation.” Although the date, time, and location for this ceremony were publicly advertised in various newspapers, only government officials, military personnel, and journalists are in attendance. The event is broadcast live on national television so that the TRNC population can watch the ceremony from the comfort of their homes. Those present are dressed formally, in either business attire or military uniforms, and stand gathered around the tall, bronze Atatürk statue situated at the entrance of the Walled City. Photojournalists are interspersed throughout the crowd taking photographs seemingly every other second. It was apparent that the documenting of the commemoration was as important, if not more so, than the commemoration itself. Navaro-Yashin reminds us that sovereignty is not something ‘given’ but rather constructed through an “...enactment of agency between people and things in a given territory” (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 43). These documentations act as tangible proof that legitimizes the official narrative propagated in this commemoration both in the present and for future generations.

On this particular occasion Turkish President Abdullah Gül is in attendance, which is notable in that his attendance at this celebration will be one of his last acts as President of Turkey before Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan will succeed him on 28 August 2014. In addition to President Gül, other notable attendees present are TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu, TRNC Prime Minister Ozkan Yorgancioğlu, and TRNC Parliament Speaker Sibel

Siber. As part of the ceremony, President Derviş Eroğlu lays a wreath at the Lefkoşa Atatürk Statue. Two military men dressed in ceremonial attire assist in this process. With choreographed steps, these men carry the wreath decorated to look like the TRNC flag to the foot of the Atatürk statue. Once the wreath is placed at the foot of the statue, President Eroğlu adjusts the wreath. He only touches it so as to emphasize that it is he as a representative of his country who is laying the wreath, not because the wreath actually needs adjusting. He then steps away in front of the wreath to have a moment of silence. The soldiers too step away from the wreath in tandem back to their positions. This same process is repeated with President Gül, with the only difference being that the wreath is larger and decorated like the Turkish flag. The larger size of the wreath acts as a visual for the relationship between Turkey and the TRNC as ‘motherland’ (Turkish: anavatan) and ‘babylonia’ (Turkish: yavruvatan), respectively.

Following a moment of silence, the TRNC military band plays the TRNC national anthem, which is identical to the Turkish national anthem. Significantly, no one has penned a separate national anthem for the TRNC itself. The TRNC national anthem sings of the Turkish national flag and the blood spilled for the independence of Turkey and is another example of the attempts made by previous governments to construct nationalistic ties between Turkey and the TRNC. As the military band plays, the attendees sing in unison as the Turkish and Turkish Cypriot flags are raised up the two flagpoles, which stand opposite either end of the Atatürk statue. The civilian attendees stand with their arms by their sides, while those dressed in military uniform stand saluting the flags.

The ceremony concludes with the signing of “The Special Memorial Book” by the two heads of state. In this book, both Presidents write letters to “the GREAT Atatürk” thanking him both for his general leadership of the Turkish people and more specifically for his ideological guidance in the 20 July 1974 event. As they write, President Eroğlu and President Gül stand at podiums facing the statue of Atatürk. The act of writing letters to Atatürk and the positioning of their bodies in relation to the Atatürk statue makes it evident that this oversized statue personifies in this moment the spirit of the Turkish leader to whom these letters of thanks are written. Subsequently, these letters are publicly displayed for citizens to see on television and will be available to read in the newspapers the following day. The wreaths laid at the feet of Atatürk will remain in place throughout the day, serving as a reminder for those passing by the statue to reflect upon the relationship between Atatürk and what is being commemorated on this day.

In both Turkey and North Cyprus the military and political leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, is glorified and his memory is kept alive in a variety of ways within educational institutions, at public holidays, and in visual representations such as monuments. As his surname granted to him in 1934 by the Turkish Parliament suggests, he is considered to be the “Father of all Turks”.¹¹ He is considered to be such by Turkish and Turkish Cypriot people because his generalship and leadership led to victory in the War of Independence out of which the Turkish Republic was born and he became Turkey’s first President. There are full-length Atatürk statues in each of the major cities of North Cyprus and smaller busts of Atatürk in many of the villages. Adil’s (2007) and

¹¹ Under the surname law in Turkey, it is forbidden for anyone else to use “Atatürk” as a surname.

Sadrazam's (1990) research on monuments in North Cyprus explains that the Atatürk statue where the 20 July wreath laying ceremony is held was the first full-length statue symbolic of Turkish cultural identity to be erected in any of the Turkish Cypriot areas of Cyprus.¹²

This statue represents Atatürk's ideals of modernization by portraying Atatürk in a Western suit and coat. The statue was sculpted in Turkey and shipped to North Cyprus where a public inauguration was held on the 29th of October 1963 (Adil 2007). The year of the inauguration coincided with the beginning of inter-communal violence on the island. Fearing their island would become a part of Greece, Turkish Cypriots fought to prevent this union and instead realize taksim, a division of the island and a union with Turkey. Having a statue built during this time of inter-communal violence, and at the height of a desire to become a part of Turkey, symbolized their unique "Turkish" identity amongst the Cypriots and fostered a sense of Turkishness. As explained by Adil (2007) this was further symbolized by the Turkish Cypriots' embrace of the date 29 October. This date is the Turkish national public holiday celebrating the day Turkey became a Republic following the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

¹² It was the second sculpture overall, with the first being a bust of the Young Ottoman, Namîk Kemal (Adil 2007; Sadrazam 1990).

At the inauguration of the statue, Erdoğan Mirata¹³, an active member within the Turkish Cypriot community, read a poem he had written entitled, “My Atatürk in Cyprus” (Adil 2007). In this poem, he spoke directly to the statue of Atatürk and said,

“...What is erected is not a monument / but a command post, / where great decision makers will gather...From this statue / courage will flow to our hearts / The youth will light their torches / from your eyes / You will be a sacred figure to the CypriotYou will be the flag of my fight / excitement to our hearts, / Your gaze will chase away the foe / The ill intending enemy of Cyprus / will be burnt by your spirit.” (Adil 2007, 82).

Through this poem Atatürk is represented not only as a leader and protector, but also as a source of inspiration and the embodiment of Cypriot values. With this in mind, the 20 July wreath laying ceremony at this Atatürk statue is symbolic in both reaffirming loyalty to Atatürk’s vision of a Turkish future and serves as a reminder of the continued presence of outside threats against which Turkish Cypriots need to protect and defend themselves.

On 20 July the outside threat is defined as the Greek Cypriots and the RoC. Indeed, as will be demonstrated throughout this chapter, the everyday presence of the Turkish Army stationed around the island serves as a perpetual reminder of pending threats. However, with the rise of AKP in Turkey and their divergence from Kemalist constructions of Turkishness (by embracing and promoting Islam as an important aspect of the Turkish

¹³ Erdoğan Mirata (b. 1930) was, and continues to be, very active in the Turkish Cypriot community. During the 1960s many of his poems and writings were published in newspapers and magazines. In 1974, he founded the Nicosia City Club [Şehir Kulübü], a tennis club for the community of Nicosia. Additionally he is a trained Orthodontist and an active member of the Turkish Cypriot Medical Association. Most recently, in 2015, Erdoğan Mirata published his autobiography, “Like a joke...memories, reminders” [Turkish: ‘Şaka Gibi...Hatırlalar, Hatırlatmalar’], which was praised by several journalists in the TRNC and by TRNC President Mustafa Akıncı (Presidency of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus Website 2016).

identity (see Chapter 2)), many Turkish Cypriots are also constructing Turkey as an outside threat encroaching on their Turkish Cypriot values. Unlike the Greek Cypriots and the RoC, which are seen as an outside threat to invade their land, Turkey has already “invaded” their island.

As described in Chapter 2, anxiety about Turkey’s cultural domination over the island has been brewing since the early 1980s, when the hopes that Turkish nationalism promised were dimmed as the harsh realities of being an unrecognized state took hold (Hatay 2008). During that time, Turkish Cypriots became more critical of Turkey and vocally expressed their disapproval of the growing presence of Turkish propaganda (Navaro-Yashin 2012). Navaro-Yashin illustrates the Turkish Cypriots’ displeasure by giving an example of a public demonstration held against a militaristic statue of Atatürk on horseback (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 217). Today, while Turkish Cypriots are still angered at the “Turkification” of the island, the definition of this “Turkification” has been reconstructed and redefined in response to the AKP government and President Erdoğan’s new construction of Turkish nationalism. As such, protests by Turkish Cypriots against displays of Turkish nationalism are not protests against Turkish flags or statues, but against the rise of political Islam in the public sphere, in the building of more mosques and enforcement of mandatory religious education (See Chapter 4).

In these protests, Turkish Cypriots will often invoke Atatürk to legitimize their cause. For example, one slogan chanted during organized marching protests in the TRNC against then Prime Minister Erdoğan and the AKP government was, “We are the soldiers of

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk!”¹⁴ This slogan originally was popularized in Turkey in 2008 when the left-wing magazine, *Türksolu*, published the phrase in an article (Fırat 2008) responding to public debates regarding the Ergenekon investigation.¹⁵ The author, Gökçe Fırat, felt that the possibility of a trial was not merely an attack on Turkish military personnel, but an affront to both Kemalism and Atatürk. Thus, he proudly proclaims that he is a soldier of Atatürk; that he will defend democracy and Kemalist values. This slogan became a catch phrase with left-wing political supporters. During the Gezi protests in Turkey, CHP members shouted this chant in attempts to commandeer the original protest for their own political advantages. Comically, Gezi protestors parodied the slogan with the phrase, “We are the soldiers of Mustafa Keser” (Turkish: “Mustafa Keser’in askerleriyiz”), a popular Turkish arabesque singer (Karakayali and Yaki 2016, 212). Karakayali and Yaki (2016) illustrate that humor like this demonstrates the reflective way activists kept the political space fluid and inclusive, thus allowing for no one political group to dominate the protest (Karakayali and Yaki 2016, 213). Although CHP members in Turkey originally chanted the former slogan in an attempt to politically hijack the Gezi Park protests, Turkish Cypriots adopted the phrase as well, specifically to protest against the AKP government and Tayyip Erdoğan at organized marching protests (Afrika 2013, 3a).

By invoking an identification with Atatürk’s foot soldiers during the Turkish War of Independence, Turkish Cypriots proclaim themselves as part of a country dedicated to his

¹⁴ For example, this slogan was chanted at the Gezi Park Protest at Kuğulu Park and Dereboyu Street in Lefkoşa, TRNC (Afrika 2013, 3a).

¹⁵ As mentioned previously (p.76), Ergenekon allegedly was a secret organization (comprised primarily of members of Turkey’s military and security forces) that sought to overthrow the AKP government.

legacy and the protection of his ideals. In using this protest chant, they are simultaneously defining themselves as Turkish Cypriots against a foreign government and identifying with the Turkish citizens who use this protest chant against the AKP government because they too are having a non-Kemalist Turkish nationalism thrust upon them. In one way Turkish Cypriots are using this chant to dispute Turkey's new direction in the context of their island's politics and in another way, by sympathizing with the Turkish protesters, they are engaging in a transnational Kemalism. These notions of Kemalism are tightly intertwined with the complex and evolving relationship between Turkish nationalism and the Turkish military.

The formation of the Turkish Republic under Atatürk's leadership created a Turkish military that protects the Kemalist values found within the constitution. All of the military coups that have occurred in Turkey since Atatürk's demise were perpetrated under the premise of protecting Atatürk's ideals.¹⁶ When a non-Kemalist movement within the government grew in power, the military stepped in to reinforce Kemalism. By invoking Atatürk's ideals, the military establishment promoted Kemalism as central to

¹⁶ In 1960, General Cemal Gürsel led the first military coup and successfully removed President Celal Bayar, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes and his cabinet. The leadership of the coup claimed that they had no intention of staying in power, but rather they wanted to remove one democratically elected government and replace it with another (Lombardi 1997, 205). Their explanation was that the elected government in power was passing legislation that relaxed the restrictions on Islam that were put into place by Atatürk. Similarly, the coup d'état on 12 March 1971 was also to overthrow a government that was not supporting Kemalist values. Prior to this coup, General Memduh Tagmac warned "all who may try to destroy the national integrity of the republican regime and Atatürk's reforms," that "The armed forces, whose mission is to protect the country against any danger from without or within, will smash any action directed against the country" (Lombardi 1997, 206). In 1980, a third military coup occurred when the newly elected Demirel government was overthrown. Again, in this coup the Turkish military perceived their role as custodians of Atatürk's legacy.

the government's purpose and identity and in doing so was able to legitimize their coups to their own satisfaction. Thus, the Turkish military perceived their role as custodians of Atatürk's legacy, to protect his Kemalist values, and to reestablish a government that would honor and protect those ideals.

In Turkey, the Turkish military is highly integrated into Turkish culture primarily due to efforts of past governments. As illustrated by Altinay (2004), the Ministry of National Education (Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı) has continued the legacy of interpreting and privileging the history of Turkey in military terms. Since the ratification of the 1961 constitution under the military junta, mandatory military service has been required for all men; if one evades military service the consequence is imprisonment. It is punishable under Article 301 to openly criticize the service. Altinay (2004) and Jenkins (2001) have shown that it is no easy feat for the public to resist and fight against the revered military culture primarily because even though it is culturally produced it is considered to be a 'natural' phenomenon. Reversing this reverence from 'above,' however, is also difficult, as the AKP-led government has realized. Since the AKP came into power in 2002, they have been promoting policies within Turkey to curtail the authoritative power and profile of the military and Atatürk.

In 2012, the AKP government banned institutions (other than the state) from laying wreaths at Atatürk monuments on national holidays. This was met with great criticism following 20 October 2012 Republic Day, when various confrontations between police forces and party members trying to lay wreaths at Atatürk's statue occurred (Hurriyet

Daily News 2012b). Following this resistance, the AKP government relaxed the ban stating that institutions that want to lay the wreaths will have to inform the governor's office at least two days in advance (Today's Zaman 2012). While the wreath-laying ban was met with resistance, other regulations were met with less violent confrontations. In 2012, a regulation was issued by the AKP government stating that the August 30th celebration would be the only national holiday to retain a military parade, thereby effectively cancelling the traditional military parades held on the remaining public holidays of 29 October, 23 April, and 19 May (Hurriyet Daily News 2012a). The regulation went on to say that the Turkish President would assume celebratory duties formerly performed by the General Chief of Staff who heretofore had received the greetings and hosted the receptions at the military facilities. These restrictions were designed to curb the army's high visibility in national celebrations and they exemplify the desire of AKP to weaken the connection between the military and Turkishness, as had been promoted under Kemalist ideology. These restrictions and forced changes, some successful and some not, highlighted the fact that it was just as difficult to resist or erase the military reverence from 'above' in Turkey.

What does this mean for the TRNC? How do these resistances to the military reverence from 'above' in Turkey effect Turkish Cypriots' relation to the Turkish military? On one level, the Turkish military is a relatable entity whereby Turkish Cypriots proudly boast that they are the foot soldiers of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Yet, on another level the Turkish military is associated closely with the powers of the Turkish government. If Erdoğan and the AKP succeed in ending the protection of Kemalism by the Turkish

military, they will remove a major barrier to the establishment of a Turkey guided by modernization through Islamic values and extend that to the TRNC. Turkish Cypriots see secularism as their legacy and in a way that is specific to their understanding of a Cypriot future. If the Turkish military no longer protects ideals of Kemalism, then the presence of Turkish troops on the island is nothing more than an invader's occupying force and shows the 'Peace Operation' as a fantasy serving only the Turkish government.

3.3 Military Culture in North Cyprus

3.3.1 Turkish Armed Forces and the Turkish Cypriot Security Forces

The Turkish armed forces in North Cyprus (Kıbrıs Türk Barış Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı, KTBK) have been on the island since 20 July 1974. The members of the Turkish Cypriot community, who no longer wanted to be under the repressive control of the Greek Cypriots, initially welcomed their arrival to the island. Today, however, the continued presence of the Turkish military on the island is a highly contested subject amongst the Turkish Cypriot people. Currently, the KTBK is comprised of an estimated 30,000 troops. In addition to the 30,000 troops of the KTBK, the island is also home to the Turkish Cypriot Security Forces (Güvenlik Kuvvetleri Komutanlığı, GKK), which is comprised of another 9,000 troops. The numbers of Turkish troops on the island are only estimates because actual troop strength cannot be confirmed. There is a tension between the Turkish soldiers and TRNC soldiers on the island created by their distinction and separation. This tension can in part be seen by the organization of the military, wherein

the TRNC troops, although a separate military entity, are in fact subordinate to the Turkish military.

Although distinct military entities, both the KTBK and the GKK are controlled by the Turkish General Staff (TGS) located in Ankara, Turkey. The TGS oversees the Turkish armed forces and is responsible for the security policies of both Turkey and the TRNC. The KTBK, as part of the Turkish Aegean Army, reports directly to the TGS. The GKK, although comprised of Turkish Cypriot soldiers, is commanded by a Turkish two-star General under the control of the TGS who also reports directly to the President of the TRNC, thus providing direct communication between the Turkish military and the TRNC President (Jenkins 2001, 80). Additionally, the Turkish Cypriot police force is part of the GKK and subordinate to the TGS. This is noteworthy in that in Turkey the police force is part of the Interior Ministry. Veterans of the Turkish military in North Cyprus informed me that the dependence of the GKK and the police force on the TGS is vital to Turkey so that Turkey can both stay in control and intervene when and if deemed necessary. My informants further substantiated their claims by highlighting the fact that the GKK reports to a Turkish commander, as opposed to a Turkish Cypriot commander, and that the highest-ranking official of the GKK is usually lower than the higher-ranking officers of the KTBK military.¹⁷

This structure whereby the Turkish Cypriot military is subordinate to the Turkish military was established prior to 20 July 1974. Before the self-declaration of independence of the

¹⁷ In 2010, however, Salih Cevahir Cem became the first Turkish Cypriot General in Cyprus, but he soon afterwards retired.

TRNC, the Turkish Cypriot paramilitary organization (TMT) was dependent upon the Turkish military for training, equipment, and funds. During the fight against the Greek Cypriots the Turkish Cypriots welcomed the Turkish military presence. Today, however, the continued presence of the Turkish military on the island is contested. Some Turkish Cypriots support Turkey's military presence on the island, while other Turkish Cypriots privately and publicly call for Turkey to leave the island. The large majority of Turkish Cypriots fall somewhere in the middle, with an understanding of why Turkey is on the island, but wish that the necessity did not exist for Turkish troops to remain. This is a subtly different opinion than an outright rejection of the Turkish military presence. Those who hold this opinion do not necessarily speak poorly about the Turkish presence on the island (except when questioned) nor do they attend public protests against Turkey, but neither do they defend Turkey's military presence on the island.

Regardless of whether or not Turkish Cypriots want Turkey's military forces on the island, most agree that the GKK and the Turkish Cypriot Police Services should not be controlled by the KTBK but instead should be separately controlled by the TRNC. As stated by my Turkish Cypriot friend Erkan in a conversation about Turkish military presence on the island, "As you know Turkey has their own soldiers. Therefore they can control them. No problem about that. But GKK and the police services should be controlled by ourselves". When questioned further as to why he thinks the TRNC does not have control over their own military and police, he lamented that "Because at the end of the day, North Cyprus is a base of Turkish military services and they don't want to give control to someone else".

His sentiment echoed a 2000 proposal by the TRNC Communal Liberation Party (CLP) to make the TRNC military and police force independent. CLP proposed to change Article 10 of the TRNC constitution. The proposed amendment sought to move the police from under supervision of the GKK to the TRNC Interior Ministry, which is the same as it is in Turkey and other parts of the world. However, Turkish General Özeyranlı publicly decried this proposal stating that such a change in the law would be considered an ‘act of treason’ thereby implying that Mustafa Akıncı, Chairman of the CLP, was a traitor (Jenkins 2001, 80; Kanlı and Alkan 2000). Following General Özeyranlı’s comments, the Chairman of the CLP criticized the General’s comments as “absurd” (Kanlı and Alkan 2000). The proposed amendment was ultimately dropped. Despite this, there are still many who feel that the military and police force should be under the control of the TRNC and not under the control of the TGS.

Debates surrounding the control of the police force reflect issues regarding national sovereignty in the TRNC. To examine this further it is first necessary to shed light on the concept of sovereignty. Conventionally the principles of Westphalian sovereignty act as a precedent for any international definition of sovereignty, although in practice they are frequently violated. Westphalian sovereignty considers a state or governing body to have the authority to govern its territory without any external interference (Krasner 2004, 88). According to the TRNC constitution, *de jure* sovereignty (or ‘legal’ sovereignty) lies with the Turkish Cypriot people. Article 3 of the TRNC constitution (1983) states that sovereignty belongs to the “...people comprising citizens of the Turkish Republic of

Northern Cyprus, without condition or reservation” and they shall exercise this sovereignty “...within the framework of the principles laid down by the Constitution, through its competent organs.”¹⁸ As such, the “representation of the people” lies within the “public powers” of the state (Balibar 2004, ix).¹⁹ The clause “without condition or reservation” indicates that absolute sovereignty lies solely with the power of the people. This claim is repeated in the preamble of the TRNC Constitution (1983), “The Turkish Cypriot people, with whom the absolute right to sovereignty rests”.²⁰ Thus although Turkey officially recognizes the TRNC as a sovereign nation, the insistence by General Özeyranlı to maintain control over the TRNC military units and police forces curtails their sovereignty and directly contradicts the official position of Turkey that the TRNC is an independent state. Additionally, it should be noted that it is the Turkish military, which has a history of upholding and defending Kemalism that maintains control over the TRNC military units and police forces against the desire of Turkish Cypriots. Thus, it is ironically the ‘Kemalist’ military that is curtailing the sovereignty of the Turkish Cypriots. As such, the effectiveness of the claim by the TRNC constitution that the

¹⁸ The English translation of the TRNC Constitution provided online by the TRNC Ombudsman Office is being used here and throughout this chapter. However, I have also provided the Turkish translation in the footnotes. The Turkish translation of the first quotation reads, “Egemenlik, kayıtsız şartsız Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti yurttAŞalarından oluşan halkındır.” (TRNC Constitution, 1983. Article 3, section 1). The Turkish translation of the second quotation reads, “Halk, egemenliğini, Anayasanın koyduğu ilkeler çerçevesinde, yetkili organları eliyle kullanır.” (TRNC Constitution, 1983. Article 3, section 2).

¹⁹ There is a wide literature engaging with how this transfer of power from ‘the people’ to ‘the state’ can and does occur. One of the most notable authors on sovereignty, Giorgio Agamben (1998), explores this transfer of power from ‘the people’ to ‘the state’ by engaging with Foucault (1976) through a philosophical exploration of the relationship between the physical body and the sovereign.

²⁰ “KIBRIS TÜRK HALKI Egemenliğin kayıtsız şartsız sahibi olarak” (TRNC Constitution, 1983. Preamble).

TRNC is a sovereign nation is called into question. This debate over the power of control of the police force illuminates the failure of the Westphalian definition of sovereignty in the TRNC and exposes the reality of multiple sovereigns. While a *de jure* sovereign is the legal sovereign, a *de facto* sovereign is the authority that has the executive powers. In the TRNC, Turkey is the *de facto* sovereign.²¹

The competing Turkish and Cypriot nationalisms construct different notions of national belonging, which result in different conceptualizations of the political and cultural relationships between the TRNC and Turkey. As Lacher and Kaymak (2005) note, prior to declaring statehood in 1983, “...self-determination was widely seen as something that would be pursued within the larger framework of Turkish Nationalism. The ‘self’ in question was not the political community of Turkish Cypriots, but the Turkish nation, of which the Turkish Cypriots were regarded to be an extension” (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 155). This belief was central to taksim, a popular political movement of the time, whereby Turkish Cypriots wished Cyprus to be divided into Greek and Turkish sides (See Chapter 2). As demonstrated by Bahcheli and Noel (2010), declaring statehood in 1983 was intended to foster closer relations between Turkish Cypriots and Turkey and strengthen a sense of Turkish identity (Bahcheli and Noel 2010, 145-146). The first President of the TRNC, Rauf Denktaş and his political party UBP were primary advocates of the idea that the TRNC is an extension of Turkey (Bahcheli and Noel 2010, 148; Navaro-Yashin 2006, 86). Denktaş frequently promoted the idea that Turkish

²¹To complicate matters, the RoC claims *de jure* sovereignty over the entire island, including the territory that makes up the TRNC. The role of Turkey as *de facto* sovereign extends beyond the context of TRNC politics, and into direct conflict with the claim by the RoC to be the *de jure* sovereign over the entire island.

Cypriots and Turkish mainlanders were indistinct from one another (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 155). This idea of being a part of the Turkish nation with loyalty to Turkey is reflected and dispersed throughout the preamble of the TRNC constitution:

“Whereas the Turkish Cypriot people is an inseparable part of the Turkish Nation which has lived independent and fought for its rights and liberties all through its history...

Whereas the Turkish Cypriot people has, in the face of events directed against its national existence and right to life, and since 1878 when it was broken away from its motherland...

Whereas Turkish Cypriot people has established through the bitter experience it had undergone until the year 1974 when the Peace Operation, which was carried out by the Heroic Turkish Armed Forces by virtue of the Motherland’s natural, historical and legal right of guarantorship emanating from the Agreements...” (TRNC Constitution 1983. Preamble).²²

Bahcheli and Noel (2010) highlight that the conflict between declaring a Turkish Cypriot statehood while simultaneously promoting a singular Turkish nationalism was a contradiction that compromised both from the beginning (Bahcheli and Noel 2010, 146). As a result of this contradiction, the façade of TRNC sovereignty weathered poorly as an increasing number of Turkish Cypriots came to doubt whether the new state in fact reflected their political will (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 155). This doubt also raised

²² “Tarihi boyunca bağımsız yaşamış, hak ve özgürlükleri için savaşım vermiş büyük Türk Ulusunun ayrılmaz bir parçası bulunan; // Anavatanından koparıldığı 1878 yılından bu yana ulusal varlığına ve yaşam hakkına yöneltilen...// Toplumsal hak ve özgürlüklerle sahip olmadan, bireysel hak ve özgürlüklerin sözkonusu olamayacağını, Anavatanın doğal, tarihsel ve andlaşmalardan doğan yasal garantörlük hakkını kullanması suretiyle Kahraman Türk Silahlı Kuvvetlerinin sonuçlandırdığı ve Kıbrıs Türküğüne huzur, barış, güvenlik ve özgürlük ortamı içinde yaşama imkanı sağlayan Barış Harekatının yapıldığı 1974 yılına kadar süren acı deneyimlerle saptamış bulunan...” (TRNC Constitution 1983. Preamble).

questions among citizens regarding the amount of power that the TRNC government actually had over the affairs of North Cyprus, which resultantly allowed for the development of new ways of conceiving their political community (Lacher and Kaymak 2005, 155). The majority support originally given to pro-Turkish nationalism political parties, such as UBP, began to wane as political parties, such as CTP, promoting Cypriot nationalism grew in power and influence (Lacher Kaymak 2005, 155; Carkoglu and Sözen 2014; Bahcheli and Noel 2010, 146). Those political parties promoting a Cypriot nationalism contested Turkish control of the island and instead embraced the idea of a TRNC completely independent from Turkey.

In questioning the sovereignty ‘guaranteed’ to them by Turkey, Turkish Cypriots also expressed their dissatisfaction over the lack of external recognition. They believed they were promised sovereignty with the declaration of statehood, however no country but Turkey would acknowledge this sovereignty and the Turkish acknowledgment was increasingly revealed to be duplicitous. Turkish Cypriots’ dissatisfaction over non-recognition illuminates another aspect about conventional sovereignty, which is that international recognition is an important aspect of sovereignty. As Anthony Giddens (1985) argues, sovereignty is not something that a state maintains on its own, but rather sovereignty is only constructed and maintained through the connection and relation between states (Giddens 1985, 263). As such, declaring sovereignty is not enough; sovereignty needs to be recognized by the international community at large. As has been mentioned, the sovereignty of the TRNC is not internationally recognized by any state except Turkey. The international community considers the ROC as the *de jure* sovereign

of the TRNC and refers to the territory that makes up the TRNC as the “militarized occupied zone of the ROC”. They regard Turkey as the *de facto* occupier of the territory and by this set of terminology, they further emphasize that they do not recognize the sovereignty of the TRNC.²³

Thus, to reiterate, Turkish nationalism promotes Cyprus as part of the larger Turkish nation and Cypriot nationalism contests this notion by promoting the sole recognition of the *de jure* power of a Turkish Cypriot state. What will be demonstrated is that although these ‘official’ constructions of Turkish and Cypriot nationalisms promote differing understandings of sovereignty, Turkish Cypriots themselves are ambivalent about their sovereignty. Before demonstrating this, it is first necessary to consider how sovereignty has been conceived of and examined by scholars. The discourse about sovereignty discussed thus far presumes the idea that sovereignty is based on a concept of a single, governing sovereign. However, as Bryant (2014) demonstrates, although this might be how sovereignty is discussed, thinking about sovereignty as something that is ‘all or nothing,’ especially in the context of a *de facto* state, is an outdated and unproductive way of conceiving of sovereignty (Bryant 2014, 127). Instead, she suggests that the conventional concept of sovereignty needs to be re-examined and engaged with in a way that accounts for the complex and changing ways in which sovereignty exists (Bryant

²³ They also use other terms to emphasize that the TRNC is not sovereign, for example often the TRNC President is referred to only as the Turkish Cypriot Leader, or ‘President’ is placed in quotes (i.e., “President”) (US State Department 2013). Additionally, it is worth noting that the issue of TRNC recognition has played a large part in hindering potential peace deals between the RoC and the TRNC because during these meetings the TRNC wants to start negotiations from the basis that these are two sovereign nations making a deal, but the RoC declines to concede this point.

2014, 127). Other scholars share similar views and note that the ability of states to have absolute control within their territory and maintain their borders (or more appropriately, appearance thereof) has become harder to maintain and espouse with the proliferation of international organizations, internet communities, and NGOs (e.g., Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Bellamy 2003, 167; Petersmann 2003). As such, effective legal sovereignty is always an unattainable ideal (Hansen and Stepputat 2006). Bryant (2014) illuminates that because sovereignty is often misconceived as ‘all or nothing,’ proposed frameworks to legally change the *de facto* status of states are hindered. As such, in this context, she suggests that the concept of sovereignty needs to be reconceived in the context of a globalized world; sovereignty needs to be thought of as ‘fragmented’ or ‘disaggregated’ (Bryant 2014, 140).

Navaro-Yashin (2010; 2012) also contests the idea of sovereignty as resting in a single, supreme sovereign (whether that sovereign is the ‘state’ or ‘the people’). Instead, she argues that sovereignty is a continuing negotiation, contestation, and mediation between the terrain, human actors, and devices of measurement (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 44). This process, she argues, is the work of sovereignty in and of itself. Examining an official catalogue produced by the TRNC Ministry of Settlements, entitled “The Catalogue of Geographical Names in the T.R.N.C. Volume-III,”²⁴ Navaro-Yashin (2012) demonstrates that political agency is not located solely within the Turkish state, but rather that the agency rests in the negotiations conducted “...between people and things in and on a given territory” (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 43). To demonstrate this, she illustrates the ways in which the TRNC administration systematically changed place names within their

²⁴ Turkish: “K.K.T.C Coğrafi İsimler Kataloğu (Cilt-III)”

territory to Turkish place names. Although the administration re-named these cities and towns in Turkish, the Turkish Cypriots did not fully accept these new Turkish place names. She provides several examples of Turkish Cypriots who did not even recognize the new, official place names (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 48-50). Instead, Turkish Cypriots would often refer to places by the old names. Navaro-Yashin (2012) uses this criticism and subversion by Turkish Cypriots regarding the new place names as an example of the way in which sovereignty in the TRNC is problematic. Her definition negates the idea of a top-down approach to sovereignty and instead demonstrates that sovereignty is something continuously negotiated. Using this understanding of sovereignty Navaro-Yashin (2012) argues that sovereignty in the TRNC is both partial and problematic.

Extending from this idea of a problematic sovereignty, I will argue below that although politically particular understandings of sovereignty are promoted (i.e., Turkish nationalism fosters the idea that the TRNC is an extension of Turkey and Cypriot nationalism fosters the idea that Cyprus is separate and distinct from Turkey), Turkish Cypriots construct more ambivalent understandings of sovereignty. Through an examination of the military culture and official military parades, I will demonstrate how this ambivalence about their sovereignty is constructed.

3.3.2 Barbeque and Bullets

The number of military sites in North Cyprus might be equaled only by the number of picnic sites one can find along the sides of the road. An afternoon outing to one of these sites with my Turkish Cypriot acquaintances was illuminating with regard to the

relationship that the people on the northern part of this island have with Turkey's military presence on Cyprus. Driving by car from Lefkoşa, Ali, Nefise, Erol, and I met up with many of our other Turkish Cypriot friends at Çınar Restaurant, located in Girne (Kyrenia). The word Çınar refers to the large trees that were in the area, whose long branches provide shade from the sun over the picnic tables. We were having our first official 'mangal' (barbeque) of the season. We brought meat to grill and vegetables to cut. We also brought raki, a traditional Turkish liquor that tastes like licorice and is most commonly diluted with water and ice and served with food.

When we arrived at the picnic site, we sat down at a large table that was surrounded by plastic chairs. The tablecloth that was provided by the site had "Çınar hotel and casino" written on it and was embellished with the large green leaf found on Çınar trees. I questioned my friends what this meant because there was neither a casino nor a hotel in sight, just what appeared to be a barbecue site. They informed me that originally it was meant to be a hotel and casino for tourists. The prospective developers of the site bought the tablecloths believing they could get official permission for the hotel and casino. Unfortunately for them, they were denied permission, so they turned it into what is today, a canteen (gazino²⁵). At the time, I did not know what a 'gazino' was, so I asked. By way of explanation, they provided a military example saying, "In military we use these spaces

²⁵ There are two official definitions for 'gazino': 1.) A place where you can eat, watch shows, listen to music, and sometimes a place where plays are performed. 2.) A large kahvehane (Turkish coffee place) or birahane (beer place, like a pub). There is also another definition where 'gazino' means 'casino'. However, usually in Turkey as well as in North Cyprus they use the English word 'casino' or the Turkish word 'Kumarhane' for 'casino'; not 'gazino'. As stated above 'gazino' also means 'a large kahvehane'. At kahvehane's men are known in Turkey to play cards and secretly gamble, thus alluding to the definition of a 'gambling place' or 'casino'.

to eat food". Pointing to the stone pavement and small rotundas, Erol commented, "Actually, this place looks a lot like a military canteen". Through this comment, Erol had revealed the effect his compulsory military service had on his interpretation of the environment.

It is very popular during the summer months for Turkish Cypriots to have mangal (English: barbecue). A proper Turkish Cypriot mangal involves a lot of food. The men typically barbecue the meat, while the women cut vegetables to make salads and set up the table with condiments and other side dishes. As I was helping to prepare salads, Nefise rolled her eyes at the conversation the men were having. "These men are always complaining about the military," she tells me. The other women chuckle in agreement. Alev comments, "It's very true!" The women proceed to laugh and comment that the men do not have to do anything hard in the military; they just lay around in the sun. In defense, the men say, "No, no, no, that's not true. Don't listen to them, Katie". The tone of their laughter had a quality in it that suggested that it was probably not as difficult as they were making it out to be. Altinay (2004) demonstrates how the military service in Turkey provides for a development of a military culture, by which those who have served can participate in shared stories, complaints about the conditions, and a "common sense of sacrifice". In the TRNC, the men also complain frequently about their time in the military. They enjoy complaining about the service with their male friends and discuss the hardships they faced in their military life that was dictated by strict rules and curfews and required that they surrender their freedom for a time.

