

**IN THE REALM OF HEAT AND WATER: SOCIAL LIVES AND
MATERIALITY AROUND INFRASTRUCTURAL ENVIRONMENT
IN ADANA**

by
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ABSTRACT

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Keywords: infrastructures, urban environment in Adana, environmental justice,
materiality, heat and water

Beginning with the contextualization of a local activity in Adana, namely bathing in the irrigation canals, this thesis has expanded to investigate social relationships and materiality around the infrastructural environment in the domain of heat and water in urban Adana. Tracing agricultural infrastructure's interventions in topographies, this thesis aims first to locate the conditions that make modern Çukurova (the “fertile lands” in commonsense), then unfolds discussions about nature and city by positing infrastructural production of the urban environment. Adopting a materiality-based approach, this thesis proposes a study of infrastructures that does not focus on technical design and function, but on undesigned prolific engagements. Suggesting an infrastructural environment and emphasizing such an urban topography, it notes, on the one hand, both transgressive and tailored acts (e.g., canal-bathing and care work) by focusing on the materiality of forms and relationships; on the other, presents how social lives and materiality around the water environment have both affect-laden and gendered facets. This thesis aims to point out the environmental justice aspect of heat and water in an urban area and to mark the undesigned relationships with infrastructures.

ÖZET

SICAK VE SUYUN DİYARINDA: ADANA'DA ALTYAPISAL ÇEVRE ETRAFINDA SOSYAL HAYATLAR VE MATERYALİTE

FATMA DİDEM OZAN

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Anahtar Kelimeler: altyapı, Adana'da kentsel çevre, çevresel adalet, materyalite, sıcak ve su

Adana'da yerel bir aktivite olan sulama kanallarında yıkanmanın bağlamsallaştırılmasıyla başlayan bu tez, kentsel Adana'da sıcaklığın ve suyun alanında altyapısal çevre etrafındaki sosyal ilişkiler ve materyaliteyi araştırmak üzere genişlemiştir. Tarımsal altyapının topografyalara müdahalesinin izini süren bu tez, öncelikle modern Çukurova'yı, genel kanıda "bereketli toprakları", oluşturan koşulları bağlamına yerleştirmeyi ve kentsel çevrenin altyapısal üretimini öne sürerek doğa ve şehir üzerine tartışmalar açmayı amaçlamaktadır. Materyaliteye dayalı bir yaklaşım benimseyen bu tez, teknik tasarıya ve işleve değil, tasarlanmamış çok katmanlı üretken etkileşimlere odaklanan bir altyapı çalışması önermektedir. Altyapısal çevreyi öne süren ve bu tür bir kentsel topografyayı vurgulayan tez, bir yandan formların ve ilişkilerin materyal yapısına odaklanarak hem sınırları aşan hem de uyarlanmış eylemleri belirtirken (örneğin, kanal banyosu ve bakım emeği gibi) diğer yandan su çevresindeki sosyal yaşamların ve materyalitenin hem duygulanım yüklü hem de toplumsal cinsiyet temelli veçhelerinin olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Bu tez, kentsel alanda sıcak ve suyun çevresel adalet yönünü vurgulamayı ve altyapılarla olan tasarlanmamış ilişkileri işaret etmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

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To those who know and live the heat and water of Çukurova.

"Yakında güneş doğacak. Kıpırmızı, her yanı yalıma kesiveren bir güneş. Toprağa basamayacak, sıcaktan soluk alamayacak, bir fırın içine girmiş gibi kavrulacaktı ama, gene de güneşin doğmasını sabırsızlıkla bekliyordu."

-Yaşar Kemal, Turnalar/Sarı Sıcak

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1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1.1 The zone around the Old Dam (Seyhan Regulator Bridge) and the Seyhan River in Adana, photo by the author



"Gradually, he accustomed the boy to reality. Once he ordered him to place a banner on a distant peak. The following day, the banner flickered from the mountain top. He tried other analogous experiments, each more daring than the last. He understood with certain bitterness that his son was ready—and perhaps impatient—to be born. That night he kissed him for the first time and sent him to the other temple whose debris showed white downstream, through many leagues of inextricable jungle and swamp. But first (so that he would never know he was a phantom, so that he would be thought a man like others) he instilled into him a complete oblivion of his years of apprenticeship."

-The Circular Ruins, Fictions, Jorges Luis Borges

1.1 The Field in Expansion: Wetland, Walks, and the Heat

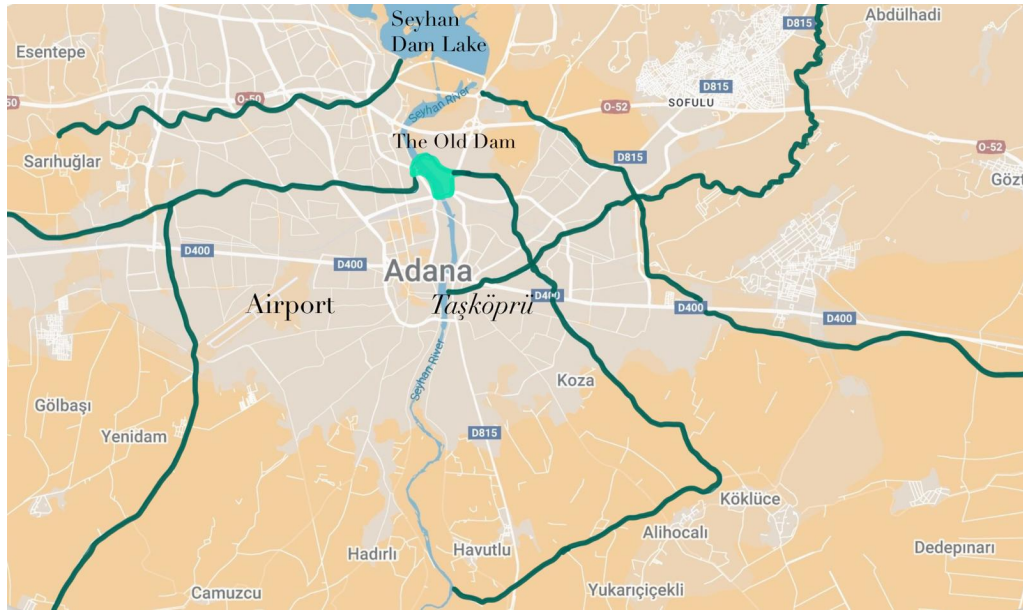
The water level in the river basin along the neighborhood's edge was very low. The wind was blowing steadily. It was evident that it had been doing so for some time. The greenery was able to emerge and grow when the water receded. Some bushes and reed-type plants had yielded to the wind. They seemed to be bending down and stretching, but some did not straighten back up. The river had a basin but no banks. Maybe even the basin was not like a basin anymore. The place looked like a wetland: water in some places, mixed grasses and shrubs in others. In this warm weather, mosquitoes should have been flying all over the landscape due to this level of water.

Instead of a shore, a wall was built on the sides of this part of the river. The banks of the river had become an edge. From my position on the edge, I was inevitably looking at this wetland or river basin from above. Three ducks, two navy blue-headed and one white, wandered around the riverbed. Since they can both walk and swim, it seemed like the perfect place for them. They dipped their heads in and out of the shallow water. Sometimes they just floated in the water. Beer and wine bottles, chip wrappers, napkins, and fruit peels kept the ducks and other birds company in the river basin. When I looked to my right, there, the Seyhan Regulator was standing still. The robust body of the regulator has been dividing the Seyhan River for many years in Adana, the southern part of Turkey. I could not see the source of the water, but I could see seepage. Water was seeping into the river basin like a fugitive because it was the irrigation season, and there was a construction site

for another bridge planned to be built. There was incredible noise, like the sound of construction. I wondered if the Seyhan Regulator was ever silent. The water was not allowed to flow from upstream to the Mediterranean Sea. The irrigation canals were entitled to the river water. However, these canals are not in a state of isolation. They pass through the middle of the city, and for some, throughout their everyday life.

In this thesis, my first infrastructural curiosity began not by following so-called human-made concrete constructions but the Seyhan River instead. I was interested in another topic related to rumors on urban transformation projects in another neighborhood of Adana. I visited a neighborhood located on the banks of the Seyhan River. I saw a confused area with messy plants, bushes, and water in some places. It did not appear to be in a state of active human engagement. Then, I wonder about the relationship between the city dwellers and the river, through which I found myself searching for drowning cases in the irrigation canals. Therefore, before bathing in the irrigation canals in general, I was tracing where the locals were drowning in the city, which I thought first as the focal point of the research. I scanned the news media on the death cases in the canals; then, I marked the neighborhoods on a digital map of the city of Adana. It was not a thorough browsing because I just wanted to have a glimpse instead of doing an analysis of the distribution of death in the canals. I aimed to see if the drowning cases clustered around a similar region and to decide where to begin my research. There was no clustering among the death reports according to the picture I generated. I chose a neighborhood on the map to spare a day for my pilot fieldwork. One of the neighborhoods was almost surrounded by watery places; the Seyhan River was on one side, and a canal path was on the other side.

Figure 1.2 Map of the city of Adana. (Bold lines represent the irrigation canals, further marked by the author. The light-green painted area below the Old Dam represents the location of the field.)



I chose this neighborhood, which I call neighborhood Çıkın, as my field. I believed that the residents of this neighborhood would have different experiences with both the river and the canal, which also resulted from my curiosity about what it was like to live close to an abundance of water within the city.

Figure 1.3 The Satellite view of the field (The lines tentatively show borders and places I walked.)



I visited the field three times. The first one was in November 2023. The second time began at the end of April 2024, which was also the longest one, lasting a month. The last one was at the end of August. I chose one neighborhood on the digital

map, but when I visited the place, I realized that people were talking about three different names. The neighborhood on the opposite side of the canal, Kalkan, used to be part of the Çıkm neighborhood. At the same time, it was called Selvi before it was renamed Kalkan.

Finding the first *muhtar*, the head person of Çıkm, was like a journey in a game. I was highly excited when I got off the bus since it was the first time. Google Maps drew a path for me; however, I did not exactly follow the line on the map. I wanted to wander within the neighborhood. The houses were quite close to the ground. There were no high-rise residences, which contrasted with the buildings on the north side of the city where many relatives inhabit. The walls of the houses were patchy. Even the same wall of a house had different surfaces and colors. I passed through a mosque which was fully covered by green leaves. Later, *muhtar* and his sister said to me that this mosque was previously an Armenian church. I did not expect to encounter a converted church in the neighborhood, although I knew that Adana has been one of the places where Armenians have been living. The neighborhood is not distant from the city center, but it gives a village impression with its low-rise and handmade houses, dusty roads, dispersed trees, messy fronted houses, and uncrowded streets. Some locals described the neighborhood “like an island” both because of the water surrounding it and disconnection from the city in terms of lack of shopping and transportation facilities. Some directly stated its village-like situation by referring to its “without city chaos” and “underdeveloped” features. For example, one of the locals pointed out how there is nothing but small neighborhood groceries.

When I arrived at *muhtar*’s office, as Google Maps showed, I could not find anyone. The place was locked. I continued to walk around until I saw a small grocery store. There was also a coffee house beside. In front of these, there were middle-aged and elderly men sitting outside. I decided to contact an old man reading a newspaper on his own. He told me where I could find him, at his soup place, which was in front of his home, and described the path. I needed to find a plaque on which *çorba* (soup) was written. I found the soup sign located across the canal. Unfortunately, there was no one. Since I knew where *muhtar*’s house was, I tried to find him there. I rang the bell, and nobody opened the door. I decided to ring the bell of the flat downstairs. This time, an old man opened the door. I asked him how I could find *muhtar*. He called *muhtar* via his mobile phone, told me to wait in front of the soup sign, and did not question who I was or why I was looking for *muhtar*. A few minutes later, *muhtar* came on his motorcycle. Finally, I could find him. He invited me to his house’s roof terrace. Later, his sister came by and sat with us. In my second visit, I was hoping to meet people through the first *muhtar*, which did not

happen as I expected. Except for one person, I could not reach the locals through his connection. In fact, he was not a *muhtar* anymore. It felt like starting over again to find *muhtar*. I did not rush into it this time because the first *muhtar*'s sister did not recommend speaking with the newly elected one.

While wandering around the riverside, I passed again by the place like a coffee house. I asked the two men there about him, and exhausted by the heat, I sat down to rest for a while. These two people became significant encounters who contributed to the smoother running of the fieldwork afterwards. I was told by them that the new *muhtar* is a hardworking person who tries to enhance living conditions in the neighborhood. For example, it was said that he carries out the fly spraying very regularly and without any disruptions, and sometimes he even does it himself. Then, I met the second *muhtar*, who was a younger and more outgoing person, through whom I could meet other people.

Wetland, the heat, and walks were highlights of my field experience, which at the same time, expanded the field both thematically and physically. While browsing on the map, the Seyhan River was shown as a blue line, and so were the irrigation canals. I imagined a large body of flowing water would welcome me. However, I encountered a confused zone consisting of patchy land and water. My first reaction was "there is no water here", but then I noticed that the image in my mind dominates the material existence of water in front of me. I contemplated that there was water, but in a different way, which, in the end, made me ask questions beyond canalbathing activity. A moment concerning the perception of the existence of water, interestingly, once again occurred when I visited the first *muhtar*. We went to the canalside, and it was the non-irrigation season. I saw very thin, a small amount of water at the bottom, and said that "There was very little water there", to which he replied, "There is no water right now". For me, while the criterion to acknowledge the existence of water was only to see water in the context of a canal, it did not apply to the river context. It was not enough to see the water to confirm that there was water in the river. I regard this as both a positionality and a categorical distinction issue. As an outsider to the canals, I could recognize the existence of water even with a very small amount of water, while for the local man level of water mattered instead. Similarly, from an operations technician's position, the state of water would not be so different from the current situation, "It can flow a little further, maybe 3-5 meters more.", if there were no construction site. Contrarily, the neighborhood locals articulate it as "still water" or "water that has been cut off", which seems neither a flow of nor so existent water. The discrepancy between the inhabitant and technician perceptions indicates how water's existence is relational. This situation transformed my way of inquiry that instead of an either/ or category of existent

water, the forms of water would be the key phenomenon to examine relationships in the infrastructural watery spaces.

The walks I took were not only about going somewhere to elsewhere. Walking became a methodological engagement with the field since I did not know anybody in the neighborhood who could build links between me and the field. I mapped the field by recurrent walking sessions through which I was trying to meet the locals and get a sense of the environment. It was not easy to initiate conversations while walking on the streets. Since there was no key interlocutor who could introduce me to people, I tried to explain myself and build trust. As a result of this, in the first parts of my fieldwork, many interviews or conversations were not recorded. As I walked along the water, I was tracing the boundaries of the Çıkın neighborhood, which also gave me the feeling of suddenly finding myself far outside the neighborhood and in the center of the city. The place was almost fully uncharted for me. I walked my own way. The routes had some routines, such as each time I visited both the riverside and the canalside. At the same time, as I stepped, I enlarged the field physically and socially. Then, the boundaries of the field were extended more than those of the Çıkın neighborhood. For example, I walked on the regulator bridge and crossed the river, then went down to the riverside. Stewart (2011) conveys that “[Situations]...They can go lateral. They can feel like something you’re in, or sort of, or just something you’re around.” (452). The spatiality of the field unfolded an aroundness regarding materialization of the field that was signaling proximities (for instance, to water) and being without a defined path or conducted tour. My curiosity and the flow of walking allowed me to establish spatial connections around the wetland, the regulator bridge, the riverbed, and the canal side. It cannot be said that I was completely disconnected from a place or that I had no concerns about a place. There were reasons why I chose this neighborhood. What I mean is, without completely losing contact with the ground, the walks flooded the neighborhood and revised the field’s boundaries. The act of walking-around contributed to the spatial and affective constitution of the field. This reminds me of what Ingold (2007) conveys, a description of a sort of line that Paul Klee suggests, that is “active” and “develops freely, and in its own time, ‘goes for a walk’ (73). Toward the end of the fieldwork, the lines I walked, or lines that I enacted to go for a walk, turned from this kind to one that I gathered or conducted “assembly of point-to-point connectors” such as organization of interviews in advance (Ingold 2007, 74-75). At the end, the act of walking-around culminated in an idea or a question that I asked myself: Did I walk around infrastructures or the infrastructural environment, which was produced by intertwining elements, such as water, the regulator bridge, the concrete dam gates, the sound of the regulator, the rocks and birds on the riverbed, the concrete

walls of canals, the lichen, and so on? It seemed to me that I did not locate an inventory of water spaces. Instead, I actively participated in the expansion of the field, which was, at the same time, the materialization of the field for the research by walking around the infrastructurally produced environment. Hence, this embodied experience showed me that the field was in constitution, which differed from the map of the neighborhood that I used to find an address.