All TRNC male citizens are required by law to serve in the GKK for a specified number of months, with most men serving the standard 12 months. In the context of the Turkish military, Altinay (2004) highlights the importance of military service in the social lives of men in Turkey. More specifically, Altinay (2004) illustrates that completing military service is an important part of the process of becoming a man and as such is socially viewed as an important pre-requisite to marriage and employment. Additionally, Altinay (2004) shows how military service introduces those participating in military service to different areas of Turkey. In North Cyprus, the location in which soldiers are stationed is less significant because North Cyprus is so small that most Turkish Cypriots have seen the major cities and villages. Even if they have not, Turkish Cypriot culture does not vary significantly from place to place as it does in Turkey. However, military service provides a way for those conscripted to make connections with people from other villages and cities. Travelling to these provincial locations, and the connections there made, help to foster the creation of a national community (Anderson 1983). A few of the men I knew in the TRNC met each other through their military service. These introductions can benefit them not only in friendship, but also in business. For example, Ali and Mahmut, two of the men at this barbecue, became friends during their military service. Now Mahmut, a civil servant with many contacts, uses car insurance purchased from Ali's insurance company located in a different city and recommends him to all he meets that need insurance. This connection may not have happened otherwise as both men come from different places in North Cyprus. Through the acts of meeting new people and bonding through common experiences and shared stories from across Cyprus, military service provides one way in which the military is viewed by Turkish Cypriots as contributing to

the integration of their culture. Yet although a community is being constructed through military service in the TRNC, participating in the military does not foster a sense of sovereignty

The military culture of the TRNC perpetuated by military service (e.g., service to country, complaining, manhood, bonding) is similar to the military culture of Turkey in many ways. However, one distinction needs to be noted: the perception and knowledge of the GKK. In Turkey, many Turkish citizens do not know that the Turkish Cypriots have their own military; some do not even know that the Turkish Cypriots perform military service at all. For those Turkish citizens who do know that Turkish Cypriots perform military service, very few of those know about the GKK and assume they serve in the Turkish Army. Turkish Cypriots know that the GKK is a separate military entity and generally disapprove of being subordinate to the Turkish military. My Turkish Cypriot contact Erkan spoke of his disapproval of the Turkish Army by making the implication that the Turkish soldiers are stationed on his island with their own intentions, “Turkish soldiers fight for Turkey”. When I asked him if he felt that he did not properly represent his country since Turkey was in charge of his military and not defending what he believed to be his country’s rights he responded, “Nope, I always served to *my* country”. When asked who they serve, Turkish Cypriots distinguish their service from the KTBK and state that they are a part of the GKK. Although the Turkish military manages the GKK, these soldiers are pledging themselves to the TRNC.

Under the authoritative discourse, the KTBK are the protectors of Turkish Cypriots as well as the protectors of Turkey and Turkey's possessions, in this case the northern part of Cyprus which they occupy. From this multifaceted role arise internal contestations regarding the role of the military in the TRNC. Those who identify themselves only with the GKK as the domestic defense force are aware that it is not possible to have a GKK fully independent because of its reliance on Turkey for funding and the TRNC's lack of international status. This belief reflects the idea that they have always been subject to foreign domination and rule from afar and do not have the wherewithal to take their political situation in their own hands. Although they believe this, as noted above, they still desire an independent GKK and police force. Fewer in number, but worthy of mention, are those Turkish Cypriots who are proud to be part of the KTBK, arguing that they are part of the oldest military organization in the world. This buys into the authoritative discourse that the TRNC is an extension of Turkey.

This awareness of distinctions between GKK and KTBK provides insight into important issues about sovereignty and the role of the military. As mentioned previously, Navaro-Yashin shows how sovereignty is constructed by a network of people engaged with, on, and through materialities (Navaro-Yashin 2012, 43). In this way, this military command structure highlights her argument that sovereignty is constructed through a relationship between materiality and human agency, as there are rules in place that construct this command structure. Yet, while there are materialities involved, the military is also a practice. Focusing solely on the engagements with materiality ignores a broader encompassing of the intangibles used in the practice of the military, such as the meeting

of new Cypriots with whom they share service or the ‘feeling’ of separation of GKK. Thus, while the distinction between GKK and KTBK can be examined to highlight Navaro-Yashin’s (2012) argument, it can also be examined to extend her argument. These everyday interactions help to shape their construction of sovereignty, or in this case, an absence of sovereignty.

3.3.3 Kismet

During a discussion with Erkan about the Turkish military, I questioned him about his opinion regarding Turkish military bases on the island. My curiosity about the subject was piqued because the owner of the bar below my apartment was vehemently against the military bases. Erkan responded to my question by explaining to me, “If you look at the history of Cyprus, it is filled with wars and different ownerships every hundred years. Ottomans, Venedics [Venetians], Lusignans [Franks], British, and others. It is our destiny, whether we want it or not. We are always a military base.” His comment is historically true. The island has been ruled by expanding empires over the millennia. The island’s successive rulers include the Greeks, Phoenicians, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Ptolemies, Romans, Byzantines, Franks, Venetians, Ottoman Turks, and most recently Britain from which Cypriots later gained their independence in 1960. Today, as previously discussed, Turkey now has de facto control of the northern part of the island. In addition to the successive rulers of the island, the island is now home to not only Turkish military bases, but also British and Greek bases. Erkan’s comment is revealing in other ways as well. The presence of military bases is not something that is just physically experienced in the landscape, as is described above, but the presence of military bases is

also deeply entangled with the imagined community of Cyprus. He said it was fate, or in Turkish, Kismet.

Kismet is a noun used in both Turkey and North Cyprus that means fate. In using this word, Turkish Cypriots and Turkish people express belief in a concept that every event in people's lives is pre-determined. This principle comes from the Islamic belief in the will of God. Like the English phrase "It is fate," it can be used for both positive and negative situations. It signifies that circumstances are believed to be beyond one's own control. Erkan's statement that it is Cyprus's fate to always be ruled is a sentiment and belief structure shared by many Turkish Cypriots living in the TRNC. Holding this belief in Kismet eases their frustration in the slow pace of finding a solution to the 'Cyprus Problem' and the subsequent dependence on Turkey.

Additionally, it is important to note that Erkan uses the plural pronoun "we". In using "we" he is referring to the Cypriot people as a whole. He clarified this point later by stating, "Cypriots are unlucky because we were all born in a big warship in the middle of the Mediterranean. Not only Turkish Cypriots, but Greek Cypriots as well". By concluding this, he is aligning the plight of his people with the Greek Cypriot people; together as Cypriots it is their fate that outsiders will always rule over them. The Turkish Cypriot public shares this belief that it is the fate of the island to always be ruled by non-Cypriots, often citing the strategic location of their island in the middle of the Mediterranean. This belief is significant because as seen in the previous section, Erkan differentiated himself as distinct from Greek Cypriots through his military service. In the

context of military service, he was serving to protect his country against domestic and foreign enemies, including Greek Cypriots. He and his people were serving to protect a future in which he would remain separate from the Greek Cypriots. Yet, in his comment about the fate of Cypriot people, it seems as though he does not want that fate. In this way Turkish Cypriots see themselves as united with the Greek Cypriots in that others will always rule them. Kismet, determined by the hand of God, is something that cannot be manipulated and as such one has to learn to live with the fate one is assigned.

The military culture in North Cyprus in one respect embodies a subjectivity of domination. Those serving in the GKK are subordinate to a foreign military power and the places they serve on the island are bases that were created as a result of a military invasion of their island. This returns us to notions of Atatürk's military whereby territorial expansion and integrity was central. Turkish soldiers are sent off around the country to protect citizens from external and internal threats (such as the PKK). As Turkish Cypriots see it, Cyprus is occupied by the military of a foreign nation that is becoming more alien as AKP's reconceptualization of its purpose goes forward. Turkey promised to protect Turkish Cypriots from 'foreign' forces such as the RoC, but now they themselves are viewed as the foreign 'other'. So what does this mean for the Turkish Cypriots' construction of the sovereign when the military designated to protect their values of the nation, no longer represent their nation? Although the authoritative discourse, as exemplified in the President Eroğlu's speech at the 20 July parade, is that the TRNC is a "sovereign" nation, examining the understanding of the Turkish military from 'below' illustrates that Turkish Cypriots contest that notion of sovereignty. Turkish

Cypriots not only believe that a foreign country rules them, but it is their fate that they will always be ruled by a foreign power.

3.4. July 20 Celebrations

3.4.1 Celebrating Militarism

The 20 July 2014 military parade followed shortly after the wreath laying ceremony (Section 3.2). The military parade officially began with President Eroğlu and President Gül, accompanied by the GKK Major-General (Turkish: Tumgeneral), Baki Kavun, driving down the Dr. Fazıl Küçük Boulevard in a military jeep. Starting off the military parade with those men was symbolic of their leadership of the military and the country. The composition of the soldiers participating in the parade included the veterans of the Turkish Resistance Organization (Turkish: Türk Mukavemet Teşkilatı, TMT), veterans and current members of the KTBK (which is comprised of Turkish citizens), and the veterans and current members of the GKK (which is comprised of Turkish Cypriot citizens). Within their designated brigades, they advanced on foot, in tanks or other armed military vehicles, in jeeps, and on motorcycles or descended by parachute. Group-by-group, they all came forward accompanied either by Turkish pop music played over the loudspeakers or by their own marching chants such as the ‘Turkish Cypriot Fighter’s Anthem’ (Turkish: ‘Kıbrıs Türk Mücahitler Marşı’). The large number of foot soldiers carrying weapons and soldiers riding in armed military vehicles displayed the military might of the TRNC. Under command of the GKK, the TRNC police force also put on an impressive show of skill by performing acrobatic stunts on moving motorcycles. As the seemingly never-ending line of soldiers advanced down Dr. Fazıl Küçük Boulevard, the

military parade portrayed a grand display of military uniformity and might through sheer numbers. 20 July marks the day the Turkish Cypriots were saved from suffering at the hands of the Greek Cypriots, but the date also represents the start of a set of motions that led to the establishment of the TRNC. As such, the military parade encapsulates the notion of the inseparability of the military from the independence and sovereignty of the TRNC. Because the TRNC is not legally recognized by the international community, the parade is not only an attempt by the state to produce and display their sovereignty to the citizens of the TRNC, but it is also an attempt to display their strength and legitimacy externally.

3.4.2 Flag Ceremony

After President Eroğlu, President Gül, and Major-General Kavun finished parading down the street, the flag ceremony commenced. The flag ceremony during the 20 July parade on Dr. Fazıl Küçük Boulevard is a very important event according to the official discourse, as exemplified by its listing within the official gazettes. After the arrival of President Gül and President Eroğlu, a young boy and a young girl in red sport shorts, white shirts and white tennis shoes run down the street bearing flags. The girl holds a folded Turkish flag and the boy holds a folded Turkish Cypriot flag. Behind the girl is a large Turkish flag held by four children in identical outfits. Behind the boy is an equally large Turkish-Cypriot flag, held by four children, again in identical outfits. The children are wearing red and white to symbolize the colors of both Turkey and the TRNC. As they are running, a woman's voice cascades from the loudspeakers to the ears of the

participants and the audience. She states, “Blood turns out to be (becomes) the flag,”²⁶ then speaking directly to the flag she continues, “...you are carried from generation to generation by your sons.”²⁷ The crowd gives applause. As choreographed, when her words end the children stop running and find themselves in the middle of the stadium stands, positioned directly in front of Turkish President Abdullah Gül and TRNC President Derviş Eroğlu. The children holding the unfolded flags tilt the flags downward to face the presidents. The children symbolize the future and represent the generation carrying the flags, performing the narrative that the future is better thanks to the 20 July “Peace Operation”.

Preparing the audience, a man’s voice over the loudspeaker announces the performance that is about to happen. He says, “The flags from Yavuz²⁸ Troop Landing Beach (Turkish: Yavuz Çıkarma Plajı) carried by our athletes will be given to the President of the Republic of Turkey, Abdullah Gül and the President of North Cyprus, Derviş Eroğlu”²⁹. The girl and the boy holding the folded flags then walk in tandem to scattered applause up to the stand holding the seated military and government officials. President Eroğlu and President Gül stand to greet them. The girl holding the flag of Turkey stands in front of President Gül, and the boy holding the flag of the TRNC stands in front of President Eroğlu. Major (Turkish: Binbaşı) Hasan Efendi, adjutant to the TRNC

²⁶ “Kan bayraklaşır,...”

²⁷ “...seni nesilden nesile çocukların taşıır,”

²⁸ The forename, Yavuz, references Turkish First Lieutenant Yavuz Sokullu. His name is being commemorated as the first martyr of the 1974 “Peace Operation”.

²⁹ “Yavuz Çıkarma Plajı'ndan atletlerimiz tarafından getirilen bayraklarımızın Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı Sayın Abdullah Gül ve Kuzey Kıbrıs Türk Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanı Sayın Doktor Derviş Eroğlu'na verilmesi.”

President, comes to stand directly behind President Eroğlu to witness the ceremony. Major Efendi's presence is both symbolic of the relation between the military and the TRNC and ceremonial in that he will receive the flag from President Eroğlu after it has been handed to him. It is worth noting that the adjutant to the Turkish president is a higher-ranking Colonel, rather than a Major as adjutant to the President of the TRNC. The girl then states that the flag she is giving is from Troop Landing Beach and she feels honored in giving him the flag, which is the symbol of independence, on the peace and independence holiday of TRNC. The girl then kisses the flag, presses it to her forehead, and hands it to the President Gül. The audience applauds. As she is handing the flag to President Gül, the boy too kisses the flag of North Cyprus, presses it to his head, and hands it to President Eroğlu. The kissing of the flag and placing it to one's forehead is a sign of respect for the flag; it is the same action used to greet elderly people by kissing their hand and holding it to one's forehead. President Gül then shakes the girl's hand and greets her with two cheek kisses, a common way to greet people in Turkey and North Cyprus. The ceremony is done.

The choreography of this flag ceremony is symbolic and representative of both the different relations between Turkey and the TRNC. The quotation spoken over the loudspeaker during this performance reinforces the nationalist discourse that the blood and nation are one. This is reminiscent of the phrase emblazoned on the Martyrs monument where another military ceremony commemorating 20 July was held earlier.³⁰

³⁰ “What makes a flag *flag*, is the blood on it. Soil becomes homeland once blood is shed for it” (Turkish: “Bayraklı Bayrak Yapan Üstündeki Kandır Toprak, Eger Uğrunda Ölen Varsa Vatandır”)

Both of these phrases tie together blood and the nation. The Turkish flag is symbolic for the nation of Turkey and the red of the flag symbolizes the blood shed for that country (Bryant 2002, 516). Additionally, as the quotation suggests, the flags are physically being carried by the future generations. Through the blood ties they are suggesting a “natural” kinship between Turkey and North Cyprus. Under the AKP’s new ideological shift in the notion of ‘homeland’, the ceremony reframes what that kinship means. Under Kemalist ideology, the TRNC was seen as baby country and Turkey was seen as the motherland. In this relationship, North Cyprus was seen as a baby country that required nurturance, a role provided by Turkey because it had “saved” its children of Turkish descent from ethnic cleansing and is now providing them money and sustenance to survive. During the foundation of the TRNC this relationship was more or less welcomed, with many Turkish Cypriots extending a welcoming hand to those from the mother country. Although superficially recognizing the independence of North Cyprus, Turkey’s actions (e.g., government speeches, foreign policy, military bases on the island) have always revealed that it views the relationship between the TRNC and Turkey as one where the TRNC is an extension of Turkey.

Since AKP came to power in Turkey in late 2002, many scholars and journalists have analyzed the new policies introduced by AKP as an attempt to make real AKP’s desire for a “New Turkey”. While this “New Turkey” has yet to be described with any great specificity, it is clear through the policies promoted, proposed, and enacted to date that this “New Turkey” is inspired by its Ottoman past and seeks to discard its Kemalist roots which have more or less dominated Turkey’s governing system since they were planted

in the 1930s. Saracoğlu and Demirkol show that while Kemalist nationalism perceived Turkish territories as a ‘homeland’ that had to be protected from foreign and domestic ‘enemies,’ AKP’s nationalism promotes Turkey as the successor to the Ottoman Empire—as a cultural and political epicenter from which it can influence the surrounding regions (Saracoğlu and Demirkol 2014, 12; Taşpınar 2012, 130).³¹ This new vision of the ‘homeland’ changes the way in which Turkey perceives its relationship with territories under its authority. Under AKP’s new re-conceptualization of Turkey as an epicenter, in the minds of many Turkish Cypriots the veil of superficially recognizing the TRNC’s independence is slowly being lifted, with a greater number of them feeling resentful towards this ‘anavatan’ and ‘yavruvatan’ relationship.

Often Turkish Cypriots and local publications will comment negatively on this relationship. For example, on a front-page article discussing the water pipes that were being laid by Turkey to Cyprus, the newspaper had an image of North Cyprus connected to Turkey by an umbilical cord (See Figure 1). This visually comments on the mother-child relationship and simultaneously references the physical connection between Turkey and North Cyprus via the submerged pipelines being laid to bring water from Turkey to North Cyprus. The headlines, however, read “BAĞLA ANAM,” meaning, “Tie it [the umbilical cord], Mother”. This image provides two commentaries. The first is that

³¹ This rhetoric was materialized visually on the symbolic date of 29 October 2014, the anniversary of the Republic of Turkey, when President Tayyip Erdogan formally inaugurated the new presidential palace, known as ‘Ak Saray’ (English: The White Palace). This Palace is larger than the Palace of Versailles with more than 1,000 rooms, to include a grand meeting room often likened to the meeting room in the Ottoman Palace, Topkapı, in Istanbul. It is here that President Erdogan greeted foreign officials with an army of men dressed in ceremonial Ottoman warrior costumes.

Turkish Cypriots literally do not want the pipeline because it makes them even more dependent on Turkey, although many Turkish Cypriots are grateful for the much-needed water. The second commentary is that they want to stop being “yavruvatan”; they no longer want to depend on Turkey for sustenance. This latter commentary is further emphasized by the imagery of both countries as alike in size, suggesting that Turkey and North Cyprus should be considered as equals, not as mother and child.



Figure 1: Front Page Afrika Newspaper (18 October 2013).

Returning to the ceremony, the flags the children hold in the ceremony are symbolic of the flag placed on “Troop Landing Beach”— the beach where thousands of Turkish soldiers (i.e. heroes) first landed on the island for the 20 July 1974 invasion. Due to the symbolic importance of this beach it was chosen as the location for the Dawn Vigil

[Turkish: Şafak Nöbeti] to commemorate the events of 20 July. In this way, they are remembering the blood that was shed on that day under the Turkish flag and the ties that Turkish Cypriots and Turkish people have. The Turkish and Turkish Cypriot flags are utilized to celebrate the 20 July ceremony because it was the beach landing by the Turkish Army on that day that allowed the independence of the Turkish Cypriots from the Republic of Cyprus. This narrative is repeated throughout the ceremony in different speeches, for example, when President Eroğlu stated, “Today, how happy it is that we live in a free country under our own flag with the protection of the Turkish military...”³² As it follows, according to the narrative that is performed in this ceremony put on by the Turkish and TRNC governments, the people of both Turkey and the TRNC are all Turkish and unified under these flags.

The display of the TRNC flag and the Turkish flag side by side on government buildings and national monuments is encountered frequently in everyday life. The flags are even inscribed into the Besparmak Mountain, whereby at night the etching lights up to show first the Turkish flag and then the TRNC flag. The flag is a clear symbol of sovereignty, promoting the notion that there are two separate countries. However, the presence of two flags also acts as a reminder for Turkish Cypriots to question the political sovereignty of the TRNC. Reflecting these feelings of disenchantment with their government and legal system, in addition to their current international and political standing, are the words they use to describe their country such as “Korsan” (English: “pirate country”) and “Muz

³² “Ne mutlu ki bugün kendi bayrağımız altında türk askerinin güvencesinde özgür bir ülkede yaşıyoruz”

Cumhuriyeti" (English: "The Republic of Banana"). These names do not represent North Cyprus as a sovereign nation, but instead refer to an illegal entity, a Republic of nothing.

A 2014 court hearing further reflects this questioning of political sovereignty by Turkish Cypriots. In 2013, Koray and Cinel Basdogrultmaci were charged with "offences against public order and improper behavior" because they had hung 3 Republic of Cyprus flags outside of their store in Famagusta (LGC News, 23 June 2013). They had hung these flags both in support of the Gezi protestors and as a statement of protest against Recep Taayip Erdogan and his administration. In addition, the couple claimed that they were protesting the TRNC's exclusion from the Mediterranean Games.³³ In conjunction to hanging these flags, Cinel Basdogrultmaci made the statement, "I do not recognize the fake flag of a fake country, these are my flags" (LGC News, 23 June 2013). During the court hearing they were asked to apologize for flying these flags. Not only did the couple refuse to apologize, they also stated that if they were to be fined they would prefer to go to jail rather than pay. Many Turkish Cypriots openly supported their stance, including the General Secretary of the Teacher's Union (KTOS), Sener Elcıl, who made a public statement to show his support. In his statement Elcıl denounced Turkey's governance of North Cyprus, and further, stated that hanging the Republic of Cyprus flag is not a crime and called for Turkey to leave the island:

"...It is clear that the ones who claim they saved us are actually after our soil. Like it was not enough that Turkish Cypriots became the minority in

³³ The Mediterranean Games is a sporting event that only includes the countries surrounding the Mediterranean Sea. The Games that year were held in Mersin, Turkey. Although the RoC attended the games, the TRNC was not allowed to compete because it is not considered an official country. Because the games were held in Mersin, Turkey their exclusion resulted in considerable criticism from the peoples of North Cyprus.

their own country and are impoverished and forced to migration with migration laws, now are tried at the courts for hanging the Cyprus Republic flag. This is clearly an occupation policy. It is also evident that while they claim to be pro-solution, in reality they can't even stand Turkish Cypriots' rights in Cyprus Republic. We urge the ones who pulled us off from Cyprus Republic, doomed us to live in this "cowshed" system, deceived the community with embargo lies and judge us by their cheap nationalistic propaganda to immediately return their Cyprus Republic passports and IDs. Holding and hanging the Cyprus Republic flag is not a crime. The related trial against Koray and Cinel Basdogrultmaci is completely political and Turkish authorities are the ones who are responsible...." (LGC News, 7 May 2014).

The hanging of three Republic of Cyprus flags in Famagusta and Ecil's statement of support are actions that deviate from a national narrative in which Turkey 'saved' the island and instead demonstrate their belief that the military occupation ensured that they were deprived of their sovereignty. Likewise, these actions are also indicative of wanting a future in which Turkey will not play a governing role. The Turkish Cypriot couple is promoting their identity as Cypriot through the nationalistic symbol of the Republic of Cyprus flag. While this court hearing is an extreme example, as most Turkish Cypriots do not desire to fly the RoC flag, it is representative of Turkish Cypriot contestation over the Turkish influence over the island. In flying the RoC flag instead of the TRNC flag, the couple used a nationalistic and politically charged symbol to emphasize their defiance. Simultaneously, they are using the RoC flag to show support for the Gezi supporters who are Turkish citizens; however, these Turkish citizens too are protesting against the AKP government and are seeking to protect Kemalist values with which most Turkish-Cypriots identify with. Through this example, it is clear that Turkish Cypriots are not only constructing a 'Cypriot' identity, but a 'Cypriot' identity heavily influenced by Kemalist Turkish values.

3.4.3 Performing “Turkishness”

Following the Flag Ceremony, the 20 July parade exhibited performances of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot cultural heritage. The men and women of the Turkish Cypriot Dance Troupe, dressed in traditional Turkish Cypriot dancing attire, performed a few traditional Turkish Cypriot group dances. The women wear a white embroidered scarf covering their hair. They wear knee length white dresses that are covered by a red *uçetek*, a beautifully embroidered long dress. Over the red *uçetek* is a shiny belt. The men wear a white shirt that is covered by a vest jacket, blue knee length trousers, and a wide red cloth belt. Turkish Cypriot folk dance choreography ranges from dances that are inspired from Cyprus island music and dance styles to those that are influenced by Turkish mainland music and dance varieties. Folk dancing is celebrated by Turkish Cypriots as an authentic cultural art form that survives from an ancient Cypriot past, however, as researched by Papadakis and Hatay (2015) and Demeteriou (2015) Turkish Cypriot folk dancing has been shaped and constructed to present a particular nationalistic ideal.

The nationalistic ideal promoted through the crafting of Turkish Cypriot folk dancing has shifted back and forth between a Turkish national identity and a Cypriot national identity. Papadakis and Hatay (2015) and Demetriou (2015) reveal that folk dances taught and performed in Turkish Cypriot communities before 1960 (the independence of Cyprus) were dances imported from Turkey. The folk dances coming from Turkey were themselves being carefully choreographed as part of Atatürk's modernization of Turkey. Inspired by Gökalp's writings on the relationship between folk and the Turkish nation,

the newly established CHP-led government set about cataloguing and preserving Turkish songs and dances from rural parts of Turkey which were seen as pure and unadulterated expressions of Turkishness (Öztürkmen 1992, 182; van Dobben 2008, 92). It was not until 1973 that Turkish Cypriots started to research and shape a Turkish Cypriot folk dancing (Papadakis and Hatay 2015, 25). However, after the 1974 Turkish ‘Peace Operation’ Turkish cultural influence loomed large in the shaping and defining of Turkish Cypriot folk dancing. The inclusion of folk dancing in the July 20 national parade is an active performance of Turkishness in order to foster a sense of social cohesion amongst the Turkish Cypriots.

Prominent in the parade was a musical performance by the Ottoman Janissary Band. The Ottoman Janissary Band is heralded as the world’s oldest military band. During the Ottoman Empire, they played on the battlefield to encourage soldiers until combat was over. Today, the Ottoman Janissary band is still under the charge of the Turkish Army and performs at the Military Museum in Istanbul and at special ceremonies. Atürk (2007) demonstrates that although it may seem that the Ottoman Janissary Band performs grand songs from the past Ottoman Empire, a large part of the repertoire was actually reconstructed during the Republican period. These songs were also practiced and learned in Cyprus during the 1920s in musical societies such as Darül-Elhan (Adanır 2015, 97). Atürk (2007) further demonstrates that a large number of songs were also written in the 1950s and 1960s. Recovered from their midnight performance at the Dawn Vigil, the Ottoman Janissary Band performed a set of marching songs dressed in traditional

Ottoman regalia. One song they played and sang was “Estergon Castle”³⁴ (Turkish: Estergon Kalesi), about the heroic, but ultimately failed attempt at protecting the Ottoman castle located in present day Hungary from invaders. The castle in the song is personified as a beautiful woman that the Ottomans do not want to lose. Using the metaphor of this beautiful woman, they retell the loss of Estergon to the enemy. The enemy gains the castle and plants their flag atop it. Like folk dancing, the music performed by this band in the parade is used as an agent of nation-building. While the Ottoman Janissary Band has played in previous 20 July celebrations in North Cyprus, AKP’s new nationalism promoting Turkey as the successor to the Ottoman Empire sets their performance at the 20 July 2014 event in a different context that seeks to enforce that Turkish nationalism upon the TRNC. Turkishness is not just a discourse, but is embodied in spectacle.

3.4.4 Audience

These various performances of strength, skill, and tradition overwhelmed one’s visual and auditory senses. The audience was made up primarily of government workers and both Turkish and Turkish Cypriot families who brought their children to the ceremony. As with most summer days on the island, the day was incredibly hot. Thus, most of the people were crowded within the stadium seating area, which provided shade and some comfort. Those that could not sit in the shade stood along the side of the street. Many people were queuing for water or soda from the vendor stationed just a few feet away from the seating. Though there was some applause during some of the parade events, the

³⁴ The Estergon Castle is known in Turkish folklore for being a place of heroic defence. The mayor of Kecioren, an area of Ankara that is known for being very nationalistic, made an exact replica of Estergon Castle.

degree of enthusiasm did not match the drama staged to stir the crowd. There was a larger, more diverse, and more enthusiastic group taking part in April's celebration of the Turkish football team Fenerbahçe's win of the Turkish League Championship. That day in April, men, women, and children of all ages marched down Dereboyu Street waving Fenerbahçe flags, chanting songs, clapping, and cheering. It was a stark contrast to the polite applauses and absentminded interest found in the parade.

The parade was also broadcast live on TV. Thus, even though there were not many people physically in attendance at the parade, it does not mean that they were not many watching it from the comfort of their homes. However, out of those questioned, only a small fraction were watching the parade on TV. When questioned further as to if they were actively watching the parade, only one had a nationally framed response, which was that he was watching the parade because it was their national holiday. The others who were watching it at home cited that they found the parades "interesting" or "entertaining". When questioned as to why most Cypriots do not attend the parade in person, one Turkish Cypriot (27 year old male) commented, "We are Cypriot. We like to eat and drink. Not sit under sun for nothing". Responses like this were the most common, with many preferring to enjoy their day off drinking and having a barbecue (mangal).

Some Turkish Cypriots expressed anger towards the parade. A Turkish Cypriot (female, mid-20s) referencing the 20 July military parade stated that she did not like "these kinds of power shows" which for her meant that Turkey was saying, 'I am here and this land is ours'. It is interesting to note that she also commented that it is primarily Turkish

immigrants, not the Turkish Cypriots, who attend the 20 July parade. However, during the 20 July 2014 parade the majority of people I encountered were Turkish Cypriot viewers who were taking their children out for the day. Her understanding and misconception about the number of Turkish immigrants on the island and their “negative” influence in the changing culture of Cyprus harkens to a study by Hatay (2005). He examined the Turkish Cypriots’ misconceptions of the influence of Turkish voters on politics in North Cyprus and discovered that they were not changing the voting patterns in the ways that Turkish Cypriots claimed they did. In the context of the 20 July Parade, although the Turkish Cypriot female that I spoke to assumed that the 20 July Parade was put on primarily for Turkish immigrants, the numbers of Turkish immigrants and Turkish Cypriots present belied her viewpoint.

The Communist Labor Movement (Komünist Emek Hareketi) in North Cyprus actively protested against the 20 July holiday by chanting, “Long Live Independent Cyprus” outside of the Turkish Embassy. The next day, I read in the newspaper that they protested against what they saw as Turkey’s 40-year imperial occupation of the island. Although it was a very small group of people protesting, it is notable that while all other newspapers posted images on the front page of the 21 July edition, the Communist Labor Movement’s protest was the lead story in the Afrika newspaper edition (Alptürk 2014, 1d). Afrika is known across the island for their anti-Turkey stance but it is significant to note that this view towards the parade is not confined to that newspaper. The newspaper’s infamous editor, Sener Levent, wrote a long article in which he remarked that 20 July is the most tragic and bloody day of the country’s history and commented that it was a

shame that no one was calling for the removal of the holiday, which he believes needs to be done to see peace on the island (Levent 2014, 2b).

While there were few people actively protesting on the streets, the sentiment of the protestors was echoed by many privately on the island. There are many who silently agree with the protestors as they spend the 20 July holiday barbequing with their friends. This is not to imply that all those barbequing are actively performing a silent protest, but rather, that many of those agree with the sentiments of the protestors even though they are not directly involved in the activity of demonstration. Many Turkish Cypriots want to be free to have their own democratic society, which for them means to be separate from Turkey. One such person is known around North Cyprus for his opinionated stances on issues in Cyprus. He has a large following on Facebook and his own online political satire newspaper, *The Mandira Times*. When discussing the 20 July holiday with him, he commented, “We are celebrating our national day and we are celebrating all of Turkey’s National Days.... Why? You tell me why? I don’t want any military celebration. I don’t want to see in this street soldier, tank, bomb, nothing. Do you know why they [Turkey] are doing this? It means to the Cypriot people, ‘I’ve got the power. Sit down.’” His stated reason for not wanting Turkish soldiers in the street is because it is representative of the political and cultural power Turkey has over the island. Thus, instead of protesting on the street he demonstrated his displeasure through the theme for his usual live music nights held at his bar, Anayasa Rock Bar.

On 19 July, Anayasa Rock Bar had one of their live music nights where a local musician plays an array of Turkish rock songs, many songs of which are politically charged from the 70s and 80s (See Chapter 5). These nights last until 2am, thus this live music night played into the morning of 20 July—the anniversary of the day Turkey ‘invaded’ the island. On this night many Turkish Cypriots are gathered at the Dawn Vigil (Turkish: *Şafak Nöbeti*) held on Troop Landing Beach where the Turkish Army first landed. The programme of the Dawn Vigil is comprised of speeches, Turkish Cypriot folk dancing, and musical performances by famous Turkish singers. People in attendance at the Dawn Vigil sing along to these songs and patriotically wave Turkish and Turkish Cypriot flags. Around 12:30am participants carry lighted torches to the main landing area of the Turkish troops to watch a symbolic reenactment of the Turkish Army’s 20 July 1974 beach landing. It should be noted that the Dawn Vigil emerged as a civil society initiative, independently funded by local organizations. Many citizens had grown weary of the military parades, thus the idea behind the Dawn Vigil was to reinvigorate and attract citizens to a celebration of 20 July. Despite this attempt to reclaim the holiday as a ‘Cypriot’ celebration, it has received considerable criticism from Leftists as it is still a celebration of the ‘invasion’ of Cyprus.³⁵ On July 19 2014, Anayasa Rock Bar held a different *Şafak Nöbeti* celebration titled, ‘Sa-fak nobeti’ [separating ‘fak’ to imply ‘fuck’]. On his public Facebook account the owner of the bar announced his fake ‘Sa-fak nobeti’ evening making the word play to emphasize Turkey’s ‘rape’ of Cyprus. On this night, extending to 20 July, the songs usually played took on a more specific political

³⁵ For example, in 2010 Leftists in the TRNC even criticized Bülent Ortaçgil, a well-known folk singer with Leftist associations, for performing at the 2010 Dawn Vigil.

meaning showing their disgust for Turkey, AKP, and their ‘occupation’ of Cyprus. Here it is quite clear to see that Turkish Cypriots attending this alternate Dawn Vigil celebration contested and rejected the notion of a sovereign and independent TRNC.

3.5 Turkish Air Show

While there were few spectators at the military parade on Dr. Fazil Küçük Boulevard, the national celebration that took place that night in Kyrenia was actually very popular. While it was also a military show, it was attended by a greater number and more diverse group of people. Many people arrived in the square to find no place to park. Kyrenia locals sat on their balconies and rooftops to observe the spectacle. What was different? The festival-like atmosphere that evening provided a sharp break with the structured uniformity of the morning ceremonies. While during the morning celebrations one had to sit on a bleacher or stand in the sun, here people could watch from the rooftops of their own homes (as we did) drinking homemade Nescafé frappes, or stand near the sea in one of the main squares in Kyrenia. Whereas the morning was filled with long speeches, structured performances of Ottoman Janissaries, and the Flag giving ceremony, this event was all action with a high-flying acrobatic air show put on by the Flying Solo Türk and the Turkish Stars.

The first of two back-to-back air shows started at 6pm in Kyrenia. The first act was the Solo Türk, heralded as the best jet pilot of the Turkish Air Force. His stunts with the F-16 were impressive; he performed flips and turns, survived huge drops, and even flew upside down and backwards. As part of his finale he made a large heart in the sky with his jet’s

contrail. My friends remarked with glee that a Turk was the best pilot in the world, pointing at certain stunts commenting proudly that only the Solo Türk could perform them. After the Solo Türk show, there was a short break and I went downstairs with Merve to help make iced Nescafe frappes for everyone. As we were finishing up, the house began to shake and the glasses wobbled on the counter top. The Turkish Stars had flown directly over the house. Merve told me to hurry up and go to the roof. The Turkish Stars flew in intricate formations and performed daredevil stunts, teasing the audience into thinking they were going to crash when at the very last moment possible they would pass each other. At one point, Erkan and Nefise told me to watch what was going to happen next. The Turkish Stars flew far into the distance, along what my Turkish Cypriot friends interpreted to be the border between the north and the south. My friends were spellbound by this nationalistic spectacle, by the reenactment of aerial events of 20 July 1974. Many of my friends even giggled with restraint and mimicked mockingly the shocked reactions the Greek Cypriots must be having of the planes flying close to their border. A few seemed to do so with a twinge of resignation, but they continued to make fun nevertheless. My friends explained to me that the Greek Cypriots hate it when that happens. Indeed the following day, the South side filed a complaint (as they do every year) with the UN over this violation of the Republic of Cyprus's airspace by the Turkish military. After the performance of the air show, there was a military band procession, but my friends had already moved on towards the pool after the drama of the airshow had passed.