The heat was the most familiar thing for me regarding the city of Adana. Many locals described the heat as “no one can know unless they experience it,” and I was among the knowers. The impressive character of the heat expanded my view on the research. During my time in Adana in April 2024, temperatures varied significantly. They rose from 24.8°C on April 22 to 31.4°C on April 23 and reached 35.2°C by April 24. After I left the city on June 6, the temperature climbed to 42.8°C, marking the highest temperature recorded in Adana for the summer of 2024. During my last field visit at the end of August, the temperature was around 35°C. Feeling the heat reminded its unavoidable and bizarre force over the body in terms of the power of acting. I believed I was embarking on research concerning water, but I overlooked the intensity of the heat. Every walk I took in August, beginning from morning until afternoon, left a lasting impression on me. Hence, I began rethinking or remembering the heat as part of the research. Then, I left the neighborhood on a windy day.

1.2 The Case on Theoretical Ground

Mostly lower-income men jump the irrigation canals while water from the Seyhan River is channeled to the canals. They swim, bathe in, jump, or enter the irrigation canals for many reasons, such as to cool off, to be involved in sportive challenges, and to entertain with friends. After talking with the locals about the canals, I realized that the name of the activity is not only mentioned as swimming, which mostly emphasizes bodily movements. Some used *çimmek* (to bathe in the local dialect) to refer to the activity. Jumping and entering the canals are phrases commonly used, which articulate a spatial direction toward these agricultural infrastructures instead of a bodily motion. For the most part, I will use bathing as the wording of the local activity for the sake of being comprehensive, except for the parts where I describe specific situations. Here, to bathe is not to clean oneself unless one wants to get rid of sweaty moments. I, rather, use it in the sense that one spends time within the water. In other words, immersion in canal water can be specified as swimming, jumping into, or entering, according to the way they are in the canal water. Additionally,

the weather condition is a vital component of this activity. In summer, the heat becomes extreme and unendurable in Adana with a felt-air temperature that can reach up to 52°C (around 125° F). Those who can afford to go to the seaside or *yayla* (highland) can also escape disastrous weather effects. While staying in the city center, the rest must find other ways, such as using air conditioners and fans or finding places where they can take shelter from the scorching heat. In this respect, the irrigation canals have become one of the places of refuge.

This was the initial focus of the research, then I noticed the significance of “the complex emergent worlds”, first by encountering the wetland (Stewart 2011, 445). This became not only a study of infrastructures, but an infrastructural topography. Anthropological investigation of infrastructure as a conceptual area is considered to be a relatively recent field of study, although specific technological phenomena such as roads, cars, and dams have been examined (Larkin 2013, 328). Studying infrastructures can illustrate other areas such as governmental actions, social lives, or belief systems by holding contingent circumstances, such as varying forms of technologies (328). As Larkin (2013) remarks as a crucial point, infrastructures do not manifest one thing waiting “out there” to be examined, like in the discourse of so-called “nature out there” (330). The infrastructure’s unending and multiplicity of existence with respect to its network, material world, and entangling features requires a decision to be made on defining the scope and the scale to be studied (330). For instance, the technopolitical approach scrutinizes infrastructures by signifying their relations with the domain of governance and political work.

Timothy Mitchell (2002) conveys that “There were always certain effects that went beyond the calculations, certain forces that exceeded human intention.” (38). He neatly presents how technopolitics is indispensably “a process of manufacture whose ingredients are both human and nonhuman” and a composition of planned and unplanned, which he refers to as the planned as the human world that finds itself overwhelmed by the unplanned nonhuman (43). This research has begun its journey to follow “the beyond calculation”, first to look at drowning cases, then got caught up in much wider lenses. In the case of Adana, the unplanned becomes related to a human activity, for example, bathing in the irrigation canals. This unintended human activity is strongly intertwined with the thermal effect. The heat is notably a part of the infrastructural environment, which puts its force into the act of canalbathing in Adana.

However, phenomenon of drowning does not illustrate a technical failure per se, which I regard, from what Mithcell (2002) discusses, that it may be a situation of human engineering that cannot absorb the nonhuman reaction to the technopolitical product or that simply does not work in accordance with the design, with the

expected way (43). The drowning case does not involve technical mistakes because it is not the case that the infrastructure fails to work according to its expected design. It continues irrigating the fields. Hence, canalbathing (and drowning as one of its trajectories) has an unintended character, in which drowning does not destroy the working of the infrastructure, but disturbs it. In other words, drowning can temporarily interrupt the flow of the designed function in the presence of extreme heat. As I suggest, it becomes more of a deficiency issue, which does not signify mistakes in working, but working unfavorably, being not good enough, in the time of an international credit-seeking world, and of more financially concerned governance. The drowning incidents fuel circulation of deficiency, a moral one, between the state institutions, associations, families of the drowned, and even the drowned person themselves. Recently, drowning incidents in the irrigation infrastructure have become a management issue in addition to a moral deficiency, as the lawsuits on compensation payment in the aftermath of drowning incidents are evaluated in terms of service or contributory defect. While the former falls into institutional wrongdoing, the latter puts the unfavorable act on the affected's side, such as blaming families for not being good caregivers enough. Accordingly, the constitution of the risk of drowning has been affected in the direction that the representation of bathing in the irrigation canals in the news media is portrayed as too risky and canalbathers as distant from the rational act. The forces of heat, preparing conditions for canalbathing were not calculated in terms of social engagements with the infrastructural environment, which notes that the production of the environment is an “unresolvable tension” involving not only human designs (Mitchell 2002, 52).

In addition to the technical function concerning political governance, infrastructures indicate the aesthetic and meaning-related worlds, which render their existence vivid in the subjects' social world (Larkin 2013, 329) The Seyhan Regulator, for instance, is meant for the locals by being a space where people spend their leisure time. The locals of the infrastructure were not the intended subjects. As a result, the investigation of the infrastructures would notably not focus on how those projects function in the agricultural fields, what kind of conflicts and cooperations among irrigation water users take place, or how these infrastructures shape agricultural work, and so on. If this is not about the relationship between the technical design and its nominated subjects, the phenomenon of drowning in the irrigation canals requires a different approach—one that investigates generative relationships through direct material contact in everyday life. Therefore, I decided on the everyday scale and categorical frame, which resulted in an investigation of the material aspect and exclusion of other water infrastructures in the city, such as the Seyhan Dam or Catalan Dam. I investigate prolific forms of water, unplanned engagements, and

ordinary transgression, as Stewart (2005) puts it, “excesses uncaptured by claimed meanings” in the realm of heat and water (1015).

According to Ingold (2012), grasping the material world requires “telling their histories”, which means “what they do” and how they are affected by varying ways of actions done to them, that is, by “practice of working with them” (434). This approach highlights that the material world is not fixed and does not consist of isolated beings(434). How can we tell the history of the Seyhan Regulator and the irrigation canals? He suggests that all the unstable, intertwined, and flowing character of the material world does not pose a network form but a “meshwork”, which foretells “ecology of materials” (435). The co-responsive act is the vital feature in the ecology of materials, which notes the generative quality of bodies (Ingold 2012, 437). In the context of social lives and infrastructural topographies, considering co-responsive relationality can be thought-provoking. This is particularly the case when examining how, for instance, elements such as extreme heat, forms of water, concrete, caregivers, and the masculinized bodies give rise to reactive happenings.

Larkin (2013) further emphasizes that infrastructures are not only material but also “relations between materials” (329). He gives an example of water, a materially visible part of the infrastructure, which contrasts with the pipes and other mechanisms allowing us to see these taps and water, while not so visible to the senses (329). In the case of Adana, as concrete, solid, and majestic architectures, irrigation canals appear to have untraceable qualities at a glance. For instance, one cannot perceive the length of the canals with one look. The city dwellers see neither the moment of irrigation nor the designated participants of the infrastructure, such as the farmers. The irrigation canals are so visible to the senses, unlike the example of water and pipe system he gives, which presents witnessing the infrastructural function, but not the material aspect enabling that function. In fact, the very concrete material, the flow of water, and waterways manifestly exist as urban topography, yet the city dwellers are not able to see their designated function in the agricultural fields.

How do water infrastructures matter beyond their designed function? In investigating the materiality of infrastructures, whose technical qualities were constructed by expert knowledge and nation-state aspirations, I have questions with me asking how these knowledges and political entanglements have ended up constitution of the material topography and social lives on an everyday scale unexpectedly. Contrary to the isolated and static state of existence, these canals are touched, used, and felt. The agricultural industrial infrastructures are scaled according to everyday life. It can be said that the act of entering canals “demystifies” the existence of the infrastructures in the urban topography in Adana (Taussig 1991, 150). As Taussig (1991) conveys, Benjamin’s approach to the way of knowing the surround-

ing, which happens by using, having a material contact, positioning the body, so by “tactility,” for instance, we grasp a “building” (149). As Kathleen Stewart (2011) suggests, through the lens of atmospheric attunements, I wonder also how works are organized, people find their ways in relation to their environment, what kind of things occur, and how feelings, senses, practices, and forms get registered around the infrastructural environment (452). How do infrastructures become infrastructural environments? What kind of “worldings” come to being for a caregiver woman with a child around such an environment (445)? How do young boys find themselves close to the irrigation canal? What is it like to live around a watery infrastructural zone in the presence of urban heat? How does infrastructural materiality shape everyday life? How do undesigned engagements with the infrastructural zone unfold material, urban, and social limits? This research is interested in how the locals build proximate or distant relationships around things emerging with the infrastructural environment. The significance of this research lies in both its ethnographic prism and the divergences it tries to follow, such as unexpected local experiences. This study problematizes the conventional media representations of canalbathing, which focuses on drowning cases and risk discourse only, or at its best, positing an image of recklessness. Rather than following the risk discourse, it tries to listen to the local experiences, which is not a totality either. Moreover, it can enrich the environmental justice literature by its discussions on relationships with the prolific environment, especially in the context of extreme heat. Additionally, this study approaches drowning through epistemic facets it enacts, instead of its death aspect. As a result, it can show how the locality of drowning differs from the authoritative ground, which might be blind to the well-being of the affected parties.

1.3 Methodological Notes

After being approved by the Sabancı University Research Ethics Council, I began to think about the configuration of the field.¹ The physical spatial fieldwork was the basis of my ethnographic research. In the initial fieldwork study, my main aim was to build a connection between me as a researcher and the neighborhood. Therefore, I was mostly in an outsider position, although I was born in Adana. I assumed that living for a couple of years and being born in this city would equip me with more familiar feelings and thoughts in the field. However, this was not like I imagined. Acknowledging the fact that the city in general is acquainted, when the scale got

1. This research is approved by Sabancı University Research Ethics Council (SUREC) with Protocol Number FASS-2024-19.

deeper, I felt my outsider position more intensely. The outsidership I was positioned came from divisions within the city: the north and the south. My family was living in the northern part of the city, and my relatives still do, which, like many dwellers of the city, migrated from rural areas or the southern part. This division not only reflects socioeconomic differences but also physical variations among the streets and housing. The fact that I was born into the city after my family underwent urban mobility positioned me as an outsider in the more southern areas of the city, and I stayed as such because my family left Adana at some point, which made me only a summer visitor of the north side.

This research was an anthropological journey for me through which I could conduct qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, observation, and participant observation. The sensory ethnography also enriched the field experience in Adana. For example, I noted the warmth of a November day, and I could sense the attractiveness of the canal water under the extreme heat while watching it by the canal. I used a digital map on my phone to find the neighborhood's address.

The image of the canalbathing phenomenon presents children's visibility, but in this research, children are not among the participants. Besides, I had no prepared list of sampling, and I mostly did interviews or engaged in conversations by chance encounters in a large part of the fieldwork. For instance, in the riverbed part, I met two men who were coming to the riverbed to find fish from distant neighborhoods. In this study, I am not using people's and neighborhoods' given names, so that I can make it anonymous for ethical reasons. I did transcriptions of the recorded interviews and coded them via MAXQDA. I used my notebook for the unrecorded ones and informal chats. I also took some photographs of places where people showed me or I coincidentally found.

1.3.1 Participants

I present some of the participants of the research. I conducted 17 semi-structured interviews, 6 of which were without audio recording. 6 women participated in the interviews. Almost all women were too busy to spare time for me. In terms of number, more than I mentioned here have contributed to this journey either while passing by or sitting down for casual short and longer conversations. The interviews lasted between 20 minutes and an hour and a half on average. Additionally, I could have a chance to do a focus group with men aged 50 and above, which was set up thanks to the second *muhtar* who walked with me to the courtyard of the mosque and introduced me to the elderly as a student in need of assistance.

Caner was the person from whom I could learn a lot about Adana. He was not from the neighborhoods I visited; rather, I could reach him through my advisor's connection. He is one of the swimmers who began his swimming journey in the irrigation canals in the city of Adana. Like many professional swimmers in the city, he said, "I am also someone who came out of the irrigation canals in swimming."

As my first attempt to find one to speak with in the neighborhood was not arranged through a familiar contact, I tried to find *muhtar*, the headperson. Kadir is in his 50s. When his father started working at TEKEL (Turkish tobacco and alcoholic beverages company or the Monopoly), the whole family moved from Kozan, a district of Adana, to this neighborhood.² He is a canalbather who learned swimming in the Seyhan River, then "transferred to the canal," as he said. He gives me a glimpse of the case. In my second visit after the local elections, I could not find him in a *muhtar* position again. I also spoke with his brother, Fuat, a 57-year-old retired man, who experienced a similar swimming journey to his and learned how to swim by handling a drowning case. Both have ceased active bathing because they do not find it convenient for themselves. Fuat mentions his health problems in addition to uttering "I cannot bring myself to behave like this".

Yusuf, 30, is the first person who actively bathes in the irrigation canal. He is not from Çıkın, but from the other neighborhood across the canal, Selvi, as he calls it. He worked for private security services for a while. Now, he does not work. His family moved to the neighborhood from Bingöl 50 years ago, and his grandfather built their house. His mother and father are self-employed. Yusuf rescued many from drowning.

I came across Yılmaz (61) and İzzet (75) sitting at a place on the canal's edge, surrounded by places selling *bici bici*, a local dessert from southern Turkey and the Mediterranean area, and gözleme, the dough pocket. They were not from Çıkın or Kalkan neighborhoods, but they came here because they thought it would be nice to spend time here.³ İzzet remembers when he was 9, the canals were made of earth. Yılmaz was born in Adana, but his family is from Konya, and İzzet is from Kahramanmaraş. Both İzzet's and Yılmaz's fathers worked for *DSİ*, so they worked, too. While Yılmaz continued canalbathing despite he undergone drowning, İzzet stopped when he witnessed a drowning case in his childhood.

Altay (60) and Erdal (40) helped me navigate finding the second *muhtar* and con-

2. In 1932, the Monopolies Public Directorate was founded to operate the monopolistic system over not only tobacco and alcohol, but also salt, and then other commodities. It was privatized in 2002 (Gürsoy 2015, 602)

3. *Bici bici*, particularly popular in the provinces of Adana and Mersin, where it is mostly enjoyed during the summer. It is made of crushed ice, starch, and syrup.

nected me with other interlocutors towards the end of the fieldwork. Erdal's place became like a station where I rested or met new people. Altay and his family moved to Adana when he was 5. His father started working for *DSİ* in 1969. They moved to Adana from Kadirli twice. First, they lived in the Kalkan neighborhood for almost a year as tenants. They moved back to the village because it was difficult to raise children due to the surrounding water. Then they moved back to the city because educational opportunities were limited in the village. His father dismantled the house in the village with his own hands and rebuilt it in this neighborhood. Erdal came to Çıkm from Kozan when he was 10 because of his father's work situation, a shoe manufacturer. Both Altay and Erdal canalbathers, but they do not do it actively anymore. In addition to getting married and having children, Erdal no longer bathes in the canal because a close relative committed suicide. Altay rescued many people from drowning, and he also experienced it while learning how to swim.

I could reach out to Emel and Seher thanks to Altay's help. Emel, a 66-year-old retired teacher, and Altay are siblings. She is the eldest child in the family. Seher (32) got married to Altay's son. She lived in different neighborhoods in the city. After getting married, they decided to live here because of the beautiful scenery and surroundings. She holds an associate's degree and does not work. She has been intensely engaged in motherhood.

Seda (34) was the person who made me question my own questions all the time. After the age of 5, she moved with his mother and brothers from Şanlıurfa to the Selvi neighborhood. She runs the shop together with Erdal, her husband. Together with a friend of hers, they were called "manly" in the neighborhood. She is a canalbather or has a canalbathing experience. She did not continue to do it when her brothers withdrew from bathing in the irrigation canals. She rescued one from drowning and had a drowning experience herself. I believe the conversations we get involved in have a significant impact on my way of thinking.

Halil (86) was the oldest person I interviewed, whom people in the mosque tried to connect with me because, for them, he knew the history of the neighborhood. His parents came from Thessaloniki as part of the population exchange. He was born and grew up in Çıkm. After working as a PTT (Post and Telegraph Organization) employee for 29 years, he retired in 1990. He also confirmed that once upon a time, the irrigation canals were narrower and made of earth. When his economic conditions improved, he moved to an apartment complex in the north of Adana, where he has been staying for 14 years.

Hülya's family also came from Thessaloniki in the same way. She is a 66-year-old woman living with her brother. Her family's house was among the ones with a

well. In her childhood, she had an experience of “not a swimming but a water play” around the banks of the river, as she describes. For her, the intensity of the heat in the city has increased as she ages. The family of the second *muhtar* comes from Thessaloniki, like Halil and Hülya’s families. Melih seems to be a dynamic headperson of the neighborhood, who was busy with some visitors or his mobile phone, all the time, whenever I saw him. He is a canalbather and, like many, he rescued people from drowning. Hasan, in his 50s, was born in Adana. He is an operations technician working at the Seyhan Regulator Bridge. After working for the Water User Association for 25 years, he was assigned to this position because he had been in a train accident.

Most people have a migration story in their lives. In this neighborhood (including Kalkan), the locals’ parents, mostly the fathers, had found a job in the city, and then the family migrated there, which falls into the period around the 1960s. Apart from economic migration, the population exchange is prevalent as a migratory story. Many participants in this research have an affiliation with *DSİ*. While conducting fieldwork, I was surprised to encounter people who mentioned *DSİ* either as their workplace or their parents’ workplace. I have not met women with a job lately, except Seda, who shares the responsibility of shopkeeping with her husband.

1.4 The Flow of the Thesis

In Chapter I, I present the historical and theoretical underpinnings of the social lives and materiality around the infrastructural environment in urban Adana. The environmental history of the region indicates how the Cilicia region, encompassing both the lowland and mountainous areas, was transformed into modern Çukurova, where Adana is also located, beginning in the late Ottoman period. In the making of Çukurova, settlement, displacement, and reclamation actions were operated in relation to the state’s sociopolitical aims, such as development and centralization. Both in the late Ottoman period and as a part of state-making processes in the republican era, water management continued to be one of the key issues, which further contributed to the transformation of the topography. *DSİ* has been an imperative state institution, which has not only administered the irrigation of the agricultural lands, but also has taken actions related to the drainage of the swamps and the war on malaria. Everlasting infrastructural constructions with respect to water, like dams and irrigation canals, brought up several institutional and legal arrangements, which have led to some turbulence in the distribution of authority over water man-

agement. In this regard, Water User Associations began managing irrigation in the early 1990s, which was previously under the direction of *DSÍ*. The confusion in the authority contributes to the inability to conduct a substantial evaluation of the irrigation-related water management issues.

This chapter also conveys discussions on dualisms between nature and the city and nature and society. The idea of separation reinforces the view “human domination over nature”, which is challenged by the idea of the production of nature. Social lives and materiality of space reveal a boundary situation, such as being urban but rendered non-social, which becomes part of the technical composition of these infrastructures. Hence, this chapter presents that this thesis is not interested in how infrastructures work, but the materiality and social lives around the spaces generated through infrastructures.

In Chapter II, I delve into the act of canalbathing, which I began with the drowning case, positing epistemic relationships of body and infrastructure concerning it. Water management necessarily involves death cases, both in the field to find the dead body and in lawsuits. The management approach is accompanied by risk management, which is revealed by those lawsuits concerning compensation payments. The second chapter conveys how irrigation canals were materially altered both for enhancement goals and as a defense mechanism against the service defect. While the former changed the material qualities that make space prone to drowning, the latter did not function to block people, if not attract them more. As a result, this section of the thesis discusses how the authorities constitute drowning cases from a moral deficiency framework, which attributes discomfort and unfavorable character to the work of water management, instead of an ethical-practical approach that aims to include the needs and desires of the locals. In the field of drowning, the locals of the canals and bureaucratic teams may not agree on the search and rescue procedures. Furthermore, drowning affirms that there is a difference between bathing and swimming, which is based on knowing not to be harmed in the irrigation canal.

Obtaining the lore of the canal brings the question of who enters the irrigation canals, which Chapter II continues toward canalbathing activity. I investigate the reverse way and examine first the non-canalbathers since the locality is not about living in the same city. Mainly, gender difference and geographical-topographical order of the city compose the non-canalbathers, such as women and the upper middle class, mostly inhabiting the northern side of the city. Lastly, I look at how people find themselves on the route to the irrigation canal. Specific to this field, there is a river highly close to the neighborhood, which presents nuances in practices. Young girls and boys do not have the same experience of watery immersion on the riverside. Women usually do not engage in water activities or stop doing them when it becomes

against the gender norms. While the boys could begin and continue learning how to swim without barriers, women may need to find hidden ways. Other than gender comparison, the river context also denotes the significance of desiring more than watery immersion. In other words, the river becomes unsatisfactory at some point, and boys jump into the canal as if it is the next stage.

Building a masculinized way of relationship with the canal environment and affective relationships around felt intensities can be answers to the question of why they do not stay in the river or enter the canal. Here, I question the “fearless” image of the canalbathers and show how they are not without fear. I suggest three lines on the route of the canal: learning, acknowledging, and withdrawing. These (at least) three demonstrate that there is no total experience of canalbathing. Withdrawing is usually a less visible line to relate to the irrigation canal. The masculinities around the irrigation canal go up and down. The canalbathers do not generate social consent among the broader public because the act of entering the canal is regarded as crucially risky, “uncivilized”, non-urban, and being done by marginalized groups such as the urban poor and ethnically discriminated ones. I put canalbathing as an ordinary transgression, which is about practical knowledge that allows life and death to enter the everyday, at the same time, how the act reveals the limits, such as infrastructural, bodily, and legal, by both illustrating the bathable character of the irrigation canals as well as the risk of drowning.

The last chapter, Chapter III, focuses on the organization of everyday work that women undertake around the infrastructural topography. I examine how relationships with water-related infrastructural space, involving riverside and canalside, get gendered. However, gendered experiences are not lived in a mechanical way, but generative way. Childcare and domestic work are the main tasks women engage in. The caregiver women are affected by the way watery spaces and forms of water exist. For instance, a feeling of fear pertaining to drowning risk circulates among many, which is particularly the case based on the gender and class dynamics, together with the temporality of the water. Class, gender, and form of water influence how women with children position themselves in relation to the infrastructural areas, such as the wetland or lake-like water body of water.

The wetland form brings the situation of being a deserted and polluted environment where women need to arrange their movement with further safety concerns, which in some cases encompasses their sense of safety. In addition to being affected by the states of water, women also prolifically engage in watery spaces. The laundry work they carry out in the dam gates area indicates such an unplanned way of doing domestic work. The fact that the material changes imposed on the riverbank led to the withdrawal of some neighborhood women from the dam gates also alters their

social sense to use the space for the laundry. In other words, the more they find the material usability decreases, the more they might become judgmental of those who engage in the space. The forms of water are not static and are triggered by the dynamic emergence of the infrastructural environment. They both direct how the domestic work is done and create situations in which women orient themselves.

2. ON NATURE AND THE CITY

“Though, when you say ‘garden’—I’ve seen gardens, compared with which this would be a wilderness.”

-Lewis Carroll, The Garden of Live Flowers in Through the Looking-Glass.

*Concrete, well, we have become concrete now. In the past, if we had a one-meter yard, we would plant parsley, lemon trees, and grapevines there. Now everything is concrete. The places that have not become concrete are like ruins, breeding flies.*¹
(Emel)

2.1 Making of Modern Çukurova Where the Heat Meets with Water

When I talk about the story of my birth, I always contextualize it by adding “in the midday of August in Adana”, which I believe makes a vivid combo, indicating it was too hot for a day to be born. The history of Adana in the Çukurova region, which is among the most populous cities in Turkey with a total population of 2.270.298 by the year 2024 according to the Turkish Statistical Institute, is one of the transformations of space in a land of heat and water.

The topography has been designed to achieve specific goals, such as agricultural development in the late Ottoman state’s political agenda (Gratien 2022, 17). Beginning with the Tanzimat and the Reform Edict in the 19th century, the late Ottoman state’s settlement policies can be regarded as an endeavor for the centralization of power, which also employs processes of modernization of the state (58).

Major features of Çukurova, meaning *çukur* (low) and *ova* (plain), are mainly made of lowland, hot weather conditions, rivers, swamps, and mosquitoes. However, as a

1. Emel: Beton, o zaten, artık betonlaştık ya. Eskiden birer metre bahçemiz olsa, biz oraya bir maydanöz ekerdik, bir limon ekerdik, bir asma dikerdik. Şimdi her yer beton. Beton olmayan yerler de virane gibi sinek üretiyor

broad plain between the Taurus and Amanus mountains, those were only parts of a larger area, namely Cilicia. In fact, unlike the modernized image, the mountainous part was more principal than the lowland, as holding mountains had to do with political power (17). Çukurova came to be the fertile land of a modern project in the late Ottoman period by crowding the lowland environment with people, constructions, and plantation fields, and at the same time deserting the mountains (17). While there were many swampy zones, nomadic lives, and narrow domination of the Ottoman state over the region, cotton emerged as the prevailing element of the landscape, which could be actualized through the enforcement of sedentarization, building permanent villages, and agricultural industry (Gratien 2022, 4-5). As a result, the lowlands of Çukurova, where water and heat reign, were produced both as settlement areas and an environment that was promising for the agricultural industry.

Is it favorable to live in Çukurova? Yaşar Kemal, a globally well-known author from Adana, has many books and stories about this region, in which he presents geography not as a background view but as a significant actor in his stories. In the story "The Hunter", one of the short stories in *Sarı Sıcak* (Yellow Heat), Kemal (1991) perfectly narrates the situation in which the effects of the encounter between the human body and a swampy area are hazardous:

"No house can be built on the banks of Akçasaz. And if they do, no human can live here. All kinds of mosquitoes... Poisonous and non-poisonous... Like bees swarming. All night long, on every side, like bees swarming. Poisonous malaria takes you away in a few days... There are villages close to Akçasaz. You won't see a human over fifty." (Kemal 1991 , 155)

Having malaria requires contact between a human and a mosquito. Malaria had also existed before cotton flourished at enormous scales. However, the disease-prone environment was not there on a large scale. Building the lowlands of Çukurova as an agricultural hub through the wedding of heat and water was one of the industrial projects, first by the Egyptian rule in the 1830s, then by the late 19th century authorities of the Ottoman state, and lastly, by the republican era of Turkey (Gratien 2022, 97). Accordingly, malaria expanded enormously as the commercialized agricultural production transformed the circumstances, such as pushing settled forms of living and disturbing the seasonal strategies to flee from the disease (96). Hence, the transformation of the environment appears not to be for people or for their benefit; indeed, the effects of the process were perilous.

Forms of living were attempted to be tailored to a settled life in order to have people easily governed and productive by the settlement policies of the late Ottoman state, which were accompanied by the coerced population movements in different periods of the Ottoman state, such as the Tanzimat or after the Crimean and Balkan wars (Gratien 2022, 57; 178). In these cases, the nomadic people in the highlands of Cilicia and some Muslims displaced from war zones were directed to settle in Çukurova. Placing those people in Adana was not isolated from the state's goal of agricultural production and, at the same time, crowding the districts with Muslim populations (Der Matossian 2022, 43-45). Moreover, Armenians of Cilicia were exposed to the disastrous displacement and massacre in 1909 in Adana. When Armenians believed there would be socio-political changes in a good way after the end of the Hamidian period, approximately 20.000-30.000 Armenians in Adana and surrounding parts of the region were murdered by the violent mobs (Der Matossian 2022; Gratien 2022). This was followed by the Armenian Genocide during World War I, Armenians in Adana were forced to leave and deported in 1915, which was organized by the central state apparatuses, unlike the massacres in 1909 (186; 227). While the places were made uninhabitable for Armenians, Muslim migrants from the Balkans were sent to replace them in Adana (Gratien 2022, 146). After the war, the new Turkish republican state maintained the settlement project of Muslims in Adana. In the first month of 1923, the Convention Concerning the Exchange of Greek and Turkish Populations was signed by the Greek and Turkish governments (Çomu 2018, 267). According to Çomu (2018), there were two types of settlement places in Adana: either the ones taken away from Armenians and Greeks or the old-established migrant villages from the prior migration periods (272). Consequently, Armenians, the nomadic people of the Taurus Mountains, seasonal workers, and people from the Balkans and Caucasus were among those who were forced to leave their environment.

The neighborhood, where I conducted my fieldwork in Adana, is also one of the Armenian villages where the displacement of people happened: Armenians were forced to leave, and Muslims were settled. Some of the residents I spoke with told me how their grandfather was made a resident there by the Turkish state: "The state showed that house to my grandfather so that he could settle down and also showed him the place where the campus of Çukurova University is now located so that he could plant fields. They came in the second *Kaç-Kaç* (Flee-Flee!) period." ²

2. The *Kaç-Kaç* incident refers to the fleeing of the local Muslims from the city of Adana to the countryside to escape the attacks of the French army in 1920. The word *Kaç* directly means to flee. The incident is known by the locals in Adana. However, it was a single incident, which has no second character. When I asked what the *Kaç-Kaç* meant, my interlocutors passed my question and talked about other things. Here, my understanding is that they internalized the fleeing action during wartime and reckoned the migration from the Balkans after the Balkan Wars (1912-13)

Figure 2.1 Different forms of houses, photo by the author



The three differently textured and designed houses are juxtaposed in the photograph above. The first brown house with a roof on the left is a one-room Armenian house made of earth. The house with a dark brown door and the right side along with it were built after the resettlement by Muslims from the Balkans, to make the latter part look like the old one. The grandchildren of the later settlers do not use this house as their home. Because it had historical value for them, they wanted to show me the old house that their grandfather had been allocated. They neither demolish nor dwell in there. While the lowland topography was made settled, people's lives as populations have been turbulent in the history of Çukurova. The movement of people did not stop in the early republican era in Adana. One of the participants in my research said to me, "You cannot find a native of Adana.", which referred relatively recent state of population in the city, such as an increase in the population of Kurdish people after the 90s (due to forced displacement) and Syrian migrants after the war.

In the making of modern Çukurova, the changes made regarding the settlement during the Tanzimat period were essential in the process of urbanization of a place in the future (Gratien 2022, 68). Some urban political ecology scholars, such as N. Heynen, E. Swyngedouw, and M. Kaika (2006), argue that the making of cities is at

as the first wave of fleeing, while migration from the Balkans after World War I, exchange of populations, as the second wave (of *Kaç-Kaç*). Both the *Kaç-Kaç* incident in Adana and exchange of populations happened after World War I.

the same time a process of urbanization of nature (5). Rather than polarity between nature and city, there is an idea of urban nature that comes to being through socio-ecological processes (8). Therefore, examining how cities emerge goes in parallel with how ecologies and topographies relate to the social and political order. Adana is an interesting example of the growth of a city since it stems from rural-assigned activity; therefore, a good one to show neatly how urban growth is not an isolated process from the production of nature. The transformation of *yaylas* (highlands) as the modern vacation zones in the early republican period can also be given as an example. The mountainous *yaylas* transformed into the venues for middle-class people to escape hot weather conditions in the city and to enjoy the natural nature (Gratien 2022, 213). Gratien (2022) calls on Hagop Terzian, an Armenian writer and pharmacist, to present how the large-scale production of cotton affected the growth of the city and how villagers came together with merchants, wage labor, and urban life. I want to recall on Terzian for an apt description of the transformation of urban nature in the city of Adana: it was “like a large and incomparable city because of progress but like a big village because of agriculture” (107).