The display performed by the Solo Türk and the Turkish Stars demonstrated the level of skill and capabilities of the Turkish air force pilots. It was a representation of the strength and power of the Turkish military and a demonstration of the official Turkish discourse about the power of the military. The planes were re-enacting the invasion by flying close to the border and my friends giggled and mocked the faces the angry and sad Greek Cypriots might have been making when they saw the planes swoop close to the Greek Cypriot territory. Ironically, the air show by which my Turkish Cypriot companions were spellbound was representative of the “official” Turkish narrative about which many of them usually complain. Many of the people in my company had complained about the Turkish military presence on the island. Regardless of the level of passion of their complaints, the overall commonly held position was that they did not want to have a foreign military presence on their soil. In certain contexts, they aligned themselves actively with their ‘Cypriot’ heritage and their Greek Cypriot counterparts, especially when they complained of the Turkish military presence and called for an independent Cyprus. However in this context of the spectacle of the Turkish air show, they have accepted the ‘official’ narrative that they are an extension of Turkey. They are celebrating the Turkish military presence on the island. Though they may have spoken disparagingly about the Turkish presence on the island, there was also a certain seductiveness and sense of security in the latter narrative, whereby the Turkish military protected them from the Greek Cypriots and is continuing to protect them (as exhibited by their response to the air show). Or perhaps more accurately, returning to the notion of Kismet, they are resigned to that narrative. It was out of their hands, it was their fate, and there was nothing that could be done.

Chapter 4

The Asmaaltı Project: An Unattainable Modern Future

Section 4.1 Introduction

I first arrived in North Cyprus with my friend Erol and his mother, both Turkish citizens who had previously lived in North Cyprus during the late 1980s. Even though it was very late at night when we arrived at the Ercan airport, friends of Erol's family, Hüseyin and his wife Müge, were waiting for us at the entrance. Hüseyin and Müge are middle-aged Turkish Cypriots who reside in a small farming village in North Cyprus. In this village, they work on a family owned farm cultivating various fruits and vegetables to be sold to wholesalers. With all of our suitcases packed into their car we could barely fit ourselves inside. We asked if we should get a taxi instead, but they refused our suggestion. They explained to us that we were guests and that they could not allow for us to arrive in a taxi because it would not be considered hospitable.

Hüseyin drove us directly to Nur's apartment. Nur is Erol's sister and a dental student in North Cyprus living in Lefkoşa with a classmate.³⁶ She served us tea and Turkish coffee as we conversed. Soon afterwards we turned our attentions to various activities. Erol's mother and Müge went into the kitchen to gossip, Nur played on her iPhone, I got out my notebook to write down first impressions, and Hüseyin took Erol aside to have a more private conversation. From my spot on the couch I could overhear a few phrases here and there, and I could feel the seriousness of the conversation by the tone of Hüseyin's voice. However, it was not until later when Hüseyin left and Erol relayed their conversation to

³⁶ It is very common for Turkish citizens to study at universities in North Cyprus if their test results are too low to enter into Turkish universities. After their first year of study, many Turkish students re-apply for enrolment in Turkish universities in hopes that their grades will be high enough to gain acceptance into the university.

me that I learned what they had discussed. Hüseyin had warned Erol about the dangers of a young woman such as myself walking around the Walled City alone. Hüseyin stressed to Erol that the Turkish migrants in the Walled City were dangerous and not to be trusted. He gave Erol examples of the danger, including stories about how Turkish migrants put pills in girls' drinks and then the girls "wake up in trouble". He suggested to Erol that I purchase a fake wedding ring to wear on my left hand in an attempt to ward off these migrants who might make unwanted advances towards someone thought to be unmarried. Hüseyin ended his conversation with Erol saying that overall North Cyprus is safe, but that it used to be a much safer place prior to the arrival of the Turkish migrants. He emphasized this point by stating that in the past everyone left their houses and doors unlocked, but now people needed to lock their doors.

Hüseyin's depiction of the Turkish migrants living in the Walled City was not an anomaly. When conversing about the Walled City, Turkish Cypriots often spoke disparagingly about the Turkish migrants living there and the effects they had on both the physical transformation of the Walled City and the character of the Walled City. In these discussions Turkish Cypriots utilized nostalgic rhetoric to fantasize that the Walled City had been safer prior to the arrival of the migrants, even if they themselves were too young to have known a Cyprus prior to the increased migration of people from Turkey to the island. According to Hatay and Bryant (2008a) many of the negative attitudes expressed about Turkish migrants by Turkish Cypriots are projected fears regarding the political relationship between the TRNC and Turkey, whereby Turkish Cypriots feel the TRNC is being colonized by Turkey. Hatay (2008) illustrates that the media informs and

manipulates these fears by exaggerating and sensationalizing negative coverage of the Turkish migrants. Although the Turkish migrants are not a homogenous group as they hail from various parts of Turkey with different cultural backgrounds, they are often categorized by Turkish Cypriots and the media as a single entity, particularly as migrants coming from the ‘East’ of Turkey (Hatay 2008).

This fear and distaste of the Turkish migrants living in the Walled City by Turkish Cypriots has transpired into feelings that Turkish migrants pose a threat to the very existence of Turkish Cypriot culture (Hatay 2007; Hatay 2008). Bryant (2015) argues that Turkish immigration to the island coupled with the lack of legal recognition of the TRNC has resulted in Turkish Cypriots feeling uncertain about their ‘identity³⁷’ (Bryant 2015, 167). She demonstrates that Turkish Cypriots, who had once used Turkish culture as the foundation for understanding and navigating their own cultural identity, now find themselves uncertain and anxious about their place in the world (Bryant 2015, 168). She defines this uncertainty and anxiety as ‘longing for essentialism’ (Bryant 2015, 166). She argues that within this context of abrupt change in their social environment a new kind of nostalgia materializes (Bryant 2015, 167). Bryant (2015) demonstrates that this nostalgia is a force used by Turkish Cypriots to construct social boundaries and essentialize identity. This argument demonstrates that nostalgia is both an active and transformative force.

³⁷ Bryant defines ‘identity’ as “...something that groups perceive as their ‘essence,’ that thing that ties them together, and it describes it both to themselves and to others.” (Bryant 2015, 165).

Bryant (2015) convincingly demonstrates that Turkish Cypriots desire to be able to clearly define themselves and that this desire manifests itself nostalgically. Researching the Walled City certainly illuminates and establishes this argument, as Turkish Cypriots utilize nostalgia to confirm what has been lost and in doing so construct boundaries between themselves and the Turkish migrants living there. Adding to this argument, this chapter will demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots in this politically liminal state do not only mourn an unattainable past, but mourn an unattainable future as well. Turkish Cypriots long for a future that is defined by negotiated notions of perceived European modernity (vis-à-vis the Greek side) and Turkish Cypriot modernity (vis-à-vis Dereboyu Street). Ultimately, they conceive this future to be unattainable because of what they see as the failure of their government to produce the modern. Similarly, as Turkish Cypriots accept the fact that they will not be able to return to the past they mourn (Bryant 2015), they have also resigned themselves to the notion that the modern future they desire is also unattainable. This longing is made all the more palpable as this desired modern future is situated in an alternative present in the Walled City in the RoC. It is also revealed that in interpreting themselves in the transformation of the Walled City they construct boundaries against the Turkish immigrants to define themselves as ‘modern’.

For many Turkish Cypriots living in North Cyprus, the Walled City is characterized as something separate, something that is fixed and contained (Bakshi 2012b). In describing the Walled City from the outside Turkish Cypriots refer to the Walled City as a symbolic space representative of the divided nature of the island and because of this, the Walled City becomes a place on which Turkish Cypriots’ project their political understandings of

the island (Bakshi 2012b). This chapter will examine how Turkish Cypriots negotiate their social and cultural boundaries through their longing for a modern future through an examination of one heritage and urban planning project in the Walled City, the Asmaaltı Project. Rather than examining the Walled City as a contained entity, examining the Asmaaltı Project allows one to see the Walled City from the inside in that it provides insight into the ways in which the Walled City is a space that is continuously transforming. Examining the contested responses to the Asmaaltı Project will highlight these different relationships with the Walled City, through the top-down approach by the Municipality Officials who projected their ideas onto a “fixed space” and the shopkeepers who believed that it was not compatible with the Walled City as a lived space.

Contained within fortified walls built by the Venetians in the 16th century are a high concentration of historic architectural structures spanning centuries. Through conflict, wear, and neglect many of the structures contained therein have suffered a significant amount of deterioration. To encourage economic development and promote tourism to the area, the TRNC Nicosia municipality now attempts to rehabilitate the area through heritage and urban planning projects. As will be argued in this chapter, these heritage and urban planning projects not only redesign the physical environment, but also through the Turkish Cypriots’ engagement with these new urban designs they negotiate new social imaginings of the Walled City. These social imaginings reveal how Turkish Cypriots construct social boundaries and negotiate understandings of their identity.

In his research on the Luang Prabang heritage site, Berliner (2012) examines the transformative force of nostalgia by demonstrating how nostalgia is a driving force in the making of heritage; that by attempting to preserve spaces the actors involved effectively transform the space, thereby constructing ‘new social configurations’. By new social configurations, Berliner refers to the ways in which the preservation of heritage sites can transform the way in which people relate to one another and their surroundings. Berliner (2012) holds that these many attachments to nostalgia can both bond diverse actors in a community as well as give rise to misunderstandings and tensions because these diverse actors may have different relationships to heritage. He argues that in these relationships that are both past and future oriented, people express their hopes and fears regarding the future (Berliner 2012, 770).

Similarly in the preservation of heritage in the Walled City, the state is not the only actor involved in transforming the space. Firstly, there are also heritage preservation and urban regeneration projects that are organized and funded by EU and UN organizations. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, while the state primarily focuses on promoting a specific TRNC national narrative, many of these EU and UN funded projects seek to highlight a common ‘Cypriot’ past through the preservation of shared ‘Cypriot’ heritage in an attempt to build relationships between the RoC and the TRNC in order to foster a political reunification of the island. In this regard, the Walled City is often used for social experiments in bi-communal projects as it is the perceived seam between two cultural fabrics. Some examples of such projects include the Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) (1979 – present day) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and

local Greek and Turkish Cypriot leaders, the Bi-communal Development Programme (1997-2005) implemented by United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the EU-funded Partnership for the Future (UNDP-PFF) (2001, on-going), and the UNDP Action for Co-operation and Trust (2005- March 2016). Evident in these projects, the Walled City represents the bi-communal possibilities of the island for international organizations and the Nicosia municipalities. Simultaneously, however, both the TRNC and RoC Nicosia municipalities are also expending efforts to preferentially preserve heritage sites deemed culturally significant to their own national narrative. As such, the Walled City represents the failure of these bi-communal projects in its continued and visible division. Examining heritage and urban planning projects conducted inside the Walled City in the TRNC will highlight contesting and overlapping urban designs. These tensions and layers reflect different orientations towards the political future by the different governing entities.

Secondly, although the Walled City is shaped from “above” to be experienced by those visiting and living in the Walled City, the preservation and rehabilitation of this space is also actively constructed by all those who engage with the urban design through every day practices. In this way, there are additional overlapping and contesting social constructions of the space. As such, there is an active and continued negotiation over the meaning of the space of the Walled City. As will be demonstrated, through these negotiations over the construction of the identity of the space Turkish Cypriots articulate their longing for an unattainable modern future and simultaneously construct social boundaries.

Thus, examining the debates surrounding the Asmaaltı Project will demonstrate a longing by Turkish Cypriots for a ‘modern’ future. This modernity is located in an unattainable future. This future is unattainable because of the failure of the state to live up to its promise to build a modern nation. Its loss is felt even greater as it is reflected in the alternative present of the Walled City in the RoC Greek side. This is not to state that Turkish Cypriots desire a political union with the RoC (although some may), but rather to illustrate how they see by this comparison that their government failed to achieve the modernity the RoC was able to reproduce. In debating the project Turkish Cypriots construct boundaries against Turkey, whom through characterization of immigrants from the eastern part of that country they see as in part responsible for the failed modernity. In doing so, they align themselves with modern values reflected in European countries.

To make these arguments this chapter will be divided into three sections. Section 4.2 will describe the ways in which Turkish Cypriots imagine the Walled City as a place of decay and through nostalgic rhetoric long not only for a pure past, but a modern future as well. Through this rhetoric Turkish Cypriots also negotiate cultural boundaries with the Turkish immigrants. This section will additionally introduce how the TRNC Lefkoşa municipality attempts to address this urban decay through revitalization projects that are intended to promote tourism and create economic stimulus. Section 4.3 will continue to focus on these initiatives by the government to regenerate the inner-city, specifically discussing the contentious Asmaaltı Project, an EU-funded pedestrianization and revitalization project carried out by the TRNC Lefkoşa municipality. This section will

demonstrate that although there are rival responses to the project, these responses illustrate that Turkish Cypriots long for a modern future and through this longing negotiate and construct social and cultural boundaries vis-à-vis the RoC. Section 4.4 will demonstrate that the Asmaalti Project only partly addresses the Turkish Cypriots' nostalgic concerns regarding the decaying Walled City. It will further demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots are ultimately disappointed with the regeneration attempt and interpret this failure as a failure of the state, believing this failure of the state is the reason for the unattainability of the modern future they desire.

Section 4.2 The Walled City

This section will provide a brief history of the Walled City, focusing specifically on its division and the ways in which it has been transformed since this division. The first section (4.2.1) will focus on the transformation of the Walled City by the influx of immigrants and migrant workers into the city and the urban decay of private property. The second section (4.2.2) will also focus on the transformation of the Walled City, but through an examination of the revitalization and heritage projects by the TRNC Lefkoşa municipality. Firstly, through an examination of the nostalgic rhetoric used by Turkish Cypriots regarding the transformation of the Walled City and the xenophobic rhetoric applied to the Turkish immigrants who live there, this section will introduce the argument that Turkish Cypriots long for a modern future. Secondly, in describing and examining the 'official' heritage of the Walled City, this section will illustrate the simultaneous, but conflicting 'official' narratives being constructed about the Walled City through heritage

preservation. Highlighting these contradictions will demonstrate the different ways in which heritage is preserved and promoted by the TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality to foster particular political futures for the TRNC.

4.2.1 The Walled City and Decay

Over time the Walled City has experienced a series of transformations, with one of the most significant recent changes being the division of the city. In 1956, during the inter-communal fighting between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots while Cyprus was still under British Colonial rule, British military personnel erected a wire fence named the ‘Mason-Dixon Line’ in an attempt to prevent further skirmishes. This buffer not only divided the city in half, but also contributed to the stagnation of a once lively community. This division prevented the fluid movements between the various neighborhoods and by 1963 the former vibrant life lived in the Walled City ground to a rather dramatic halt (Bakshi 2012a; Attalides 1981). By 1964 the UN had intervened to stop the inter-communal fighting and a buffer zone was established, along with a UN peacekeeping force of 6,000 men to keep the communities separated in an attempt to avoid further clashes (Kliot and Mansfield 1997, 497). After the Turkish invasion in 1974, the buffer zone in place was extended and reinforced, ensuring the continued division between Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots within the Walled City, who had resigned themselves to living in what is referred to as a ‘ghetto’ or ‘enclave’, exercised their new freedom of movement and began to vacate their former homes and move to the suburbs. As a result, the once active life of the Walled City was regenerated in preexisting neighborhoods, such as Köşklüçiftlik and Kumsal, around Dereboyu. Over a short period of time, the

majority of the residences in the Walled City were filled with low-income migrant workers coming primarily from southeast Turkey to seek better working opportunities. After 1974 there were plenty of opportunities available for work that attracted many immigrants to the island and North Cyprus needed this influx of workers to help boost the economy (Hatay 2008; Hatay and Bryant 2008a; Navaro-Yashin 2012). Turkish migrants who came during this period were granted immediate citizenship in the newly established TRNC upon their arrival (Hatay 2008, 151).³⁸

Many Turkish Cypriot construction companies gladly accepted the incoming migrant workers from Turkey because they worked for less than the wages demanded by the Turkish Cypriots (Hatay 2008, 157). The migrant construction workers were supplied with on-site accommodations wherever they worked in North Cyprus; however, many Turkish Cypriots later realized that they could utilize the unused properties within the Walled City to house these workers (Hatay 2008, 157). Placing twenty to thirty people in the same house without repairs to the inadequate plumbing and cooking facilities yielded a high profit margin (Hatay 2008, 157). These newly arrived migrants significantly changed both the demographics of the Walled City and the physical landscape (Hatay 2008; Hatay and Bryant 2008a; Hatay and Bryant 2008b; Navaro-Yashin 2012). New businesses and organizations opened, tailored to the wants and needs of the new Turkish

³⁸ This citizenship law was in effect until 1993, when during that year Turkish immigrants were no longer guaranteed automatic citizenship (Hatay 2008, 151). The citizenship law has undergone intense public scrutiny. The most recent amendment to the law was in November 2015. This law amendment replaced the granting of citizenship to foreign workers with permanent resident permits, with the exception for births and marriages (TRNC Directorate of Immigration [KKTC Muchahert Dairesi Müdürlüğü] 2016).

community living there (Hatay 2008, 158). As mentioned above (Section 4.1), due to the presence of these Turkish migrant workers and Turkish businesses many Turkish Cypriots felt that their culture was being erased through a ‘Turkification’ or ‘Anatolization’ of the city (Hatay 2008). The influx of Turkish immigrants to the Walled City has led to great changes in the culture of the area in a short period of time, and it is this particular change around which Turkish Cypriots frame their nostalgic rhetoric (Hatay and Bryant 2008a).

Hatay and Bryant (2008a) illustrate that this nostalgic rhetoric by Turkish Cypriots reveals a longing for a specific period of time; Turkish Cypriots were nostalgic for the enclave period (1963-1974) because it was during this period of communal strife that Turkish Cypriots developed a stronger attachment to Cyprus as a homeland. They argue that after 1974, when Turkish Cypriots confronted the realities of the Turkish state in the form of Turkish immigration to the island and political subjugation, the Turkish Cypriot imaginings of a Turkish modernity collapsed and a growing pride in being Cypriot flourished (Hatay and Bryant 2008a, 442). Hatay and Bryant (2008a) argue that this is significant because prior to this Turkish Cypriots had only considered Turkey as the “motherland”. They argue that this nostalgic rhetoric only implied a Turkish Cypriot desire for self-determination and that this nostalgic rhetoric was not aimed at reunification with the RoC (Hatay and Bryant 2008a, 431). Nostalgia in this context, they argue, highlights the purity of the past and emphasizes the corrupted nature of the present.

In addition to the “Turkification” of the Walled City, Turkish Cypriots commonly remarked to me that they were saddened by the derelict state of the Walled City—referring to either the poor condition of the property, the uncleanliness of the city, or both. Many neglected buildings in the Walled City have succumbed to decay and deterioration. This decay has occurred incrementally over time due to neglect since the division of the city. It was not uncommon to see collapsed buildings, broken windows, missing shutters, missing doors, and condemned buildings. These two distinct but overlapping changes to the Walled City—the change in demographic and the neglect of the infrastructure—were often combined and related in the Turkish Cypriots’ imaginings of the Walled City. As will be described more in-depth below this rhetoric is often imbued with a sense of longing for the clean, pure, and known Cypriot past in contrast to the present depictions of decay, uncleanliness, and dirt. Thus as will be shown, the Turkish Cypriots not only longed for a defined identity as argued by Bryant (2015), but also a ‘pure’ identity.

Turkish Cypriots who live outside of the Walled City often declare how much better the Walled City was before 1974. This rhetoric is focused specifically on the “character” of the Walled City. For example, a common phrase one hears from Turkish Cypriots is that the feeling of ‘trust’ has been lost in that area. Usually accompanying this expression of loss is sadness in the belief that there are no more familiar faces. According to a Turkish Cypriot male in his early twenties, “I think it [the Walled City] was better before. Now we don’t know each other. It’s definitely not as it used to be, people were more warm (*iç içe*). We now see faces and we understand that they moved in afterwards”. This particular

Turkish Cypriot, though too young to have known a Walled City before the arrival of Turkish immigrants and migrants, still idealizes the days before 1974. By utilizing nostalgic rhetoric and invoking the Walled City, he constructs social boundaries between himself as a Turkish Cypriot and the Turkish immigrants that inhabit the Walled City.

This loss of trust is accompanied with a perception of danger. For example, a female Turkish Cypriot interviewee described the area around her grandparent's house located in the Walled City as unsafe. "I like my grandparent's house, but it's not safe there, really...I have never stayed there because I get scared when I stay there...but I like to go there because the house is really different". When pressed as to why it was unsafe she reasoned that it was unsafe to stay in the Walled City at night due to the high population of Turkish immigrants living there. "The immigrants they are from the bad side of Turkey and as I said, it's not safe to walk around." Thus, she praises the unique materiality of the Walled City, considering her grandmother's house as 'different', but laments that the area is unsafe. It is worth noting that one first generation Turkish immigrant who arrived in the 1970s possessed similar emotional responses about the character of the Walled City. He sympathized with the Turkish Cypriots' distrust and dislike of the Turkish immigrants, explaining that there was an increase in crime after 1974 and that the city used to be much safer. He recalled an experience in which he protected a Turkish Cypriot girl from Turkish soldiers who were being unnecessarily aggressive towards her. Although an immigrant himself, he employed nostalgic rhetoric that constructed social boundaries between himself and the newer Turkish immigrants.

These expressions of longing are further contextualized by the political reality of the island whereby Turkey, governed by the AKP, wields great political, economic, and cultural influence over the island's affairs. A common complaint and fear voiced by Turkish Cypriots was that their country was changing from being secular and modern towards one that was becoming increasingly more religious (See Chapter 5). This complaint was based on the conservative AKP policies that had seeped their way into the culture of North Cyprus. By invoking the transformation of the Walled City they were projecting their discontent of the political milieu of the island onto the immigrants. This reflects the argument by Bryant and Hatay (2008a) that Turkish Cypriots are nostalgic for a time before the arrival of the immigrants. Through this nostalgia they not only express their discontent with the current political situation, but also construct social boundaries against the Turkish immigrants. When examined further, it can be argued that they are not only mourning the loss of a past, but longing for a modern future.

Turkish Cypriots expressed their fear that tourists to the Walled City had no way of knowing that the Turkish immigrants living there were not Turkish Cypriots. They expressed their frustration that these Turkish immigrants living and working in the Walled City were presenting a 'bad' image of the Turkish Cypriot people to those who came to visit. For example, one Turkish Cypriot shopkeeper in the Walled City articulated her concern that tourists, particularly those coming from the RoC for the day, would mistake the Turkish immigrants for the Turkish Cypriots and thus diminish the stature of the latter. She stated, "The quality of the country goes down because when they [tourists] see people like this, tourists do not know that they are not Cypriot...and when

they come to Cyprus and visit the Walled City and when they walk around they may think ‘What kind of people are these? I don’t want to come to Cyprus again.’” To address this fear, she suggested that the municipality should construct new restaurants and remove the immigrants from the Walled City in order to avoid promoting derogatory images of Turkish Cypriots.

“We [Cypriots] only have one restaurant in the Walled City, you know about it, Sabor. It’s really the best place. It’s near the mosque. The area is very beautiful and Cypriots like going to Sabor; eating something, wasting time there. If they [the TRNC Nicosia municipality] do more restaurants in that area and remove that people, that [sic] immigrants from that place, I think it will be better.”

Through the xenophobic rhetoric she demonstrates her vision of a Walled City that is a better place without the presence of Turkish immigrants. Her vision, however, is magnified as she simultaneously addresses their removal with the need to build new restaurants. The Walled City has many places to dine, however, in this comment she states her opinion that there is only one restaurant in the Walled City worth going to, Sabor. She refers to Sabor as the kind of restaurant she envisions being built in the Walled City. Officially named El Latino Sabor, it has an international menu, but she references it and interprets it as a Turkish Cypriot restaurant. The other restaurants in the Walled City are predominately restaurants owned by Turkish restaurateurs, selling Turkish food and staffed with workers from Southeast Turkey and Asia. Thus, her reference to Sabor as a place Turkish Cypriots go to is in contrast to these other restaurants. Through her comment she is not envisioning a return to the past, but emphasizing a desire to modernize the Walled City with varied, modern European

cuisine. Her fear, then, that tourists would mistake the Turkish migrants for Turkish Cypriots was really a projection of her fear that the tourists would characterize Turkish Cypriots as being non-cosmopolitan and unmodern. Her fear was further magnified by the knowledge that those tourists would have experienced the ‘modern’ Greek side and be comparing it to the less developed Turkish side. In this way she is not only longing for a modern, pure future, but also constructing boundaries of a Turkish Cypriot identity as one that is modern against the perceived backward Turkish immigrants.

Other Turkish Cypriots expressed similar fears about the Turkish immigrants. One male Turkish Cypriot explained to me in an interview, “They are always trying to save money, they are not looking to their selves. If we go out we are taking good clothes, but they don’t care...If you look at their houses, they put all their clothes in front of their main door...If you have pants [underwear], you should put it in the back to not see...But if you look to their houses, you can take a tour [around the Walled City] and you will see that all the pants and everything is [sic] in front of the door. Can you believe that? It’s a shame for us, but for them it’s not...” Examining this comment will provide fruitful insight about his imagining of the Walled City and his construction of social boundaries against the Turkish immigrants living in the Walled City.

In consideration of this comment as an insight as to how he imagines the Walled City, it is clear that he sees the immigrant’s presence as negatively transforming the area. He first declares that the immigrants themselves do not dress well and projects that opinion onto their houses, which he sees as dressed with dirty laundry. He uses the hanging of

undergarments as an example, which provides a more dirtying and shameful image than other articles of clothing; for him the presence of the immigrants has littered the space of the Walled City. His comment also reveals his construction of social boundaries. He separates Turkish immigrants from Turkish Cypriots by first negatively remarking that Turkish immigrants do not take pride in their appearance by spending money on their clothes to look their best. Through this comment he is not only depicting the Turkish immigrants as dirty, but also stingy. As will be demonstrated in Chapter 5, shopping for clothing at brand name stores on Dereboyu is conceived of as a modern activity by Turkish Cypriots. Thus, by depicting the Turkish immigrants as unkempt and stingy, he is not only speaking disparagingly of the Turkish immigrants but also constructing social boundaries against them by imagining them as unmodern and Turkish Cypriots as modern.

4.2.2 ‘Follow the Blue Line’

In order to address the physical deterioration of the city the TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality has focused its attention on revitalizing the area through restoration projects and promotion of heritage sites. The revitalization efforts are targeted towards attracting tourism in order to foster economic stimulus. Over the years different heritage projects by the TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality in conjunction with the UNDP have been carried out in order to preserve and promote the city’s “Cypriot” heritage, such as the renovation of the Bedestan, Selimiye Mosque, and the Bandabulya Municipal Market.

This begs the question, what is “Cypriot” heritage? The answer appears to diverge depending on whether one is in the RoC or the TRNC. The concern of both governments has been on the identification and protection of the tangible manifestations of cultural heritage that are associated with the historical presence of their ethnic communities on the island (e.g., Bounia and Stylianou-Lambert 2011; Calame and Charlesworth 2002; Constantinou and Hatay 2010; Jansen 2005; Knapp and Antoniado 1998; Ladbury and King 1982). Examples include, but are not limited to the protection of churches, mosques, castles, mosaics, traditional buildings, and archaeological ruins. Research on heritage in Cyprus is usually framed by the ‘Cyprus Problem’ and explores how the Turkish and Greek Cypriot cultural and political differences take force within the physical environment of the city. Papadakis (2006) demonstrates that specific heritage sites have been strategically preserved in order to promote a specific historical narrative and, in addition, justify present political beliefs. Additionally, he demonstrates that on either side of the divide certain heritage is purposefully destroyed, downplayed, or neglected in order to purify the past. Scott (2002) and Akay (1996, 88) highlight that in the TRNC, Ottoman and Muslim heritage sites are promoted to align the history of the TRNC with “Turkishness” while simultaneously downplaying the Greek heritage sites by labelling and referring to them as ‘Roman’ or ‘Byzantine’. Similarly, in the RoC, the Ottoman and Muslim influences are masked, while the Greek influences are underscored.

Constantinou and Hatay (2010) demonstrate that in the academic debate about the destruction of heritage sites in both the RoC and the TRNC, the destruction is generally analysed as “...explicit or implicit attempts of ethno-cultural denial and cleansing”

(Constantinou and Hatay 2010, 1600). However, Constantinou's and Hatay's (2010) analysis of the dominant heritage discourse in Cyprus suggests that heritage practice is much more complex than commonly presented. They submit the view that heritage "...can be reevaluated positively as well as negatively because of or despite conflict, surprisingly protected by those supposed to destroy it, or destroyed by those that were meant to preserve it" (Constantinou and Hatay 2010, 1601-1602). Focusing on case studies in North Cyprus, Saifi and Yuceer (2012), illustrate how some communities in North Cyprus protect Greek Cypriot religious heritage sites by reusing them based on the local community needs. For example, in Yenibögaziçi, the Greek Orthodox Church, Agios Sergios, was converted into a kindergarten school (Saifi and Yuceer 2012). Through an examination of three different heritage sites, Constantinou, Hatay and Demetriou (2012) further illuminate the complexities of the relationships between heritage and politics in Cyprus by raising questions about what cultural heritage means in relation to conflict on the island. They demonstrate that the varying nuances of heritage protection, destruction, and neglect are not just inter-ethnic between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, but intra-ethnic and trans-ethnic (Constantinou et al 2012, 194).

Within the Walled City there is a clear political agenda in the historical narrative promoted by the TRNC Nicosia Municipality in the Walled City seen through the dominant focus on preservation and promotion of Turkish Cypriot and Ottoman histories. A guided route to various heritage sites and museums deemed significant by the TRNC Ministry of Economy, Tourism, Culture and Sports aptly named the 'Blue Line' has been physically painted onto the sidewalks and roads of the northern sector of the Walled City.

This 4.5km long blue line weaves in and out of the 11 neighborhoods situated within the northern sector of the Walled City. Tourists are advised that they can follow the blue line with a tour guide during designated hours or with a map. Without a map or a guide, the physical blue line is not a very reliable route guide in leading its follower as many parts of the blue line are barely visible or missing entirely from years of wear and lack of upkeep. Nevertheless, this tangible aid is there to guide the visitor through the Walled City to specifically chosen heritage sites and museums.

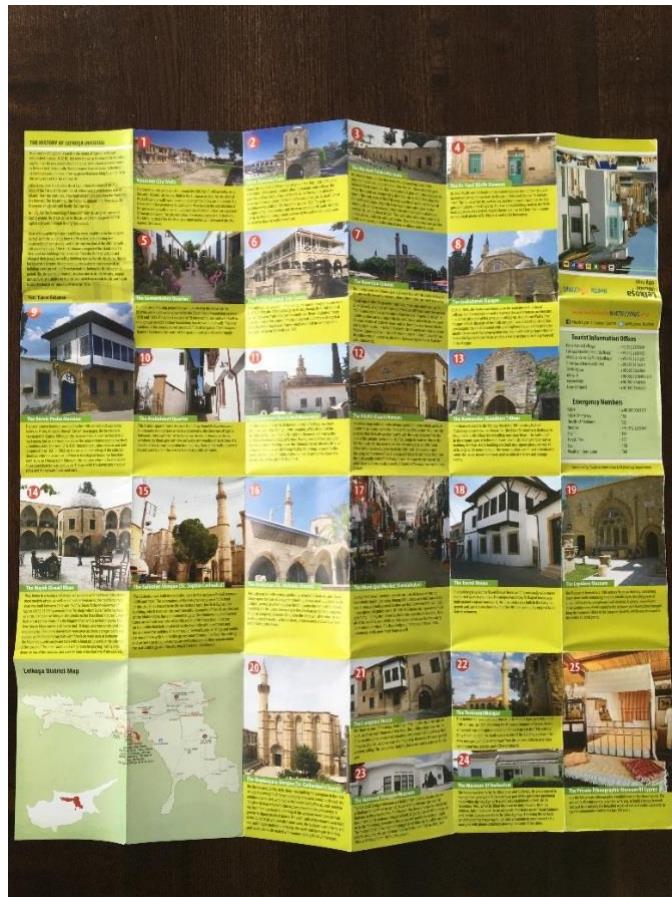


Figure 2: Lefkoşa City Map designed by Tourism Promotion and Marketing Department of North Cyprus Tourism Centre

Created by the Tourism Promotion and Marketing Department, the Lefkoşa City Map Guide (See Figure 4.1) highlights the heritage sites seen along the blue line. Similar to Scott's (2002) and Akay's (1996) observations mentioned above, the descriptions of the highlighted sites within this guide contain only two uses of the word "Byzantine" (which is a reference to heritage of Greek origin, without using the word "Greek") compared to the twenty-eight uses of "Ottoman" and "Turkish". In fact, there is only one reference to the "Greek Cypriots," and that is located in the description of the Museum of Barbarism³⁹ to highlight the Greek Cypriots' persecution and murder of Turkish Cypriots. In doing this, the tour purposefully highlights the Ottoman and Turkish Cypriot history of the island over other cultural histories.

On the other hand, in addition to the promotion of Turkish and Ottoman histories, there is a simultaneous running narrative promoting a common "Cypriot" heritage. This promoted narrative is in an effort to foster both political and social bi-communal relations between the TRNC and the RoC. For example, although the Blue Line Tour highlights the Turkish and Ottoman histories, the tour also leads visitors to other heritage sites that emphasize the multicultural past of Cyprus. The Lapidary Museum, the Armenian Church, and the Bedestan (English: Covered Market) are all examples of a multicultural history. Prior to becoming an Ottoman Market, the building previously functioned as a 12th century Byzantine Church. Throughout the various foreign occupations the building underwent multiple restorations that are reflected in the diverse architectural details of the building.

³⁹ See Chapter 2 for a description of the Museum of Barbarism.

To preserve the multi-cultural details, between June 2004 and 2009 the Bedestan underwent restoration funded by the EU and carried out by UNDP PFF and the Cyprus Evkaf Foundation⁴⁰. For these bi-communal efforts, the Bedestan was awarded the Europa Nostra Award (European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage) in the Research Category for the ‘Study, Assessment and Design for the Structural and Architectural restoration of the Bedestan’. Since the restoration the Bedestan has been reopened as a cultural centre and because of its preserved multi-cultural past the Bedestan is used to promote bi-communal events. The pamphlet explains that its new role as a multi-cultural centre is for the all the citizens of Cyprus, stating, “...the re-use of it [the Bedestan] brought a new life and a new function as a multicultural centre, at the very heart of the Walled City of Nicosia, servicing all its citizens” (Hacışevik and Bozaltı 2013). However, not once during my year of field research in North Cyprus did any of my Turkish Cypriot friends go to visit the Bedestan. The centre was visited mainly by tourists visiting the Selimiye Quarter who wanted to see a performance of the Whirling Dervishes. Although the architectural details of the building displayed a multi-cultural past, the Bedestan was the venue for six performances a week of the Turkish Whirling Dervishes, which emphasized a present-day Ottoman association with this location. In ways such as this, the competing governments of the North and South continue to promote division between communities while appearing to cooperate in bi-communal efforts encouraged by outside agencies. The celebration and recognition of the Bedestan

⁴⁰ The Cyprus Evkaf Foundation (Kıbrıs Vakıflar İdairesi) is a religious organization in North Cyprus under control of the TRNC government. Amongst other responsibilities, the Cyprus Evkaf Foundation allocates economic resources to the historic and cultural preservation of mosques, tekkes, cemeteries and other religious sites.

for being multi-cultural on an international scale perhaps is thus more prized than actually fostering of bi-communal relations as the prize acknowledges international acclaim for the island and as such attracts tourists to the vicinity. These contesting narratives promoted through the preservation of the Walled City reflect not only the complexities of heritage, but also demonstrate how these sites are preserved to orient different political futures.