2.2 Brief Notes on the Management of Water in Adana

It was difficult to locate all the information about infrastructural projects in relation to water mentioned in conversations I was involved in Adana. My initial focus was to investigate the irrigation canals only. However, I realized that neither irrigation canals can be isolated from other projects, nor connections with the river and other constructions can be peeled off. Therefore, I endeavored to look into the Seyhan Regulator, in addition to the irrigation canals. When I spoke to the residents in the neighborhood about dams, irrigation canals, bridges, and the regulator, they referred to those constructions as the old dam, the new dam, the regulator, the canal going to Karataş, the canal below, and so on. In fact, the local people were also sometimes confusing the word river with the canal and vice versa. It was not easy to grasp the object of conversation with that number of infrastructural constructions with different names and adjectives. The more I delved into dialogues, the more I found myself in a state of turbulence regarding infrastructural information. For instance, later, I learned that there was another regulator bridge, which is close to *Taşköprü* (the stone bridge), other than the one next to the neighborhood. I had many questions and had to deal with untangling these infrastructures. For what purpose was the Seyhan Regulator built? Which one was the old dam that people refer to? I learned that the locals call the regulator built in 1943 the Old Dam, even

though its official name is a regulator bridge. There are also the Seyhan Dam and the Çatalan Dam, built in 1956 and 1997, respectively, which I did not include in the scope of the research.

Management of water in the modernization of Çukurova was not limited to irrigation. In fact, this came later than the first two main targets, which were to block the river flood and drain the swamps in the region, posited by an improvement and reclamation report of Adana plain prepared by the first Minister of Public Works of the Republic of Turkey, an engineer named Süleyman Sırrı Bey (Yıldırım 2021, 208). As Scott also conveys, the prevalent idea that the first settlement practices aimed at irrigating the arid land needing water may not be accurate. Contrarily, sedentary communities came up in wetlands; therefore, it is argued that “it was far more drainage than irrigation” (Scott 2017, 38). One of the ways to dry swamps was the plantation of eucalyptus trees, *sıtma* (malaria) tree in the local calling, which are said to have the capacity to suck circa 400 litres if they are among the tall ones (Karatepe 2017, 54). These water-loving trees were introduced in the late Ottoman era; nevertheless, it was not widespread (Özgün 2013, 13). The launch of eucalyptus trees into the region was first through another infrastructural construction, the Adana-Mersin Railway, which was for the decoration of the railway line (10).

As a part of state-making processes from the 1920s to the 1950s, water was examined as a resource and exploited for development (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 190). Institutional arrangements were made for hydrological surveys in the country, such as the establishment of the Ministry of Public Works in 1920 and the Electrical Power Resources Survey and Development Administration in 1935. Water management also encompassed the public health concerns, such as malaria, on which the state waged war beginning in the early republican era (Aydın 1998, 9). Adana was classified within the region where malaria was most prevalent (12). Policy plans that were primarily arranged for the development of the nation-state, and financing irrigation infrastructure was based on public spending until the 1980s (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 193).

Thus, it would not be an exaggeration to say that *DSİ* (State Hydraulic Works) is a “central water bureaucracy” and the ultimate institution, which was founded after the Second World War in the 1950s and operates the governance of water bodies in Turkey (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 191). During fieldwork in the city, I tried to speak with its district director, whom I could hardly find a moment to chat with. I had not visited the district directorate before; however, as I was walking towards the address, I could grasp that I was approaching the place from the blue-greenish signature color painted on the walls of the campus and other items, such as signboards and the font. The first time, I waited almost the whole day to catch

the director. While I was sitting on a chair next to a desk that looked purposeless, some men came and went, waiting with me, knocking on the director's door, going in, and leaving. I could not be so confident to knock on the director's closed-door as other men could. One of them asked me which company I came from, and I said that I was not affiliated with any. So, it was a very busy setting where people from companies visited *DSİ* in a rush. The second time, I learned from company people and checked in with the director's office. He wrote an email address on a small piece of paper and told me to contact him in this way. After waiting hours, I could not reach him, even via email. It was hard to access bureaucratic knowledge, especially if one was not there on company business.

The Seyhan Regulator was opened for operation in 1943 in Adana, which is recognized as the first modern irrigation project in the Lower Seyhan Plain (Seyran 2009, 58). The regulator was built to prevent floods and provide water for agricultural irrigation. While the regulator does not produce electricity, the Seyhan Dam, opened in 1956, was aimed at the production of electricity (59). In the case of irrigating the Çukurova region, the Lower Seyhan Plain Irrigation Project (LSIP) has been key to the agricultural industry. Establishment of the LSIP is considered in four phases, according to Turkey Engineering News Magazine's Water Structures section by TMMOB (Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects) (2006), and the employer is presented as *DSİ* (102):

Figure 2.2 Phases of the Lower Seyhan Plain Irrigation Project (LSIP)

Yer	: Adana
Tarih	: I. safha : 1957 1968 II. safha : 1969 1974 III. safha : 1976 1985 IV. safha : Devam Ediyor
İşveren	: Devlet Su İşleri Genel Müdürlüğü

In 1993, Water User Associations were founded concerning the Irrigation Management Transfer program under the guidance and partial financial support of the World Bank (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 198). The transfer was because of an increase in the labor costs, employment ceased by governmental institutions, and competency and efficiency issues of the state agency in the face of expanded irrigation areas (198). Between 1994 and 1996, the irrigation operation was transferred to 18 Water User Associations, *Sulama Birliği*, in Adana (Turkey Engineering News magazine 2006, 103).

In line with the 2011 Water User Association Law, the associations are in charge of

management, operation, and restoration (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 199) . According to Topçu, Kibaroglu, and Kadirbeyoğlu (2019), the operational transfer of water management from the state agency to the user associations and relevant legal arrangements did not engage in the sustainability question of water, which is an issue concerning the structure of the infrastructure, such as having an open canal system (201). Irrigation canals were mainly designed as open distribution ways between 1950 and 1965, from the supply area to the fields (194). Hasan, an operation technician in the Seyhan Regulator, called this open system *vahşi sulama* (wild irrigation), which refers to the uncontrolled, sudden release of too much water. The form of open irrigation canals is named “classic trapezoidal open canal”, which the locals in the neighborhood describe as “V-shaped canals.” The technical, stewardship, and legal capacities of the Water User Associations are not sufficient to address issues related to the infrastructural aspect of irrigation (208). For instance, according to a report by Adana *TAYEM* (Adana Agricultural Production Enterprise Agricultural Extension and In-Service Training Center Directorate), there are considerable overlaps in the responsibilities and jurisdictions of institutions such as municipalities, *DSİ*, or Water User Associations, resulting in poor coordination and disruption of services (Adana Zirai Üretim İşletmesi Tarımsal Yayım ve Hizmetiçi Eğitim Merkezi Müdürlüğü 2013, 36). As in the case of water quality and sustainability issues, the very infrastructure-related matter, bathing in the irrigation canals, cannot be expected to be dealt with by the current water management system, in which *DSİ* has ownership, while other parties are involved in the management.

While the 2011 law aimed to ensure an autonomous administration of the local associations, for example, suspending the municipal and neighborhood headpersons from becoming an inherent leading authorities; in 2018, the central government was authorized by an amendment to the Law 6172 to control decision-making mechanisms by appointing the public officials from Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry as presidents to the Water User Associations with a *DSİ* consultation (Kibaroglu 2022, 30). While the transfer of the irrigation management decreased “the public financial burden”, especially by collecting the fees more efficiently than *DSİ*, the efficiency of the irrigation was not achieved at the expected rate by the legal authorities (29).

The World Bank’s involvement and the legal and institutional arrangements regarding the state’s position in the irrigation management, happening not in a bottom-up way, lead to confusion in the jurisdiction, which can encompass both authority and responsibility for management processes (Topçu, Kadirbeyoğlu, and Kibaroglu 2019, 208). In the case of the urban environment in Adana, stewardship of drowning incidents can be added to these processes, which can leave the institutions with a focus on the issue of financial burden or credits and inability to take action, aiming at the

empowerment of the locals who live around the infrastructural environment.

2.3 Production of the Infrastructural Water Environment in the City

Appearing concurrently urban and non-urban denotes a challenge to the division between nature and city, through which discussion on the formation of an environment can be navigated, and the effects of the production processes can be pondered. The alteration of space and the environment is not a neutral action. The transformation of space occurs in relation to the operation of power, which forms how one can live their life (Harvey 1996, 44). Living with unbearable hot weather conditions, involuntarily feeding mosquitoes, avoiding leaving the house before the sun goes down, or breathing laboriously due to humidity is about the impact of the environment that reflects on one's power of existence. What conditions were in place for people to live in this way in Adana?

Transforming the environment can be regarded as an act of production of nature and the city, namely Adana in Turkey. Even though the wording has nature and city as separate entities, this idea of separation is criticized by many scholars, such as Neil Smith, Jason W. Moore, and Maria Kaika. Moreover, the nature-city discrepancy originates from the concept of nature, which is often regarded as external to the social world of humans. For Kaika (2005), the dualism between nature and the city is the spatial extension of the duality between nature and society (13). Consequently, the general perception of nature positions it away from the city, similar to how it is viewed as separate from society. Not surprisingly, the capitalist mode of production accelerated this concept of nature through profit-based utilization of nature (Smith 2006, xii). Which one belongs to the realm of nature in Adana, the Seyhan River or canals? Is there a boundary between nature and a cityscape? Is there nature out there? I also challenge the age-old divisions between nature and society or city, since the issues I want to investigate have to do with these demarcated notions.

Smith (2020) presents several features of the concept of nature with its contradictory parts. Nature is conceived both as external and universal (11). The external character of nature suggests that nature is outside the realm of society in which human actions prevail. The latter proposes that human beings have natural properties, which bring human existence together with other beings in the sense that they are part of nature, or they universally have a place in nature (Smith 2020, 12).

Francis Bacon was one of the iconic scholars who strove both methodologically and theoretically to obtain (scientific) knowledge of nature. He was impressed by the

age of transformation of nature, in which he coincided with progress in technologies of mining metals, crafting matter, and metallurgy (Merchant 2008, 735). Notably, the Baconian approach renders nature external to human beings. It is posited in opposition to the human world to be instrumentalized. Hence, nature and society are treated as discrete spheres, and the former is to be subjected to the latter (Smith 2020, 14). In other words, the Baconian approach proposes the human *techne* to experiment and utilize nature by cutting it off from its environmental connections, for some, which is accompanied by the retreat of the idea of nature as a living thing and the rise of the death of nature (Merchant 1980, 193). For instance, the Seyhan River's water, being reckoned as a natural resource, is regulated, and its relationship with the Mediterranean Sea is interrupted. The engineers, technicians, planners, or other experts measure Seyhan's springs and state of being in relation to irrigation. When I visited *DSİ*, after the failure to have a contact with the directorate, I passed by the engineers' corridor. I knocked on the door of a meteorological engineer and asked questions about the precipitation situation. He said, "There was no snow this year. There was a light dusting of snow, maybe 10 cm. It lasted for a week, and we were lucky enough to measure it." Hence, the Seyhan River must be known in order to be regulated by the authorities.

Smith (2020) underlines the relationship between industrial capitalism and the concept of nature, which he renders ideological (16). Not only the establishment of scientific methodology but also the labor process of human beings operates with an approach that posits beings in "nature" as extrinsic objects (Smith 2020, 15). He argues that the production of life activities is the very natural act of humans; therefore, there is no *a priori* nature with respect to human existence, and the social world of people is not outside what is articulated as nature. However, in industrial capitalism, there is production for exchange value that diverges from the scale of subsistence (65). Underscoring the capitalist mode of production opens up a discussion of the scale, which suggests that the production of nature is not a unique process to capitalism, but the production of nature at the "world scale" is (77). Smith (2020) remarkably states that the production of nature does not mean controlling nature, which presupposes that people are outside the world of nature and not part of it. (87). Indeed, he acknowledges that in the process of production of nature, there are uncontrollable things, such as pollutants or excess carbon dioxide (89).

If the relationships with the earth are evaluated through the view of dominion over nature with its baggage of dualist presuppositions, we cannot substantially examine conditions generating those relations with the earth. Mastery over nature presumes that human and nonhuman existences are isolated, and the former has

full or perfect command over the latter. Was malaria a consequence of dominion over nature? A parallel discussion is held around the issue of the Anthropocene. In the 2000s, after the term Anthropocene had been uttered by scientists, the human impact on the Earth became one of the heated discussions among scholars. The term has been contested by many, especially by naming its timeline and subjects. Are human beings not part of nature? Jason W. Moore (2016) argues that the term Anthropocene reinforces the idea of a division between nature and society (3). Therefore, for him, instead of emphasizing the *Anthropos*, the capitalist impact on the world needs to be named. Correspondingly, Haraway (2016) approaches the issue by criticizing human exceptionalism either through glorification or vilification (51).

This is parallel to Smith's suggestion that, rather than the dominion over nature with its dualistic and ideological concept of nature, "how nature is produced" and by whom the production of nature is controlled needs to be investigated (Smith 2020, 89). Human beings might not be the only producers in this process; otherwise, they need to be regarded as "autonomously self-making" (Haraway and Moore 2016, 37). For instance, the emergence of malaria is not made by human existence alone. However, human labor and the production of nature with different scales based on the exchange-value make them the directors of the production process (Smith 2020, 91). Thinking about by whom nature's production is controlled might be accompanied by the question of for whom this process is accomplished. Was the production of the environment at Cilicia as modern Çukurova done for humans as species? If it were for the prosperity of all humans, how did vast some of them perish from malaria? Then, I also ask, for whom were watery infrastructures constructed, for rethinking the current situation?

Reckoning the city in the sense of being separate from nature makes bathing in irrigation canals hard to contextualize. While going to the seaside to escape the city's heat can be rationalized as a nature retreat, escaping to the canal water is not located in this way. Bathing in the canals does not appear as a "natural" process of having a relationship with the environment in the news media. People can swim in the sea, in a lake, and a swimming pool. There is nothing out of order here. The concept of nature or a city neatly works in these situations. On the one hand, seemingly natural watery entities, rivers, seas, or lakes, are ready to embrace humans to offer them their pastoral refreshing sphere and facilitate refuge from the chaos of the cityscape. Or they are not fully trusted: there are waves and streams uncontrollable. On the other hand, the swimming pool is apparently a human-made place that is designed for human entertainment and bodily activities. Everything is fine and in line with the borders of the concept of nature and the city. Hence, I

argue that bathing in irrigation canals is not rendered as a (natural) social activity for urban life in general, although the canals, the river, and the Seyhan Regulator, with their physical existence, are all components of the environment into which the locals were born.

Nevertheless, canals can be against human life forces, bodily nature, from which the outsider gaze tends to look. Even if escaping the heat to the canals is a physical as well as a social affair, they were not crafted for people's immersion in water. They were not constructed for a direct encounter with the human body. Death can easily follow bathing. If such death cases happen in this way, is it human dominion over the river? Is it the production of the environment with other ecologies under the government of the agricultural industry?

Just as infrastructures are expected to operate according to the rules of their design, people are also supposed to employ actions according to these rules and goals. Canalbathers are not only supposed to but also *should* not be there. In addition to functional design, they transgress the legal border of a river's existence, or they show an extra-functional action. From one perspective of the commons discussions, it is proposed that, for instance, a river's existence on the institutional level is based on "property regimes" (Bromley 1992, 2). For him, the commons as resources are conducted in four different property relations, which are the state property regimes, individual property regimes, common property regimes, and no-property regimes (open access) (10). Putting aside the criticism of the river being seen as a mere resource, the legal departments of an ecological being can give an idea of the transgressive character of canalbathing. Bromley (1992) suggests that property is "not an object but is rather a social relation," which is defined as "a benefit stream that is only as secure as the duty of all others to respect the conditions that protect that stream" (2,10). The state holds the ownership position of "the benefit stream" of the Seyhan River, which differs from an open access situation on paper. From this property lens, the act of bathing in the irrigation canals breaches the property design, which does not include the bathers in its benefit stream. The infrastructural watery spaces are used as open access, both by the women who do the laundry work in front of the dam gates and canalbathers. However, the latter constitutes a security issue because of the death cases and the immediate aftermath, interrupting the flow of the benefit stream. In fact, canalbathing is legally sanctioned by the Ministry of Interior.

The normative way of relation with infrastructure does not stem from a doctrine, for example, a religious ethic, as we may see in the case of Bahla, Oman, that Limbert (2010) presents (126). In that case, water, especially drinking water, is strongly regarded within communal sharing through that kind of ethic. The conflicts emerging

around jurisdiction, negotiation, and delivery of water still appear in the right track of water's function, such as drinking, washing, bathing, and irrigation (133). In the case of canalbathing in Adana, transgression of the planned function and legal design indicates a state of "ought-not-to" regarding a proper way of engagement or non-engagement with the urban environment. The irrigation canals become risk zones that one should avoid. For instance, in 2023, one of the news media, NTV, reported the death of 318 people in the last 11 years in Adana. It is the space where the fact that human design cannot be the only director becomes visible because of the emergent phenomenon and the inability to produce a risk-free area. Authorities have control over the scale of the production processes of agriculture; however, their rules sometimes do not mesh with emerging situations and become irrelevant. Particularly, everyday engagements with the infrastructural spaces can help note how the environment is formed through socio-ecological processes, which are arranged in accordance with scales of production and do not necessarily imply human dominion over nature.

Social lives and materiality around the infrastructural spaces present a boundary case, which confuses the idea of division between nature and city. Is the river, whose water is held back by the dam gates, riverbed filled with rocks, and riverbank transformed into a wall, a natural being? On the one side, the canals are so visibly part of urban topography, but at the same time, so useless for urban people. They exist so urbanely; however, they are so external to city life. They are like turquoise accessories complementing the landscape without engagement with people. They provide the urban topography with nice views. On the other side, while irrigation canals for some locals become their natural (urban) environment like a sea, for others, they do not. Human-made canals are regarded by the general public as antagonistic to, and are excluded from urban engagement, which falls into the so-called world of society. If it is outside social/ city, is it in the world of nature, according to established dualisms? The technical rationale is based on the idea of nature that can be compartmentalized for exploitation. Hence, compartmentalization of water from its environment is supposed to continue as if such a thing exists. When the city has been expanding, some city dwellers and the infrastructure have become proximate to each other. The emergent intimacy has made it more visible how the heat, the flow of water, and people are entangled.

2.4 Infrastructure as an Intervention

Where does land end? Where does water begin? How do river lines separate land from water? These are questions raised critically to examine how rivers have come to be such geographical beings. Dilip da Cunha (2019) discusses the demarcation between land and water through the form of rivers in his book *The Invention of Rivers* (ii). He questions the naturalness of the lines drawn to indicate where the river exists in the case of India. The lines signify the edges and place the water as a thing apart from the land. Engineers, historians, geographers, archaeologists, and other scholars work through these lines.

He argues that more than the water itself, these lines have become the fundamental parts of river existence. Sometimes rivers dry, and the space that remains in the absence of water is still imagined and called a river or riverbed. Even in the state of lack of water, rivers continue to flow (da Cunha 2019, 4). I followed the blue representation of both the river and canals on the digital map. However, I could not see the blueness of either of them: first, the riverbed became a wetland, and second, the canals were not filled since it was not the irrigation season, yet. Nevertheless, even without water that fills the place, the river continues to be a river. This is obvious in the case of the canals, which are already regarded as human-made entities. What makes a canal is not water but infrastructural design.

What used to be a river as we know is also interesting in this context. Sometimes, river water held by a dam becomes a lake, which might be labeled even as a lake on a map. Otherwise, the water body usually has no name allocated; instead, the name of the dam is written. In both cases, the river label appears only if the water flows in the form of a line on the map. Similarly, the Seyhan Regulator not only regulates water but also allows the place's name to be nominated as a river or lake by the locals. The part that holds and accumulates water, so that it is full of water, is called a lake by some inhabitants, even though some maps represent it as the Seyhan River. In other words, for some people, the southern part of the Seyhan Regulator is a river while the northern part is a lake. Thus, the lines tend to insist on the riveriness of the water body on the map, while some locals see another form of water. Moreover, some mention the form of water not as a river or lake but as a dam. Therefore, in some cases, they refer to the infrastructure as the entity that they engage with rather than the water itself.

At the same time, the water cycle that depicts different stages of water as precipitation, flow on the ground, evaporation, and cloud formation is conveyed to show how the flow of water is decided to be a permanent form of water and “time of reality”

(da Cunha 2019, 5). Even though water circulates as rain, flow, vapor, and cloud, the water body recognized by the map representation is the flow contained by the lines. This being the case, he argues that the rest of the water cycle is regarded as ephemeral and as visitors only, while the rivers are the permanent inhabitants. The river form as a flow of water in a designated area serves well by facilitating transportation and waste disposal paths, supplying water, generating energy, and adding value to the real estate zoning and transactions (6). Furthermore, flood times are considered exceptional moments that cause problems, deviating from the ‘time of reality’ in the water cycle that signifies the flow of water within certain lines. Being out of the preferred time (of reality) that points out when water is recorded, so in which form floods breach these river lines and rather become indefinite wetness. Moreover, this non-conforming mode of water to the edges of the river is an issue that needs to be solved. Dilip da Cunha (2019) questions whether the problem lies in rivers that flood or the borders that create a clear separation between land and water (6). He suggests that the human design of dwelling on the earth is vitally conducted by reckoning an earth surface, divorcing water from the land (12).

These questions and remarks can be handy to scrutinize both forms of water and the design aspect of the world as we know it, or are taught as nature. However, it circulates around the idea of design’s imposition, which I want to add to or diverge from. The embankment wall, the *islah* wall, which was said to be built in the 90s in order to block floods, is the crystallization of the design that shapes water or “invents” the river once again (da Cunha 2019, 1). The imposition of the concrete wall-edge, needless to say, fed the finance-oriented municipal urban planning, as some interlocutors talked about, and that has had an impact on the socio-ecological lives of the locals. However, the story does not end here. Inside the riverbed, water and land do not cease to get confused. The lines became untidy and irregular again. The mosquitoes and birds visit this wetland. Women’s relationship with the riverside changed. All these indicate that the generation of the infrastructural topography is not a finished product.

Besides finding conversations on infrastructures confusing, I was thinking about how the Seyhan River has been an obvious issue to be addressed. It has been perfectly unavoidable. Infrastructural interventions in its water body have been repeatedly done. One project after another has been implemented to regulate and distribute water or produce hydroelectric energy, for example, in the case of the Seyhan Dam. This is not only the case that it has a long and huge body. The life activities have been arranged in relation to the water. In other words, there is life not only because of water but also in spite of water, such as in the case of floods. As I stated, overwhelming heat is another thing that cannot be ignored in Adana. It can be a

facilitator of agricultural products and, at the same time, cause disastrous urban weather conditions. All in all, I examine how infrastructures intervene in both locals' relations with heat and water and their affective experiences, and the production of urban nature in Adana in Çukurova that can be enabling as well as hindering. As Mitchell (2002) proposes for the river Nile, I also convey the idea of “nature” as “outcome” (35). Infrastructural constructions do not only produce or contribute to producing agricultural fruits or electricity, but they also have been giving birth to a novel environment in the Çukurova region. How can we understand the troubles and wonders of heat and water in Adana? What are the conditions that make it possible to feel at home while bathing in irrigation canals? How are some people oriented to the canal water whilst some refrain from it? How do the social rhythms and everyday works circulate around the infrastructural environment?

Infrastructures are studied from many perspectives. For instance, as Appel, Anand, and Gupta (2018) convey, while urban geographers investigate the material frames of infrastructures with respect to fashioning urban life, anthropologists tend to look into lived experiences of varying positions (11). Another dimension of infrastructure has to do with what it represents. Larkin (2018) invites for an evaluation of infrastructures through their aesthetic dimension together with physical (179). For instance, the Minister of Public Works gave a speech at the opening ceremony of the Seyhan Regulator, in which he reflected the ideals of a nation-state in the political atmosphere of World War II. According to a newspaper, *Ulus*, dated July 1943, he stated that combating nature is one of the vital qualities of a civilized nation, and those who do not wage this war or are defeated are doomed to be enslaved by others as much as by nature. Dividing the water of the Seyhan River and regulating it for agricultural development and prevention of floods are associated with a triumph over nature in a militarized way. As Larkin (2018) points out, the political atmosphere and its emotional impressions are interwoven with how infrastructures come to exist (189). The Seyhan Regulator was presented both as a material result of combating nature and a symbol of how the state was so devoted to people that it could build it despite the war conditions. The Turkish government was not involved; however, it issued martial law during World War II, and the economic crisis was present (Gratien 2022, 211).

In fact, the aesthetic character can also change as its physical features do (Anand, Gupta, and Appel 2018, 19). In Adana, people have been bathing in the canals since the 1940s when construction took a stage in the environment. As Caner narrates, while bathing in irrigation canals, some young children were noticed by professional swimmers or trainers and then educated as professionals. This initiation resulted in the generation of a professional swim team whose members were found

and selected from irrigation canals in Adana. This swim team has been called *Yenilmez* (invincible) *Armada* because it was known for its remarkable success, 29 national championships with only one defeat in 22 years, in the branch of water polo.³ Indeed, one of them, Erdal Acet, a former national swimmer from Adana's irrigation canals, crossed the English Channel in 1976 with the best of all time. Therefore, the imagery of bathing in the irrigation canals once implied the fledgling of legendary stories throughout the sportive success.

I hereby examine the expression of infrastructural intervention from the book *Field Guide to the Patchy Anthropocene* by A.K. Saxena, A.L. Tsing, F. Zhou, and J. Deger (2024) in order to discuss the processes of production of urban nature in Adana (4). The book suggests a new nature, the feral one, which alters through its affairs with the human infrastructures (1). According to the authors, the imperial and industrial infrastructures fueled the transformation of the earth in feral ways. Just as Neil Smith (2020) emphasizes the scale of production rather than mere production, this book also highlights specific scales, such as infrastructures constructed at the scales of imperialization and industrialization (Tsing et al. 2024, 44). The feral is neither wild nor domestic, as they put it. These scales of infrastructure are entangled with the earth, but there might be no human control in the aftermath. Instead, nonhumans can respond, out of human control, to the affairs of infrastructure, which generates the feral effects (10). I find this discussion useful to think about the effects of irrigation canals and the Seyhan Regulator on urban nature in Adana. The definition of intervention in the Cambridge Dictionary refers to becoming involved in a situation. Becoming involved in a situation reserves a previous state of ongoingness. The ongoing state of production can be agricultural activities, using water for daily needs, production of subsistence, or escaping annoying hot weather. In this respect, I question whether infrastructures of the agricultural industry, such as the Seyhan Regulator and irrigation canals, can be rendered topographical interventions in the process of production of urban nature in Adana. This requires approaching infrastructures not only as functional constructions but also as material involvement in the transformation of the environment. In the *Field Guide*, ferality is conceptualized as nonhuman responses to infrastructures (10). For instance, designing the lowlands of Çukurova as a permanent settlement zone and fertile agricultural locus was followed by an unplanned and unwanted disease environment. As the book calls it, terraforming projects at these scales can create troubling consequences (4). Without using the very same framework in the case of bathing in canals, I ponder the effects of infrastructures in this way. It presents an approach that looks into the materiality of infrastructures that trigger situations out of human control and out

3. Caner mentioned this period as swimming movement.

of design, which are neither wild nor domestic. Similarly, Mitchell (2002) mentions how technologies or infrastructural technical designs come to be without the situation in which humans are “directing social outcomes” (10). For instance, what I found was a wetland in emergence, instead of a flow of water. The river becoming a wetland can be one example to rethink notions of nature and the city, or wild and domestic. Is the regulation of the river a human dominion over nature? Is the wetland a natural existence? Does the canalization of the river present human control? Bathing in canals, on the one hand, does not create a domestic space in some ways. They do not appear in line with the rules of urban life, which the dualistic notion of nature/ society or city assigns as home to people. On the other hand, it does not draw wilderness because it is a quite usual and daily human activity among people who inhabit in neighborhoods next to these canals. Therefore, I investigate people’s relationships with heat and water through infrastructure as an intervention that can present material impact, unscripted occurrences as well as a way of existence that human authority cannot control.

The authors in the *Field Guide* argue that infrastructures are predominantly studied as networks that operate the circulation of things and people (Tsing et al. 2024, 38). They do not reject that this network-based approach can convey the material aspect of infrastructures. However, it is stated that studying infrastructures with a material focus appears insofar as it accompanies the network analysis. Moreover, the materiality-based approach, which the book adopts, is a relational one just like the network-based analysis. Accordingly, the analysis of the relational effects of infrastructures differs in the point that the latter is bounded by the planned function of infrastructures and their participants (39). What happens when human beings respond to the materiality of infrastructural intervention in the production of topography by diverging from the designed function?

I suggest that the phenomenon of bathing in irrigation canals in urban nature in Adana, mostly done by lower-class men, requires a materiality-based approach rather than a network-based one, since the bathers engage in the material properties of the construction instead of the designed function. This bodily activity does not align with the design (the canal’s physical properties leading to a risk of death), and the prescribed usage, namely, no active urban usage except for agricultural activity or only as a nice blue-green view in the city. In fact, their action is not to participate in the infrastructure. For example, this is what is done by farmers. The urban locals rather enact something else, which demonstrates the liveliness of the infrastructural environment. I am interested in how some people respond to the emergent environment either by their daily work, struggling ways, or simply finding their ways. For example, I want to look into who becomes oriented toward canal

water in which ways while the sun is up. Here, I use orientation in the sense that Ahmed (2004) uses: being oriented is about how to “find our way” in conjunction with coming to “feel at home” (7). After all, not everybody responds to the irrigation canals by entering them. While some jump from the top of trees, others fear them. In this respect, there should be affections pertaining to their extra-functional activity.

I do not necessarily investigate how water is delivered to prospective or non-prospective users in line with the designed function. I am interested in what happens around the infrastructural environment, or, as Stewart delivers, what Thrift states, “geography of what happens”, while the water is flowing towards the designated places (Stewart 2011, 445). As Larkin (2013) posits that infrastructures “generate the ambient environment of everyday life” (328). This study focuses on the undesigned social life around the infrastructural environment when the weather is warming.

Living in the lowland of Çukurova brings the pain of the extreme heat together with the attractiveness of water. Nevertheless, the canal water is not always appealing to everyone. For instance, women rarely engage with the canal water to bathe in, or fear of drowning is shared by some, while many young men find it enjoyable. Hence, this research looks at different practices and relationships built with and around such an environment. The expansion of the city of Adana, both in terms of population and physical world, ends up with the emergence of more intimate relationships with the infrastructural environment (Akbulut Camuzcuoğlu and Güler 2020, 1286).

3. AN ORDINARY TRANSGRESSION: LOCATING THE SOCIAL LIFE OF BATHING IN THE IRRIGATION CANALS IN ADANA

Figure 3.1 A scene of the irrigation canal, photo by the author



Everyone used to be entrusted to each other. Now someone from outside jumps into the canal. If you don't know how to swim, how will you get out?

Hülya

Reporter: *Aren't you afraid, son?*
Canalbather boy: *Be afraid? What are you talking about, dayı ya? Death is God's command. Our life-cinema is just beginning. Record!*¹

1. (Muhabir): Korkmuyor musun oğlum?
(Kanalda yıkanan çocuk): Korkmak mı? Sen ne konuşuyorsun dayı ya? Ölüm Allah'ın emri, hayat sinemamız yeni başlıyor. Çek!

3.1 Tracing Drowning: Procedures and Epistemic Distinctions

Drowning is a crucial moment and an everyday potential for the canalbathers, which marks epistemic relations circulating around the irrigation canal. It is a happening, a process that continues over seconds and minutes, and not something occurring in a single moment. Besides, drowning does not mean dying, at least for a while. The tempo of death is not instantaneous. Therefore, becoming the drowning one takes place not at one point, but along a time (a line). Remarkably, in the temporality of drowning, while the drowning one continues to do the act of bathing, the bodily existence disavows the act of swimming.

Drowning in the irrigation canals conducts relations of knowledge in at least two ways, which are related to bodily existence and the materiality of the infrastructure. On the one side, it draws a line between swimming and bathing activities, which, I contend, refers to knowing ways not to be hurt by oneself in the irrigation canal. On the other side, drowning reveals the cleavage between locality and administration of the infrastructure, such as knowledge about infrastructural existence pertaining to both the duration and afterlife of the drowning.