The preservation of heritage sites in the Walled City controlled by the TRNC municipality is done in part to increase tourism and promote the official historical narrative to external visitors, but also to construct a Turkish Cypriot narrative for nation-building internally. As is a common practice of education in many countries, Turkish Cypriot schoolchildren are taken on field trips to visit these heritage sites in the Walled City to provide greater attachment to their country and indoctrination to the promoted history of the island. As adults, however, Turkish Cypriots seldom go into the Walled City to visit these museums and sites. Although the displays in museums are informative, these permanent museum exhibitions consist only of text, photos, and dioramas of historical events and are not successful in engaging the Turkish Cypriots I met, as they find them boring. This is not to state that they do not value the sites; on the contrary, many Turkish Cypriots hold the tangible heritage sites and old buildings in the Walled City in high regard due to their associations with their historic past. As stated by one young adult male Turkish Cypriot, "...yesterday they [TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality] demolished an old building [in the walled city] and I am very upset to hear this because...they [TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality] didn't give any notice...We have to keep

the original...Many people are thinking 'this is old we have to demolish it,' but this is actually wrong we have to keep them because some of them are even about 100 years old..." Despite this high regard, none of the Turkish Cypriots I knew visited any of the heritage sites in the Walled City during my stay, with the exception of Büyük Han (English: The Great Han) and Selimiye Mosque.



Figure 3: Büyük Han.

Büyük Han (See Figure 3) is an old Ottoman inn along the Blue Line and is one of the most well-known tourist sites in north Nicosia promoted heavily by both tourism companies and Turkish Cypriots. There are many artisan's shops located in former rooms of the old inn and the artists and craftsmen there welcome conversation with visitors.

Tourist information centres and online tourist sites advise tourists to view its well-preserved architecture, enjoy its relaxing ambience, and peruse and purchase traditional Cypriot arts and crafts, such as the UNESCO-listed Lefkara laces. More than other heritage sites located in the Walled City, I was repeatedly encouraged by Turkish Cypriots to visit Büyǖk Han. Repeatedly, they stressed the beauty of Büyǖk Han. This emphasis on the beauty of Büyǖk Han is heightened when juxtaposed to their views of the Walled City as decayed and underdeveloped. The experience of Büyǖk Han was the ability to sit and enjoy the ambience, and was touted by Turkish Cypriots as one of the best things to do in the Walled City. Although there are plenty of places within the Walled City where one can sit and pass the time, Turkish Cypriots often lament that they cannot partake in this activity in the Walled City in the way that they can on a street such as Dereboyu. However, within Büyǖk Han, they have the perception they can achieve this modern lifestyle. Part of this has to do with the ‘atmosphere,’ which they define as beautiful and clean. As Turkish Cypriots view the Walled City as polluted by the immigrants and decayed due to neglect, Turkish Cypriots are not only nostalgic for a purified past Cyprus, but also long for a modern future. This is reflected in their desire to reclaim the Walled City in a modern way.

While the presence of the Turkish immigrants in the Walled City is invoked to show Turkish Cypriots’ dissatisfaction with Turkey’s control over North Cyprus, the focus on the presence of the conservative qualities of the Turkish immigrants reflects the fear that the TRNC has not lived up to its promise to create a modern country for Turkish Cypriots. In their comments, the Walled City reflects the island’s unaccomplished

modernity. Their longing is not just past-oriented, but future oriented as well. This nostalgia for an earlier time is not only rooted in the past, but it is also very much embedded in the hope for a modern future they believed they were promised.

The following section (Section 4.3) will expand upon these arguments by engaging in-depth with the Asmaaltı Project, a pedestrianization and revitalization project in the Walled City that was carried out during the time of my field research. Section 4.3 will demonstrate that Turkish Cypriots who oppose the Asmaaltı Project describe it as hindering the lifestyle of the Turkish Cypriots. Through their opposition to the project they depict the Walled City not as abandoned by Turkish Cypriots, but as a space that is actively being used by Turkish Cypriots. Through an examination of the debates surrounding the Asmaaltı Project, it will be argued that whether Turkish Cypriots support or oppose the Asmaaltı Project, they long for a future Walled City that allows them to practice their ‘modern’ lifestyle.

Section 4.3. A Modern Shopping District in a Historic City

Originally conceived in 1979, the Nicosia Master Plan (NMP) was a bi-communal project created to foster cooperation between the RoC Nicosia Municipality and TRNC Nicosia Municipality. The NMP team became a partner with the UNDP. Since October 2001, UNDP, in collaboration with its executive agency UNOPS, has been responsible for the implementation of Partnership for the Future (UNDP-PFF). The UNDP-PFF is an EU funded program and aims to support peace-building initiatives in Cyprus, particularly through the economic and social development of the island. Working within the

framework and principles of the NMP, UNDP-PFF has financially supported the “Rehabilitation of Old Nicosia” project, which is designed to revitalize the Walled City by the rehabilitation and preservation of the structures within. While many of the NMP planned projects have been realized over the last three decades, the implementation of many objectives has yet to be completed. During my field research the two mayors of the Nicosia municipalities pressed ahead with their attempts to develop a revitalization project for the buffer zone area and implement the pedestrianization project for the Walled City.

The Walled City underwent significant development during the year of my field research, with the Asmaaltı Project generating the most controversy. The project included refurbishing the facades of some of the buildings in the Asmaaltı area and transforming the shopping and leisure district into a car-free zone. Originally intended to be completed in 2010, the project was cancelled for a time due to a lack of commitment on the part of the municipality itself (Evalutility Ltd., 2010). A 2010 UNDP project report stated that, “...the municipality had failed to prepare satisfactory design and technical specifications, despite the support of consultants provided by UNDP” (Evalutility Ltd. 2010, 26). With the international embargoes placed on the island, tourism and education are two of the most lucrative areas of economic benefit for North Cyprus as they cannot be controlled by the embargoes. Thus in 2013, recognizing the economic value of the Asmaaltı area as a tourist destination as well as its historic importance, the TRNC Nicosia Municipality was motivated to renew the project. In order to enhance economic gain for the municipality, government officials designed and influenced the Walled City through

revitalization projects such as the Asmaaltı Project to transform the space into a tourist destination. TRNC Nicosia municipal officials expressed their desire to transform the Asmaaltı area into a thriving shopping and leisure district for both tourists and locals alike (Kerem 2013b).

Municipal officials believed that by creating a car-free environment, people would be able to safely enjoy their time within the Asmaaltı area. Municipality Project Manager Ali Güralp expressed his hope that, “People can flock to visit shops and enjoy the authentic atmosphere of Asmaaltı with no traffic, meaning they do so in a safe and clean environment.” (Kerem 2013b). It was estimated by officials that about 1200 people cross daily into the TRNC from the Ledra Palace and Ledra Street / Lokmacı crossings (Kerem 2013b). Due to the high number of people crossing the border the mayor of Lefkoşa, Kadri Fellahoğlu, endorsed the project stating that it would be beneficial to the people living and working in the Asmaaltı area because the end result of the project would allow for the visitors to have a nicer experience, implying that they might shop and buy more goods (Bayrak Television, November 30, 2013). In order to transform this area into a clean and safe shopping district, the municipality looked towards creating an ‘authentic’ atmosphere, which was located in an unspecified historic past.

Problems arose when Municipality Project Manager Ali Güralp defined the ‘authentic’ atmosphere as an area with no cars because in the TRNC Turkish Cypriots drive practically everywhere. Many shopkeepers claimed that the prohibition of vehicles would severely hurt their businesses because their customers who prefer driving would not walk

to the shops. As stated by another shopkeeper, “Our people will only go to places where there is convenience. They are not used to parking miles away and walking” (Kerem 2013b). When traveling with my Turkish Cypriot companions, instead of walking a short distance, they preferred to drive for long periods of time, circling the destination point in order to find a closer, free parking spot. This characteristic was well known on the island and often the subject of jokes. One Turkish business owner quipped, “They [Turkish Cypriots] would want to go to everywhere with their cars. To the toilet too... We [people living in Cyprus] are a people who do not like walking. We only like kebab, eating and sleeping”. Another Turkish Cypriot business owner stated, “The Turkish Cypriots don’t like walking, we go everywhere with our cars. We are lazy people [laughs]” This self-proclaimed and jokingly self-deprecating stereotype is often mocked by Turkish Cypriots and in this way is representative of Herzfeld’s notion of ‘cultural intimacy’ (Herzfeld 1997). These concerns and jokes by these shopkeepers reflect their belief that pedestrianization of this area did not fit the Turkish Cypriot culture and thus would actively discourage Turkish Cypriots from visiting the Walled City. As stated by one shop owner, “This [the pedestrianization of the Asmaaltı area] is encouraging people to go and shop at supermarkets that have car parks” (Kerem 2013a). Motivated to encourage economic development, the TRNC Nicosia Municipality envisioned the Asmaaltı area as a space primarily for tourists and brushed aside concerns by many local shopkeepers who believed that this car-free zoning did not allow themselves or their local Turkish Cypriot customer’s easy access to the space.

Through the implementation of the Asmaaltı Project, the Walled City has been commodified in order to appeal to the tastes of the tourists and for some shopkeepers this has resulted in a Walled City that does not fit Turkish Cypriot's way of living. As one male Turkish storeowner effected by the project stated to me, "...This kind of project doesn't fit our people well. It doesn't fit here well...They [Turkish Cypriots] would prefer to go to everywhere with their cars..." Shopkeepers who opposed the plan imposed by the TRNC Nicosia Municipality to create an 'authentic' atmosphere spoke to its flaws believing that this project only catered to tourists and did not aid in bringing more locals into the city. Although those who opposed the Asmaaltı Project wanted to attract tourists in order to get money, they were equally concerned about the city's usefulness as a space for Turkish Cypriots.

Turkish Cypriots frequently comment and joke about the undeveloped state of the TRNC by citing the many faults of the government and their unrecognized status by the international community as the primary reasons for this predicament. Through these jokes and stories they evoke a desire for a more modern and contemporary country. Though they make jokes when the electricity fails, as it often does, they are frustrated with this situation as they wish for a more modern country where infrastructure is reliable. These same longings were evident in the comments by the Walled City business owners in response to the Asmaaltı Project. In their expressions of their desired future, they compared the Walled City in the TRNC to the Walled City in the RoC. As stated by one female Turkish Cypriot shopkeeper, "The municipality should try to change the Project. They should clean the roads...For example, when I go to the Greek side, I really like

walking in the Makarios Street or the Ledra Street because it's very clean...if they do the same thing to our side, to the Walled City, I think it can be better..." Here, this shopkeeper compared the present condition of the Walled City in the TRNC to the Walled City in the RoC and in her opinion the RoC Nicosia Municipality appeared to have achieved her imagined Walled City especially as exemplified by the clean pedestrianization of Ledra Street.

Here she expressed her desire that the government should make the Asmaalti area and the Walled City more attractive to Turkish Cypriots. Specifically, she thought that the government should construct more cafes and entertainment establishments so that the area would resemble Dereboyu. "They should open more coffee shops, there are only two or three. For example, we have more coffee shops on Dereboyu Street. We have Lavazza, Gloria Jeans, which you can find in other cities, but in the Walled City there are only a few coffee shops, but they [Turkish Cypriots] don't know what kind of coffee they are selling and then they [Turkish Cypriots] don't want to taste". She continued, "They can make a pub street, like in other countries, so maybe our people [Turkish Cypriots] will choose to go there. We don't have any other entertainment place, except Dereboyu. We only have Dereboyu". Turkish Cypriots prefer to shop at clothing stores on the streets of Dereboyu and Metropol as they are filled with brand name stores (see Chapter 5). She went on to point out that the Walled City in the RoC has cobbled streets and that it would be very nice to have that instead of the asphalt streets of the Asmaalti area.

Unlike the government's attempt to historicize the Walled City, in this context she desires for the Walled City to be more modern in attempts to attract Turkish Cypriots. She is comparing the Walled City to Dereboyu and city centres of other countries, rather than comparing it to a past Cyprus. Her desire to transform the area exemplifies her position that the Walled City should also be a space for Turkish Cypriots. As a shopkeeper within the Walled City and relating herself to the Asmaaltı area, she constructed a vision of the Walled City that differed from the vision of the Walled City promoted by the government. She demonstrated a desire for a thriving, modern shopping centre, which was made more intense by the tangible realization of such a Walled City on the Greek side.

To commemorate the start of the project and to encourage visitors to experience the car-free Asmaaltı area, the TRNC Nicosia Municipality held a three-day program of events from 29 November to 1 December 2013. Events included Turkish Cypriot folk dancing, music, and children's games. According to local newspapers, shopkeepers opposing the Asmaaltı Project showed their displeasure by protesting at the start of the three-day event by chanting songs, passing out leaflets, and carrying signs that attacked the municipality officials. They also laid black wreaths as an expression of their displeasure. The shopkeepers who were upset by the pedestrianization project created 'The Protection of Lefkoşa Walled City Association'. Through this association the disgruntled shopkeepers took an opposing stance against the Asmaaltı Project, with the brunt of their anger directed towards the municipality's lack of forethought in construction of compatible infrastructure for the newly pedestrianized area. The Association expressed deep concern

that there was no planned infrastructure to support the project. Imren Özerlat, owner of the Özerlat coffee shop, said, “...There is no appropriate infrastructure—road, pavement, car parks, dustbins, emergency services—and no elderly person will walk for a mile to come here...They are killing business” (Kerem 2013a). However, there were some Turkish Cypriot business owners who supported the car-free zone so this decision to pedestrianize the Asmaaltı area sparked debate and controversy over the project.

The chairman of the Asmaaltı and Arasta Shop-Owners Association, Tanju Müezzinoğlu, spoke on behalf of the organization stating that, “We have been campaigning for many years for this project to be realized and we are delighted that it is finally being implemented. We are certain that the number of visitors, both locals and tourists, will be significantly boosted and it will make this part of our capital the most attractive place to visit” (Kerem 2013a). Mr. Müezzinoğlu continued, “It is absolutely amazing to see the crowds who come to have a real taste of untouched, historic Cyprus...” (Kerem 2013b). Mr. Müezzinoğlu’s claim echoed the TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality officials in that they both believed that the elimination of traffic congestion would result in drawing in more tourists. Business owners who welcomed the project did so because they believed that with less traffic congestion the area would look cleaner and that the more authentic look would draw in more tourists and customers. Although his opinions about the implementation of the project were in stark contrast to those who opposed the project, his view was similar in that he imagined the Walled City as a thriving shopping centre.

Additionally, like the TRNC Lefkoşa Municipality officials, Mr. Müezzinoğlu believed that in order to achieve a thriving shopping district the city should capitalize on nostalgia by transforming the Asmaaltı area in a way reminiscent of its historic past. Mr. Müezzinoğlu's rhetoric of a 'real' and 'untouched' Cyprus did not seem to counter the fact that it took a revitalization project to construct an 'untouched' Cyprus. Applying Bissell's (2005) argument, it can be said that the distinctions being made between the 'untouched' Cyprus and the present-day Cyprus dismiss the fact that the vibrant trading area within the Walled City was once itself the product of urban transformation. In attempting to construct an 'untouched' urban past, the Asmaaltı Project is in fact a modern present-day transformation. Although supporters of the Asmaaltı Project favoured the removal of cars from the area, their imagining of the Asmaaltı area as a modern shopping area is similar to those who are against the project. Mr. Müezzinoğlu stated for a newspaper interview that the implementation of the project would be successful in this transformation to a thriving shopping district, "The road will come alive with thousands of locals and tourists, and will be a symbol of the capital, like Chelsea's King's Road in London" (Kerem 2013b). Although supporters of the project approved of the 'historic' appearance, they compared the desired results of the transformation to busy cosmopolitan European streets.

A journalist who supported the project stated, "It [the Asmaaltı Project] will make this very historic part of our capital more attractive for people to be able to sit, relax, and enjoy themselves and at the same time increase economic and social activity" (Kerem 2013b). By making the area attractive through sanitation and removal of cars, he believed

that this would allow one to be able to enjoy the area. His comments echoed that of those Turkish Cypriots who enjoyed the atmosphere of Büyük Han and the shopkeeper who enjoyed the atmosphere at El Latino Sabor restaurant. So although those who supported the project agreed that the Walled City should be ‘historic’ and those who were against the project wanted to keep cars in the area, both desired the Walled City to be a ‘modern’ shopping district.

When describing the transformation of the Walled City through the Asmaaltı Project, these Turkish Cypriots did not employ a sense of loss. Whether supporting or rejecting the project, shopkeepers juxtaposed the Asmaaltı area to other modern areas, longing for it to be like streets such as Chelsea Road in London, and Makarios Street and Ledra Street in the RoC. They longed for a future Walled City that allowed for the Turkish Cypriots to experience their modern lifestyle. This rhetoric was not nostalgic, but situated in a present where they negotiated their Turkish Cypriot values with their constructed imaginings of modern, European values and against the inability of the TRNC to achieve this goal.

While the previous section (Section 4.2) highlighted the ways in which Turkish Cypriots imagine the Walled City as a place of decay, this section demonstrated the ways in which Turkish Cypriots imagine the Walled City as a modern, thriving shopping district. Through the present debates about what they see as the successes or failures of the project, shopkeepers articulate their longing for a modern future. The shopkeepers compare the Asmaaltı area of the Walled City to other thriving European shopping streets

in order to articulate their desire to create a space that is compatible with a modern Turkish Cypriot lifestyle. Extending this argument, Section 4.4 will argue that what is really at stake in these debates is not merely a debate about the Asmaaltı Project, nor a complaint over lack of infrastructure, but the inability of the TRNC government to revitalize and transport the country into a modern future as imagined by Turkish Cypriots.

4.4. Buyer's Remorse

Located within the Asmaaltı area is *Asmaaltı Purses*⁴¹, a store that sells imitation purses designed to mimic expensive luxury brands such as Gucci, Chanel, and Louis Vuitton. It was August 2014 and the Asmaaltı Project had already been implemented for almost a year when I went to spend a working day with the shop owner's daughter, Zeynep. As Zeynep made tea, I asked her if the Asmaaltı Project had affected her business. She complained that the infrastructure still had not been fixed, a comment consistent with those of other shopkeepers against the Asmaaltı Project. She explained specifically that she was upset that the parking issue had not been resolved. As shopkeepers they needed parking access for many more hours than area visitors, yet they had to pay the same fee of 5TL per hour for parking. To avoid this extra economic burden, most shopkeepers and area workers sought the free places to park around the Walled City, which meant they had to walk much farther than they would like to get to their places of work. She went on to complain that it was much worse when it was raining, for the elderly, for those who had to carry numerous shopping bags, and for mothers who had to carry their small

⁴¹ Name has been changed for privacy.

children. As with other shopkeepers, it was clear that the project was not compatible with her lived experience within the Walled City.

As we sat in her shop, the customers who entered were primarily tourists visiting for the afternoon from the RoC. However, according to Zeynep, most of her store's customers were primarily Greek Cypriots. Greek Cypriots frequently went to the TRNC to purchase imitation purses, as they were not readily available in the RoC because the sale and distribution of counterfeit purses was illegal in the RoC. In the TRNC, counterfeit goods in general were still sold in many shops across the island. On 28 April 2014, a few months after implementing the Asmaalti Project, the TRNC government published the Product Safety Law, which allowed shop owners to continue selling their contraband goods until 1 June 2015. For counterfeit goods produced in the TRNC, the law would not be implemented until 1 June 2015 (TRNC Chamber of Commerce, 2016). Although counterfeit purses were considered contraband in the TRNC during the time of my field research, the law was not strictly enforced and was further weakened by barriers to police search of any store. Police were not allowed to enter a store and search for contraband unless a formal complaint had been filed.

As stated previously, on this particular day most of the customers in the store were tourists visiting only for the afternoon, but staying in the RoC. The majority of these tourists looked at the wallets and purses on display but did not purchase anything. Some explained to Zeynep that although they wanted to purchase an item, they would not do so because they did not want their purchases to be seized at the border on their return to the

RoC. Their tour guides from the RoC had warned them that it was illegal to carry counterfeit purses into the RoC from the TRNC. Zeynep tried to reassure the tourists that it was legal to carry the purchases made in the TRNC to the RoC, but her attempts at persuasion were more often than not unsuccessful. I asked her if it was illegal to bring the counterfeit items across the border. She stated that it was legal for Cypriots to bring 150 euros worth of purchases across the line, but she did not know specifically if it was illegal to bring contraband items across the border.⁴² Instead she turned our conversation to focus on her belief that the RoC government does not like it when their citizens or tourists spend money in the TRNC, so the RoC government is trying very hard to prevent people from spending money in the TRNC. She recounted a story in which a woman was so frightened to take counterfeit purses over the border that Zeynep offered to bring them to her and meet her at the Starbucks on Ledra Street in the RoC. The woman paid for the goods and agreed to meet her there, but still seemed hesitant after the fact, not wanting to break the law. As promised, Zeynep went to the Starbucks but the customer never showed up for the delivery.

Transporting counterfeit goods across the border was a practice I commonly observed during the time of my field research. Many Greek Cypriots and tourists wore their purchases from the TRNC (so as to appear as though they were not purchased items) while crossing border to the RoC to avoid seizure of their purchased goods. Shopkeepers opposed to the Asmaalti Project, already fearing a decline in local visitors because of the

⁴²Although she did not comment on whether or not it was illegal, it should be noted that according to Article 4 of Regulation (EC) 1480/2004 it is in fact illegal to carry counterfeit and pirated goods across the border to the RoC (RoC Ministry of Finance 2014).

ban on vehicles, now had also to deal with the potential loss of Greek Cypriot customers with the passing of the Product Safety Law. The Product Safety Law was unpopular not only amongst shopkeepers in the Walled City, but also across the rest of the TRNC because of the volume of Greek Cypriot customers who shopped across the border for counterfeit products. Zihni Kalmaz, a Turkish Cypriot shop owner of counterfeit goods stated in a newspaper interview, “I do not think this kind of rule would work in the KKTC [TRNC]. It happened in South Cyprus and the production and distribution of counterfeit goods was banned. But that is a European Union country. As for the KKTC [TRNC] it is an unrecognized country. There is neither a need for a law like this, nor is it possible to implement” (Kibris724, 2014). Through this comment he is not only expressing his frustrations over the government’s implementation of The Product Safety Law, but he is also citing the unrecognized status of the TRNC as the reason such a rule would not work. As one shopkeeper stated, “Do we produce anything? No. We have to sell these things [counterfeit items] because we cannot even produce yarn” (Kibris724, 2014).

Returning to Zeynep, although she expressed her desire that the Asmaaltı project should be compatible with the lived experience of shopkeepers and Turkish Cypriots, she also acknowledged that attracting more tourists was also important and claimed that ‘new’ things, such as the cafes Turkish Cypriots would desire, are not what tourists wanted to see, stating instead, “Tourists prefer to visit older places”. Yet, even in the Asmaaltı project’s attempt to attract tourists, her opinion was that the government’s attempt to revitalize the city has thus far been unsuccessful. Likewise, the Protection of Lefkoşa

Walled City Association and others shopkeepers who did not support the Asmaaltı project did not oppose the goal of the project organizers to attract more tourists to the area. These shopkeepers wanted more tourists to come to the Asmaaltı area and agreed that the Walled City needed to be cleaned. Specifically, they spoke of the desire to fix the roads and buildings, and upgrade sanitation services to include sewage and litter management. For example, one shopkeeper stated, “The road itself is not in a very good state and you have unpleasant sewage smells and pot holes. Many buildings are in a bad state. The municipality should have fixed these instead of shutting the whole road to traffic” (Kerem 2013b). Thus, although the municipality viewed the Walled City as a broader economic asset and wanted to attract more tourists through the implementation of the Asmaaltı project, Zeynep and other shopkeepers felt that the municipality’s efforts were unsuccessful. For many other shopkeepers this transformation was not only seen as unsuccessful, but also as mismanagement of money by a government they believed to be corrupt.

One male Turkish storeowner was happy that the government was trying to attract more tourists, but regarded the attempts by the government to restore the Walled City as useless, saying, “The budget was allocated by the European Union, but now our government is trying to eat this money...They’ve just erected 5 poles [in reference to the poles blocking cars from driving into the area] with that money and the money has already disappeared. No one is happy with this project.” From his perspective and that of other shopkeepers, the Lefkoşa municipality officials were transforming the Asmaaltı area in order to turn the Walled City into a thriving tourist destination at the expense of

those who work, eat, and make their living in the Walled City. From this, it is clear that the real source of anger of the Turkish Cypriots was not just that their voices were excluded in the planning process or the poor execution of the pedestrianization project, but their frustration over what they believe to be blatant displays of corruption by the TRNC government. To this effect, their modern future has literally been stolen from them and they are given ‘authenticity’ instead.

Other shopkeepers who were against the Asmaaltı Project also juxtaposed it to the Greek side to emphasize the differences. One shopkeeper stated, “You cannot compare Asmaaltı Road to Ledra Street. That is wide and long. Asmaaltı is completely the opposite” (Kerem 2013b). Although he argued that the streets are not the same, his focus was on the failure of the municipality by excluding the shopkeepers in the decision-making process. He did not dispute the success of Ledra Street. What is worthy to note is that both supporters and opponents of the Asmaaltı Project juxtapose the TRNC Walled City to the RoC Walled City to justify their claims. Through this comparison of the Asmaaltı Project to the pedestrianization of Ledra Street, Turkish Cypriots are highlighting what they see to be the failures of their government to deliver on the promises of a modern, sovereign nation as the Greek Cypriots are doing on their side.

The Asmaaltı Project was designed by the government to accommodate tourists and increase the TRNC economy. However, the way in which the project was implemented left many shopkeepers feeling frustrated in that they found that the project was incompatible with the life style of both the visitors and the shopkeepers. Many of the

shopkeepers in the area felt excluded from the process of implementing the Asmaaltı Project; “...They [the municipality] never listened to us, they imposed their own project” (Kerem 2013b). Specific flaws cited were the lack of car parks and the banning of all vehicles, which did not allow for the use of delivery trucks, private vehicles by local shoppers who wanted to use their cars, or ambulances to access the area. For shopkeepers who were against the project, their vision of a shopping centre did not negate the need for modern conveniences which were actually incorporated strongly within those imaginings. Thus, the result of the Asmaaltı Project was not only a debate about a pedestrianized area, but also an intricate web of conflicts amongst and between the different actors about the future of the TRNC. What was really at stake was the ability of the state to revitalize the country and the ability of the TRNC to transport the country into a modern future.

To summarize, shopkeepers who oppose the plan have different visions of the Walled City than the government and the international community. The government is redesigning the city to promote what tourists might regard as an ‘authentic’ atmosphere. The international community is trying to promote the city for the reunification of the island and peace reconciliation. The shopkeepers partially agree with the government in that they too want to promote the city for tourism, but not at the expense of the Turkish Cypriots’ use of the space. In these disagreements regarding the design of the city Turkish Cypriots feel that the TRNC has ultimately failed them, not merely because of the inability to provide the proper infrastructure, but more importantly because of the inability to provide them with the modern future they desire. Turkish Cypriots were promised modernity when they bought into the idea of a TRNC nation-state, but they

have discovered that their purchased state was a fake, much as the counterfeit goods that are commonly sold in the Walled City. Perhaps the Turkish Cypriots are experiencing something akin to ‘buyer’s remorse’. They find themselves in a situation not of their liking, but they cannot take their situation back for a refund. Instead, they find themselves looking across the border to other European countries and seeing the modernity they long for but cannot seem to grasp.

Chapter 5

“Return home, Ayşe!”

5.1 Negotiating Islam and Secularism

There is a sparrow living in the churchyard. It drinks water from the basin by the bell tower and then goes back to the bell and poops on it. The pastor of the church is sad about this. Curious, the pastor empties the water in the basin and fills it with wine. The bird drinks the wine and still poops on the bell. Furious, the pastor asks the bird: “Dear sparrow, there was water in the basin and you pooped on the bell. I filled it with wine and you still poop on the bell. You cannot be a Christian as you dirty the bell and you drink wine so you can’t be Muslim. What are you then?” The sparrow replies, “I am a Turkish Cypriot.”

This well-known Turkish Cypriot joke was told to me by a Turkish imam who led the Islamic congregation at the mosque off of Dereboyu Street in Lefkoşa. Like many imams in North Cyprus, he was sent from Turkey to serve for a few years in North Cyprus. At the time of my field research 110 religious officials working in North Cyprus, were sent by Turkey through the Religious Affairs Office (Diyanet İşleri Bakanlığı). Educated Turkish imams are sent to mosques in different countries across the world as part of their civil service. The stated reason for this is to promote and control the religious message being presented so as to combat what Turkey regards as the incorrect interpretation of Islam. Furthermore, they carry out this work “To contribute to Turks living abroad not to lose their self-identity and be in harmony with the society they are living in without being assimilated...To introduce Turkey’s experience and heritage in the field of religion abroad...” (Presidency of Religious Affairs 2013). The Turkish Religious Affairs Office, working together with the TRNC Religious Affairs Office, is charged with preserving Turkish religious heritage, which as will be discussed later is considered an important part of the Turkish national identity by the AKP government.

He told this joke to me during a discussion about religious practice in North Cyprus in order to illustrate the different ways that Muslims in North Cyprus practice Islam as compared to Muslims in Turkey. The majority of Muslims in both Turkey and North Cyprus are of the Hanefi-Sunni School of Islam. However, it is well known by Turkish Cypriots and other inhabitants of the TRNC that Islamic practices and rituals are loosely adhered to by Turkish Cypriots in North Cyprus, especially in comparison to religious practice in Turkey (Yeşilada 2009). For example, while Turkish Cypriots have a strong belief in God, most drink alcohol, do not regularly attend mosque (if at all), and do not pray five times a day. When Turkish Cypriots are questioned as to why they do not adhere to the traditional practices of the religion, they express that they “feel Muslim on the inside” and that this, coupled with their strong belief in God, is enough for them to be considered a Muslim. In this way, Turkish Cypriots practice Islam with the idea that faith is more important than ritual, unlike the more orthodox view that a Muslim should adhere strictly to the daily rituals associated with Islam. As will be discussed later in the chapter, their relaxed approach to religion stems in part from their strong secular heritage. Turkish Cypriots advocate a strong separation of religion and politics and as such see any mixing of religion and politics as a threat to their secular way of living.

Journalists and academics have used the term “political Islam” to encapsulate a political theory that fuses Islam and politics. Debates about the use of this term question its productivity (Ayoob 2007). Ayoob (2007) identifies three major misconceptions about the notion of “political Islam”: first, that “political Islam” like “Islam” is a monolithic construction; second, that the intermingling of religion and politics is unique to Islam;

and third, that political Islam is inherently violent. He disputes these misconceptions by showing how different national contexts give rise to different manifestations of “political Islam”. Nonetheless, I will use the term ‘political Islam’ in order to distinguish between approaches by political parties in Turkey that actively try to dissociate themselves from religion (even if in practice they do not), from parties that actively embrace the mingling of religion and politics (no matter if their interpretation is moderate or aggressive). It needs to be made clear, however, that “political Islam” is far from a fixed political theory not only across the Muslim world, but also internally to Turkey; it is continuously changing over time and even within political parties.

Navaro-Yashin (2002) eloquently articulates why the multifaceted terms “secularism” and “Islam” are continuously evolving in Turkish nationalistic discourse. She argues that nation-states are founded on the idea of cultural unity and a common past. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic, the government under Atatürk attempted to eradicate historical and cultural connections with the Ottoman Empire. The newly formed Turkish government did not look to a common past to unify a nation, but to a common future based on a “modern” Turkey. For Atatürk, the idea of the modern meant distancing the newly formed nation from its Ottoman past and making Turkey a “western civilization”. In attempts to achieve this future, he promoted a separation of religion and politics and pushed through a series of radical reforms in attempts to modernize Turkey (See Chapter 2). As the past is continuously re-interpreted, so too is this idea of the “modern”. Today, the governing AKP party has abandoned Atatürk’s definition of a “modern” Turkey in favor of one that sees Islam as playing a greater role in governance.

The AKP seeks to tamp down those practices put in place during Ataturk's period of influence and reestablish pride in Turkey's Ottoman heritage and practices. Just as Atatürk's vision of Turkey was resisted by some, so too is the AKP's redefining of Turkishness. The strongest opposition comes from the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP), whose policies and visions are steadfastly dedicated to those laid out by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and views any deviation with great disdain and suspicion.

The AKP government, although denying that they are an Islamic party (preferring instead to term the party's agenda as "conservative democracy"), still actively promotes the "Islamic way of life" in Turkish society and adheres to the view that the modernization of the country should not come at the expense of Islam (Michael 2014, 22; Criss 2010, 45). In direct opposition to Kemalist constructions of 'Turkishness,' AKP upholds the position that Islam is a necessary component of Turkishness. Like previous political parties in Turkey that embraced Islam, AKP does not see Islam as 'backwards' or as a hindrance to "modernity". In fact, AKP views it as a key component of modernity. Yet, AKP's conception of political Islam is framed differently from its predecessors in that it portrays 'Islam' as compatible with a republican form of government.

AKP envisions their efforts at synthesizing Islam and politics and posits Turkey as potentially leading the Muslim nation, thereby claiming an international role for Turkey. As stated by then Prime Minister Erdoan after AKP's 2011 victory, "Sarajevo won today as much as Istanbul. Beirut won as much as Izmir. Damascus won as much as

Ankara. Ramallah, Nablus, Jenin, the West Bank, [and] Jerusalem won as much as Diyarbakir" (Erdoğan 2011, as quoted in Taşpinar 2012). Through this speech, Erdogan is not only speaking to his party's present day wishes to be seen as a model for other Muslim societies, but in his speech he also harkens back to Turkey's Ottoman past when Turkey was the center of the Muslim world. AKP is the latest and most powerful in a line of conservative religious political parties that have viewed Atatürk's effort to redesign the nation based on the European model as weakening Turkey. Therefore, the AKP government embraces the past grandeur of its Ottoman and Islamic heritage and actively seeks to transform the ideological framework of Turkey from one based solely on secular Kemalist values to one that acknowledges its Muslim heritage and its relevance for today. In doing so, AKP seeks to eliminate Atatürk's vision of a westernized Turkish society and attempts to recapture Turkey's former Ottoman glory.

Although highly contested amongst the population in Turkey, political parties that embrace political Islam receive a tremendous amount of support. In North Cyprus, however, Turkish Cypriots are much less inclined to support a political party that promotes political Islam. Even the more conservative parties in the TRNC, such as the National Unity Party (Ulusal Birlik Partisi, UBP) and the Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) are less sympathetic than political parties in Turkey to AKP's active efforts to implement Islamic values in their society. The reason for this can be found in the roots of Turkish Cypriot political secularism. The vehement embracing of political secularism by Turkish Cypriots has been traced historically by Michael (2014). Michael illustrates that the British modernity framework and the introduction of Kemalist secularism greatly

influenced the defining of political practices in the TRNC. During the British colonial period many religious institutions lost their power and consequently the already small religious fervor of the Turkish Cypriots was diminished. After the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, the Kemalist reforms were enthusiastically adopted by the Turkish Cypriot community, which furthered the separation of church and state and increased their embrace of secularism. Bryant (2004) demonstrates that the immediacy and ease with which Turkish Cypriots embraced Atatürk's 'modernizing' reforms were due in part to the concept of 'enlightenment' constructed by Cypriot Muslim elites during the late Ottoman period of the early 1900s.

According to Bryant (2004), the Cypriot Muslims were divided over the future direction of their community. There were those who wanted to use the Islamic identity as the basis for a modern state which would be achieved through 'revelation' and available to all (Bryant 2004, 103). There were also those who believed strongly in the need for leadership and argued that it was only through "enlightenment" the state would be saved (Bryant 2004, 103). In her exposition, Bryant (2004) examines how the concept of "enlightenment" in Cyprus was understood to be a product of education, something available essentially only to the elite of society. Therefore, while Muslims could be created through accepting revealed prophecy, Ottomans could be created only through education. As Bryant demonstrates, Atatürk, referred to by Turkish Cypriots as "ikinci peygamber" (English: "second prophet"), used the notion of "enlightenment" in the construction of the new Turkish Republic; it was "...the 'enlightened' individual that was the cultural type to be molded in Turkish schools" (Bryant 2004, 152). Thus the Cypriot

Muslim population, whose concept of ‘enlightenment’ was already fostered through British education, easily embraced Atatürk’s ideals about secularism and the new Turk.