3.1.1 Stewardship of Drowning

The management of water encompasses the legal and bureaucratic presence of drowning and has a routine, although the drowning event is disruptive to the flow of infrastructural actions. Hasan, who works for *DSİ* (State Hydraulic Works) at the Seyhan Regulator as an operations technician, told the bureaucratic routine in the case of drowning:

Hasan: When someone drowns, they report it to the local police station. The owners of the body or the family of the drowned person write to the prosecutor's office. The prosecutor's office writes a letter. Regarding the water being cut off. They bring this letter to us. We send it to our superiors via WhatsApp. The superiors then have the water cut off from *ÇEAŞ*. We close the canal covers. After that, the body is searched by the underwater (team). Once the body is found, the underwater team reports it to our superiors. *ÇEAŞ* is contacted again. They release the water and inform us. We then restore the water to the canals in the

same manner.²³

Then, the dam gates are closed so that the canal space is made available for underwater search and rescue police officers, who are called *kurbağa adamlar* (the frog men), to find the dead body. After the body is found, the operation of water is returned to the regular state. Hence, public and private parties get involved in the stewardship of drowning. In fact, in the legal realm of drowning cases, in addition to *DSİ*, *ÇEAŞ*, and the police, the Metropolitan Municipality and *Sulama Birliği* can be summoned to the legal case. Hasan narrates, “They [plaintiff against *DSİ*] filed a lawsuit and won, so they [*DSİ*] are constantly putting up warning signs everywhere.” According to a news report from 2011, a family of a 14-year-old child who drowned in the canal in 2008 won a lawsuit against *DSİ* and Adana Metropolitan Municipality for material and moral damages, which set a precedent and encouraged other families, too. Then, *DSİ* began installing iron railings and fences to avoid compensation payments. *DSİ*, Adana Metropolitan Municipality, and *Sulama Birliği* (Water User Association) are the main institutional bodies that appear in the documents of the compensation lawsuits.

Drowning cases might surface legal conflicts such as the distribution of institutional responsibility or land status of the dead person’s residency, e.g. coming out of the classification of the area where the plaintiff’s residence is located as arable. The municipality is mainly accused of permitting settlement in the agricultural land next to the irrigation canals and of failure to take preemptive measures. In one of the court decisions, *DSİ* and *Sulama Birliği* could defend their positions through a statement indicating that they took security measures such as warning signs and barriers.⁴

2. Boğulma olduğunda saha polis karakoluna bildiriyorlar. Ceset sahipleri veyahut da boğulanın ailesi savcılığa yazıyorlar. Savcılık yazı yazıyor. Suyun kesilmesiyle ilgili. Bu yazıyı bize getiriyorlar. Biz de WhatsApp’tan amirlere atıyoruz. Amirler de yukarıdan ÇEAŞ’tan suyu kestiriyor. Biz de kanal kapaklarını kapatıyoruz. Ondan sonra ceset aranıyor sualtı tarafından. Ceset bulunduktan sonra sualtı bizim amirlere bildiriyor. Tekrar da ÇEAŞ aranıyor. Su bırakıyor, bize bildiriyor. Biz de gene kanallara suyu aynı şekilde veriyoruz.

3. According to the Chamber of Electrical Engineers of Turkey. *ÇEAŞ* (Çukurova Electric Inc.) was founded to manage the Seyhan Hydroelectric Power Plant constructed at the Seyhan Dam in 1953. In line with its original mission, the company received concession rights in the Çukurova Region through a Concession Agreement that encompassed electricity generation, transmission, distribution, and trade, all of which were exclusively under state control. The public share, originally at 51%, was decreased to 26% during the capital increase when preemptive rights were not exercised, and a portion of these shares was sold via the Privatization Administration (previously known as the Public Housing Administration) at the end of the 1980s, bringing the share down to approximately 11-12%.

4. placing warning signs, broadcasting warning news and public service announcements on local television, writing warning letters to all relevant persons and institutions at the beginning of the irrigation season for security reasons, and ensuring that there are warning signs around the canals where the incident occurred, double-sided barriers at least 80 cm high to prevent slipping

Figure 3.2 The pool or the 8 metre, the first area for channeling the river water, warning signs by DSI in Turkish and in Arabic with lines drawn over it, and the wires, some of them are barbed, photo by the author.



All these extra materials and actions purported as preventive measures procure a relief from *hizmet kusuru*, the service defect, which can be defined as “...deficiency in organization, structure, personnel or operation of any public service that the administration is obliged to perform...” (Sarica 1949, 859-869). Moreover, the families and the drowned person are usually claimed to be also defective, which is named as *müterafık kusur*, which means contributory negligence “the injured party’s negligent conduct causing damage to arise from or increase as a result of the wrongful act committed against the injured” (Osmanoğlu 2019, 112). We see a circulation of the defective action between the institutions, families, and the drowned person in the legal presence of drowning cases.

New arrangements furnish the canal environment to appear more precautionary, instead of eliminating of death. What is the problem with drowning cases in the irrigation canals? I contend that institutional problematization of the drowning phenomenon has shifted from loss of lives to entering the canal. Preemptive actions are relatively recent, circa 2010, compared to the years of the establishment of the Seyhan Regulator and the irrigation infrastructure (beginning in the early 1940s). Drowning in the irrigation canal is not new, but the proliferation of compensation payments is a relatively recent issue. Currently, warning signs and barriers are implemented to block people from entering the infrastructure, which is a kind of hindrance that was not present before. In 2016, Adana Governorship published a

and accidental falls, and railings on the nearby bridge to prevent accidental falls...

press release on the topic of “drowning incidents”. According to the press release, drowning incidents in *DSİ* facilities are reported despite the physical measures being taken. Moreover, at the request of the Governor’s Office, the Ministry of Interior has issued a statement clarifying that swimming or cooling off in the water at *DSİ* facilities is against regulations. Those who do not adhere to this rule may face administrative penalties under Law No. 5326 on Misdemeanors. Previously, entering the canal was not problematized in this way. In other words, nowadays, the act of entering the irrigation canal needs to be prevented rather than the drowning incident itself. In fact, when the problem becomes the act of entering the canal, the responsibility of not dying is concentrated more on people entering the canals or their relatives.

Erdal Acet (born in 1941) and Ersin Aydın (born in 1947) are among the most famous professional swimmers in Turkey who learned to swim in the irrigation canals of Adana. In an anecdote, Acet’s brother nearly drowned in the canal and was saved by a passerby who warned his father to “teach the children how to swim, otherwise they would drown.” (Talaş 2021, 509). Then, it is narrated that “Erdal Acet’s enthusiasm was further increased by his father teaching him to swim across the 5-meter-wide canals by tying gourds under his armpits.” (510). In this case, the problem was to die in the irrigation canal. However, the question is not dying anymore, but the act of entering the irrigation canal.

The shift in question calls for a discussion, Foucault (2009) also brings concerning mechanisms of security. He mentions that while disciplinary mechanisms aim more for nullification of what harms, security mechanisms “try to reduce the unfavorable, deviant normalities in relations to the normal...to bring in line with the normal” (62). Therefore, while the former’s base is the norm, the latter is related to (distribution of) the normal. He further suggests security’s techniques:

Here, instead, we have a plotting of the normal and the abnormal, of different curves of normality, and the operation of normalization consists in establishing an interplay between these different distributions of normality and [in] acting to bring the most unfavorable in line with the more favorable. So we have here something that starts from the normal and makes use of certain distributions considered to be, if you like, more normal than the others.(Foucault 2009 , 63)

I argue that drowning in the irrigation has become an issue that needs to be normalized and brought in line with the normal dying/ drowning by the institutional authorities. From a security-based perspective, normalization of drowning cases

could be done by mapping the normal and abnormal ways of drowning. Accordingly, drowning in the *DSİ*'s infrastructure is not a normal way of dying. On the website of Adana Governorship, there is an announcement regarding a ministry circular about drowning cases. Article 11 of the Provincial Administration Law No. 5442 is reminded, which suggests that it is the governor's duty to guarantee security. It is further stated that the Ministry of Interior "requested the governorships to designate some areas such as seas, lakes, ponds, and so on that do not pose a risk to life safety as 'swimming zones'". The institutional arrangements were not done to cease deaths and annihilate the problem of drowning, but to distribute places as swimmable or non-swimmable.

Foucault (2009) points out an example, vaccination, as a "provoking" action rather than annihilation of the disease fully (59). The iron railings and fences along the canals installed by *DSİ* reminded me of this approach. These preemptive measures may also provoke some to enter the canal, making it more challenging, so more attractive. However, at the same time, they aim at lessening the possibility of drowning by barring the entrance. Installing the fences and iron railings serves to sustain the infrastructure's operation without any disturbances: distributions, productions, and consumption relations of water. For instance, paying compensation in the absence of these canal accessories is a less manageable situation, which requires the "delimitation of the phenomena within acceptable limits" (Foucault 2009, 66). In this way, the norm becomes more "one should not enter the irrigation canal" instead of "one should not drown", which is related to the management of drowning cases.

The normal distribution of drowning, I think, is not only based on the statistical figures. In addition to systematic deaths and high monetary costs, there is a qualitative aspect of drowning in the canal, which puts the case distant from the normal way of dying. Irrigation canals are not regarded as a natural context to bathe in by the general public in the sense of being against the urban way of living. Those who do the activity are mainly economically and ethnically marginalized ones, such as the urban poor, Kurds, or Syrians. As I contend, this reinforces the need to manage the risk by trying to normalize not only the urban way of living, but also the urban way of dying. In other words, drowning in the canal does not die in an appropriate way for urban life, which requires getting in line with the urban context.

This discussion would be incomplete without mentioning the transformation of the canal environment, this time for the development of the infrastructure. The ground and/or the side parts of the canal were not necessarily made of concrete. The earth material was removed and the concrete texture was built; hence, the water would flow more speedily and the hands and feet would hold the side parts more laboriously

due to lubricity and robustness, which, I believe, has made the canal environment more risky for the bathers than many watery spaces, such as sea or lake, which creates conditions demanding much more risk management.

3.1.2 Friction between the Local and Bureaucratic Scales of Drowning

While sitting at Erdal's place with Altay, Erdal, and a junk-dealer who joined us to take a break from the scorching sun, Altay, as one of the old-timers who said he rescued more than 20 people from drowning, began recounting his memories of saving people from drowning:

Altay: I saw people gathering and starting to panic.

The Junk-dealer: Someone jumped and drowned.

Altay: Our neighbor's child at the bottom of the water... I came right away. I asked, "Where is the child?" "He went to the bottom." There was a *burgaç* (whirlpool) pulling him down... I saw the child lying on the ground. I grabbed his foot... We started spinning around in *burgaç*. They said, "Let's take him to the hospital." I said, "Don't take him to the hospital, he'll die if you do." We grabbed the child by his feet, brother. We lifted him up, drained the water from his lungs, and he survived... Once I saved two brothers at the same time. So I've saved a lot of people. That life experience is what led me to save this child here. Now, taking a drowning person to the hospital takes at least fifteen minutes, no matter how fast you go. When a person doesn't breathe for more than six minutes, their body chemistry breaks down... So, if possible, you should intervene there. The only thing you can do is empty their lungs... If you see someone drowning and you have an inflatable boat or a plastic ball or something that will keep you and them afloat, it's better to go in with that.⁵⁶

Drowning conveys epistemic pictures at the scale of bodily existence and materiality of infrastructures. Knowledge about procedural and infrastructural aspect of drowning unfolds a divergence between the canal locals and institutional bodies such as the police officers. In the context of drowning in a canal, the canal locals experience

5. Altay: Baktım insanlar toplandı çırpınmaya başladı.

Eskici:Biri atladı, boğuldu.

Altay: Suyun dibine komşumuzun çocuğu... Geldim hemen. Nerede dedim çocuk,? "Tabana gitti". Bir *burgaç* var böyle çekiyor. Baktım gözlükten. Baktım çocuk yerde böyle yatıyor. Ayağından tuttum. Çıkardım. Dönmeye başladık *burgacın* içinde. Hadi hastaneye götürelim dediler. Dedim hastaneye götürmeyin, götürürseniz ölür. Çocuğu ayaklarından tuttuk abicim. Kaldırdık, ciğerindeki suyu çıkartıp kurtuldu... Bir keresinde iki kardeşi birden kurtardım. Yani çok insan kurtardım.

6. By Junk-dealer, I mean a man who picked up iron and plastic items from streets and houses.

happening of drowning more than being acquainted with or witnessing. In many cases, they precisely underwent it or rescued someone from dying. The rescue act is articulated as if the routine of living close to the canal environment. This thoroughly common act gives insights into the locals on the phenomenon of drowning in a canal infrastructure. They know how to approach the drowning person, anticipate the forces of water directing what is immersed, and have a sense of temporality of drowning. Sometimes, the locals and the professional teams go in different directions in the process of undertaking the rescue act. Seda's account shows how the police's authority determines what to do with her drowning body, which disagrees with the local proposition. While the officers aim to prevent the drowning body from dying, the locals have a concern with the method that would not take the exhaustion into account:

Seda: They caused a lot of trouble there. I don't think it was something a police team or rescue team should have done. But they did it.

What did they do?

Seda: It was very high. You may know the other side. After the bridge, after the second bridge, it was very high above the canal... They pulled me out with a rope from there. Melih *abi* said, "This girl is already worn out, she's swallowed a world of water. Let her leave, let us flow." Of course, the team wouldn't allow it because all the responsibility was now his... But they shouldn't have done it. After they dragged me out of there, I felt terrible; I was ruined. I was torn to pieces. I had no strength left. ⁷

Moreover, the significance of the infrastructural lore, which prompts actions that might vary from the bureaucratic manual, includes the afterlife of drowning in addition to its duration. Knowing how the water and the bathers' body would behave in which part of the canal can furnish the canal locals to locate the drowning body. The standard procedure for finding the body in the canal, which the underwater teams conduct, might not work in every case. Yusuf tells the afterlife of a drowning case he encountered last summer, which he wanted to show me how they know very well the structure and architecture of the irrigation canal and where it originates through the regulator:

7. Seda: Çok çektirdiler ama orada. Yani bence bir polis ekibinin ya da can kurtarma ekibinin yapmaması gereken bir şeydi. Yaptılar.

Ne yaptılar?

Seda: Çok yüksek. Karşı tarafı biliyorsun belki. Köprüden sonra, ikinci köprüden sonrası kanaldan yukarı çok yüksek. . . Oradan beni ipe çekerek çıkardılar. Melih abi dedi ki, bu kız zaten yıpranmış, dünya kadar su yutmuş. Bırakın dedi, aşağı dedi akalım. Tabii ekip de buna izin vermez çünkü bütün sorumluluk ona artık ait. . . Ama yapmamaları lazımdı. Oradan beni sürerek çektikten sonra ben çok kötü oldum, mahvoldum. Her tarafım paramparça oldu. Artık dermanım kalmadı.

Yusuf: The children are jumping into the lake, and they are swimming there. We know the dam gates there, and we sometimes jump from that side, but we know which way the water will throw us, so we can jump back into the lake. But now they jumped from that side, and when the water did something a little strong, they panicked. The gates pull it over to the canal side. We told the divers, ‘Look, think of those kids inside those gates.’ They are like blocks. Our people used to go inside those gates, too. We can climb on top of the cover and sit there, but I’ve never gone inside, to be honest. When the divers arrived, they cut off the water here... ‘Look, those children did not come out of this *8-metre*.’ They did not flow away. ‘Are you teaching us our job? How would you know?’ They said those children must have flowed away. Afterwards, when the water was completely drained, it became clear that we were right, and the children came out of that *8 metre* because we know the lore of this place. Okay, you go and get your diving training in the sea, lakes, and so on, but you’ve never been in the canals. You don’t know these places. We told you that because you don’t know. It takes at least 20 minutes for those things to come out of the blocks, and within those 20 minutes, the body will automatically swell and become heavier because it has swallowed water. Because it will become heavier, it will sink to the bottom, and since there is no way for it to come back up, the area below *8 metre* is a bit high. When they pass 5 meters, they fall to 2 meters at the transition point. Since the transition point is a little low, they enter the lower part and stay there.⁸

Bureaucratic procedures involve techniques and knowledge that may differ from what the locals of the canal environment know. The socially located infrastructural knowledge or the “folk knowledge,” comes from daily experiences and observation of the canal dwellers, whereas the professional teams have instructions they have to follow (Harding 2004, 4). The professional-bureaucratic is not so flexible and adaptive to the local and contingent circumstances; indeed, it is authoritative over them.