Under the influence of Atatürk’s guiding principles, Turkish Cypriots’ governing bodies have tried to protect its separation of religion and politics and as a result there is strong resistance to the AKP in North Cyprus by Turkish Cypriots. The Turkish Cypriots feared that AKP’s abandonment of Kemalist secularism and their embrace of political Islam would result in an “Islamification” of the island. As evidence of this attempted “Islamification” Turkish Cypriots cite the increased efforts to bring Islamic tourism to the island and the non-secular changes made to education, such as the inclusion of mandatory religious classes in public schools and the opening of Hala Sultan Divinity College, the first religious school in North Cyprus for the study of the Koran. As will be discussed more in-depth later (Section 5.3.2), although Turkish Cypriots often cite these examples as evidence of AKP’s ‘Islamification’ of the island, in some cases their ‘evidence’ is not always based in fact.

Although Turkish Cypriots fear an ‘Islamification’ of the island by AKP, the AKP government views their policies to be an effort to assimilate them into Turkish culture—to ‘Turkify’ them (Michael 2014). Michael (2014) makes evident that just as Atatürk tried to integrate the Turkish Cypriots into the Turkish nation employing secularity, today the AKP is attempting to re-integrate the Turkish Cypriots using Islam as the unifying force by re-conceptualizing Turkish Cypriots not as ‘Turks of Cyprus’ but as ‘Muslim Turks of Cyprus’. Just as the policies of the post-colonial Turkish government were

enacted to unify Turkish Cypriots under the definition of ‘Turk’ as conceived by Atatürk, the current Turkish government is also enforcing policies to culturally integrate Turkish Cypriots into Turkish society as defined by AKP. Hence, the definition of ‘Turk’ is changing again. For AKP, Turkish Cypriots are first and foremost ‘Muslim Turks’ that are part of a larger Turkey. Michael (2014, 25) has noted that Turkish government officials prefer to promote the term ‘Muslim Turks of Cyprus’, while Turkish Cypriots prefer to use the term ‘Turkish Cypriot’ (Turkish: ‘Kıbrıslı Turk’). During my field research, many Turkish Cypriots also referred to themselves as just ‘Cypriot’ (Turkish: ‘Kıbrıslı’). Despite the AKP government’s efforts to change their description, even Turkish citizens refer to Turkish Cypriots using the term ‘Cypriot’ or ‘Turkish Cypriot’ not ‘Muslim Turks of Cyprus’.

These differing views about the role of secularism and Islamism in politics and culture lay the framework for the ways in which the ‘secular’ and the ‘Islamic’ identity are being continuously constructed and negotiated within the varying concepts of ‘Turkishness’. This chapter will argue that Turkish Cypriots invoke the Kemalist definition of “Turkishness” to combat what they perceive to be the AKP-driven Turkish political and cultural domination of the island, and seek to retain more autonomy for themselves through more secular policies. The discourse on Turkishness provides a legitimate way to contest the island’s Turkish domination. At the surface this contestation appears to be AKP’s ‘Islam’ vs Atatürk’s ‘secularism’, but it is actually a series of complex negotiations on notions of progress and modernity.

Through both collective organized protests and individual practices on Dereboyu in North Cyprus, Turkish Cypriots challenge notions of Turkish modernity as promoted by AKP and in doing so Turkish Cypriots actively shape the street of Dereboyu. This chapter will argue that Dereboyu is a socially constructed place where Turkish Cypriots can perform their secular heritage. As argued by Low, “The social construction of space is the actual transformation of space—through people’s social exchanges, memories, images, and daily use of the material setting—into scenes and actions that convey symbolic meaning” (Low 1996, 862). In this way, places become imbued with meaning by individuals and collective groups of people; owing to this, spaces are contested constructions. Using Low’s (1996) understanding of space, this chapter will examine how people engage with Dereboyu and in doing so negotiate and reproduce their understandings of “Turkishness”.

To make these arguments, the remainder of this chapter will be divided into three sections. Section 5.2 will provide an in-depth description of Dereboyu and through an analysis of the description will argue that Dereboyu is a place where Turkish Cypriots perform their secular heritage. Section 5.3 will examine two official protests against the Turkish government that took place on Dereboyu Street. This section will demonstrate that although Turkish Cypriot demonstrators stand in solidarity with the Turkish protesters, they negotiate their own understanding of ‘Turkishness’. Section 5.4 will analyze informal protests against the AKP government by exploring both the activities that take place at Anayasa Rock Bar on Dereboyu and the use of rock music as a tool of protest. This section will illustrate the ways in which Dereboyu is a place where Turkish

Cypriots can live out their secular values by examining the way in which the patrons and musicians of Anayasa Rock Bar perform informal protests through everyday practices. Through an analysis of these case studies, this chapter will demonstrate the complex layering of how Turkish Cypriots engage with this street, and through different negotiations of “Turkishness” articulate a distinct demotic nationalism from below.

5.2 Encountering Dereboyu

Spanning 98km, the Pedieos (Turkish: Kanlı Dere) River traverses across the divided capital of Nicosia and runs parallel to one of the most frequented avenues in North Nicosia, Mehmet Akif Street; also commonly referred to by locals as ‘Dereboyu’ Street. According to a newspaper article, the name ‘Dereboyu’ originates from an expression used by locals in years past to refer to the avenue: “*dere boyundaki cadde*”, which translated into English means: “The avenue along the river” (Day 2010). Today, Dereboyu is also used colloquially to refer to the intersecting street, Osman Paşa Caddesi. Dereboyu is one of the most popular destinations for both locals of Lefkoşa and Turkish Cypriots travelling to Lefkoşa. Despite being a major center of activity for Turkish Cypriots living in Lefkoşa there has been little written about it. Over the decades Dereboyu has undergone quite a transformation. During the period of intercommunal violence leading up to and following the 1974 Turkish Operation, Dereboyu was witness

to violence and bloodshed.⁴³ Within recent decades, Dereboyu has become the center for entertainment and nightlife for those living in and visiting Lefkoşa.

During my field research Dereboyu was also the place I called home. After two weeks of living with a Turkish dental student, I moved into my own apartment on Dereboyu. The apartment was recommended to me by my Turkish Cypriot friend Ali, who provided insurance for a man who had available flats to lease. Due to the location of the apartment on Dereboyu and Ali's trusted recommendation of the landlord, my Turkish and Turkish Cypriot acquaintances advised me to rent it. The apartment was conveniently located within walking distance to the Walled City (my original targeted site for research), bus and taxi stations, cafes, restaurants, and grocery stores. However, some of my Turkish Cypriot friends expressed concern when they learned that the apartment I was planning to rent was located next to an apartment rented as a gathering space and meeting hall by the all-male political youth group, "Idealist Club" (Turkish: Ülkü Ocakları). They organized events to increase political support for the Turkish political party, the Nationalist Movement Party (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi, MHP), recruit new members for MHP, and promote MHP's political ideals. Members of this youth group are known as the "Grey Wolves" and are seen as acting as an unofficial para-military youth wing for the MHP. Grey Wolves are known for their far-right conservative views and are often remembered

⁴³ Dr. Nihat İlhan was a major in the Turkish Army aiding the Turkish Cypriots during the period of inter-communal violence on the island. In December 1963, Dr. İlhan's wife and three children were murdered in their home by Greek Cypriots. The house has been preserved as the "Museum of Barbarism". The bullet holes and bloodstains are still visible in the bathroom where Dr. İlhan's wife and three children tried to hide.

for their complicity in the assassinations of numerous left-wing intellectual leaders and academics during the 1970s in Turkey. While several of my Turkish Cypriot acquaintances were concerned that I was a female living alone next to an apartment full of men, others were concerned because of the violent and nationalistic reputation of the political party. A concerned middle aged Turkish Cypriot, Serdar, asked my less concerned friends, “Would you put Katie inside a beehive?”

Grey Wolves have counterparts all around the world to promote Turkish nationalism. They have been active in Cyprus since 1974 and their role has been to actively promote the political idea that Cyprus is Turkish. In the 2004 Annan Referendum, while Turkish Cypriots overwhelmingly voted ‘yes’ for the unification of the island, the Grey Wolves actively lobbied for a ‘no’ vote. In October 2013, the same month I moved into my new apartment, the Grey Wolves opened up their new headquarters (next to what was to have been my new apartment) on Osman Paşa Street. This newness of the event contributed to the heightened fears of my Turkish Cypriot friends. During the opening of their new headquarters members of Ülkü Ocakları chanted phrases such as “Cyprus is Turkish and will remain Turkish” and “The Grey Wolves movement cannot be stopped” (Afrika 2013). My Turkish Cypriot friends’ disapproval of the Grey Wolves organization was not only a rejection of the nationalistic ideologies of MHP in Turkey, but an objection to the presence of the Grey Wolves ideologies in Cyprus. After much deliberation with my friends and the landlord, I decided at their suggestion to move to an apartment on the floor above so that I was not living right next door to them.

Encompassing a two-mile stretch, Dereboyu houses a multitude of shops, cafes, bars, apartments, and restaurants. Although Dereboyu is only a small two-way street with few parking options, the car is still the preferred method of travel. All too frequently, the time Turkish Cypriots spend looking for a parking space takes far longer than the time it takes for them to reach their destination. During weekdays at around 2pm and again at 6pm, the traffic is particularly congested due to lunch breaks and end of day work hours. While pedestrian sidewalks are present, most of the time they are completely unusable for their intended purpose. Instead, they function as makeshift parking spaces for vehicles (see Figure 4). Additionally, while there are signs located directly in front of each building signifying the names of the shops, there are few independent advertisements located on the street. The most prominent advertisement is for Jack Daniels Whiskey; it heralds over the street on top of one of the high-rise apartment buildings and is highly visible from both directions on the street.



Figure 4: Mehmet Akif Street, Dereboyu

The people who frequented Dereboyu were Turkish Cypriots, immigrants, and students, usually between the ages of 18-40. Dereboyu was a very social street and those visiting the cafes usually went in groups or with their significant other. Rarely would an individual visit a cafe alone for purposes of work or to read, and even more rarely would that individual be a lone female. With few exceptions, all of the cafes, restaurants, and bars have outdoor seating options. Those that did not provide outdoor seating had the option of opening up wall-length windows, thereby transforming the space into an outdoor seating area. Most people preferred to sit outside, so even during the coldest months of the year outdoor heating was provided. Additionally, most outdoor seating

areas were equipped with retractable roofs so as to provide for protection from the various elements.

During both weekdays and weekends, daytime and nighttime activities on Dereboyu remained similarly constant, except for Sunday when most clothing stores and a few shops were closed for business. During the morning hours (8am-noon) there were very few pedestrians on the street with the exception of those going to work on weekdays. Activity increased around 1pm and the area was crowded by 2pm, filled with people drinking coffee or eating lunch with friends. Most of the clothing stores were fairly quiet. After working hours, many people would go out to eat at one of the restaurants or have a beer or coffee with friends. Most of the cafes and bars televised Turkish football games that were playing on any particular day. My Turkish Cypriot friends would go to a café almost every evening to watch a Turkish football match, talk about the events of the day, and drink Turkish tea.⁴⁴ Occasionally, they would attend a themed musical night hosted by restaurants where one could either listen to live music or listen to a local DJ play their favorite Turkish hits from a specific decade. These musical nights usually occurred after the football games ended or when there were no football games being televised. By 2am all the bars and restaurants were closed.

⁴⁴ It should be noted that the preference to drink Turkish tea was an unusual choice. Generally, Turkish Cypriots prefer to drink Turkish coffee or English tea when at home. Although the café that my Turkish Cypriot friends often frequented was usually filled with Turkish Cypriot patrons, the café was the Turkish chain MADO. As it was a Turkish chain, traditional Turkish tea was on the menu.

There were many large street parties and events organized on Dereboyu by both businesses and the Municipality. Two such well-attended events were the Halloween Party hosted by one of the most popular bars on Dereboyu, Cadi'nin Evi (English: Witch's House), and the Dereboyu Street Festival organized by the Municipality. Although Halloween is not a holiday traditionally celebrated by Muslims, one would not know that when standing on Dereboyu 31 October 2013. The Halloween party on Dereboyu attracted over 500 people; most of them 18 to 30 year-olds (see Figure 5). Anticipating the large crowd, the bar had a few outdoor minibars stationed on Dereboyu so that there were plenty of places to buy beer and other beverages throughout the night. Turkish Cypriots came dressed in all manners of Halloween costumes, although the most common costume was something “scary looking” decorated with fake blood. People drank beer, chatted with friends, listened and danced to the live sounds of DJ Barrios, and were entertained by the fire performer Tulga Altunbilek.



Figure 5: Halloween Party at Cadı'nın Evi on Dereboyu (Osmanpaşa Street)

Halloween has its roots in pagan festivals and was later adapted by Christians as All Hallows Eve. However, in North Cyprus, as in most American and European countries today, Halloween is not celebrated as a religious event, but rather as an excuse to dress in costumes and attend parties. Although in America and some parts of Europe it is common for children to go door to door in costume collecting candy, this tradition is not practiced in North Cyprus. A few people may carve pumpkins, although this too is not a common practice. Halloween was not a traditionally celebrated event in North Cyprus until more recently gaining popularity. Halloween has become popular due to an amalgam of reasons including globalization of ideas spread through advertising and social media, the growth of popularity of Halloween in Turkey, and the introduction of new British

primary schools on the island. Young Turkish Cypriot schoolchildren in these British primary schools, such as the Necat British School, celebrate national Turkish and Turkish Cypriot holidays, but are also introduced to and celebrate some British holidays such as Halloween. Most of the scattered Halloween celebrations on the island are attended only by British immigrants. On the night of the Dereboyu Halloween party mentioned above, a Turkish Cypriot acquaintance was playing in a band at a bar in Kyrenia attended almost exclusively by British people with the exception of myself and his Turkish Cypriot friends who had come to see him perform. My friends were eager to attend the Halloween party on Dereboyu as well so we did not stay for his entire performance. Partaking in this celebration on Dereboyu is yet another example of one of the ways in which Turkish Cypriots practice their chosen secular heritage on this street.

The Dereboyu Street Festival held on 3 May 2014 attracted even more people than the Halloween Party, as it was an event targeting people of all ages and it lasted late into the night. All of the bars and shops along Dereboyu were open with most of them holding special discounts and or promotions. Many of the bars had special live musical performances. There were also street venders along Dereboyu giving away Turkish Cypriot foods, free promotional beer, toys, and balloons, amongst other items.

There are many parallels to be drawn between the Dereboyu Street Festival and the local heritage festivals held in rural villages across North Cyprus (e.g., Guzelyurt Orange Festival, Yesilirmak Strawberry Festival, Lefke Walnut Festival, Mehmetcik Grape Festival, Tepebasi Tulip Festival). At these rural village festivals, Turkish Cypriots

celebrate the local food produce or environmental heritage that is associated with that specific village. Festivals like these also promote the town itself as they sell local crafts, clothing, and various odds and ends on temporary table and booths. These local festivals usually feature traditional Turkish Cypriot dancers, music, and speeches made by both local and TRNC national politicians. The Dereboyu Street festival can also be interpreted as a local heritage festival, although instead of a local village Dereboyu is a zone within a large city and the celebration revolves around the unique commerce available and the Turkish Cypriot secular heritage. Similar to the local village festivals where one walks down a street lined with temporary booths selling different goods, the Dereboyu Street festival has opportunities to shop as well. The difference being that instead of booths and tables, there are fixed storefronts with brand named stores such as Tommy Hilfiger, Nike, Adidas, and MANGO. Instead of traditional Turkish Cypriot dancers and music, there are live rock concerts and Turkish Cypriot women dancing on elevated platforms to lure patrons to the promotional booths.

At the Dereboyu Street Festival, there are not only local Turkish Cypriot sweets, such as Lokma, being sold from carts, but also there are cafes, bars, and restaurants offering promotional deals to entice visitors to dine and drink. There are stands by different alcoholic beverage companies giving away free drinks. There are a few cafes and restaurants known outside of the TRNC, such as Leman-Kültür (a famous Turkish restaurant chain), Gloria Jeans (an American coffee company, now Australian-owned), and Domino's Pizza. Because of the embargoes placed on the TRNC, it has been a long and arduous process to allow these stores, restaurants, and cafes to operate on TRNC soil.

Resultantly, many Turkish Cypriots take great pride in the fact that they have these stores and see it as a small step towards the process of their recognition as a legal country. As such, Turkish Cypriots interpret these brand name stores as a sign of the modern. In the village festivals, the heritage celebrated and the products sold is the food or the environment. But in the capital city, on Dereboyu, the ‘secular’ is being celebrated. Through engaging in activities such as drinking, commerce, and singing along with Turkish Cypriot musicians, Turkish Cypriots are reproducing a local identity where the ‘modern’ is celebrated. These special events exemplify the popularity of Dereboyu as a place where Turkish Cypriots enjoy and practice their secular heritage as Cypriots. While Turkish Cypriots project their nostalgic views of the past onto the Walled City from the outside (see Chapter 4), Turkish Cypriots project their views of modernity onto Dereboyu.

Diverse groups of people frequent the shops and cafes located on Dereboyu, but Turkish immigrants, Turkish Cypriots, and university students tend to segregate themselves in their favorite cafes and bars. This self-segregation was an occasional topic of discussion. One night my Turkish Cypriot companions wanted to play Okey, a domino game whereby the objective is for a person to be the first one on their team to form a hand consisting entirely of sets of equal numbered tiles or runs of consecutive tiles of the same color. There is a café on Dereboyu with tables built to play such games, a café usually associated with Turkish students because it is part of a chain also found in Turkey. My Turkish Cypriot companions never went there to watch football games but only when they wanted to play Okey. As they enjoyed playing this game, they would make small

bets, such as the loser would have to pay for everyone's tea. They especially enjoyed teasing one another, such as when one team felt their side was getting close to winning, they would order another round of tea. On this particular night, a group of Kurdish 20-year olds were watching the football game on TV in the café. When the soccer team they were rooting for scored, their voices made a long-drawn out ululation which my Turkish Cypriot companions found funny. The sound made by the young men watching the football game became the subject of ridicule by my Turkish Cypriot acquaintances for the rest of the night. The ridicule of these young Kurds illustrates their rejection of immigrants and acts as an example of how they negotiate boundaries between themselves and Kurdish 'others'.

As Turkish Cypriots negotiate the boundaries between themselves and Turkish and Kurdish 'others', they also project these boundaries onto the materiality of Dereboyu. For example, Tuncay, a Turkish Cypriot, commented about a mosque located at the end of Dereboyu, stating, "...the mosques are increasing [in North Cyprus] as well. Okay, a Muslim should follow his religious duties. He should go and pray, but I don't understand why a person would go to a mosque on this street after coming to this street and drinking alcohol. Would it be normal?" He went on to say, "You cannot think of this country becoming conservative. It's almost impossible to imagine, but we are being put onto this road, you know? Slowly, slowly, they [AKP government] are trying to make us become more Muslim. This has been happening the last 13 years in Turkey, but is only recently starting in our country." Through these statements it became quite evident that he feared that Erdoğan and the AKP government in Turkey were attempting to make his country

more religious. Ironically, the mosque he refers to was not built at the expense of the Turkish government, but was actually built by a Turkish Cypriot father who lost his child in a traffic accident. Though Tuncay's reference to this specific mosque as an example of AKP's 'Islamification' of the island was misinformed, it reveals the degree of his fear about the 'Islamification' of the island by generalizing all new mosque construction as being financed and driven by the AKP. His comments against the increase of mosques on the island were directed against the AKP's political influence on the island, and the ways in which he believed their influence to be changing the island's cultural landscape. His objection to the mosque on Dereboyu was therefore not one against religion per se, but rather it was against a religious presence in a space he sees as 'secular'. He is afraid that the increasing number (perceived and real) of mosques will slowly eliminate the secular heritage of the Turkish Cypriots. Here he is projecting the Turkish Cypriot ideology about the 'modern' onto Dereboyu.

In this same discussion, Tuncay criticized the length of the ezan (call to prayer) in Lefkosa, stating, "I thought that the prayer length was too long, so I looked up how long the prayers should be on the Religion Ministry Website and I've seen that the prayer length is longer here (Lefkoşa)!...It's more than five minutes here yaaa! It causes me discomfort". In the recent decade, the length and volume of the ezan has been magnified,

causing considerable discontent amongst people, to include Tuncay.⁴⁵ Like many Turkish Cypriots, although Tuncay himself did not attend mosque, he still considered himself Muslim and as such these complaints should not be interpreted as a condemnation of the Islamic faith. In fact, he comments further about the ezan stating, “It’s actually a beautiful sound, it needs to be spread”. This comment supports the notion that his distress regarding the increase in mosques is not a fear directed against Islam. Instead, Tuncay’s fear is directed against the AKP. By specifically referencing the Dereboyu mosque and its location next to the drinking establishments and bars, Tuncay articulates his fear of the AKP altering and or eliminating the Turkish Cypriot ‘secular’ and ‘modern’ lifestyle.

When comparing Dereboyu vis-à-vis AKP’s vision of Turkey, Turkish Cypriots construct Dereboyu as a “modern” and “secular” space. In a different context, when Turkish Cypriots compare Dereboyu to the shopping streets in the RoC, Dereboyu is revealed to be “less modern”. Hatay (2008) illustrates that while North Cyprus has acquired a number of legitimate name-brand stores, Turkish Cypriots remain acutely aware of the limitations levied by the embargoes and the number of knock-off chains such as the fast food chain “Burger City” (instead of the better known Burger King). The impact of the embargoes is particularly revealed when compared with the stores, cafes, restaurants, and bars located on the Greek side of the island. Many Turkish Cypriots asked if I had visited

⁴⁵ For example, in November 2015 a trial was brought to session concerning the complaint filed by the lawyer, Feza Güzeloglu, regarding the volume of the ezan from the minaret speakers of three mosques, Şeyh Nazım, Aşağı and Pir Paşa (*Güzeloglu*, No. 386/2014). Feza Güzeloglu’s complaint was not against the ezan itself, but rather the volume of the ezan. Until a further decision can be made, the court has temporarily banned the dawn recitation of the ezan from these mosques (*Güzeloglu*, No. 386/2014).

the Walled City on the Greek side and then immediately said, “Isn’t it nice? It’s much more European”. Most will go on to say that it is not as congested and dirty as the TRNC. Several Turkish Cypriots were particularly curious as to whether or not I had eaten at the McDonalds on the Greek side or had gone to their Starbucks. While many Turkish Cypriots are proud to have a Gloria Jeans, some mourn the fact that it is not a Starbucks Coffee. Many of the Turkish Cypriot youths also longed for the variety of international brand name clothing stores located on the Greek side. While one can sample international brands on Dereboyu, there is a painful awareness of the comparatively meager offer of choices in the TRNC compared to the ROC. Although Dereboyu, a space filled with bars and international brands distinguishes the Turkish Cypriots as ‘secular’ and ‘modern’ against the AKP vision, when Dereboyu is compared to the Greek side, it highlights their as yet unattained ‘modernity’.

Regardless of whether Dereboyu is being socially constructed as a modern space or seen as backwards in comparison to the Greek side (thus emphasizing the unrecognized status of the TRNC), Dereboyu is socially constructed as a secular Turkish Cypriot space. While the Walled City symbolizes a nostalgia for the past (Chapter 4), Dereboyu reflects their desired future—a place that is continuously under construction and progressing forward, a step toward their vision of a modern TRNC, and a vision that is threatened by the AKP’s non-secular efforts. The proximity of the Walled City to Dereboyu provides a sharp contrast and only enhances these views. Dereboyu is a place where Turkish Cypriots can embrace modern secularism and as such becomes a place where they can defend their secular heritage through protest.

The next section will examine two organized protests that took place on Dereboyu against the AKP government in Turkey. Although these protests were expressions of solidarity with protests happening in Turkey, it will be demonstrated that these events on Dereboyu were happening in a very specific Turkish Cypriot context. Through an examination of these protests, and the contexts in which they were held, this section will argue that the underlying motivation for Turkish Cypriots to protest was the defense of their secular values. This section will illustrate that Turkish Cypriots felt that these values were under threat by what they perceived to be the AKP government's 'Islamification' of the TRNC and Turkey's political and cultural dominance over the island. Much like the protestors in Turkey, the Turkish Cypriots resorted to Kemalism to resist the AKP, however, this section will emphasize that they protest within a very specific Turkish Cypriot context and as such negotiate a different construction of 'Turkishness'.

5.3 Gezi Park and Berkin Elvan Protests

5.3.1 Alcohol restrictions and the Taksim Protests in Gezi Park

On May 28th 2013, the Gezi Park protest in Istanbul began. It started peacefully as a demonstration against the decision made by the AKP government and then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to remove trees in Gezi Park in order to provide space to build a shopping mall. In attempts to silence the demonstrators, the government used police force to remove them from the park. The extreme measures taken by the police included water cannons, pepper spray, and forced removal, videos of which were soon

posted on social media sites. After seeing these images, a protest erupted in Taksim Square attracting tens of thousands of people, with simultaneous protests being held in Ankara and Izmir. The protest was no longer about just the trees in Gezi Park, but had grown into a larger protest against the AKP government and Prime Minister Erdoğan over their interventions to restrict individual lifestyles and freedoms. The protest united disparate groups of people. Whether they were from different ethnic backgrounds, different age groups, social groups, political parties, or football team fans, they were all united in protest against Prime Minister Erdoğan and the AKP government.

The anger against AKP did not happen overnight, but had been slowly building over the years amongst a large percentage of the population. Prior to the Taksim protests, the government passed a series of legislative mandates with little or no public consultation or forewarning, resulting in increased anger amongst the public against the AKP government and Prime Minister Erdoğan. One such legislated bill that passed was a bill restricting the sale, advertisement, and consumption of alcohol beverages (Resmi Gazete 2013).⁴⁶ The Turkish government claimed that the bill was passed to help protect the health of the Turkish youth, while opponents claimed that these regulations were an aim to make Turkish society more “Islamist”. CHP Deputy Musa Cam spoke out against the

⁴⁶ Under this bill, alcohol cannot be sold after 10pm and is prohibited from being sold within a hundred meters of mosques and schools. Alcohol cannot be sold at educational or health institutions. Alcohol advertising campaigns such as promotions, sponsored activities, festivals and free giveaways are prohibited. Any images of alcohol on TV will be blurred (which is already in place for cigarettes). All liquor bottles being sold will have to display warning signs that indicated the harms of alcohol, as is the same for cigarettes (Resmi Gazete 2013).

law saying, “This is not a struggle against the ills of alcohol but an attempt to redesign the society according to their beliefs and lifestyles” (Hurriyet Daily News 2013).

To justify their frustrations, opponents of the new law further cited AKP’s 2013 decision to change the national drink of Turkey from the much beloved alcohol drink, raki⁴⁷, to the non-alcohol yogurt-based drink, ayran. This change caused national outrage, with many commenting on how the drink of Atatürk was being replaced by the ‘Islamic-friendly’ yogurt drink. Supporters of the bill denied the claim they were attempting to “redesign society”, emphasizing that alcohol was not being banned completely as it would have to be to conform to Islamic religious teachings. Instead, they argued that their only concern when passing the law was for the health of Turkish citizens, particularly the youth. They also emphasized that in fact, far from being “backwards,” they were actually implementing a law that was already in place in several western, non-Islamic countries. For example, in a newspaper interview the head of the Planning and Budget Committee, Lütfü Elvan of AKP made comparisons to Sweden stating, “In Sweden, [the retail sale of alcohol] is forbidden after 7pm on weekdays, 3pm on Saturdays and 24 hours on Sundays. There are similar restrictions in all Scandinavian countries” (Hurriyet Daily News 2013). Here it is clear that the AKP government and its supporters do not want to be seen as “backwards”, thus political parties, whether promoting a separation or synthesis of religion and politics, both share Atatürk’s view on modernity as an

⁴⁷ Raki is an aniseed flavoured alcoholic drink that is usually served with ice water, although can also be consumed straight. When combined with water, it produces a distinct milky-white colour and as such is referred to as ‘Aslan sütu’ (English: ‘Lion’s milk’). Drinking Raki is a cultural activity in North Cyprus and Turkey, most commonly consumed with company and mezze dishes. The drink is also associated with Atatürk who is known to have enjoyed drinking large quantities of Raki.

instrument of ‘progress’. These debates were not just about whether or not the sale of alcohol should be restricted, but also through these debates the concept of ‘Turkishness’ was being negotiated and redefined.

This law is best understood in the social background in which it was enacted. AKP had gained strict control over the media, shutting down YouTube and Twitter to control news stories as needed. The police had adopted brutal tactics in dealing with resistance and used that against protesters including those involved in the Taksim event. On the occasion of the Taksim protest the Turkish media, under control of the government, did not air information about the Taksim protest but instead aired documentaries and cooking shows. CNNTurk aired a documentary about penguins. This inspired the protesters to use the penguin as a symbol of their opposition, which became very popular because of the irony that penguins are nowhere to be found in such a hot country. The penguin rapidly became an image that was posted throughout social media and painted as graffiti onto walls. Social media became the platform to get their messages across throughout Turkey and the world because their own news stations were not fulfilling their proper role.

In addition to the images of penguins, social media became inundated with music, comic strips, photographs, videos, and chants that were happening at protests across the country. Two popular protest songs included “Sounds of Pots and Pans” and “Everyday I’m Çapuling”. The former song used kitchen pots and pans as musical instruments to mimic the residents in the protest areas who banged pots and pans from the windows of their homes to express their support for the protesters in the street. The latter song used the

melody of the international pop musical hit, “Everyday I’m shuffling” by LMFAO, but replaced the word ‘shuffling’ with ‘çapuling’. Prime Minister Erdogan used the term “çapulcu” (English: ‘looter’) disparagingly to describe the protesters, which was immediately reclaimed by the protesters and used to further unify themselves as part of the movement against AKP. As noted by Singer (2013) the term “çapulcu” used by Erdogan is significant as it was previously used by Necip Fazil (See Chapter 2). Fazil described the Action Army lead by Kemal Atatürk and Ismet Inonu as “çapulcu” in their resistance against the 1909 mutiny, whereby religious students and lower-ranking Islamic scholars were revolting against the so-called “anti-Islamic” government of the late-Ottoman era, Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) (Singer 2013, 86). The Action Army eventually prospered, but what makes this even more significant is that this resistance took place at the present day Gezi Parks (Singer 2013, 86).

It is important to note that social media was widely used not only by those who protested against the government, but it was also used by those who supported the government in their attempt to stop the protest. Those who supported the government used social media to present protesters as “hooligans” instead of peaceful protesters. One popular image circulated by the pro-government supporters was a beer can left inside a mosque by protesters. Comments were made by social media users that it was disrespectful for protesters to enter mosques with their shoes on and bring in and consume alcohol. Another popular way to use social media to support the government was to display images of police officers being abused to counteract the images posted of protesters being abused by the police.

Although these social media protesters present these static images of alcohol and mosques as mutually exclusive, the orientation of both the protesters and supporters of the government were not. Many protesters who were against Erdoğan and against the alcohol ban were Muslim. Similarly, there were hybrid groups such as the “Islamic non-capitalist”, who although devoutly religious, were protesting against Erdoğan for his neoliberal policies. Therefore, underlying their protests were concerns about where the future of Turkey was headed. The protesters were worried that Atatürk’s secular vision for the nation would be replaced by AKP’s political Islam, while the supporters defended AKP’s alternate Turkish future embedded in a synthesis of politics and religion. Consequently, these diverging understandings of the future have repercussions on how the citizens define themselves in relation to their nation. What ‘Turks’ are to comprise this future? These negotiations of ‘Turkishness’ in Turkey lay the framework for how the protests on Dereboyu can best be understood.

5.3.2 “Dereboyundayız Taksim!” (“We are in Dereboyu, Taksim”)

In addition to Gezi protests held around Turkey, solidarity protests were held in foreign countries with large Turkish populations such as Germany, England, and North Cyprus. Upon seeing the protests in Turkey, the TRNC citizens, Turkish immigrants and Turkish students in the TRNC wanted to stand in solidarity with the Turkish protesters. On June 1st 2013, they organized themselves using social media and gathered outside Kuğulu Park. Similar to the protests in Taksim Square, the demonstrators in North Cyprus were composed of a cross-section of society. The protesters in North Cyprus were primarily

students at the TRNC universities, but non-governmental organizations and unions were also present. From Kuğulu Park they marched to the Turkish Embassy and down Dereboyu Street. At the protest in North Cyprus, demonstrators insulted Prime Minister Erdoğan by toasting to him with the Turkish crafted Efes beer, singing “Şerefe Tayyip” (English: “Cheers Tayyip”) (See Figure 6). The song was appropriated from the protests in Istanbul. Originally created in Turkey by the Beşiktaş football fan club, Carşı, the song was soon adopted by protest groups all across the globe thanks to social media sites such as YouTube. To further show their disdain for the alcohol ban, they painted their slogans on Efes Beer posters that they carried down the street.



Figure 6: Front Cover *Afrika* Newspaper (2 June 2013).

Why were citizens in North Cyprus passionately protesting and standing in solidarity with Turkish protesters? Why were many angered by the restrictions on alcohol if they did not directly affect North Cyprus? Although the alcohol ban did not directly affect North Cyprus, many Turkish Cypriots were outraged over Erdogan's increasingly authoritarian rule, his deconstruction of Atatürk's work, and what they viewed as the rise of pro-Islamic policies promoted by the AKP government. By toasting to Erdogan, they were fiercely opposing the AKP's alcohol ban to illustrate their conviction that the government should not be allowed to control alcohol consumption. However, more so they were demonstrating their support of the separation of religion and state put in place by Atatürk. Although the ban does not prevent anyone from drinking alcohol, these protestors interpreted the alcohol ban as a not too subtle move by AKP to Islamify Turkey. As such, their protest is also demonstrating how they define the Turkish nation, one that progresses towards a modern future by keeping religion and state affairs separate. Through this protest they were standing in solidarity with the protestors and constructing boundaries against the AKP to define themselves as Turks as defined by Atatürk. In this definition of the state, the Turkish citizen is not religiously defined. They do not want to replace their Efes with Ayran nor live in a future Turkey that embraces political Islam. Simultaneously, as will be demonstrated, the Turkish Cypriots are invoking a Turkish Cypriot identity to combat the political and cultural dominance of the island. As will be made clearer throughout this chapter, Erdogan's vision of Turkey's future vis-à-vis its relationship with North Cyprus both differs from the majority of Turkish Cypriots and has tangible effects on the island. Over the years, many Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants living in North Cyprus have been increasingly angered

with Erdoğan's pro-Islamic policies, many of which have had direct consequences for the political landscape of North Cyprus.

Perhaps the most noticeable changes have been the increase in the number of mosques and the enforcement of religious education. According to data provided by Yusuf Suiçmez and gathered by Dayioğlu and Hatay (2014) North Cyprus had a total of 182 mosques in 2009. 84 of these mosques existed before the island's division, but the rest were either converted from Greek Orthodox churches or newly constructed. There were 39 newly constructed mosques, of which 31 were directly financed by the Directorate of Aid Committee of the Turkish Embassy. This is not surprising as most of the cost of infrastructure in North Cyprus is provided for by Turkey. According to research conducted by Dayioğlu and Hatay (2014), although Turkey granted 10,400,000TL (approximately 3,466,000E) to the TRNC to be spent on mosque construction, upkeep and organization of religious courses, the total amount spent by the TRNC was 2,185,207TL (approximately 728,400E). Although only 20% of the funds allocated were used, Turkey continued to send money to the TRNC for religious purposes. While Turkey provided copious amounts of money to the TRNC for religious purposes no money was allocated for the construction of a cemevi, the house of worship for the Alevis, a cultural and religious minority in Cyprus and Turkey (Dayioğlu and Hatay 2014). For many, this expenditure of money gave evidence to a biased agenda on the part of Turkey.