8. Yusuf: Gölde atlıyorlar çocuklar da hani orada yüzüyorlar. Oranın kapakları, biz biliyoruz, biz de o taraftan bazen atlıyoruz ama biz suyun bizi ne taraftan atacağını bildiğimiz için mesela göl tarafına tekrar kendimizi atabiliyoruz. Ama şimdi onlar o taraftan atlayıp su da biraz güçlü şey yapınca panik yapmışlar demek ki. Kapak da alıp çekip kanal tarafına geçiriyor. Dalgıçlara dedik ki, bak o çocuklar bu kapakların içerisi blok gibi böyle düşünün kapakların içine bizim eskiden giren insanların da vardı. Kapağın üstüne falan biz çıkıp oturabiliyoruz da ben içine hiç girmedim yalan yok. Dalgıçlar geldiklerinde burada suyu kestiler. . . bakın o çocuklar bu 8 metrenin buradan çıkmadı. Akıp gitmediler. Bize işimizi mi öğretiyorsunuz, işte siz nereden bileceksiniz, o çocuklar akıp gitmişlerdir dediler. Biz sonrasında su tamamıyla çekildiğinde bizim haklı olduğumuz ortaya çıktı ve çocuklar bu 8 metrenin oradan çıktı çünkü biz buranın ilmini biliyoruz. Tamam siz dalgıçlık işini gidip denizlerde, göllerde vesairelerde eğitimini alıyorsunuz ama siz kanallara hiç girmediniz. Buraları bilmiyorsunuz. Bilmediğiniz için biz size söylemiştik. Çocuklar zaten o şeylerin blokların içinden çıkması en az 20 dakika sürer ve 20 dakika içerisinden de zaten su yuttuğu için vücut otomatikman şişecektir, ağırlaşır. Ağırlaşacağı için de yani su yutacağı şey olacağı için de dibe doğru batar, yukarı çıkmasının da imkanı olmadığı için zaten 8 metrenin alt tarafı biraz yüksek. Hani 5 metreye geçerken 2 metreye düşüyor geçiş noktasında. Geçiş noktası biraz düşük olduğu için alt tarafa giriyorlar ve orada kalıyorlar.

Contrarily, the local scale of drowning is reflective on the capacity and situation of the drowning body, together with the material qualities of the infrastructure; thus, people move responsively. In my opinion, while for the bureaucratic and administrative areas, drowning instances are dealt with to re-ensure the flow of production, distribution, and consumption relations, which makes drowning a rupture; for the canal locals, these instances happen as interference both in the sense of taking a part in the concern of the drowning body and of an obstacle in the act of bathing.

3.1.3 Claiming and the Sense of Knowledge

Practical and social operation of the gender order can make a woman refrain from claiming swimming knowledge despite the presence of seemingly competent past experiences. Seda speaks of her brothers as supportive in the case of bathing in the irrigation canals. This is one aspect of how the doors of the canal open to her, which is also not so common for other women in the neighborhood. On the other aspect, the way she lives her gender identity is significant that she and other people in the neighborhood describe her “like a man”, which makes her a befitting fellow in the canal, thereof. The visibility of her masculine qualities and social support could enable her to pass as one of the canalbathers. However, she did not continue to bathe in the canal as boys did. Furthermore, she does not demonstrate confidence in asserting swimming knowledge. If she does not know how to swim, what was her experience?

When I asked her if she had ever swum in the canal, she replied, “I have swum a lot.” I took this to mean that she knew how to swim, even in the canal. This moment was challenging for me in the sense that I had not faced such a situation in which one had an experience of entering the canal but did not claim knowledge. In this respect, she mentions a fear of water shared by many and speaks of it as taken for granted:

Seda: We somehow overcame our fear of water in this way. I mean, my brothers helped to overcome it. As time went by, we got used to it. There is always a fear because the water is with the current. I mean, no matter how much they throw me, there is a fear. In other words, there is a fear of not being able to swim alone.⁹

9. Seda: Biz böyle bu şekilde su korkumuzu bir şekilde yendik. Yani yendirdiler abilerim. Gel zaman, git zaman böyle alıştık. Ama yüzmeyi öğrendim mi de öğrenmedim. Çünkü hep bir şey var böyle su akıntılı olduğu için hep bir korku var. Yani ne kadar atsalar da bir korku var. Yani tek başına yüzememe korkusu var.

She further explains that she did not make an effort to learn how to swim because she feels bad when her feet are off the ground. Swimming knowledge becomes a contested issue between her and her brothers. For the latter, she actually knows how to swim; she can save herself, but she does not want to swim. Notably, she does not claim swimming knowledge since she thinks that she has no capacity:

Seda: It's not really feeling like not knowing. I'm swimming, I mean, I can save myself. But after a certain point, for example, I start to feel something. The thought of drowning enters my brain. Because I have no determination. You know, for example, a person enters a competition, a swimming competition. You believe that you can go from here to there. I don't believe that, because I know I'll get tired in the middle, and I'll stop. I get into the mindset that if I stop, I will drown.¹⁰

One of the crucial moments she conveys is about how she jumped into the canal to rescue her nephew. That act of jumping into the canal after the child becomes a revelation for her to question whether she knows how to swim or not:

Seda: I mean, I said I cannot swim, I was always saying that to myself, for example. I do not know how to swim, you will drown if you fall in, etc. It turns out that I can, in fact, swim. I mean, I could save a life.¹¹

Seda does not make a difference between the canal environment and other watery spaces in her case of not claiming knowledge. She recognizes that there is a point she cannot pass. At the same time, she acknowledges that some of her past experiences, such as swimming in a challenging part of the Mediterranean Sea, are among those that take courage. Being aware of her limited capacity leads her to utter, "I do not know how to swim," even though she has experience, including challenging situations:

Seda:...I say I don't know how to swim because I have a certain limit. I can't exceed that limit. If I do, I'll drown. I'm in this mindset. Tell me

10. Seda: Aslında bilmiyor gibi hissetmek de değil. Yüzüyorum bak, kendimi kurtarabilirim. Ama belli bir yerden sonra artık şey düşüyor içime mesela. Boğulacaksın düşüncesi giriyor beynime. Çünkü bende şey yok, azim yok. Hani bir insan mesela yarışmaya falan girer, yüzme yarışmasına falan. Ya buradan oraya kadar gidebileceğine inanırsın. Değil mi? Ama ben ona inanmıyorum. Çünkü biliyorum ortada yorulacağımı, duracağımı. Durursam boğulurum kafasına giriyorum.

11. Seda: Yani yüzme bilmiyorum dediğim kendi kendime hep bunu söylüyordum mesela. Yüzme bilmiyorum işte düşsen boğulursun falan kafalarına giriyordum. Meğerse ben aslında yüzebiliyordum. Yani bir can kurtarabiliyordum.

to go and swim a meter in the sea again, I can't swim, whereas I don't know if you have ever been to *Kız Kalesi* (the Maiden's Castle). I swam from the beach to *Kız Kalesi* (the Maiden's Castle). Who can swim? I don't think anyone would dare to swim.¹²

The signification of drowning appears to be the line between her experience/ knowledge and her *claim* of knowledge. The gap between knowledge and claiming that knowledge is suspended by her due to the proximity to save a life from drowning. In his works, Bourdieu (1990) suggests the practical sense as a “feel for the game”:

... encounter between the habitus and a field, between incorporated history and an objectified history, which makes possible the near-perfect anticipation of the future inscribed in all the concrete configurations on the pitch or board (Bourdieu 1990, 66).

The feel for the game, generated by the experience of the game, navigates the orientations, expectations, investment, thoughts, and actions; therefore, it creates a “subjective sense” (Bourdieu 1990, 66). McNay (1999) mentions this practical sense as a “form of knowledge” that is acquired through bodily experiences (101). In the case of Seda, her practical sense of swimming is not the same as her brothers. The encounter between her *habitus* and the field of watery spaces makes her have a feel for the game, which involves the anticipation of drowning. Rejection of swimming knowledge satisfies the durable dispositions of the gendered *habitus* in which women are not imagined as the subjects of watery spaces as swimmers in the neighborhood.

Her case indicates how durable dispositions are neither mechanical nor limitless. As a woman, her embodied past experiences with water, especially in the canal environment as a bather, signify how social practices and durable dispositions are enacted not in a recorded way, but in a prolific way. Unlike many women, she could bathe in the irrigation canals, which could be done with the help of her masculine existence. Nevertheless, these experiences could not make her one of the players of the canal environment. As Bourdieu (1990) states, “Belief is... an inherent part of belonging to a field” (67). She has a sense of watery immersion, one that is sometimes assertive in practice. However, the line of drowning, which she witnessed her brothers can easily challenge, curbs her from declaring such knowledge. Therefore, even though she could be a canalbather once, she could not expand it

12. Seda: ... Yüzme bilmiyorum diyorum çünkü benim belli bir limitim var. O limiti aşamam. Aşarsam boğulurum. Bu kafadayım ben. Bana de ki yine git denizde de bir metre yüz yüzemem, halbuki ben... mesela *Kız Kalesi*'ne gitmiş misindir bilmiyorum. Gittin mi hiç? Şimdi ben sahilden *Kız Kalesi*'ne yüzmüşüm mesela. Kim yüzebilir? Sanmıyorum kimsenin yüzebileceğini cesaret edebilip.

to become a canal swimmer. In fact, she activates bathing in the canal only in the state of emergency rather than on an ordinary day.

3.1.4 The Line of Drowning between Swimming and Bathing

As presented, Seda's case with watery immersion is so illustrative in locating the differences between swimming (knowledge) and bathing. Her case puzzled me by how one has experience of swimming but does not know how to swim. I realized that what I supposed as swimming might be approached basically as watery immersion, an act of bathing. In order to be an act of swimming, one should be able to prevent oneself from drowning, as I grasped from many local accounts. The criterion Seda's brothers suggest, "being able to save oneself", her lack of self-confidence concerning the likelihood of exhaustion leading to drowning at some point, and the emergence of her self-confidence through the rescue act she undertook for her drowning nephew, all feature the line of drowning in the divorce of swimming from bathing. In other words, being able to not fall into the drowning state or to cease a drowning instance generates a sense of swimming.

When I asked the local men how they learned swimming, one of the remarks they conveyed was through the risk of drowning: "by having experienced the danger of drowning". Besides, they talk about those who drown as ones who do not know how to swim. Some emphasize that one might know how to swim in the swimming pool or in the sea, but the canal is a completely different setting. Therefore, the swimming knowledge acquired in places other than the irrigation canals does not count as applicable knowledge, which results in the situation of not knowing how to swim in the irrigation canal. Yilmaz narrates the outsider position regarding the lack of swimming knowledge:

Yilmaz: You did not grow up here; you have just arrived. Now you know how to swim. You learned to swim in a pool in Istanbul. You say you know how to swim. You jump into the water here. But swimming here is a different technique... You know how to swim, you swim very well in the pool. You came to Adana, you're a boy, and you say, "Everyone else is swimming, so I'll swim too," and you jump in. The swimming you know doesn't work here. But someone who learns to swim here, in the pool, swims much more comfortably in the sea. But someone who learns to swim in the sea or the pool cannot swim here. These are mistakes. Most of the drownings are like this.¹³

13. Yilmaz: Burada yetişmemiş, daha yeni gelmiş. Şimdi sen yüzmeye biliyorsun. Havuzda, İstanbul'da havuzda yüzmeyi öğrenmişsin. Sen diyorsun ki ben yüzmeye biliyorum. Atlıyorsun

Nevertheless, knowing how to swim in the irrigation canal is also not an undying state. The position of the swimmer-knower, which can be said to be a position to know ways not to be harmed by watery immersion, might transform into the canalbather at any time, as Yılmaz states, “It is so easy to drown in this water”. Hence, the contingent position of the canalswimmer in the irrigation canal eventuates in accordance with the line of drowning. Therefore, the proximity to drowning qualifies distinct positions of the bodily existence in the canal, such as bather and swimmer-knower, which are related to the practical sense of watery immersion in the canal.

One of the most ultimate figures bearing the distinction between swimming and bathing is the suicide-bather. Some of the interlocutors mentioned those who wanted to end their lives in the irrigation canals. For Yusuf, most of the cases shown in the news media as drownings were actually suicides. He says, “Because they know this place [the irrigation canal] is bad, they come here to do this.”. Also, while Erdal was sorting out who would drown, he mentioned those who do not know how to swim, including his sister. Then, he clarified it as she committed suicide in the canal. For some, entering the canal alone is almost the same as committing suicide. Yılmaz states that “You do not go in alone. If you have any sense, you know that you are small. You are a boy. Going in there alone would be a suicide.” The equation he makes shows that entering the canal, bathing as I put here, does not necessarily mean swimming. Bathing activity done alone is even uttered as a suicide, which is the very action that aims a voluntary harmful effect. Suicide-bathing includes a non-accidental and intentional act of entering the canal, like those who want to cool off or play with the water. However, it is preferred not to play or spend time with, but to use it as a death zone. Hence, committing suicide in the canal requires bathing, to be immersed in the watery space, which, as I understand, is antagonistic with the swimming (knowledge).

3.1.5 The Lore of the Irrigation Canal

Being able to swim in the irrigation canal can be regarded not only as having the knowledge of swimming but also having the capacity not to drown in the canal. This axis connects with the question of who drowns in the irrigation canals. The line of

burada suya. Ama burada yüzmek başka bir tekniktir... Sen yüzmeye biliyorsun havuzda sen çok güzel yüzüyorsun. Geldin Adana'ya erkek çocuğusun diyorsun ki ben şu herkes yüzüyor ben de yüzeyim diyorsun atlıyorsun. Senin bildiğin yüzmeye burada para etmez. Ama burada yüzmeyi öğrenen bir kişi, havuzda, denizde çok daha rahat yüzer. Ama denizde, havuzda yüzmeyi öğrenen burada yüzemaz. Bunlar hataları bunlar. Boğulanların çoğu bu.

drowning happens as follows: if someone enters the irrigation canal and drowns, one does not know how to swim, regardless of whether they have previous experience or knowledge of swimming elsewhere, at any given time, and if someone does not know how to swim in the canal, they are most likely an outsider. Yusuf emphasizes the relationship between drowning cases and being a non-local of the irrigation canals:

Yusuf: If I were actually in charge of this canal, that is, if I were actively involved in the municipality, I would say this. I would have a sign made that says, "No entry for those who cannot swim and those who are not from around here."¹⁴

The non-local aspect can be also followed by Hasan's remark, "[who drowns] mostly those who came from Syria. Actually, those who settled later.", which links with the principle that one must know the lore of the irrigation canal. Yusuf expressively suggests that the children of the canal environment become the locals of these canals by grasping the lore, which he articulates as "we know this place's *ilim*." Here, the expression of *ilmini bilmek* can be translated as to know its science, to have its wisdom, or to have its knowledge. Another description of having the wisdom of the irrigation canal is done by undermining forces of the irrigation canal:

Yusuf: We have learned here, so now we are in a position to joke around with water, because swimming in the canal is very difficult... So, as I said, people who swim here, people who are used to swimming here, can swim very comfortably in other places. Of course, unless there is an extra urgent situation, I do not know, maybe at that moment they might experience shock in the water. They might experience a very strong cramp. They might not be able to save themselves. That's why I think people who learn here have an advantage. People who swim in the Adana canals. For example, let me tell you this: even if I get a cramp now, I have learned to do this. I immediately turn myself upside down. I take my foot out of the water. The cramp goes away once you get out of the water. Yes. So, as I said, by swimming here, we have learned how the water reacts to us. We have been around water since childhood thanks to Adana.¹⁵

14. Ya ben aslında şu kanalın, yani belediyenin şeyi olmuş olsaydım, belediyede işte aktif şekilde şey olmuş olsaydım şunu söylerdim. Yani tabela olarak şöyle şunu yazdırırdım: "Yüzmeyi bilmeyenler ve buralı olmayanlar giremez."