On 20 July 2012 the ground breaking ceremony for the first religious school in the TRNC, Hala Sultan Divinity College, was held. The allocation of 12,000,000TL

(approximately 4,000,000E) by the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey for the construction of the Divinity College was heavily criticized by the Turkish Cypriot population (Bailie 2013, 12; Dayıoğlu and Hatay 2014, 164). One of the main arguments of objection stemmed from the fact that while 12,000,000TL was allocated for the building of one religious school, only 11,000,000TL had been allocated for the maintenance of all state schools in North Cyprus (Bailie 2013, 12). In a joint statement with the Turkish Cypriot Secondary Education Teacher's Union (KTOEOS), the Turkish Cypriot Teachers' Union (KTOS) stated, "It is a reflection of that mentality when only 11 million TL has been set aside for the repair and maintenance of all state schools, and 22 million TL has been allocated for the construction of one mosque. What will destroy the Turkish Cypriots is not the TOMA [riot control vehicle] but the seeds of Sharia [Islamic Law] that will be injected into young brains." (Bailie 2013, 12). The TOMA, an armored riot control vehicle designed by a Turkish company, was under consideration for purchase by the TRNC. However, in this statement it acts as a symbol representing the authoritarian control of Turkey because the TOMA had gained notoriety after its use by Turkish police forces during the Gezi Protests. Sharia Law was mentioned in this statement as a symbol of the building of the divinity school and to represent the practice of political Islam by Turkey (even though Sharia Law is not practiced in Turkey). Either way, it is clear from this statement that KTOS consider Turkey as the 'outsider' creating the destruction of the Turkish Cypriots' way of life.

Although the financial support for the Hala Sultan Divinity College was technically non-governmental funding, many Turkish Cypriots opposed the opening of the Divinity

College because they perceived it as another attempt by the Turkish state, under the control of the AKP government, to “Islamify” North Cyprus. These Turkish Cypriots demanded the college’s closure, arguing that the AKP government was attempting to create a more religious community at the expense of the secular community. To evidence their fears they cited Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Besir Atalay who said, “As we all know, North Cyprus is a place which needs religious education. With this protocol, this need is being fulfilled” (Dayıoğlu and Hatay 2014, 173). While Turkish Cypriots were greatly opposed to the building of the Divinity College, many organizations in North Cyprus, particularly those established by Turkish immigrants, supported the college’s opening (Dayıoğlu and Hatay 2014, 173). However, because it was mainly Turkish immigrants who supported the opening of the college, many Turkish Cypriots saw this as proof that the Turkish Cypriots’ culture was being diminished.

A little over a year after the ground breaking ceremony, on 27 September 2013, the Hala Sultan Divinity College in Haspolat was opened. With the opening of the first religious college in North Cyprus and the construction of two more mosques⁴⁸, the question about the “Islamification” of the TRNC had become a renewed topic of discussion. This discussion was further exacerbated by the optional (although often cited by Turkish Cypriots as compulsory) Koran courses that had been implemented in primary schools across the country and other religious courses that were implemented for the first time in

⁴⁸ Two groundbreaking ceremonies occurred during the opening of the Hala Sultan Divinity College. One groundbreaking ceremony was for the mosque at the educational complex housing Hala Sultan Divinity College and the other groundbreaking ceremony was for the mosque being constructed on the campus of Near East University (NEU). The NEU mosque, inspired by Ottoman architecture, will be the largest mosque in Cyprus allowing 10,000 to worship at the same time (Bailie, B., 2013).

higher education institutions in 2013. The debate about the “Islamification” of the island was positioned as a debate to define Turkish Cypriot identity. In many cases, Turkish Cypriots define themselves as distinct from the “people of eastern Turkey” who they see as being more religious and having a “different culture”. Many Turkish Cypriots blamed the Turkish immigrants, specifically immigrants from eastern Turkey, for the changes in the landscape, particularly the increase in the number of mosques because they are the ones who attend mosque more regularly and are supporters of the implementation of religious courses in public education. In this way, Turkish immigrants from ‘the east’ have come to represent Turkey’s ‘Islamification’ of the island. As a result, Turkish Cypriots ‘other’ Turkish immigrants from ‘the east’, and in doing so align themselves with ‘western’ Turks. Simultaneously, Turkish Cypriots sympathize with Turkish immigrants from ‘the west’ as many of them also opposed the increased construction of mosques on the island and see themselves differently from Turkish immigrants from ‘the east’. As such, both Turkish immigrants from the ‘west’ and Turkish Cypriots embrace Kemalist values. This self-identification with ‘western’ Turks suggests that this political contestation is one that is both about Turkish Cypriot identity (and political sovereignty) as well as about definitions of Turkishness (inspired by a Kemalist legacy). In other words, the debate presents a paradoxical identification with transnational Kemalism and aspiration for TRNC sovereignty.

5.3.3 Defenders of Kemalism

In addition to the protests against the alcohol ban on Dereboyu, TRNC protesters vented their frustration with AKP through anti-Erdoğan demonstrations and burned

images of Erdoğan. One of the burned posters had an image of Erdoğan yelling with a caption that read, “I am not even this much the son of a human” which is a Turkish expression used to imply that the person is like an animal because the things they do no human would do to another human being. Protesters chanted “Eat my dick, Tayyip,” which was appropriated from the Beşiktaş football chant usually used against the rival football team Fenerbahçe but re-composed to target Prime Minister Erdoğan. To further show their anger against Erdoğan, they had many pro-Atatürk posters and sang pro-Atatürk chants. They held banners that said “We are Soldiers of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk” and “How happy I am to be a Turk,” a well-known saying by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk engraved on the Beşparmak mountainside. Turkish immigrants sang nationalist songs such as the “10 Year March” (10. Yıl Marşı). In 1933, this song was composed for Turkey’s 10 year anniversary as a Republic. The song is still sung at national holidays and events such as graduation and wedding ceremonies. The song is more frequently sung by those who are pro-Republic or pro-Kemalist and as such has become heavily associated with Republicans and Kemalists. In their demonstrations, Turkish Cypriot protesters are invoking Atatürk, the champion of a secular Turkey, in order to confront the pro-Islamic policies of AKP and Prime Minister Erdoğan and the more conservative practices of the Turkish immigrants.

Atatürk and Erdoğan are frequently pitted against one another, as both are representative of two distinct ideas of Turkey. As stated previously, Kemalists dissociate themselves from their Ottoman past, which they see to be uncivilized and ‘backwards,’ and instead look towards Europe for inspiration in the construction of the Turkish nation and the new

‘Turk’. On the contrary, Prime Minister Erdoğan and the AKPs attempt to defy Atatürk’s efforts by embracing its Islamic and Ottoman roots. The AKP seeks to use the Ottoman past as a source of inspiration in the unification of a new Turkey and in the redefining of what it means to be a ‘Turk’. A few months after the Gezi Protest, on the anniversary of Atatürk’s death, many anti-Erdoğan sentiments were again revived. On the anniversary of Atatürk’s death the Turkish people around the world celebrate and commemorate Atatürk’s life. Businesses also run advertisements in newspapers showing their respect for their founding father. In 2012, Koc, which is one of the biggest companies in Turkey, ran an advertisement displaying a portrait of Atatürk with the phrase “Olmasaydın olmazdık,” which translates into “If you didn’t exist, we wouldn’t exist”. The portrait and this phrase were accompanied with Atatürk’s date of birth and death (1881-1938), with the “8” in “1938” shaped as an infinity sign, further emphasizing that he lives on in the Turkish imagination. On the anniversary of Atatürk’s death in 2013, a pro-AKP magazine named Sancaktar paid Yeni Akit, an Islamist Turkish daily newspaper with close ties to AKP, to run an advertisement on the back of their newspaper. This advertisement displayed the dates of Atatürk’s birth and death coupled with a quote derived from the Koç’s advertisement which read, “Olmasayı da olurduk” which translated means, “It doesn’t matter if Atatürk existed, we would still exist and be the same”. Many saw this advertisement, coupled with Erdoğan and AKP’s mixing of religion and politics, as an attempt to downplay and perhaps even erase the legacy of Atatürk and his secular construction of Turkey. This advertisement infuriated many people, both Turkish and Turkish Cypriot. In retaliation, many Turkish and Turkish Cypriots took to the internet and circulated the Sancaktar advertisement replacing the advertisement’s phrase with,

“Olmasaydin süper olurdu” meaning, “It would have been super if Erdoğan had never been born,” and coupled it with Erdoğan’s birth date and the phrase “bekliyoruz işte” (English: “well we are waiting”) for his death date. This had an added impact in that a few years before this advertisement Erdoğan was very ill and near his death. Images of the latter advertisement were posted on many Turkish Cypriot Facebook pages and became a major topic of discussion.

In these acts of protests Turkish Cypriots are invoking Atatürk to legitimize their rejection of Erdoğan. However, these two men are not the subject of this debate, but rather the debate is about Turkish modernity. By embracing Atatürk, Turkish Cypriots are embracing his ideals about the need for the TRNC to be a modern state with a national identity based on secular ideals. In doing so, they are negotiating an identity different from AKP’s construction of a Muslim-Turk. Although they are protesting what they perceive to be Turkey’s instituted non-secular politics, their desire to preserve Kemalist values is an embracing of their Turkish roots and these two negotiations are not seen as contradictory. In this context, through this embrace, Turkish Cypriots negotiate ‘Turkishness’ to project a future founded in Kemalist values whereby they relate to the Turkish immigrants and citizens from the ‘west’.

5.3.4 Berkin Elvan Protests

A 14-year old boy spent several months in a coma after being hit by a tear gas canister during the Gezi Protests. He died on 11 March 2014. His name was Berkin Elvan and he was 15 years old at the time of his death. Those opposing the AKP government and the

brutal tactics of the police portrayed Berkin Elvan as a young boy who got hit on his way to the market to buy bread. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan and his supporters claimed that he was a member of a terrorist organization. In Prime Minister Erdogan's speech on 14 March in Gaziantep celebrating his 12th anniversary of being the longest serving Prime Minister he characterized Berkin Elvan as, "...a kid with steel marbles in his pockets, with a slingshot in his hand, his face covered with a scarf" (BBC 2014b). His death sparked anti-government protests in Turkey and the TRNC similar to the Gezi Protests by those who held the government responsible for Berkin Elvan's untimely death.

Protesters shouted "Berkin's murderers are the AKP police" and the boy's mother said, "It's not God who took my son away but Prime Minister Erdoğan" (BBC News 2014a). On March 11th, in solidarity with the protesters in Turkey, the people in the TRNC took to the streets of Dereboyu to protest the AKP government. The protest was organized by Communal Democracy Party (Toplumcu Demokrasi Partisi, TDP) youth group, CTP Youth, New Cyprus Party (Yeni Kıbrıs Partisi, YKP) youth group, Baraka, Devrimci Komünist Birlik (Revolutionary Communist Union), Pir Sultan Abdal Association, and the Poseidon Culture Centre. University students from EMU and METU North Cyprus Campus also participated. A crowd gathered at Kuğulu Park and walked towards Dereboyu holding posters with Berkin's picture and chanted slogans in protest of his death. The chants were showing their support for the protesters in Turkey and protesting against Tayyip Erdoğan. Slogans like, "Shoulder to shoulder against fascism", "Cyprus don't sleep, defend Berkin", "Berkin Elvan is immortal", and "Murderer Tayyip Erdoğan" were chanted during the demonstration. The demonstration's last stop was the

Turkish Embassy. Echoing Berkin's mother, the protesters shouted, "God didn't take Berkin away, Tayyip took him away". The protesters called for AKP and Tayyip Erdoğan to be held accountable and further stated, "...with the death of Berkin we are not only saying goodbye to a young boy but also to justice, democracy and independence one more time". Turkish Cypriots stood by their fellow Turks with this announcement: "Whoever killed him should know that we are all Berkin Elvan. We brought these loaves of bread, but we are not eating them as Berkin could not eat them either. We invite these killers to give account in front of justice. We believe that the Turkish public will ask AKP to be held accountable...we salute resisting groups on the streets since the beginning of Gezi protests. We are giving shoulder to the Turkish people. Your pain is our pain" (Afrika 2014, 3a).

For Turkish protesters in Turkey, the purpose of the demonstrations after Berkin Elvan's death and at Gezi was to move Turkey in the direction of Kemalist ideals of modernization. They sought to rid themselves of what they regarded as an oppressive central government in which the voice of the people was being stilled. According to the Kemalist values they support, the idea that North Cyprus is a part of Turkey is not contested. Atatürk regarded the Turkish Cypriots living in Cyprus as the Turks of Cyprus. How Turkish Cypriots are affected by Turkey's influence over North Cyprus is not an issue for Turkish citizens. The only issue to some Turkish citizens is the cost to the people of Turkey to maintain the TRNC. To them, the loss of the territory of North Cyprus is acceptable if solving the "Cyprus Problem" allows them entry into the European Union (EU). However, it should be noted that the desire to enter the EU by the

Turkish public is in decline (Erdenir 2014, 105). According to the 2014 Eurobarometer Report, Turkish public support for joining the EU is low, with only 38% of the Turkish public believing that EU membership is “a good thing” for Turkey (European Commission 2014, 83-84). For those in Turkey supportive of the AKP government, Cyprus is also seen as a part of Turkey, but in a different way. The AKP sees Cyprus as part of the old Ottoman Empire and reimagines Turkish Cypriots as Turkish Muslim Brothers. In both the narrative of the Gezi protester and the AKP supporter, Cyprus is a part of Turkey.

When the Turkish Cypriots protested on Dereboyu against the death of Berkin Elvan and in support of the Gezi protests, it was similarly a protest against AKP’s promotion of political Islam and the resultant non-secular conception of Turkish ‘modernity’ held by the AKP, as well as Turkey’s political and cultural dominance over the island. For the Turkish Cypriots, the current political leadership of Turkey does not represent their ideals of modernization or even include the possibility for a Cypriot narrative. Therefore, when the Turkish Cypriots were protesting in solidarity with the Gezi protesters and the protesters after the death of Berkin Elvan, they were doing so from their own vantage point, negotiating their own construction of ‘Turkishness’. Their concept of what it means to be Turkish in North Cyprus differs from the concept the Gezi protesters have for them. They stand together in support of the idea of removing AKP from power, and both invoke Atatürk, but in doing so they negotiate different understandings of ‘Turkishness’.

5.3.5 Dereboyu and Protest

Anthropologists and social scientists such as Low (1996), de Certeau (1984) and Mitchell (1988) examine the relationship between public space and social change. Through different examples they illustrate how although the construction of public spaces can increase the power of the state, the public users of the space also possess a power through their ability to contest the meaning and use of such spaces through collective and individual actions. The places where these protests were held, in both Turkey and the TRNC, were not inactive backdrops to the demonstrations but were active performers that played an important role throughout the protests.

In the context of the political protests in Gezi, research has shown the important way in which protesters situated the debate in the physical space of Taksim Square in Istanbul (Gül, Dee and Cünük 2014). With the square first being constructed as part of Ataturk's vision for a modern Turkey, to today's use of Taksim Square as the center of business and location to some of the popular bars, Taksim Square has a long history of association with secularism. As such, Taksim Square is socially constructed as a place that is representative of these ideals. In addition to the socially constructed ideas about Taksim, the physical attributes of Taksim Square were also important in the Gezi protests. The protests in Turkey were originally sparked by a desire to protect one of the last green spaces in an expanding city and to prevent the secular space of Taksim Square from being transformed into an Ottoman style shopping mall. The forceful attempts to remove the peaceful protesters quickly became a metonym for the larger political issues at hand, that being the AKP government's enforcement of its Ottoman values despite all protests.

It also highlighted the importance of the physical space because although the AKP government is well known for their urban building projects they have yet to claim any square of central importance to display their own vision and identity (Gül, Dee and Cünük 2014).

Through their demonstrations, the diverse group of Gezi protesters contested how the state was to construct Taksim's public space. As Gezi protesters wanted to protect their secular square and their secular country, so too did the Turkish Cypriot protesters. Turkish Cypriots, Turkish immigrants, and students stood in solidarity with the Gezi protesters by occupying Dereboyu in Lefkoşa to demonstrate just what kind of democratic rule they envisioned. Dereboyu was also used in the protests following the death of Berkin Elvan. It was chosen as the location for the protest in part because the TRNC National Assembly and the Turkish Embassy were located on this street, providing an audience for their protest. As stated in Section 5.2, Dereboyu is a place where Turkish Cypriots project their modern ideals for the future. Marching down this socially imagined space of Dereboyu is symbolic of their opposition to AKP's alternate ideas of modernity. Because of the location of the Turkish Embassy and the TRNC National Assembly on Dereboyu, there are numerous authorized protests occurring weekly. However, while there are many official, organized protests, there are also more organic informal "protests" that occur through the practices of everyday living by the people on Dereboyu. These informal protests situate Dereboyu as a place where they can live out their secular values as well as protest against the Turkish government's rule on

the island. Through an analysis of a rock and roll bar on Dereboyu and the music played within, the following section will provide further insight into these informal protests.

5.4 Anayasa Rock Bar

5.4.1 Kahve or Gahve?

The owner of the bar below my apartment hands me his business card. At first glance, the card appears to be a normal business card, with a pronounced logo in the center of the card and the contact details in fine print located on the bottom. The logo for the bar is a large “A”, which is purposefully constructed to mimic the anarchist symbol, but also acts as a monogram for the bar’s name, Anayasa Rock Bar. My eyes scan to the bottom of the card and the first words are the street name—Osman Pasa Cadessi. The next words read, “Guglahane Garşısı”. I pause, confused because I had never seen these words before. After a minute, I realize what he has done and chuckle.

The owner of the bar is known around the island for his far left views. He has amassed over 5,000 followers on both his Facebook and Twitter accounts, where he frequently comments on the politics and daily events in Turkey, TRNC, and Cyprus. He also publishes an online satirical newspaper (The Mandira Times) that parodies real news stories, again focusing primarily on issues regarding Turkey, TRNC, and Cyprus. During my conversations with him he frequently expressed that he is proud to be a Cypriot—using the word “Kibrisli,” rather than the term “Kibrisli Turk” found in textbooks. He further expressed his pride by claiming, “There are Cypriots who speak Greek and there

are Cypriots who speak Turkish. I am a Cypriot who speaks Turkish. I am not a Turkish Cypriot.” The Turkish Cypriot accent is very distinct, with one distinction being that they frequently pronounce the letter “K” as the letter “G”. However, it is not only the accent but Turkish Cypriots also have their own dialect, using words influenced from Greek and phrasing their questions differently. Turkish people often make fun of Turkish Cypriots for their accent and what they see as an improper adaptation of the Turkish language, commenting that they are ruining the pure, proper Turkish language. Their comments highlight one way in which Turkish culture demeans Turkish Cypriot culture by emphasizing that Turkish, as spoken in Turkey, is the norm.

Mahmut claims the Turkish Cypriot accent and dialect as a source of pride and emphasizes this “Cypriot” part of himself often. While the Turkish Cypriot dialect is different, the written language follows standard Turkish rules. However, at Anayasa Rock Bar, Mahmut will frequently write words that are supposed to be spelled with a “K,” with a “G”. Prominent amongst these words is the Turkish word for coffee, “kahve”. Mahmut will frequently write “gahve” out of pride in the Turkish Cypriot dialect, thereby adding a visible space for the Turkish Cypriot dialect in the written landscape. So on the business card, the words “Guglahane Garşısı” are his way of writing the Turkish words “Kuglahane Karşısı”, which means “Across from the Puppet House”. The “Puppet House” the card refers to is the Turkish Cypriot Parliament (KKTC Cumhuriyet Meclisi), which is indeed located directly across the road from Anayasa Rock Bar. By using the “G” instead of the “K”, Mahmut emphasizes his Cypriotness and through the description

of the Turkish Cypriot Parliament he stresses the political conundrum of the island and implies that the Turkish Cypriot Parliament is only a tool of Turkey.

5.4.2 Mixed Media Protest

The satirical business card is only a prelude to the bar itself, which is a political microcosm of the divided capital within which the bar is situated. A large pirate flag hovers over the bar, referencing the local inhabitants' use of "korsan" ("pirate") as a nickname for the TRNC and alludes to the political illegality of the TRNC. The bar is located on the corner of Osman Pasa Street and Servet Somuncuoglu Street. One side of the bar borders a side street and the other side borders a hamburger diner. At the divide between the hamburger diner and the bar, there is a large chain fence with barbed wire at the top. This fence is part of the bar's decor, with intent to mimic the border between North and South Cyprus. Keeping with the theme, the fence is also lined with the same "no trespassing" signs one would encounter along the divide. Mahmut added some additional signs such as a board showcasing the photocopies of his multiple ID cards—a citizen of North Cyprus, the Republic of Cyprus, and the European Union, which like the pirate flag allude to the illegitimacy and "fakeness" of the state.

This fence also serves a practical purpose, as it serves as a shelf to hold the bar's liquor during the months this outdoor portion of the bar is open. A bartender, wearing a shirt with a rude comical inscription as his uniform will take a bottle off this fence and place it on the long green marble top bar to pour into glasses. The green marble was purposefully chosen in order to reference the Green Line that divides Cyprus in two. The customers sit

at tables and chairs sponsored by Efes Beer which also bear the same green cushion. In the middle of the outdoor bar is a tall tree that instead of being cut down has been incorporated into the bar's construction. The tree trunk has a decorative rope around it and at the top is a clapper board that satirically depicts 20 July as a rape scene directed by "Uncle Sam" with the cameraman being "Kenan Evren" (See Figure 7).⁴⁹ The movie is titled "Mandira," (English "barnyard"), a metaphor used to describe the political state of North Cyprus, as well as the name given to the online newspaper Mahmut runs—*The Mandira Times*. The bar is full of irony in every direction you turn. Although Mahmut is proudly Cypriot, through his comedy he sheds light on what he sees as a real tragedy for the people of his country not to have a nation. In his own words he speaks against the claim that there are national borders in Cyprus, "What borders? It's a very small island and there is only one Cyprus." He continues to express the conundrum that although Cyprus is one, in the current division of the island, he has no place to call home. "I have no place to go. But the population that comes from Turkey, they can go home. If they want to go home, they can. But where am I going to go?"

⁴⁹ Kenan Evren led the 1980 military coup in Turkey and was the President of Turkey at the time of the 20 July Turkish Operation in North Cyprus.



Figure 7: Clapperboard Décor at Anayasa Rock Bar

Mahmut opened Anayasa Rock Bar because he enjoyed listening to rock music and he liked what the music stood for, "Rock is a revolution music". The genre of rock music is commonly associated with protest and anti-government sentiments. Although Anayasa Rock Bar is unique in theme, the use of rock music to protest in North Cyprus is hardly so. The use of rock music to protest against Turkey and against the divided nature of the island is a very common trend on the island. As will be shown, the rebellious significance of rock music is its multiplicity in protest.

5.4.3 Protest and Rock n' Roll in North Cyprus

“Deep Purple is coming to town!” was the phrase most heard in North Cyprus after Near East University (NEU) announced that they had secured the band to come and help celebrate their 25th anniversary. At first Turkish Cypriots could hardly believe that Deep Purple was coming to play because previous singers and athletes who had tried to come to the island had backed out at the last minute due to pressures from Greek Cypriot lobbyists. The most notable instance of this was in 2010, when the international pop-singer Jennifer Lopez had accepted an offer to perform for the opening of Cratos Premium Hotel in North Cyprus but backed out at the last minute due to the pressure of the Greek Cypriot Lobbyists, who stated that if she performed in North Cyprus she would be supporting a country that has committed numerous human rights abuses. Deep Purple, however, defended their performance on the island claiming that they were not “choosing a side” and that they were merely playing music for their fans.

Regardless of their intentions, the decision to perform was interpreted as a political statement by Greek and Turkish Cypriots and caused much controversy. However, the TRNC government and the Turkish Cypriots interpreted the decision to perform in different ways. The TRNC government saw the concert as a way to further their peace negotiations, seeing it as a confidence building measure. After a two years hiatus in peace-negotiations, TRNC President Eroğlu and ROC President Anastasiades resumed peace talks. President Eroğlu extended an invitation to President Anastasiades to attend the concert and received no response. Turkish Cypriots, however, interpreted the rock musicians’ presence on the island as a rebellious act. Rock music is rebellious and for the

Turkish Cypriots it was a particularly proud moment of legitimization when Deep Purple ‘rebelled’ and flew a direct route from London to the TRNC Ercan airport to land in their country instead of the Larnaca or Paphos airport in the ROC. The Greek Cypriot foreign ministry launched an investigation into whether the plane that landed in Ercan airport was operated by British Airways (BA) since a plane flying directly from London would be considered illegal. BA responded to these accusations, stating that it was a charter plane operated by SunAir not BA. NEU claimed that the ROC government had sent an Ottoman Turkish title deed to Deep Purple to convince them not to play in lands stolen from Greek Cypriots (LGC News 2014). The newspaper Haber Kibris said, NEU should “Answer to Greek Cypriots with an Ottoman style slap” (LGC News 2014). An Ottoman slap is an action known by Turkish and Turkish Cypriots as a large open-palmed hand slap to the face that when delivered to an enemy it could crack a skull. Despite the ROC Government’s attempts to cancel the concert, Deep Purple played an admission free concert in the TRNC to around 35,000 people.

Assistant Professor and NEU director of the board of trustees, İrfan Günsel said in a newspaper interview, “Rock is not only a music style, but a lifestyle. Rock is such a music that rises up against the status quo, [it's] a rebellion against the established order. Rock music is the reflection of freedom and honor. ... It is an awakening, a power that lays the word ‘impossible’ aside with the power of notes and guitar,” (Today’s Zaman, 26 March 2014). The portrayal of rock music as the music of rebellion is widely accepted across the world. In North Cyprus, the presence of a rock concert by Deep Purple represented a protest against the world which does not recognize the legitimacy of their

country. While many Turkish Cypriots want the peace negotiations to be successful, they feel that success is impossible. In this context, they not only took pleasure in a world famous music group playing rebellious music and boldly landing directly at Ercan airport to give the Turkish Cypriots a rock concert, but they celebrated it as a protest against those who do not recognize the legitimacy of the TNRC.

Like Deep Purple, Şebnem Ferah's concert was also attended by thousands of people. Şebnem Ferah is a famous female Turkish rock singer, songwriter, and guitarist. Her original performance in North Cyprus was delayed for a few days due to national mourning over those who lost their lives in the SOMA mining accident in Turkey. As Turkish musicians frequently play on the island, her concert, unlike Deep Purple's, was not seen as a protest concert. However, she sympathized with the leftist movement in Turkey throughout her performance. The crowd showed their approval of her sympathies with screaming and loud applause. During her song "Eski" ["Old"] in her performance's repertoire she said, "Until today, we have discussed things that have made us separate. I would like to talk about the things that connect us." The large projector screens on either side of the stage then filled with a portrait of Halide Edip, the Turkish novelist, nationalist, and social advocate during the Turkish War for independence who promoted Atatürk's ideals for the nation. The people in the audience applauded and cheered. The image dissolved and another image appeared, that being the face of Ayhan Işık, a prominent Turkish director and actor during the 1950s and 60s. Again the people cheered, whistled, and clapped their hands feverishly. The images of famous Turkish singers, actors, musicians, authors, artists, and poets were shown over the course of the

next 10 minutes. Many of those who were portrayed were famous Turkish nationalists or leftist singers, songwriters, authors, poets, and artists, who used their art form to show flaws in the state and fought for creating a better present and future Turkey. At the end of the slideshow was a quotation by Atatürk that read, “A nation which is without art has one of its veins (‘lifeblood’) broken.” [“Sanatsız kalan bir milletin hayat damarlarından biri kopmuştur”]. This quotation implies that a nation that cannot express itself freely through art is a broken nation. Contextualizing this quotation within recent events makes it resonate even more powerfully with the audience, because after the Gezi protests AKP threatened many artists if they spoke out against AKP.

Şebnem Ferah has used this slideshow at her concerts for a few years in order to pay tribute to famous artists of Turkey. However, her concert is not the only one to show a slideshow in conjunction with a musical performance. The use of slideshows to showcase famous leftist Turkish artists, authors, and singers was also employed at the November 2013 concert of Volkan Konak in Kyrenia at the Merit Hotel. Volkan Konak is a renowned Turkish folk singer who became popular in the 1990s and is well-known for his views against AKP. Most notably, after the death of Ali Korkmaz, a casualty of the Taksim protests, Volkan Konak paid him tribute by playing “Mağusa Limani” [Famagusta Port]. Traditionally, the lyrics of this song were about a Turkish Cypriot who died at the hands of British soldiers in Cyprus. Since Volkan’s performance, the lyrics also have become associated with the death of Ali Korkmaz. In both Volkan’s and Ferah’s performances the slideshow accompanied by the musical performance was a way to celebrate and honor artists of Turkey. Occurring after the Gezi protests, the slideshows

in these performances were received in a new context as a way to celebrate those artists who spoke up against the Turkish state when it strayed from Atatürk values and to celebrate those who promoted the Kemalist vision of Turkey. The inclusion of Atatürk's quote at the end of the Şebnem Ferah concert further enhanced the idea that these artists, herself included, are using their art as a voice to protest the Turkish state when the state does not represent the people's voice. In Konak's and Ferah's concerts, rock music is used to celebrate a history of leftist politics and those who protest against the state, for what they determine to be the good of the state.

In addition to musicians coming to the island to perform, there are also concerts and musical performances held on the island by Turkish Cypriots. On few occasions, Turkish Cypriots intentionally perform to protest against Turkey's control of Cyprus. For example, an event was held on 14 August 2014 to promote an 'Independent Cyprus'. The pamphlet advertising the event read, "As Turkish Cypriots, we were blamed for not being Turk enough before; and now we are being blamed for not being Muslim enough....When we start raising our voices, they call us 'besleme'⁵⁰...We are under occupation. Are we going to give up? No! We are going to raise the resistance....To make Ayşe and many go home, we are going out onto streets!" (Pamphlet 2014). Arda Gündüz, the same Turkish Cypriot musician that played frequently at Anayasa Rock Bar, performed songs at this event to air his discontent with Turkish domination. While Rock music at the Deep Purple concert created a divide between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, rock music in this context is being used as a tool of protest against Turkey to

⁵⁰ "Besleme" is used as an offensive term to call someone a freeloader or a parasite. In 2011, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan called the Turkish Cypriot people "besleme".

unite North and South Cyprus. Thus, Anayasa Rock Bar is not alone in its use of music to protest Turkey's policies regarding the TRNC but rather rock music is engaged in multiple ways on the island to protest. Unique to Anayasa Rock Bar located on Dereboyu is the repetitive, frequent nature with which the "protest" occurs as they play recorded rock music every night, with live rock music twice a week.

5.4.4 Turkish Music Revolution

Almost every Tuesday and Saturday night at Anayasa Rock Bar, the Turkish Cypriot musician Arda Gündüz performed an acoustic concert. He would be seated in the far corner of the outdoor bar with a glass of rakı on another small stool next to him. The patrons of the bar, primarily middle-aged Turkish Cypriots, would reserve a seat in advance or walk-in if there was space available. The cover charge for such an event was 10TL (2GBP). Most of the tables were crowded, with four or five people at each one and all of the tables were covered with different alcoholic beverages, with rakı and Efes beer appearing to be the two most popular choices. As Arda played, people sang along, moved their hands, and swayed their bodies to the melodies. When a song ended they clapped their hands enthusiastically and frequently shouted out suggestions of other songs they wanted to hear played. The set list remained more or less the same for every performance, with varying order to the sequence of the pieces. One of the songs that Arda Gündüz played at each of his performances was the Italian "Ciao Bella Ciao" translated into Turkish. In 1994, Grup Yorum, a political band in Turkey, released a Turkish version of the famous anti-fascist song. The song was a crowd pleaser, with the entire audience singing along with great enthusiasm. The song was attractive for audience members to

sing due to both the repetitive lyrics and the association of the song to the political situation of Cyprus. Given the song's content (see below), it was sometimes jokingly referred to as the “real national anthem of Cyprus”.

“See, one morning when I awakened / Ciao bella, ciao bella, ciao bella / Ciao, ciao, ciao / I found my homeland's hands tied up / Everywhere was under invasion / I found my homeland's hands tied up / Everywhere was under invasion”⁵¹

Most of the songs played in these sessions were written by famous Turkish artists of the 60s, 70s, and 80s. For example, the song list at every performance included songs such as, “Mağusa Limanı” (English: “Mağusa Harbor”), “Söyle” (English: “Tell”), and “Dağlara Gel” (English: “Come to the Mountains”). Turkish music was radically changing during this era. Turkish rock music was heavily influenced by the coinciding rock movement in North America and Western Europe. During this time, Turkish rock musicians such as Erkin Koray, Cem Karaca, Barış Manço, and Moğollar created a new music genre referred to as Anadolu Rock (Anatolian Rock). Anadolu Rock is a fusion of modern rock and Anatolian folk music made possible because of the Kemalist music reforms, which opened the doors for new inspirational sounds with the promotion of

⁵¹ Turkish: “İşte bir sabah uyandığımda / Çav bella, çav bella, çav bella / Çav, çav, çav / Elleri bağlanmış bulduğum yurdumun / Her yanı işgal altında / Elleri bağlanmış bulduğum yurdumun / Her yanı işgal altında”

European classical music (Karahasanoğlu and Skoog 2009, 53).⁵² Anatolian melodies and instruments such as the bağlama (also known as saz; a long necked 7-stringed instrument) and ney (reed-pipe) were synthesized with the sounds of the electric guitars, bass, and drums (Karahasanoğlu and Skoog 2009). Anadolu Rock artists were known for their left-leaning lyrics, with songs such as “Bindik Bir Alamete Gidiyoruz Kiyamete” (“This is not a good sign”) and “Durduramayacaklar Halkın Coşkun Akan Selini” (“They will not stop the flood of people’s enthusiasm”). Around the same time there was another musical genre developing known as Özgün Müzik (Original Music). These artists, such as Ahmet Kaya, Zülfü Livaneli, and Grup Yorum also wrote political lyrics, but were less influenced by European music and were more inspired by Anatolian folk traditions (Karahasanoğlu and Skoog 2009).

Wearing long beards and jeans, the musicians of both of these movements also inspired a new visual style that was seen as a threat to the moral values of Turkish society (Hecker 2012). As internal violence in Turkey grew the government suspected many of the Turkish rock musicians including Cem Karaca and Zülfü Livaneli of treason, portraying them as people who were writing songs to start a revolution (Hecker 2012). The 1980 military coup disapproved of anyone with leftist or socialist agendas and suppressed such

⁵² Kemalist reforms to achieve modernity included the modernization of Turkish music. Inspired by the writings of the political advocate Ziya Gökalp (who argued that the modernization of Turkish music could only be achieved by adopting European music standards), reforms were passed to shut down Ottoman music institutions open up new music institutions modeled on European conservatories in their stead. The new sounds and instruments from these institutions provided inspiration for the creation of new musical genres in Turkey (Has 2014; Hecker 2012; Karahasanoğlu and Skoog 2009).

groups. As a result, Turkish rock music was banned with many artists and musicians arrested, while others exiled themselves from the country.

At Anayasa Rock Bar, these songs are still played and engender powerful feelings from those coming to listen. Many of the older patrons feel a strong sense of nostalgia for this music because it was the music of their youth and simultaneously they also relate the songs and emotion in the songs to the political and cultural context of the island. While the sounds and lyrics are certainly important, the effect of the music within the social setting depends less on the meaning of the lyrics and the musical ingenuity of the songs and more on the social and political context and relationship within which it is embedded (Has 2014, 369). In North Cyprus, the economic dependence on Turkey has led to high tensions on both sides, with Turkish Cypriots feeling as though their legitimate claims are being dismissed and Turkish people feeling that Turkish Cypriots are ungrateful for their help. The military bases on the island, the building of casinos, and other exploitations of the land have provided a strong metonym for many Turkish Cypriots who feel that they are only being used, rather than just protected. These tensions have played out along the lines of cultural differences between Turkey and North Cyprus, exacerbated by AKP's promotion of Islamic Tourism and Islamic education on the island leading many in Cyprus to fear an Islamic transformation of the island.

While these patrons desire to separate themselves from the narrative of a shared future with Turkey and become independent, they are using the same protest songs created by Turkish citizens to fight against what they believed to be an oppressive regime. As was

the same for the Gezi Protests and the Berkin Elvan protests, they want a more autonomous TRNC or for some even an independent Cyprus, yet they are fighting in the context of their desire for a more Kemalist Turkish government. Turkish Cypriots are invoking the secular spirit of Turkey that these musicians fought for in order to combat the Turkish political and cultural dominance of the island.

While these songs that were played at the Anayasa Rock Bar on Tuesday and Saturday night clearly created a common leftist bond among the listeners, the intention behind playing them was entertainment. It was a way to spend one's evening. These same songs, however, were also played at Anayasa Rock Bar for particular themed political nights. As mentioned in Chapter 3, Anayasa Rock Bar held a live music night on the 19th of July that would last through to the 20th of July, the anniversary of the Cyprus "Peace Operation". This event, as previously described (p. 124), was advertised as a parallel event (Sa-fak nobeti) to the Dawn Vigil (Şafak Nöbeti) celebrations on Troop Landing Beach. In the context of this "Dawn Vigil" celebration, the songs take on a more powerful political meaning. The same bar is still open, Arda is still singing the same songs, people are still drinking the same drinks and singing along, but the occasion of the date transformed this space into a place where they are actually voicing their opinions against the Turkish domination of the island through music thereby creating a revolutionary soundscape.

5.4.5 “Evine dön Ayşe” [“Return Home, Ayşe”]

Not all songs played at Anayasa Rock Bar are Turkish songs from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. American and British rock music from the 1980s is played as well, including Eric Clapton, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Queen. There are also songs that are composed by Turkish Cypriots that specifically harken to their leftist values. Towards the end of almost any given night, to include the event on 19-20 July, patrons will inevitably request the locally written song, “Evine dön Ayşe” (“Return home, Ayşe”) to be played. This politically-charged Turkish Cypriot song uses the melody from the 1968 British song “Those were the days my friend”, with lyrics changed to highlight the unwanted presence of Turkey on the island.

“Your black money is in casinos / You established meat bazaar (sex trade) in night clubs / You exploited me with your companies / Are you not ashamed at all, Ayşe?! / Holiday is over / Return Home Ayşe”.⁵³

The song is a play on the codename, “Ayşe may go on holiday” (Ayşe Tatil Çıksın), for the 1974 Turkish Army operation in Cyprus which gave the consent for the Turkish military to land on Cyprus. In the song, with the repetitive chorus, “Return Home Ayse” (Evine dön Ayşe), the people singing it are clearly expressing their longing to see an end to the Turkish military occupation and Turkish presence on the island; they shout for Turkey to leave North Cyprus. The song’s criticism of the exploitation of the land and people of North Cyprus (i.e., Turkey’s establishment of casinos and nightclubs) provides

⁵³ Turkish: “Kara paran kumarhanelerde / Et pazarı kurdun kulüplerde / Beni sömürürken şirketinle / Hiç mi utanmadın Ayşe?! / Tatil bitti / Evine dön Ayşe”

an outlet for North Cypriot's frustration regarding the relationship between Turkey and North Cyprus. There were also nights where they would change the last chorus of the song to sing, "Return home, Tayyip" instead of, "Return Home, Ayse!", thereby directing the song specifically against Prime Minister Erdoğan and the specific present-day issues the AKP government has brought to the island. Here they do not agree with the AKP policies reshaping North Cyprus, but unlike the protestors on Dereboyu who invoked Atatürk, these bar patrons are not. Instead they are invoking a past Cypriot event—the invasion of the island by Turkey—to protest against AKP. Through the act of singing this protest song they are agreeing with the international perspective that Turkey invaded their island and are negotiating a distinct 'Cypriot' national identity.

With the decoration of the bar, the live music being played bi-weekly, and the patrons in attendance, the bar and the everyday activities going on at the bar acts as a continuous protest situated directly across from the political powers (the National Assembly and the Turkish Embassy) whose policies they oppose. The presence of the bar directly across from the National Assembly and the Turkish Embassy heightens the message of these protests. The bar and its patrons informal protest against Turkish domination of the island both produces and is contextualized by the 'secular' and 'modern' constructed social space of Dereboyu. In this way, the playing and singing along to this music by Turkish Cypriots is an everyday practice that protests against Turkey and rejects notions of 'Turkishness' in place of 'Cypriotness'. These negotiations of Turkishness through protest highlights the ways in which they negotiate Turkishness differently depending on the different contexts. Turkish Cypriots are not shifting between Turkish nationalism and

Cypriot nationalism, but rather these everyday negotiations of ‘Turkishness’ by Turkish Cypriots produce a distinct Turkish Cypriot demotic nationalism from ‘below’.

Chapter 6

Gambling in North Cyprus

“Gambling can be allowed in particular places and only to foreign [yabanci]⁵⁴ people” – Bet Houses, Casinos and Preventing Gambling Law

“There is no obstacle you can put in front in which you can make people stop gambling. They can play ‘Okey’ [domino game], they can play backgammon and let’s say the police come while you are gambling, you could easily pretend that you are paying for the bill. Forbidden is always sweet.” – Turkish Cypriot Citizen

6.1 Introduction

Arriving at Ercan Airport on Friday night, the only airport in North Cyprus, visitors might think they had mistakenly landed in the American city of Las Vegas. Greeting arriving passengers at the arrivals gate is a bevy of beautifully dressed women holding up signs, enticing new arrivals to go to the casino that each one is representing. Tourists, primarily from Turkey, fly in from all over the world to test their skills and luck in these casinos. While peak gambling times fall on prominent Turkish holidays, there are many tourists who frequent North Cyprus every weekend—taking a Friday night flight in and a Sunday afternoon flight home. Many of these weekend gamblers are high rollers and as such have taxis provided by casinos waiting for them at the airport. Casino operators in many parts of the world have learned that it is profitable for the casino to pay wholly or in part for transportation, food, and lodging for these high rollers, or “big fish” (Turkish: “büyük balık”), as they are often referred to in North Cyprus. This practice is known as “comping” and is common in the upper tier of gambling establishments all over the world. Home to more than 30 casinos and 50 nightclubs, the small island of North Cyprus has garnered an image for many tourists as a Turkish Las Vegas.

⁵⁴ In this law ‘yabancı’ means non - TRNC citizens. ‘Yabancı’ does not include TRNC citizens who reside in the TRNC with double citizenships or residents of TRNC-origin with foreign citizenships.

In 1975, shortly after the Turkish invasion of the island, legislation was passed legalizing casino gambling on the island. However, it was not until Turkey banned casinos within its national boundaries in 1998 that the number of casinos in the TRNC increased significantly. The ban was initially imposed by the Welfare government on 5 June 1997, just before they were forced out of power by the Turkish military for having an Islamic agenda (Scott 2001, 53). President Demirel vetoed the ban, but the succeeding ANAP-led government overrode the veto after allegations that the casinos were being used by organized crime (Scott 2001, 53). This law, officially published 10 August 1997, gave casinos six months to close and at midnight 11 February 1998, all Turkish casinos ceased to operate within the established boundaries of Turkey (Scott 2001, 53). Turkish Cypriot leadership embraced the prospects of legalizing casino gambling, justifying it as a way for their country to earn money (Scott and Asikoglu 2001, 53). Initially thought of as only one of many touristic endeavors, it has since become a mainstay of TRNC tourism, contributing \$600 million to the local economy annually according to Ayhan Sarıcıçek, head of the National Casino Association (LGC News 2013). Others not involved in the gambling sector dispute that amount and their opinions will be discussed in the following pages. In the past few years alone the numbers of casinos have increased significantly with many new casinos being built yearly and multiple licenses waiting for approval. While tourists are encouraged and allowed to partake in casino gambling, Turkish Cypriots and all students are banned from gambling in casinos. In practice, however, this ban does little to prevent either group from gambling in these establishments and gambling is widely practiced among both Turkish Cypriots and students studying in the TRNC.

The multiplying number of casinos on the island and its effect on Turkish Cypriot society is a topic on which Turkish Cypriots hold strong opinions. Although some Turkish Cypriots speak of the positive impact the influx of cash has on the economy, the majority decry the low rate of taxation of casinos and the mishandling of what monies are received by the TRNC government. Many more Turkish Cypriots lament the presence of so many casinos due to their perceived impact on the culture of North Cyprus, referring to high divorce rates, an increase in prostitution, and government corruption. However, many of the Turkish Cypriots who complain about the imposition of casinos on their island still enjoy gambling within them. Despite these criticisms about casino gambling, these Turkish Cypriots do not construe gambling in other locations (such as homes, betting offices, and cafes) as having the same negative effects on their culture. For example, one Turkish Cypriot commented, “I don’t think the betting places affect the culture here, they’re found in almost every country in the world...Casinos are the worst...at the end, it [sports betting] is about sports, it’s not that bad.” From these opinions arise debates about whether or not casino tourism and gambling should be promoted on the island. As will be argued, on the one hand casino gambling is not at odds with a Turkish Cypriot secular lifestyle, but on the other hand it is seen as morally corrupting the Cypriot way of life and acts as another way in which Turkey is taking advantage of the island and thus should not be supported. This chapter will argue that the debates surrounding casinos are not just debates about casino gambling, but are also debates about the ways in which Turkish Cypriots view themselves as a society and where they see themselves headed as a country.

Cohen argues that, “The consciousness of community is...encapsulated in the perception of its boundaries, boundaries which are themselves largely constituted by people in interaction” (Cohen 1985, 14). In this case, gambling in North Cyprus, I argue, is one activity in which these boundaries are being constructed. The act of gambling in North Cyprus constructs a range of boundaries depending on the context and the audience. From outside casinos, Turkish Cypriots, through stories about casino gambling and opinions on casino tourism, reject Turkey as an outside oppressor and exclude people from Turkey as ‘Other’. From within the casinos, these boundaries fluctuate and shift as Turkish Cypriots engage with the activity of casino gambling and buy into the modern spectacle that casinos have to offer. To make this argument, this chapter will demonstrate how the debates about gambling are reflected in the practices of gambling by critically examining the different spaces of gambling and the practices conducted in those spaces. This chapter will conclude that the practice and experience of gambling within casinos reflects and reproduces another way in which boundaries of Turkishness are constructed, reconstructed, and negotiated.

This chapter will be divided into two sections. The first section (Section 6.2) highlights the political contexts surrounding casinos that are emphasized by Turkish Cypriots in order to illustrate how casinos act as a symbol emblematic of Turkey’s exploitation of the island. This section will examine the activities taking place within casinos in order to illustrate how boundaries of Turkishness are re-negotiated. The second section (Section 6.3) will highlight that the casino is also contextualized within the politics of island

unification. Within this context the casino is a representation of reunification between North Cyprus and South Cyprus. Within this context, construe the act of gambling as a boundary towards Turkishness. It is important to note that these shifting and contradictory boundaries are not consciously discerned by the Turkish Cypriots as such and therefore these contradictory boundaries serve to highlight the malleable ways in which national identity is negotiated depending on the context. Thus, through an examination of the negotiation of these boundaries, this chapter will illustrate the ways in which Turkish Cypriots articulate their demotic nationalism through the practices of gambling and through the discourses regarding casinos and casino tourism.

6.2 Casino Tourism and Gambling Culture in North Cyprus

This section will begin with an account of the growth of casinos in the TRNC and demonstrate the ways in which Turkish Cypriots perceive this growth as harmful to the fabric of Turkish Cypriot society. Section 6.2.1 will examine the debates surrounding casino tourism and argue that they are not merely debates about gambling, but also debates about notions of ‘modernity’ and how Turkish Cypriots imagine the future of their country. In the context of these debates, Turkish Cypriots oppose casino tourism as they interpret casinos to be incompatible with the Cypriot way of life and see them as symbols of Turkey’s exploitation of the island. As such they negotiate boundaries of Turkishness whereby they see themselves as distinct from Turkish citizens.

Section 6.2.2 will argue that although Turkish Cypriots complain about casino tourism and casinos, gambling itself is an integral part of Turkish Cypriot culture. Through an

examination of an array of different types of non-casino gambling practices performed in everyday life, this section will argue that although these practices of gambling are ‘traditional’ as argued by Scott (2013), it does not mean that they are ‘unmodern’. In fact, this section will highlight how Turkish Cypriots view small-stakes gambling as in part compatible with a Turkish Cypriot, secular lifestyle.

This section (6.2) will conclude by turning the discussion towards an analysis of gambling practices within the casino. Section 6.2.3 will highlight that although Turkish Cypriots denounce casino tourism, many actively gamble within the casinos. Within the milieu of the casino, Turkish Cypriots (re)negotiate boundaries of Turkishness through the practice of gambling. Within this context, this section will argue that Turkish Cypriots perform their national ethos by gambling against Turkish bettors on equal footing.

6.2.1 Casino Tourism and Turkey’s Footprint in North Cyprus

Before examining the activities taking place within the casino, it is important to consider the varied external contexts that Turkish Cypriots construct around casinos and casino tourism. These contexts are shaped largely by the political status of the TRNC and the debates that arise from the various understandings of the relationship of the TRNC with Turkey. Casinos were first introduced to the island after Turkey’s military intervention in 1974. In 1975, legislation permitting the licensing of casinos for betting and gambling was passed as a way to encourage tourist investment and attract foreign currency into the TRNC economy. However, it was not until 1998 when the Turkish government banned

casino gambling within Turkey that the industry in the TRNC started to flourish. Scott's research into casino tourism in North Cyprus shows that after 1997 the number of casinos on the island more than quadrupled to over 20, with license applications pending for more (Scott 2003, 267). Today the casino industry is one of North Cyprus' most successful endeavors with more than 30 legal casinos in operation and many more in the process of being built and opened.

The growing casino industry has successfully attracted a new crop of tourists to the island (Scott 2001). However, critics of casino tourism voiced concern that the revenue brought in by casino tourists was not cycling back into the TRNC economy. While these Turkish Cypriot critics freely admitted that casinos did indeed attract more tourists to the island, they reacted negatively to the suggestion that these tourists explored the island and spent money in the local economy. Most tourists coming to play in the casinos do not in fact leave the casino resorts and instead only spend their money within those establishments. In these cases, the money brought and spent by the tourist is funneled back to the foreign investor and not into the local economy. As stated by one Turkish Cypriot, "What is a tourist? A tourist is a person who comes to your country and leaves money in your country. These people are coming to the casino, staying there, and leaving all of their money to the casino. This doesn't leave any money to our country. Those owners are not from here and they take their [the tourist's] money to their own country". For this reason, unlike other gambling spaces (such as the home, sports betting offices, and cafes), casinos are associated with foreign investors economically taking advantage of the island.

Scott and Asikoglu's (2001) research into the relationship between casino tourism and conventional tourism in North Cyprus reveals that at first glance casino tourists do spend little time outside of the casinos (Scott and Asikoglu 2001, 59). They suggest, however, that further analysis is needed to see if this is because this lack of spending outside the casino is characteristic of casino tourists in general or because most casino tourists were repeat visitors to the island and as such their overall expenditure on non-gambling related activities decreased with each visit (Scott and Asikoglu 2001, 59). If the latter proves to be true then spending habits of repeat casino tourist are not altogether different from other repeat conventional tourists. However, in the context of the research for this dissertation what is more pertinent is not the motivation behind casino tourist's expenditure or lack thereof, but how the Turkish Cypriot population perceives these actions. The perception that their island is being exploited by Turkey (and to a lesser extent Israel and Russia) is construed by Turkish Cypriots as yet another way in which Turkey has secured its foothold in order to continue to take advantage of North Cyprus. As stated by one Turkish Cypriot, "... casinos are dependent to [sic] Turkey...that's why all of the money goes to them and this is not good at all.... If the money didn't go to Turkey, if it stayed here, our island would have been strong". Turkish Cypriots critical of casino tourism view casinos not as a part of North Cyprus, but rather as separate entities capitalizing on North Cyprus and imported to the island by Turkey.

Although casinos profit significantly, the TRNC government also receives certain tax benefits from the casinos. Turkish Cypriot opinion is divided between those who see this income as an example of how casino tourism is good for the island and those who argue

that the island is not enjoying the benefits of the monies received because the government is mishandling this tax income. One Turkish Cypriot expressed a sentiment shared by many, “The government is not managing the casino tax money well. In this country, whoever gets into power promises many things...but you will never see them keeping their promises. None of the presidents or prime ministers have kept their promises on this island”. Other Turkish Cypriots have taken these comments further by accusing the government of using the casinos to launder money. “People maybe think that casinos have positive effects on the economy... That it is good economically. They employ people. Or the amount that is earned from gambling is spent here. No, not at all actually. Money laundering is in process”. Whether or not the government is mishandling funds or laundering money is not part of this research. Instead, what is interesting to note is that many Turkish Cypriots believe their government to be corrupt and have little faith in the TRNC leadership. As discussed in Chapter 4, Turkish Cypriots continually scrutinize their government and believe it to be mishandling funds. In the context of casino tourism, Turkish Cypriots blame Turkey for offshoring their casino industry to the island, but in doing so Turkish Cypriots do not forget or excuse the active role the TRNC government plays in regulating the legal environment so that the casino industry can thrive. The TRNC government has the authority to license an entity to conduct gambling on its premises, conduct oversight of that entity, and collect and disburse tax income received. The TRNC’s involvement in the proliferation of casinos on the island is one of the many associations Turkish Cypriots engage with while constructing and negotiating the various meanings of the casino.

Given the small size of the country, the growing number of casinos on the island has left a large footprint, altering the physical environment to a degree such as to engender conflict with the Turkish Cypriots affected. The increasing development of new luxury hotels, resorts, and casinos changed the coastlines and beaches of the TRNC. These assets are primarily held by foreign investors, but Turkish Cypriots also invest in and own some of these properties. Regardless, Turkish Cypriots citizens primarily associate casino ownership with foreign financiers, particularly those from Turkey. In the construction of these casinos Turkish Cypriots witnessed foreign investors claiming spaces on the island, including popular beaches heretofore public. Building these establishments created conflict with the local communities with both citizens and their local government officials displaying anger at the increase in casinos. The anger stemmed not just from the fact that they were institutes of gambling, but also because the resorts denied access to what were believed to be beaches for public use, not just for tourists.

For example, the development of *Merit Crystal Cove* and Kervansaray's *Merit Luxury Hotel and Casino* along the Girne coastline enraged Yücel Atakara, the Mayor of Alsancak, who spoke out against the development of new luxury hotels and casinos for this very reason. He was adamant that the Mare Monte beach in Alsancak belonged to the municipality: "All beaches should be open to the public. This is not just about Mare Monte. The constitution is quite clear. Alsancak should have its own public beach..." (Cyprus Today, June 21 2014). The particular hotel and casino in discussion belonged to the Turkish owned Merit Hotel. With more than a billion dollars invested in its development across the island it is one of the TRNC's largest hotel chains. While

discussions to this point have been focused on the Turkish government's influence over the affairs of the island, this situation illustrates one of the ways in which Turkish business interests were also attempting to control what the Turkish Cypriots could and could not do. This is tantamount to business interests having the power of imminent domain over the citizen's private and shared properties. This physical change in the landscape altered by the presence of the casinos on the island is seen as a tangible manifestation reflecting the ways in which some Turkish Cypriots believe that Turkey has exploited their island. As stated earlier in Chapter 5, the lyrics in the Turkish Cypriot song "Evine Don Ayse", speak specifically to their disgust over the presence of foreign casinos on the island. As reflected in this ballad, Turkish Cypriots consider the deleterious effects of casinos to be evidence of Turkey's invasion and occupation of the island.

The growth of the casino industry on the island not only has had a transformative effect on the physical environment but also has affected the imaginary landscape of North Cyprus. Turkish Cypriots have contended that the proliferation of casinos is both damaging to the favorable image of local businesses, as well as harmful to the fabric of Turkish Cypriot society. The first contention is supported by the fact that many tourists view North Cyprus as a place where behavior thought to be "immoral" in neighboring countries is accepted conduct in the TRNC. The Koran denounces gambling as both immoral and sinful, describing it as a vice that turns one away from devotion to God (Surah al-Baqarah 2:219; Surah Ma'idah 5:90-5:91). Thus, North Cyprus, dotted with nightclubs [strip clubs], multiple luxury hotels, and casinos appears from the outsider's

perspective to not only welcome but encourage tourists to indulge in gluttonous and promiscuous behavior. The ‘immoral’ landscape of North Cyprus is highlighted by the fact that these places are hidden and taboo in Turkey’s landscape. In North Cyprus, however, these ‘immoral’ establishments are both advertised and displayed in plain sight from one’s first step into the Ercan airport. The casinos and nightclubs are not hidden, but instead stand proud garnering the passerby’s attention. “Lipstick Nightclub” one building shouts from the side of the main highway with bright lights and two neon-lit lips framing the name. The Ottoman architecture of the establishment suggests a modern day harem lit with multicolored lights. Although prostitution is illegal in the TRNC, it is well known that many of these nightclubs act as purveyors of the sex trade.⁵⁵ The sheer number of casinos and nightclubs found on such a tiny island, coupled with their blatant advertising and easy access, factor greatly in the island’s image abroad.

To support the fears that casinos are impacting the moral fabric of Turkish Cypriot society, Turkish Cypriots tell stories and anecdotes about friends or family members who have divorced over debts accrued or have been financially ruined due to casino gambling. Together these stories and anecdotes fabricate a mythology that Turkish Cypriots use to navigate and understand casino gambling. Through her research on casino tourism in North Cyprus Scott (2003) has recounted and analyzed both local stories of casino

⁵⁵ There have been several human rights organizations condemning the human trafficking through these nightclubs in the TRNC. According to the 2016 ‘Trafficking In Persons’ Report by the US Department of State, “Nightclubs provide a significant source of revenue for the Turkish Cypriot administration; media reports estimated nightclub owners pay between 20 and 30 million Turkish lira (7 – 10 million USD) in taxes annually. This presents a conflict of interest and a deterrent to increased political will to combat trafficking” (US Department of State 2016, 151).

gambling and traditional gambling. In her analysis, she compares and contrasts these stories to argue that their message can be interpreted to reflect that the modern casinos originating outside the island are replacing the traditional Cypriot village way of living with a “modern commercial nexus” (Scott 2003, 271). Scott makes the argument that non-casino gambling spaces are “traditional”; while I agree that these spaces are embodied with a sense of historical past, I would argue that “traditional” does not mean “un-modern”. In fact, as will be argued below, these “traditional” gambling spaces embody Turkish Cypriot notions of modernity, as they are spaces where they can indulge in a secular Cypriot activity. For this reason, Turkish Cypriots do not see casinos as replacing the Cypriot way of life because they are ‘modern’, but in fact they embrace the “modernity” exhibited and embodied in the casino. Instead, Turkish Cypriots see casinos as replacing the Cypriot way of life because they view the casinos as a symbolic manifestation of Turkey’s exploitation of the island.

Scott (2003) further illustrates contradictions found within both casino gambling and traditional gambling stories. On the one hand these stories highlighted pride in risk-taking and rebellion, but on the other hand these stories produced a feeling of shame in anti-family and anti-social behaviors (Scott 2003, 271). Scott (2003) argues that these contradictions illustrate the confirmation and transformation of gender norms in different gambling spaces. I agree with her findings regarding the relationship between gender ideology and casino stories, and I would like to further extend her argument to show how these contradictions illustrate a Turkish Cypriot understanding of gambling as a secular activity. In stories relating to casino gambling addicts, metaphors of illness were often

used; gambling was often referred to by Turkish Cypriots as a “sickness,” or “disease”. This metaphor extended to the realm of the physical casinos as well. An elderly Turkish Cypriot man explained to me, “Casinos, if they are poison for Turkey, for this small country the poison is much more dangerous. I want them [the casinos] to go back. To anywhere, but not here.” Gambling, both inside and outside the casino is a way to partake in a secular activity, but gambling in the casinos is seen as having the potential to overindulge in secular activities and therefore gives way to sickness. Casinos are then not only considered to be a way in which Turkey is exploiting North Cyprus economically, but they are also viewed as Turkey’s exportation of moral problems to North Cyprus.

The physical landscape of numerous casinos as mediated by this imagined landscape produces debates within Turkish Cypriot society about notions of modernity, specifically debates about what moral codes of behavior are acceptable within a modern Turkish Cypriot society. As stated above, most Turkish Cypriots attribute fault to the casinos (that were exported to TRNC by Turkey) for negatively impacting Turkish Cypriot culture by enabling and encouraging immoral behavior. For these Turkish Cypriots, the cure to this immoral behavior is to not over-indulge in this secular practice. On the other hand, the Islamic religious leaders in North Cyprus, as well as some of the more religiously conservative members of their congregations (both Turkish Cypriots and Turkish immigrants), see casino attendance and the increase in immoral behavior as a result of Turkey having neglected the enforcement of religious education classes immediately after the 1974 “Peace Operation”. These leaders and like-minded congregation members hold that the immoral behaviors are a result of Turkish Cypriots forgetting their Muslim ways

and turning to fill that void with gambling and other unspiritual pursuits. As one Turkish hoca (religious leader) in Nicosia stated,

“...Religious ties were broken off, religious education was not given to people, especially to Turkish Cypriots, after 1974. So they became distant and grew away from religion and at the end they didn’t want to live with the religion.... When the religion is weak, when the Islamic religion is not lived...they fill that gap with gambling, alcohol, prostitutes and drugs...”

This observation further demonstrates that the Turkish hoca does not correlate the immoral behavior of gambling with an increase in casinos. To be clear, this does not mean that the hoca condones the building of more gambling establishments. His emphasis on the lack of religious education in North Cyprus as the root cause for immoral behavior provides a different understanding of morality than those Turkish Cypriots who state only that the immoral behavior is a product of over-indulging and gambling too much in casinos. Additionally, the Turkish hoca believes that only by increasing religious education will the corruption be healed, while other Turkish Cypriots believe removing the casinos will heal the corruption. For the Turkish hoca and the devout members of his congregation any gambling is seen as immoral and behavior typical of those who follow a more secular lifestyle. The less conservative Turkish Cypriots have a more ambivalent relationship with gambling. They believe it is not immoral to gamble per se, but overindulgence leads to chaotic and ruinous lives.

Further, the hoca’s comment highlights a desire by some for Turkey to take a greater role in island affairs, while the latter group believes Turkey has already an excessive influence on island affairs. The hoca sees Turkey as having a positive moral impact on North

Cyprus, while others in this example see Turkey as negatively influencing the island. Religious leaders in North Cyprus and their more dedicated followers are hopeful that with the AKP government in power in Turkey there will be an increase in implementation of religious classes and a return to the pre-1974 days. As one Turkish immigrant congregation member stated, “We can say that Turkey didn’t give enough support with regards to religion. For example Islamic Divinity High Schools were not opened here, even though they were opening up in Turkey...But in the last two years [referring to the role of the AKP] in Cyprus, a Divinity College opened, a Divinity High School opened and even a Divinity Faculty opened within Near East University...” His focus is not on Turkey’s exploitation of North Cyprus, but rather Turkey’s neglect of North Cyprus in not taking greater control of Turkish Cypriot educational affairs. As such, he is praising the current Turkish AKP government for taking a more proactive interest and increasing religious education on the island. These viewpoints are not isolated to the island. One Turkish politician expressed a similar viewpoint. He enraged many Turkish Cypriots when he claimed that North Cyprus had too many loose moral values and had strayed because Turkey did not hold tighter control of the island. He said,

“The Ottoman Empire left the island in 1870, but the Turkish Cypriots did not give up their Muslim faith. Religious men who came from Turkey had a big role in this. But after 1974...the education system changed in Cyprus and religious education was no longer taught...There used to be religious education classes at schools...there was no child that didn’t know the Koran, praying and fasting... The Turkish government letting TRNC be so free has had a big effect in Cyprus becoming so. Turkey shouldn’t let ‘Yavru Vatan’ be this free....” (Kibris Postasi April 30 2013).

For the religious leaders on the island and their followers, the AKP government is seen as having the ability to restore morality to the island by implementing religious education.

However, for a larger majority of Turkish Cypriots, these ideas perpetuated by the AKP government are seen as detrimental to the Turkish Cypriot way of life. They cite the increase of religious education in North Cyprus, the teaching of the Koran in secondary schools, the building of more mosques, and centers of Islamic theology education as further proof that Turkey's rescue of the island has become invasion and domination and has created a new political reality in North Cyprus. The formation of this new political reality gives rise to a new intensity in the defense of secularism by Turkish Cypriots. Supporters of AKP in North Cyprus see Turkish citizens as their Muslim brothers (Michael 2014). Those who reject this imagined political body project exhibit their desire to defend secularism by 'othering' those from Turkey.

In attempts to clean up the seedy image of North Cyprus and to open up new sources of revenue to North Cyprus, plans to open "conservative" hotels in the TRNC were supported by the Economy, Tourism, Culture, and Sports Ministry of the TRNC. Due to the success of conservative hotels in Turkey, Turkish businessmen believed that these hotels could also be profitable in North Cyprus. These "conservative" hotels are designed to cater to tourists that do not gamble or drink and adhere to more of the tenets of the Islamic religion. For example, there is no alcohol on the premises and only halal-certified meat is served. Additionally, part of the hotel's beach is reserved as a separate area for women only. This "halal tourism" as it has been dubbed by the tourism industry, is very successful in many parts of the world and works in tandem with cities endeavoring to attract faith tourism. *Cyprus Today* reported that a company spokesman for Bulut Construction said, "We prefer the tag 'conservative' to 'Islamic' because we think the

concept will attract families looking for an environment away from gambling and alcohol" (Canalp 2013). The head of planning at the Economy, Tourism, Culture, and Sports Ministry Turgut Muslu said, "This is a marketing strategy, which would seem to be well-intentioned and in line with current legislation. There is definitely a future for faith tourism here, be it Muslim or Christian. Our reputation in Turkey has been tarnished by gambling. If this is a sustainable project perhaps it would help to clean up the image of the TRNC" (Canalp 2013). The businessman views this as a tactic to increase the number of potential customers, while the government official sees this as an opportunity to improve the image of North Cyprus regarded by many as tarnished by the increase in gambling and vice.

Many Turkish Cypriots, however, are opposed to bringing faith tourism to the island. Sener Elcil, the general secretary of KTOS said, "We are Turkey's back garden and they have already imposed huge casino hotels on us. This proposed investment ['conservative' hotels] is not tourism, it's a way of life" (Canalp 2013). Similarly, Adnan Eraslan, head of the secondary school teachers' union (KTOEOS) said, "This kind of hotel does not suit our culture and I would equally oppose gambling or nudist camps" (Canalp 2013). Sener Elcil and Adnan Eraslan's objections to faith tourism reflect the fears that these attempts at religious tourism will affect the Cypriot way of living. Their comments reveal that it is not the two opposing moral practices at stake, religion and gambling, but rather the Turkish Cypriot way of life. What they fear is that Turkey is imposing its way of living on Turkish Cypriots. They see both casino tourism and faith tourism as something imposed by Turkey and not compatible with Cypriot culture.

The debates amongst Turkish Cypriots about faith tourism and casino tourism are not only debates about what is moral in the present but are also a reflection of those values they foresee in the future of their country. Turgut Muslu's hope that faith tourism will clean up the tarnished image of North Cyprus created by casino tourism ignores any contribution Turkey had in creating that role. He, along with supporters of faith tourism, desire a future North Cyprus that is compatible with Turkish Cypriot modernity as understood by the current AKP government which interpret modernity as more inclusive of an Islamic way of life. Turkish Cypriots who oppose both faith tourism and casino tourism consider these establishments as incompatible with the Cypriot way of life because Turkey imposed them. For these Turkish Cypriots they symbolize Turkey's exploitation of the island and remind them that they have little say over their own future. However, as will be expanded upon, casino gambling is in part compatible with a Cypriot way of life as many Cypriots enjoy spending time in these establishments. The anger against faith tourism and casino tourism more accurately reflects their anger over Turkey's affairs in Cyprus. They do not support a future in which Turkey continues to "pull the strings" and North Cyprus does not have a voice in shaping their own future based on their own values.

6.2.2 Turkish Cypriot Gambling Culture

Before examining casino gambling, it is important to have a background of the gambling culture in North Cyprus. Legal bans prohibiting gambling have had little effect on the long tradition of Turkish Cypriot gambling and various forms have long been common on the island. Scott's (2013) research on gambling highlights cockfighting, bingo, and card playing as being popular forms of gambling during the British colonial rule. Although illegal even under British colonial rule, these forms of gambling thrived and were means of socializing among Cypriots. Today card playing, backgammon, and dominos are some of the most common forms of gambling and are very much a part of everyday life. Scott (2003) argues that card playing is traditionally a social activity performed by single sex groups, pointing to examples of men gambling together in cafes and women gambling together in the home. During my field research I too noted that these single-sex activities were still very common, particularly amongst the older generation of Turkish Cypriots. One elderly Turkish Cypriot woman in her late 70's, and living in Lefkoşa, had bi-weekly card games with her female friends. She set the table and prepared the sweets before her friends arrived, and when they came into the door she offered them coffee or tea. They socialized while playing 'Konken'—a card game similar to Gin Rummy. While playing they would bet very little money, no more than 10TL. She and her husband explained to me that the purpose of the activity was not to win money, but rather to sit and enjoy each other's company. Examining gambling spaces, Julie Scott (2013) illustrates how in the villages of North Cyprus these spaces are sharply segregated by gender with women traditionally gambling in the home and the coffee shop acting as the primary gambling space for men. Although still present, this division noted by Julie Scott was much less

common in urban areas, especially amongst the younger generation. Many of these younger people preferred to participate in mixed-gendered gambling activities within both the home and the café.

My Turkish Cypriot acquaintances, both male and female, frequently went to Dereboyu together to play the domino game, Okey, at a Turkish chain café that had tables available to play the game. Usually the wager involved was that whichever team lost had to pay for everyone's drinks and food. If a team felt that they were winning, they ordered more drinks and sweets for the table to chide the other team on to greater effort. Within the café there were many other mixed gender groups playing Okey, playing card games, as well as just visiting or watching football games on the television. The activity of gambling in this urban environment contrasts greatly with the coffee shop experience as described by Scott. While the village coffee shop she observed was frequented primarily by men, this coffee shop on the bustling street of Dereboyu was filled primarily with young college students and young professionals of both sexes. In both instances, social gambling was practiced as a pastime throughout various settings in North Cyprus and has continued unaffected by the legal restrictions.

As the urban cafes are spaces of mixed-gendered gambling activities, so too are the homes. During my time in Cyprus, particularly the winter months, my Turkish Cypriot acquaintances had Poker nights at each other's houses. Unlike the elderly Turkish Cypriot woman's bi-weekly scheduled card games, these poker nights were unscheduled and varied in frequency. Before going to my first Poker night I was asked if I knew how

to play Poker and Texas Hold'em. I told them that I know the rules, but that I was not very good. In a joking manner, Talat smiled broadly, chuckled and said, "Okay, okay, you can come play with us. No problem." Nefise, Ali, Talat, Hasan, and I arrived at Deniz's house located on top of his family's old restaurant, which had been converted into storage and entertainment space. We were to use the unused restaurant as our gambling space. Everyone brought snacks (pretzels, cheeses, and sweets), alcohol, and a variety of meat to barbecue. A fire was started in the large fireplace and we began to barbecue the meat as others set up the Poker table. The ante for the game was 10TL for which we received chips. Both men and women were playing. Nefise won chips quickly while Hasan lost his ante right away and had to pay another 10TL to buy himself back into the game. Here again was a mix-gender gambling activity, this time taking place within the home. Scott (2003) argues that gambling in North Cyprus is perceived as an activity for men and a problem for women, but in this social setting, not only was the Poker Night mixed-gender, but also the women's participation in the game was not considered improper. Women in the game were seen as just other players of equal status.

Although women were considered players of equal status, the game itself was of low monetary stakes. As such, there was no real monetary consequence for losing the game. The only consequence was the loss of bragging rights to jest with friends. Although defined as "poker night" and established as the reason for gathering, other activities such as grilling the barbecue, gossiping with friends, and having drinks were of equal importance. This, as will be argued below, differs from the casinos where although one can partake in those activities (eating the barbecue, not grilling it), gambling is the

celebrated and central activity. The low monetary stakes, the informal environment, and the gambling opponents friendships' defines his type of gambling as only "money gambling," or to use Geertz's (1973) definition "shallow" gambling. In shallow gambling the players are not highly invested in the outcome of the game and the only thing at stake is money.

As more women arrived, Nefise and the other female players quit the game and went to the couch to chat and gossip, leaving me as the only girl gambling with the guys. Like Scott's analysis of rural villages, towards the end of the evening there was gender segregation. Further, although I was still gambling with men, I was a foreigner and therefore not judged as a Turkish Cypriot woman gambling might be (Scott 2003). Osman was the last to arrive and was very proud to show me the bottle of Zivania that he bought, the only Turkish Cypriot brandy produced in North Cyprus. He sat at the poker table but chose not to gamble. When I asked him why he did not join in he explained to me that he had made a promise to his father not to gamble because gambling is "very bad for you." He told me quietly that he thought his friends gambled too much, particularly in online betting. Although Osman's position was that gambling was "very bad," his presence made it clear that it was important to him to participate in the social activities that surrounded gambling.

As the night continued, the men became bored with the small winnings and decided to just risk lots of chips at once, regardless of whether the cards they held were likely to win. After many lost their chips this way, they ante'd up 10TL more to buy back in, only

to lose all their chips again. This activity seemed to be performed in jest to break the boredom of a long game with little at stake. However, although this activity seemed to be performed in jest to break the boredom of a long game with little at stake, it did mimic high stake games in casinos. This is very different from the traditional village home as described by Scott (2013) wherein minimal money was spent throughout the game without enacting grand gestures. This activity in the urban game seemed to resemble the idea about what those patrons do at the high priced tables in casinos. On the other hand, the simultaneous activity of the small group of friends grilling meat over the fireplace was reminiscent of summertime barbecue traditions (described in Chapter 3). It seemed that this private home gambling experience included aspects of both rural and urban activities in a microcosm.

Once the women left the table, the game resembled a more high stakes casino game. Casino gambling to refer back to Geertz's (1973) analogy contains more "deep play" games in which there is more to stake than just money. In Geertz's (1973) analysis of the Balinese cockfighter, pride was at stake in the betting games and the "deeper" the game the more pride was at stake. In casino gambling, Turkish Cypriots compete with the house (the foreign investor) as well as other foreign gamblers to include Greek Cypriots and Turkish nationals. In these spaces they are all seen as equal players with the same ability to win, which differs from their political relationships wherein the Turkish Cypriots are seen as having less with which to bet and less ability to win. What is at stake is a sense of self-determination. This game, referenced above, played at poker night was not a casino game and therefore a "shallow game", but it more accurately mimicked a

“deep play” game when the women left the table. As such, there are gradients to a “shallow play”. In these more serious “shallow play” games the men were able to show off and indulge in risk-taking and rebellious behavior. They safely mimicked the overindulgence found in casino gaming tables without actually having to face the serious consequences of “deep play” in which a loss reinforces the idea that they are being exploited. They are not betting in a casino, so their losses are not going to the Turkish business owners. Because women were not at the table when the “shallow” game began to mimic a “deep play”, gender norms seemed to be enforced as Julie Scott (2003) noted. As such, it could be argued that “deep play” games are masculine.

In addition to card gambling in homes and cafes, sports betting is also a popular activity in North Cyprus and is considered an acceptable form of gambling in Turkish Cypriot culture. Sports betting offices are widespread and can be found all across the island with a high density of them found in the big cities of Lefkoşa, Mağosa, and Kyrenia. It is not uncommon to see two or three betting offices on the same street and within very close proximity to one another. These offices are not state owned but rather are private holdings, staffed by both men and women. The names of the offices, such as ‘Nicosia Betting’ and ‘StanToto Betting’ are visible in large letters across the outside of the building in order to entice potential customers to come inside. These customers are

predominantly male and a mix of both tourists and locals. Inside these offices a wide variety of sporting games are available to bet on, including virtual sports.⁵⁶

Sports betting permeates everyday life, with bettors on the street who stop to check their phones to keep up with the various games to see if they have won to “less important” football matches playing on the television in the background of people’s conversations on the television so that those who have gambled on the game can keep up with their wins and losses. Unlike gambling in the home or in the café, sports betting at first glance does not appear to be a social activity as it is mediated only between the bettor and the supplier of the coupon. However, it is much more a social activity than at first appearance. Although the observed behavior is a solitary activity of going into the betting offices, placing a bet, and taking a coupon, it is actually intertwined with other social activities as well. As stated in Chapter 5, after the workday many young Turkish Cypriots liked to go to the cafes and bars to watch the soccer games with their friends. Many bettors get their coupons just prior to the game and take it with them to watch the game with their friends. Occasionally, halfway through the game they will leave to change their bet and then return to watch the rest of the game. If someone bets on multiple games and wins them all, they will post their winning coupons on Facebook for their followers to see and take note of their knowledge and luck. Similarly, posting coupons that almost won (e.g., three of the four games they bet on were accurate) is a way to boast pride in your knowledge of football and increase your prestige. While winning coupons increase prestige, losing

⁵⁶ A list of sports to gamble on include: Badminton, Basketball, Cricket, Dog Racing, Formula 1 Racing, Golf, Hockey, Horse Racing, Rapido, Soccer, Tennis, Virtual Badminton, Virtual Basketball, Virtual Dog Racing, Virtual Golf, Virtual Horse Racing, Virtual Hockey, Virtual Soccer, Virtual Tennis.

betting coupons do not decrease your prestige. Like the card games at the ‘traditional’ gatherings mentioned above, there is little at stake in this form of gambling and as such it is another representation of “shallow play” as defined by Geertz (1973).

This section has examined the practices of gambling in everyday spaces. Through an examination of these spaces, this section has articulated the ways in which gambling is both a traditional Turkish Cypriot pastime, as well as a practice that is seen as in part compatible with their modern, secular lifestyle. The next section will examine the practices of gambling within the space of the casino and highlight the contradiction that although Turkish Cypriots articulate their disapproval of casinos and interpret them to be symbols of Turkey’s exploitation of the island, from within the casino Turkish Cypriots themselves buy into the modern spectacle and perform their national ethos by gambling with Turkish bettors as equals.

6.2.3 Casinos and Casino Tourists

Casinos promote themselves as chic, luxury destinations in attempts to attract wealthy customers. After the forced closure of casinos within Turkey, one of the biggest differences within casinos opening in North Cyprus was the changing of the décor as compared to those Turkish casinos. A new emphasis was placed on the importance of the interior appearance. Tourists coming to Cyprus and those who live in Cyprus have been found to prefer the newer casinos. As such many of these new casinos have grand entrances with high ceilings, glass staircases, and large chandeliers in order to entice potential customers. Additionally, they demonstrate their wealth, as well as entice their

customers to stay longer by providing free food, alcohol, and cigarettes for all customers regardless of status. In addition to the modern look and feel of the casinos, the location is also an important factor in constructing it as a chic luxury destination. Although there are many casinos found throughout the island, both on the coast and within the landlocked city Lefkoşa, the wealthier customers are more apt to spend their time at the coastal casinos rather than the ones in the city center. One reason is the exclusiveness of the coastal locations. Many of the wealthier customers do not want to go to a place where “just anyone” can go. Those located in the center of the city are more easily accessed and “just anyone” does go, whereas those on the coast are more exclusive and require the means of transportation to get there. Some of the nicer casinos located in Lefkoşa that have to compete with the coastal casinos in Kyrenia attract wealthier customers by offering private gambling rooms, or desirable amenities and services. Wealthier customers are also more likely to gamble at casinos that have higher table prices whereas many of the more land-locked locations have considerably lower starting table prices.

According to one of the casino workers, tourists from Turkey are treated as ‘very special’ when they come to the casinos. The workers are instructed to hover around them and ensure that they are provided excellent service. They are also told to inquire frequently if they have any other wants or desires. Many of the Turkish tourists who come are invited as “private customers” by the casinos due to their wealth, political importance, or the amount of money they have spent in the casino in the past. The casino provides them with free plane tickets, free hotel accommodations, free taxi service, and free food. In return they expect the customer to gamble only in their establishment. Additionally, if a

famous singer performs at the hotel, the “private customers” are informed ahead of time, sent invitations, and offered free admission. Casinos have fostered a modern and luxurious environment by hosting famous Turkish performers and fashion shows. During holidays, many Turkish families will come to North Cyprus and while the men gamble, the women and children can attend shows, go swimming, dine in the hotel restaurants, enjoy the spas, and participate in other available family entertainment. My informant said that Turkish Cypriots can also receive these special invitations, but very few are extended such invitations unless they are exceptionally wealthy and gamble a lot of money or are very important people whose influence might be useful to the casino.

While the Turkish tourists traveling to North Cyprus to gamble usually acknowledge that gambling is a bad habit, they also believe gambling to be “acceptable behavior” in which to partake in North Cyprus because it is a place where gambling is legally allowed. Whereas sites of gambling are hidden in Turkey, in North Cyprus they are out in the open and therefore one does not need to conceal their behavior. From my interactions and conversations about gambling with these Turkish tourists, gambling is a way to demonstrate your social status without talking about it. It is an external demonstration that you have enough money to spend and lose at the casino, or in other words, a way to show off ones’ social status. I myself was invited on a few occasions as a guest of a wealthy customer, the father of one of my Turkish friends, to sit at the high priced tables. While my informant working in the casino stated that no business deals were negotiated or closed at gambling tables, my host informed me that although he has never made business deals at the table, he has made a few business contacts over the tables. One

frequent Turkish gambler I spoke with said many rich businessmen come to casinos for the sole purpose of making business deals. “For example, they call their friend and say they want to meet up somewhere to talk about business. They say, ‘You know what? Let’s go to Cyprus and talk about this while gambling’. So they come here”. This particular gambler, however, was not very wealthy and did not himself gamble at the high priced tables. Whether his opinion is true or false does not matter, however, because it is precisely these kinds of stories surrounding what happens at these higher price tables that add cachet to ones’ social status.

Although Turkish tourists are an important part of the clientele, they usually come only on the weekends; therefore the most any one Turkish person is likely to come to gamble within a month is four times. However, people living in North Cyprus have the ability to go every day. Contrary to the overwhelming negative opinion about casinos in North Cyprus are the numbers of Turkish Cypriots gambling inside of them. According to one casino staffer I spoke with, more than 50% of the people gambling in casinos at any given time during the week are Turkish Cypriots. This high percentage is even more notable considering that it is illegal for Turkish Cypriots to gamble inside casinos. Everyone, to include the police, is aware that many Turkish Cypriots gamble daily at the casinos. Though illegal, controls in place to enforce this law are not very strict. My informant explained to me that the police usually call before coming and when they walk through the casino, they only “enter through the front door and exit through the back door without even looking around”. It is apparently just for appearances that the police show up at all. My informant did not directly say that the police were bribed, but he implied

that the casinos gave the police money to ignore the fact that there were Turkish Cypriot gamblers at their casinos. As such, although illegal it is apparent that it is a law that is seldom enforced.

Although Turkish Cypriots spoke with disdain about casinos in North Cyprus, seeing them as a tangible manifestation of Turkey's colonization of the island, Turkish Cypriots enjoyed and participated in casino gambling in North Cyprus. When asked why they gamble in casinos, Turkish Cypriots responded that gambling at the casino was fun and that they saw nothing wrong with gambling in casinos on occasion. This common response is further substantiated by mythology constructed by anecdotes and stories whereby the prized qualities of risk-taking and rebellion were engaged in when gambling. Casino gambling was only portrayed negatively if one became addicted or if it negatively affected family life; in these cases casino gambling was described as 'poisonous'. Casino gambling, as I will demonstrate, functions as a metaphor to the Turkish Cypriots' relationship to Turkey through their perception of the secular and over-indulgence. Casino gambling is rendered more toxic than traditional gambling because the stakes are higher and if one spends big, than they lose big. If one overindulges and loses in the casino then mask of modernity portrayed by the spectacle of the casino is stripped away and the visage of Turkey's exploitation of the island is revealed. An occasional and purposeful visit to the casino, however, does not reveal this visage and one is swept up in the spectacle that is offered by the casino. Thus, although casinos from the outside are constructed by Turkish Cypriots as symbols that enable them to construct boundaries against Turkey and against gambling tourists, from inside casinos these boundaries are

momentarily forgotten as they buy into the modern spectacle casinos have to offer, seeing the spaces as fulfilling their notions of a Turkish Cypriot modernity and allowing Turkish gamblers to be considered equals partaking in the same secular activity of gambling.

In order to argue that casinos are modern gambling spaces and that Turkish Cypriots see them as such it is necessary to gain further insight into the practice of casino gambling. Preliminary to this examination, it is first necessary to define those who gamble. Turkish Cypriot casino gamblers can be divided into three types of gamblers: those addicted to gambling, frequent gamblers, and special occasion gamblers. Those addicted to gambling do so as often as possible, daily if they have the resources or credit. Frequent gamblers do so a few times a month and special occasion gamblers only a few times a year, such as on state holidays or on a celebratory night out. I will not be discussing the habits of those addicted to gambling as they will gamble anywhere and anytime and as such their compulsive behavior does not contribute to this discussion. Instead I will focus the following analysis on frequent and special occasion gamblers, both which find little immorality in light gambling in the casino. As stated earlier in this chapter, gambling has long been an acceptable, although not openly celebrated, part of Turkish Cypriot culture. Part of the reason light gambling is not seen as sinful, I would argue, is due to the Turkish Cypriots' less stringent interpretation of the Islamic religion and the dogmatic practices accompanying it. The Koran is explicit in its disapproval of gambling, as many of the more devout Turkish immigrants living in North Cyprus are quick to point out. Turkish Cypriots, however, do not strictly adhere to the dogmatic teachings of the Koran because as stated previously (Chapter 5) it is enough for most Turkish Cypriots to believe they are

Muslim. In this way, gambling is not seen as sinful as it would to a more fundamental practitioner of Islam. Inside the casino it is clear that many mainland Turkish gamblers are either non-religious or are less stringent in their interpretations of the Islamic teachings as compared to more devout Muslims or they would not be there. From outside the casino, Turkish Cypriots use the casino as a symbol of Turkey's exploitation of the island and in doing so separate their identity from that of Turkish citizens. While inside the casino these boundaries are not maintained as everyone is partaking in the same activity.

To elaborate, the casino space is not a projected version of AKP's construction of Turkish modernity, but rather the space is constructed as a more sumptuous version of Turkish Cypriot's own "traditional" gambling spaces. The opulence and contemporariness displayed within the casino transformed it from an external symbol of Turkey's dominance into a modern spectacle that is to be consumed. What specifically makes the casino "modern"? The first feature is the free food, alcohol, and cigarettes provided at house expense, similar to any other modern casino anyplace else in the world. Frequent Turkish Cypriot gamblers generally start gambling after 6pm and will stay varying lengths of time, the latest usually being around 3am or 4am. A large percentage of these frequent gamblers are there primarily to enjoy the free food, drinks, and cigarettes while gambling. They will even sometimes take food and cigarettes to go, although this is frowned upon. As a Turkish saying goes, "Free vinegar is sweeter than honey". My informant gave an example of a Turkish Cypriot man whom he said might think: "If I go to this restaurant I will pay 40TL for food and 30TL for drink, so it will

make around 70TL. So instead why don't I go to casino? I can eat and drink more, and spend that 70TL on gambling. Who knows I might even win more money!" While this provision of free food is not unique to the casinos in North Cyprus, within the political context of the island providing customers with these free amenities was especially well received in light of the "Water Project" happening "outside" the casino. "Outside" the casino, water pipes were being laid to provide water to the TRNC from Turkey. Although this water was much needed, Turkish Cypriots balked at the idea that Turkey will charge them for water as well as maintain control over when and whether or not water flows through the pipeline. However, inside the casino, water, alcohol, cigarettes, and food are flowing freely and without charge.

In addition to enjoying the free cigarettes, food, and drink, the Turkish Cypriots also enjoy the bright and festive atmosphere found within the casinos. In contrast to gambling in the homes or in the cafes there is grand décor and excitement in the air. Special occasion gamblers spend more time getting ready to go to the casinos because for them it is an exceptional activity. The girls beautify themselves and try on different dresses that they want to wear. While they do not go to the hair salon as they might for a wedding, they do put extra time into their hair and makeup. This is different from the preparations taken for gambling nights in the home, at which times they arrive in whatever outfit they happened to be wearing that day. This added preparation also differs from some of the gamblers coming in from Turkey and frequent Turkish gamblers. Although Turkish mainlanders and frequent Turkish gamblers do not always dress up, there are exceptions, for example during the Bayram holidays. While gambling, there is live entertainment,

even a Las Vegas style singing performance by a trio of women in matching dresses. Every hour a slot machine number is called out over a loud speaker and if that is your game number you can spin the wheel to earn extra money. There are also random occasions that add excitement to the gambling casino spaces. For example, my Turkish Cypriot acquaintance Nefise held her wedding on the beautiful grounds of one of these luxury hotel and casino resorts. When the wedding was over, the wedding party entered the casino to gamble. Nefise, as she had always dreamed, gambled in her wedding dress. This is not a common desire by Turkish Cypriot brides by any account, but I would still argue it is a telling one. It was not considered scandalous or wrong. Those present simply accepted what was happening and joined in the wedding festivities, which added to their fun.

While Turkish Cypriot men spend time gambling at every venue within the casino, women typically spend most of their time gambling at the slot machines or mechanical roulette tables. The slot machines and mechanized roulette machines are seen as not as requiring much skill and only require a little money to play. It is well known that it is very difficult and almost impossible to win big money at these slot machines. As such, gambling at these machines is like the mixed-gendered home gambling in that both can be classified as “shallow play” as there is less financial risk. The gaming table is where the “serious” and high stake gambling takes place. While men predominantly populate these tables, there are occasionally women who do gamble at these tables. To understand the deeper meaning of this segregation of types of play, it is necessary to engage with Geertz’s (1973) interpretation of “deep play”. At these gaming tables not only are the

monetary stakes higher, but the social stakes are higher as well. For Turkish Cypriots they are gambling as equals with Turkish tourists; although they are unlikely to state that they feel less equal than Turkish tourists, politically they understand that their island and its people are in part subservient to Turkey's desires. When Turkish Cypriots gamble big money at these tables the more they win, the more they buy into an image of Turkey that resonates with their secular lifestyle. When they lose big money to the house, they are losing money to the foreign invaders in their country. Thus, within this context of casino gambling Turkish Cypriots perform their national ethos and in doing so negotiate and construct a Turkish Cypriot identity.

6.3 Bi-communal casino spaces

While Section 6.2 focused on the practices and discourses of casino gambling to illuminate the different ways in which Turkish Cypriots negotiate boundaries with Turkish citizens and construct a Turkish Cypriot identity, this section will highlight the ways in which casino gambling simultaneously acts as an activity that negotiates a Cypriot identity. To make this argument, Section 6.3.1 will demonstrate how Turkish Cypriots can also interpret casinos as symbols that signify transcendence of the contested political relationship between the TRNC and the RoC. Section 6.3.2 will illustrate how casinos function as bi-communal spaces where both Greek and Turkish Cypriots can come together. In their gambling in bi-communal spaces, Turkish Cypriots see gambling as symbolic of their Cypriot identity and of their difference with mainland Turks.

6.3.1 Casinos and the ROC

In the contested landscape of TRNC casinos are potent signifiers of contested political relationships. They mark boundaries between different communities and the views they have about the history and future of the island. Casinos, to use Cohen's terms, are multivalent symbols (Cohen 1985). Not only do they signify the political tensions between Turkey and North Cyprus, as I will demonstrate in this section they signify transcendence of the contested political relationship between North Cyprus and the Republic of Cyprus. The 23rd of April 2003 was a significant day in Cypriot history when the Ledra Border was opened, allowing Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to cross over to the other side for the first time since 1974. Heralded around the world as an important step towards unification, the opening of the Ledra Border was also economically beneficial as the economies of both sides had the potential to benefit from new customers. Because casinos were banned in the RoC, the Greek Cypriots constituted a new and very important market for casinos in the TRNC. This market increased in number as more checkpoints opened up across the border between the RoC and the TRNC. Scott (2013) states that in 2007 there were over a thousand Greek Cypriots crossing the border every day to gamble in the TRNC casinos and they were spending in the millions. Responding to this new and larger clientele the casinos began to cater specifically to the Greek Cypriots; "...employing Greek-speaking staff, using Greek names (such as Xenon casino), and providing slot machine games based on classical Greek themes, such as Trials of Heraclites, Bellepheron, and the Flight of Pegasus..." (Scott 2013).

The RoC does not condone Greek Cypriots going to gamble in the casinos in North Cyprus as part of the revenue generated supports the unrecognized state of the TRNC. Additionally, as noted by Scott, “Greek Cypriots gambling in the TRNC casinos are engaging with the reality of the ‘pseudo-state’ on a number of practical levels that could be regarded as undermining the official position of the RoC on the Cyprus conflict” (Scott 2013). Political figures in the RoC have responded by advocating the legalization of casinos in the RoC. This they argue would discourage Greek Cypriots from going to the North and prevent the outflow of RoC capital. Greek Cypriot public opinion was mixed, with many understanding the economic benefits but fearful of the effects the casinos would have on the culture of the RoC. While previous administrations have had no success in legalizing casinos in the RoC, the administration under Nicos Anastasiades made significant headway. After coming to power in 2013, Anastasiades asked the tourism organization (CTO) to update a 2007 study into the creation of casinos to help the government to decide what form the casinos would take (Psylides 2014). By the time of my field research, although casinos were not yet legalized in the RoC, the actions were in motion to do so.⁵⁷

Another political issue is that some casinos in the TRNC are built on land that is Greek Cypriot owned territory. Julie Scott (2013) recounts a story about a casino in Nicosia that is frequented by Greek Cypriots, which was built on the site of a former flour factory owned by a leading Greek Cypriot family. Although the land was acquired in agreement

⁵⁷ On 21 July 2015, the parliament in the RoC enacted the “Law to Regulate the Establishment, Operation, Function, Control and Supervision of Casinos and Related Matters of 2015”.

with the Greek Cypriot owners, it was acquired through the Turkish Cypriot Immoveable Property Commission (TCIPC). As Scott argues, by going through the TCIPC the Greek Cypriot owners were going against the “...official Greek Cypriot position that all such property issues can be dealt with only as part of a comprehensive political agreement, thus joining private property matters to the wider issues of territorial and political sovereignty” (Scott 2013; Ilican 2010). The issue is particularly heightened, as the issue of land ownership remains one of the main problems in reaching a political solution to unification.

6.3.2 Iki Toplum Casino [Bi-Communal Casino]

Although the political issue surrounding casinos creates a political divide, it also creates a way in which Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots come together. Pyla is one of four villages located within the UN Buffer Zone and is inhabited by both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Within this village there is a shared activity that unites the people and that activity is gambling. In December 2013, in the remains of an Internet café, Turkish Cypriots working with Greek Cypriots illegally opened a casino, with ten croupiers working there (Afrika 2014). Like casinos in the North, this casino attracts both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Neither the TRNC nor the RoC approve of the casino, but authorities on both sides are restrained from stopping gambling in Pyla due to its special status as a bi-communal village. According to the Turkish Cypriot newspaper Afrika (2014), when Greek Cypriot police visit the casino, the Turkish Cypriot owner tells them it belongs to the Turkish Cypriots and when the Turkish Cypriot police arrive, the owner states that it belongs to the Greek Cypriots. Thereby neither police force has jurisdiction.

According to a recent Greek Cypriot newspaper, Phileleftheros, the opening of casinos is only expected to increase, reaching to a total of eight (Phileleftheros 2015). The Turkish Cypriot newspaper Afrika stated although Cyprus has failed to unify, Cypriots have found a way to create a “United Casino” in Pyla operated by both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, as well as attracting both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots into its establishment (Afrika 2014). These citizens of Cyprus in violation of the laws of both North and South, have in effect created their own mutually agreeable boundary, separated from and established against the wishes of the motherlands. They have constructed themselves a community of Cypriots by insisting on their right to gamble together.

While Pyla is an example of a real bi-communal casino where citizens on both side come together, this situation is not relegated solely to bi-communal territory. In fact, many Turkish Cypriots commonly joke that casinos are the one place where Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots get along. One Turkish Cypriot stated,

“The Greek Cypriots and the Turkish Cypriots make some organizations and they call them, we call them “Iki Toplum” [Two Communities].... [For example] Two Community Chorales, Two Community Theatre...It’s a good thing. Are they succeeding? I believe no. But there is a very successful “Iki Toplum” in casino! Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots are playing together and they are drinking together. ‘Hello my friend! Hello my friend! How are you?’ This is very comedic. This is ironic. Very ironic.”

This particular Turkish Cypriot did not like casinos, believing them to bring “crime, prostitution, and drugs” to the island. He further disapproved about how the money was handled stating, “They bring money from Turkey. They give money to the casino and the

money goes back to Turkey. What about my people? What about the people that work here? How can I take the money?" Here he is making a complaint voiced by many Turkish Cypriots, that casinos are no more than a "back garden" for Turkey's profits and criticize not only Turkey, but also their own government's handling of the situation. Although disapproving of the casino, he admitted that he enjoys going to the casino occasionally to play the slot machines. As reflected by his statement above, it can be seen that they construct the casino space as a bi-communal space where Cypriots partake in the communal activity of gambling. In his statements it becomes clear that more than any governmental institutions or NGOs established with the express purpose of re-uniting Greek and Turkish Cypriots, casinos have successfully attracted a mix of nationals. Although said in jest and self-deprecation about the everyday trials of living in a divided country, I would argue that rather than the political discourses articulated by representatives of the different communities, the practice of gambling has united them; gambling is what they have in common. It is not just a Turkish Cypriot practice, or a Greek Cypriot one, but a "Cypriot" practice. Thus, despite the laws of TRNC forbidding Turkish Cypriots from gambling or the declaration of the RoC that gambling is illegal, many Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots are participating in this shared Cypriot activity and forming a basis for a shared 'Cypriot' identity.

Casinos are constructed by Turkish Cypriots, then, as multivocal symbols—evoking Turkey's exploitation of the TRNC, Turkish modernity, and a reunion of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. Within the casino, gambling is an activity that constructs and negotiates a range of boundaries. While the activity of gambling works to construct and

embrace a Turkish Cypriot identity through the production of a common pastime, it simultaneously acts as an activity that negotiates and engenders the resurgence of 'Cypriotness'.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

This dissertation began by asking how Turkish Cypriots understand their national belonging. The notion of belonging is rendered much more complex in a nation recognized *de jure* only by Turkey. As described in Chapter 2, there are two primary competing nationalisms in the TRNC, Cypriotism and Turkish nationalism. Cypriotism as it manifests in the TRNC supports the concept of the nation as a space of harmony and cohesion between ‘Cypriots’. Within this narrative, national identity is tied completely to the island, rejecting notions of a Turkish motherland. Although Cypriotism is gaining saliency on the island, the competing Turkish nationalism still remains a powerful and active ideology amongst Turkish Cypriots. Turkish nationalist discourse in the TRNC supports the concept that the TRNC is part of a larger Turkish nation. Within this national narrative, national identity is inexorably linked with notions of Turkishness. In this context, Turkish Cypriots imagine themselves as Turks of Cyprus as negotiated by Kemalist values and ‘other’ Greek Cypriots as outsiders.

In Turkey, Turkish nationalism and official notions of Turkish national identity have been renegotiated by the AKP. AKP has shifted away from Kemalist constructions of Turkish nationalism towards a nationalism that embraces both Islamic values and the Ottoman legacy. This reconfiguration of national identity in Turkey by the AKP government has constructed not only new imaginings of citizens in Turkey, but has also effected the imaginings of Turkish Cypriots in North Cyprus. This new reconfiguration attempts to reshape the Turkish Cypriot identity from ‘Turks’ of Cyprus to ‘Muslim Turks’ of Cyprus (Michael 2014). As such, this promoted Turkish national discourse by

the AKP government reshapes Turkish Cypriots' relationship with Turkey has an impact on their understanding of their belonging to the Turkish nation.

Productions of national identity designed by the governments of Turkey and the TRNC were met with ambivalence by the public as revealed in the examination of national commemorations surrounding the 30th anniversary of the 20 July 1974 Turkish 'Peace Operation'. Chapter 3 demonstrates how the TRNC government articulated Turkish nationalist discourse through the production of national spectacle. In addition to examining flag ceremonies, folk dances, performances by the Ottoman Janissary band and dedications to Atatürk, this chapter focuses on the relationship between the military and the production of Turkishness. Turkish Cypriots' dissatisfaction with the continued presence of Turkish troops on the island has significantly increased since the 1974 invasion. Turkish Cypriots' negotiations and constructions of Turkishness reflect the wider political negotiation of the Turkish military presence. More specifically, the Turkish Cypriots' constructions of the Turkish military are one of the ways in which Turkish Cypriots define themselves vis-à-vis Turkey. There is an ambiguity regarding Turkishness and Turkish Cypriots increasingly move towards defining themselves as Cypriots. Thus, one response to the AKP's reconfiguration of Turkishness is that Turkish Cypriots invoke an increased sentiment for Cypriotism and are actively choosing to construct with their own Cypriot identity. In this Cypriot identification they are actively rejecting Turkish rule.

However, Turkish Cypriots also identify with Kemalist definitions of Turkishness to reject Turkish rule by the current AKP government. Chapter 3 examines the relationship between Kemalism and the Turkish military within the unique context of the TRNC. The military in Turkey has long been seen as a protector of Kemalist values in Turkey against both external (foreign countries) and internal threats (e.g., Islamic activism and Kurdish nationalism (Cizre 2004)). However, the rise of the AKP has included efforts to distance the connection between the Turkish military and its role as protector of Kemalism. These efforts have implications for how Turkish Cypriots define their relation to Turkey.

In the context of North Cyprus, the Turkish military was initially celebrated for saving Turkish Cypriots from their persecution by the Greek Cypriots. Turkish Cypriots adopted not only Turkish nationalism, but also understandings of the military as the protector of Kemalism. Through Kemalism, Atatürk sought to modernize Turkey by erasing the Ottoman past, which he perceived as backwards and uncultured and sought instead to rebuild Turkey along a more European model. Bryant (2004) demonstrates that when Turkish Cypriots adopted Turkish nationalism it was with a twist, because unlike Turkey (which only had the intangible past as an enemy), the Turkish Cypriots faced the Greek Cypriots as a tangible enemy. As Bryant (2004) astutely demonstrates it was not a ‘primordial’ enemy in the past, but “...an enemy who works against them, *always in the present*” (Bryant 2004, 233). As such, the arrival of the Turkish military was at first celebrated on the island because the Turkish military protected Turkish Cypriots from the Greek Cypriots and it was believed that they would protect the Turkish Cypriots way of

life. Furthermore, it was believed that the arrival of the Turkish military signaled the arrival of Turkish modernity as seemed to be extant in Turkey.

However, understandings of the continued Turkish military presence on the island have become multifaceted. While the presence of the Turkish military has curtailed the violence of the Greek Cypriots against the Turkish Cypriots, it no longer seems to be able to protect Kemalist values as the AKP government increasingly distances the state from Kemalist values. Today, instead of living in a nation guided by Kemalist values, Turkish Cypriots are *de facto* ruled and protected by an outside government who from their perspective is actively working to erase Atatürk's legacy. Thus, a paradox arises. Although Turkish Cypriots readily adopted Kemalism and bought into the accompanying promises of Turkish modernity, they believe they have been deprived of both their sovereignty and a modern future.

Living in a politically liminal state, Turkish Cypriots have resigned themselves to the fact that this promised future is not going to arrive. Through an examination of a revitalization project in the Walled City, Chapter 4 examines the ways in which Turkish Cypriots articulate their loss and longing of this modern future. This modernity is located in a future beyond their grasp; unattainable because of the failure of the state to live up to its promise to build a modern nation. The loss of this modern future is felt more acutely as such a future is reflected in the alternative present situated in the RoC. This does not imply necessarily that Turkish Cypriots desire a political union with the RoC, but rather

that they see by this evidence the proof of their own government's failure to achieve the modernity that exists in the RoC.

The examination of the national parade as a celebration of the military demonstrates that the Turkish intervention brought promises of establishing a new nation imbued with Kemalist values and sovereignty, but contrary to expectations this sovereignty was never fully realized and Kemalist values are being eroded. Through the examination of the Asmaaltı Project it is clear Turkish Cypriots still long for a modern future, but in their current political liminal state they realize that this future is unattainable. Turkish Cypriots believe themselves to be the true defenders of a Kemalist secular heritage, yet they also understand themselves as fundamentally 'orphaned' by Turkey's inability to develop and authorize the TRNC's project of modernity. As a result, Turkish Cypriots are fundamentally ambiguous about their Turkishness. Turkish Cypriots construct their own demotic nationalism that privileges this ambiguity over state constructions of national identity.

Chapters 5 and 6 continue the examination of how boundaries of Turkishness are negotiated and constructed by Turkish Cypriots. While Chapters 3 and 4 utilize the state constructions of Turkishness as a starting point, Chapters 5 and 6 examine this problem from the grassroots of the citizen's lives to understand how notions of national identity are negotiated. Chapter 5 examines the different ways Turkish Cypriots engage with the street Dereboyu and demonstrate that it is a place where Turkish Cypriots perform their secular heritage. While the Walled City is imagined as dirty and invaded by the backward

effects of Turkey's intrusion (as evidenced by the presence of Turkish soldiers, the decaying ruins, and the presence of Turkish migrants), Dereboyu contrastingly is imagined as a place that embodies their promised modernity. Despite the embargoed status of the TRNC, Dereboyu displays brand name clothing stores, restaurants, bars, and cafes. However, there are still imitation stores such as 'Burger City' (imitating 'Burger King') and an obvious lack of brand name stores, such as Starbucks. This lack of brand name stores is made more frustrating by their full presence in the RoC. In this way Dereboyu, like the Walled City, is also experienced as an unaccomplished modernity.

Dereboyu also acts as a space for Turkish Cypriots to voice their displeasure with the decisions of the state through official and unofficial public protests. Examining two political protests, this chapter demonstrates that although Turkish Cypriot demonstrators stand in solidarity with the Turkish protesters, they negotiate their own understanding of Turkishness. Through the examination of a rock bar on Dereboyu, this chapter demonstrates the multiple ways in which rock music is used for protest in the TRNC. Through an analysis of practices on this street, this chapter illustrates the complex layering of Turkish Cypriots' engagement with this place, and through their different negotiations of Turkishness articulate a distinct demotic nationalism from below.

Chapter 6 illustrates how this demotic nationalism is articulated through an examination of the practices of gambling on the island and the corresponding discourses regarding casinos and casino tourism. While Turkish Cypriots portray casinos as symbols of Turkey's invasion of the island and the exportation of Turkey's moral problems, in

practice they enjoy the casino as a space of spectacular modernity. Within casinos Turkish Cypriots perform their national ethos by playing against Turkish bettors of equal caliber. While casino gambling works to construct and embrace a Turkish Cypriot identity through the production of a common pastime, it simultaneously acts as an activity that negotiates and engenders the resurgence of Cypriotness.

In summary, although the distinction between Turkish nationalism and Cypriotism as promoting a Turkish ethnic identity and Cypriot civic identity adequately highlights the different ways one can engage with the nation, its binary construction renders silent the fluidity of the boundaries of national identity negotiated by Turkish Cypriots in the practices of everyday life. Additionally, this framework further does not allow for understanding the ways in which Turkish Cypriots also assume an ethnic Cypriot identity or a civic Turkish identity. As such examining the construction of national identity in the TRNC using Cohen's (1983) notion of boundary permits a more nuanced understanding of the construction of national identity as it allows for this fluidity.

I will conclude with a conversation I had with a male Turkish Cypriot. In response to my question as to what he perceived to be the biggest problem to be in Cyprus, he responded by saying that it was the fact that North Cyprus was not legal under international law. He further clarified this to mean that he was "living nowhere, living with no identification, living with no passport, living without no nationality". I interjected to ask him why he thought he had none of these things because in a previous conversation he had joked about the plethora of passports he had in his possession to include the RoC, EU, and

TRNC passport. He responded with a string of questions, “Who am I? I am a Turk? I am a Cypriot? I am Greek? Who knows about me? Who cares about me? Who am I? Who are we?”

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