15. Yusuf: Biz burada öğrendiğimiz için biz artık suyla çok afedersiniz dalga geçecek duruma geldik çünkü çok zor bir durum kanalda yüzmek... O yüzden dediğim gibi burada yüzen insanlar, burada yüzmeye alışkın olan insanlar diğer yerlerde çok rahat yüzebilirler. Tabii ekstra elzem bir durum olmadığı sürece ne bileyim hani o an belki suyun içerisinde bir şok durumu yaşayabilir. Ne bileyim. Çok güçlü bir kramp yaşayabilir. Hani kurtaramayabilir. O yüzden de bence burada öğrenen insanların avantajlı olduğunu düşünüyorum. Adana kanallarında yüzen insanların. Çünkü

Both having fun with and making fun of the canal water show that canalswimmers recognize its power over their bodies and they act through the very situation of being acted on by it. This seems to be similar to becoming a subject of the canal in a Foucauldian way. As Butler (1997) conveys that “subjectivation” encompasses both “being subjected to power” and “making of a subject”, which also puts the body in a principal place (84). Thus, power both acts on and “enacts the subject into being” through bodily existence (Butler 1997, 13). In fact, perseverance of constitutive power requires having conditions to be repeated by the subjects (16). In the process of becoming canal subjects, practicing swimming in the canal water gives them enjoyment, knowledge, relief from the extreme heat, and provides the qualities denoting them, “those entering the canal”. At the same time, they encounter the risk of harm, which makes them act in certain ways. In this respect, Seda’s process of becoming a canal subject, by a double transgression; one is gender-wise, and the other is infrastructurally, involves a “restriction” or a process of “being subjected to”, but “activation” of a subject and bodily “repetition” pause to be ordinary (Butler 1997, 84). Therefore, she becomes “a woman who enters the irrigation canal in the state of emergency” rather than someone entering the irrigation canal.

Recognition of the power of the canal water and the line of drowning, sometimes, is uttered by promoting a cunning act:

Erdal: You have to be clever, you have to know how to swim well, otherwise you’ll hear about it on the news... You know how to swim, you want to get out, but you can’t get out... You can’t get out from the same place. Because you can’t get out, from the beginning of this canal to the end, I’m talking about our neighborhood. You need to know the entry and exit points, for example. Where are the stairs? Where aren’t they? Where is the rope? Where is the hole to hold onto? You need to know these things. If you don’t, you’ll just go with the water..¹⁶

Demonstrating cunning ploy is usually done to trick the other party in order not to be defeated by them. This is a skilled way of acting both to get what is wanted and at the same time, to ensure one’s safety. On the one hand, one should be crafty

mesela ben şöyle söyleyeyim size artık kramp girse bile ayağıma şunu öğrendim. Kendimi direkt terse çeviriyorum. Ayağımı sudan çıkarıyorum. Kramp zaten sudan şey yapınca geçiyor. Evet. O yüzden hani dediğim gibi burada yüze yüze işte alışı alışı artık neyin suyun bize nasıl tepkiler vereceğini de öğrendik. Çocukluğumuzdan beri suyla haşırneşiriz Adana sayesinde.

16. Erdal: Kurnaz olman lazım, yüzmeyi iyi bilmen lazım yoksa yani haberlerde falan duyuyorsunuzdur... Yüzmeyi biliyon, çıkmak istiyon ama çıkamazsın yani... Aynı yerden çıkamazsın. Çıkmadığın için, bu kanalın ta başından en sonuna kadar, yani bizim mahalleyi söylüyorum. Giriş çıkış yerlerini iyi bilmen lazım mesela. Merdiven nerede var? Nerede yok? Nerede ip var? Atıyorum nerede tutulacak delik var? Onları bilmen lazım. Bilmezsen zaten suyla beraber gidersin.

regarding the canal environment with its architectural design, the material used, the weather, the volumetric flow rate, coldness of water, the lichen on the concrete, the stairs, the iron bars at the edge of the canal, variations in depth, such as to know the *8 metre* (or the pool from which water flows to the canal), where the canal starts with an 8-meter distance down, and so on. On the other hand, contingencies of the body such as foot cramp should be welcomed without panicking.

Akıntı (the stream) and *burgaç* (the vortex) are among the most repeated and emphasized elements that one should be clever at. *Burgaç* is one of the movements of canal water in the form of fast-spinning. It pulls things into itself like mini tornadoes made of water. Both the stream and *burgaç* become commanding forces, which the bathers need to be authoritative for. These water movements give direction to bodies. While the stream takes the bodies more horizontally on the surface, *burgaç* acts like a circular vacuum dragging downward. One of the city dwellers I met by the riverside shared how he aligns his actions with the flow of the stream. He explained that there's little need for extra movement in the water since the stream carries him along. However, *burgaç* is something that disrupts the flow:

Erdal: *Burgaçlar* draw us in. When people who do not know, they panic because they are being sucked in by those whirlpools. However, if they do not panic, those whirlpools—for example, when we enter, when the whirlpool catches us, we dive, and it releases us from the bottom anyway. Because we know, we have learned. We know what to do and how water will do things to us. But when people who do not know, we unfortunately experience drownings and other unpleasant experiences.¹⁷

Knowing the canal's ins and outs in terms of watery immersion is the local knowledge that, on the one hand, makes the bathers insiders of the canal setting, and on the other hand, qualifies them as swimmers. Therefore, acquiring the lore of the irrigation canal shapes the trajectory of the bathing experience as well as one's position in relation to the infrastructure's community.

17. Erdal: *Burgaçlar* içine çekiyor. Bilmeyen insanlar girdiği zaman o *burgaçlar* içine çektiği için panik yapıyorlar. Halbuki panik yapmasalar mesela o *burgaçlar*, biz mesela girdiğimiz zaman, *burgaç* bizi yakaladığı zaman dalıyoruz, alttan zaten bırakıyor bizi. Çünkü biliyoruz, öğrendik artık. Neyin ne yapacağımı, suyun nasıl bizi şey yapacağımı biliyoruz. Ama bilmeyen insanlar geldiği zaman boğulmalar, şeyler yaşıyoruz malesef ki.

3.2 The Non-canalbathers

Who enters the irrigation canals? This is a question phrased in a spatial idiom, which can allow examining nuances, such as bathing and swimming, in watery immersion. Besides, rethinking the phenomenon as entering a space can allow deliberating on who is excluded in terms of location and question who does not enter this space. I approach this question both in terms of by whom the activity of entering the canal is done and of what kind of activity they do. Moreover, the canalbather posits a gendered position. In most cases, young boys and men bathe in the irrigation canals as the media representations portray them “boys entering the canal despite drownings.” In this section, I will focus on who is not within the locality of the irrigation canals in terms of bathing.

3.2.1 Hidden Gender of “Everyone” in Canalbathing and Swimming

The first moment through which I could follow the gender issue in the field was sparked by my question to the first headperson, asking who enters in the irrigation canals. His answer was, “Everybody in this neighborhood swims.” He did not specify whether boys or men swim. While continuing to chat about the bathing activity in canals, his sister Zehra said, “Since I do not know how to swim, [bathing in canals] it seems crazy to me.” After Zehra mentioned her lack of swimming knowledge, neither the headperson nor Zehra found it contradictory to his statement that “everyone” knows swimming. Who is everyone? Apparently, women are not the organic subjects of the activity in the irrigation canals and are categorically outside of having knowledge about it in the headperson’s discourse.

In most cases, young boys and men appear in the news reports or post entries about bathing in canals, while young girls and women are not visible. Therefore, before visiting the neighborhood, I had already thought about the gender asymmetry of bathing in the irrigation canals in the city. Nevertheless, when the gender dimension appeared in the conversation with the first headperson and his sister, it was the first moment that revealed the question of swimming knowledge. This was pronounced by Zehra as a lack of swimming knowledge in general, rather than being specific to the irrigation canals. As I learned later, this lack of swimming knowledge is shared by many women in the neighborhood.

In some cases, young women in the neighborhood are not encouraged or allowed to learn swimming in general, as in the case of Emel:

Did you learn how to swim? Do you know it?

Emel: No, I could not learn.

But, your siblings?

Emel: All the children know.

How did it happen?

Emel: They learned to swim in the Seyhan River by themselves. The Seyhan River was not much, it was not deep. The canal flows very fast. The Seyhan River was flowing slowly. They learned there. Even my mother learned there. My mother used to swim there in her baggy pants.

So your mother used to swim, too.

Emel: My mother was swimming, but I did not know how to swim. My sisters do not know how to swim either.¹⁸

While “all the children” could learn swimming, Emel and her sisters could not obtain such knowledge. Similar to the first headperson’s words, “everyone knows”, Emel’s wording “all the children” signifies her little brothers only, rather than including the girls, even herself. Although “everyone” and “children” are gender-neutral words, or they are supposed to be, the way they are used involves a gender difference in the context of bathing and swimming. These gender-neutral wordings give the meaning of a common experience, but women are hardly involved in it. Even though women are usually not included in obtaining swimming knowledge, or they practically do not learn it as men do, this situation does not disturb usage of all-encompassing wordings. The absence of women is not contradictory to the statement that “everybody knows how to swim,” since they are not among the imaginable subjects of bathing.

The process of acquiring the cultural capital looks more cloaked compared to the economic one. Therefore, the hidden way of transmission both exhibits the cultural capital as less a capital and more an “inherited competence” (McCall 1992, 843). In this respect, she argues that the gender aspect seems to be “natural” and “universal”; therefore, it is hidden, according to Bourdieu’s suggestion of the incorporated cultural capital as “the most hidden and universal” one (McCall 1992, 844).

18. Siz yüzme öğrendiniz mi, biliyor musunuz?

Emel: Hayır, öğrenemedim.

Ama kardeşleriniz?

Emel: Çocukların hepsi biliyor.

Nasıl oldu mesela?

Emel: Onlar kendi kendilerine öğrendiler Seyhan Nehri’nde yüzmeyi. Seyhan Nehri çok şey değildi, derin değildi. Kanal çok hızlı akıyor. Seyhan Nehri yavaş akıyordu. Orada öğrendiler. Annem bile orada öğrendi. Annem şalvarıyla yüzerdi orada.

Anneniz de yüzerdi yani.

Emel: Annem yüzüyordu ama ben yüzmeyi bilmiyorum. Kız kardeşlerim de bilmiyor.

3.2.2 Gender Difference in Canalbathing

The class difference between Seher, who could learn swimming as a child at her aunt's summer house, and the other women whom I had heard about is not so much significant but varied enough to allow her to use the swimming pool as a child, which gives her access to such swimming knowledge. Even though Seher is a swimmer, she has never been one of the canalbathers. As she said, she lived in a house very close to the canal for 8 years until she was 10 years old. However, her account shows that being "on her own" is not the condition to bathe in the irrigation canal. For her, the canal environment differs from other watery spaces in terms of safety. At the same time, her prior knowledge of spending time with water allows her to make a distinction between the canal environment and water itself. She does not attribute a fixed quality to the materiality of water; rather, she could differentiate the canal form from other water bodies due to her past experiences.

Knowing how to swim is not enough to bathe in the canal in Seher's case. The drowning cases furnish the irrigation canals as undesirable watery spaces to spend time in. She hypothetically highlights that the social presence of her brothers and their friends could have an influence on her in the way she imagines the irrigation canals as batheable areas. The social character of bathing activity also needs to be qualified; that is, to be influential, the bathers should be those who can be trusted, such as siblings. She further assures her brothers would not let her enter the irrigation canal. Where she speaks from indicates that she could know what her brothers know, but she would not do what they do in the context of the irrigation canals. She is aware of the different relationship with the infrastructure compared to her brothers, even presumably:

You have not wanted to enter the canal before? You have not done it before?

Seher: If my brothers did it, if my brother's friends did it, I would want to try it too. And they would tell me no, and I would not understand why.¹⁹

For some, the gendered aspect of canalbathing is so visible. For example, *tuhafiyeci* Nermin states that: "I had brothers who learned to swim here [the irrigation canal]. A boy is bold; he ties a rope and learns. A girl does not dare. Because we have a delicate nature." She adopts one of the most established gender dualisms, which

19. **Siz kanala girmeyi istemediniz? Daha önce de yapmadınız?**

Seher: Belki abimler yapsa, abimin arkadaşları yapsa belki ben de denemek isteyecektim. Ve bana hayır diyeceklerdi ve ben neden hayır olduğunu anlamayacaktım.

presents the association of women with fragility and of men with recklessness. Therefore, in the case of women, learning how to swim as a child and getting acquainted with watery spaces other than the irrigation canals might happen, especially when the socioeconomic conditions make room for it. In other words, swimming-related knowledge does not establish the conditions for women to access the irrigation canals as canalbathers or swimmers, which men can do.

3.2.3 The North-South Division and the Verticality

One hot day at noon, while I was sitting with the men playing *Okey*, Rummikub, at Erdal's place under the shade of the trees, one of the players mentioned *TOKİ*s (The Mass Housing Administration) in the Kalkan/ Selvi neighborhood, which is materially divided by the irrigation canal and at some later time legally separated from Çıkm neighborhood. He said, "If you go up to *TOKİ* and look at the neighborhood [Çıkm] from above, you will understand the situation of the neighborhood. . . This neighborhood [Kalkan/ Selvi] was a world unto itself, but when *TOKİ* came, another world emerged from within it." Before this expression, they were mainly complaining about the neglected situation of the Çıkm neighborhood due to the pollution and squalor on the riverside. He referred to two main things: one was the dismissed state of Çıkm, where the locals have been struggling against many urban renewal projects for years, while the other thing was about what *TOKİ* brought. I questioned the contrast between *TOKİ* residency and ones in the Çıkm neighborhood.

Together with the Mass Housing Law passed in 1984, *TOKİ* was founded as a governmental housing institution to provide public support needed to accommodate the housing needs. Under the AKP government, *TOKİ*'s role in the construction industry has significantly increased, especially due to the Law of Transformation of Areas under the Disaster Risks executed in 2012. *TOKİ* could conduct urban renewal projects, construction of new buildings, and relocation of city dwellers in the targeted zones (Güvenç 2024, 369). The *Okey* player's speech was articulating the high-rise *TOKİ* building as "another world within a world", which is not the neighborhood he knew once. The high-rise residency might be different in various ways from the low-rise such as the fact that the locals built the latter themselves. One aspect of the disparities, as I contend from the locals, is the proximity to the ground level. Altay said, "I do not like living in a flat, *apartman*. I want my feet to touch the ground, and I want this structure and texture to remain intact." On the other side, Yusuf, who lives on the part of Kalkan/ Selvi, another day indicated that people living in these residences do not go out into the neighborhood. This

being the case, I suggest that the verticality of the high-rise housing actualizes literal distance from the ground, which brings one aspect of the locality issue of the irrigation canals into being. Harris (2014) conveys how “volumetric spatialities” arise in discussions about the urban landscape concerning the vertical and horizontal underpinnings of topography (2). He suggests that the verticality approach should extend beyond particular power relations, such as military and surveillance technologies, and also be assessed through the anthropological inquiry of everyday urban life (2). Through such research, complicated facets of the verticality of urban space can be investigated. For instance, the association between dwelling in a high-rise or top of a building and having a socially advantaged position might not work in every case; therefore, he suggests that theories on vertical urbanism might not represent the situation for some locations (Harris 2014, 7). The volumetric approach to the city of Adana might bring up several focal points to be examined, such as the distribution of population based on ethnicity and class. In this research’s scope, I am interested in this volumetric way of thinking about urban topography in relation to the engagement in the irrigation canals. The architectural design of these infrastructures features long, V-shaped pathways that extend horizontally across the city topography. The high-rise residential buildings, which were planned and planted mostly on the northern side of the city, hold urban verticality and foster practices, views, and anticipations that differ from the social life of residential areas with less height. In other words, the expansion of the high-rise building landscape toward the northern side, which conducts the terrain more vertically, positions those city dwellers distant from the irrigation canals. This distance occurs both in terms of height and proximity to a canal environment passing nearby. The locality of the irrigation canal does not simply emanate from the fact of dwelling in the city of Adana. Many inhabitants of the city do not engage in the irrigation canals.

As one of the destination cities, many people migrated to the city of Adana because of economic and political conditions, which had an effect on the urbanization process, especially by replacement of the ratio of rural population by the urban population since the 1980s (Çoban 2013, 63). At the same time, Adana has undergone “neoliberal urban restructuring” since the 1980s, in which socio-economic and political mechanisms have further shaped the urbanization and navigated the distribution of social groups in the city, such as the poor, the wealthy, and the migrated (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008; Zorlu and İlker Söğüt 2019).

After the publication of Zoning Law No. 3194, the Law on Land Development Planning and Control, in the Official Gazette on May 9, 1985, which assigned zoning authority to the local governments, the master development plan for Adana, *Nazım İmar Planı*, received the fourth additional revisions approved by the Ministry of

Development and Housing on June 24, 1985 (Zorlu and İlker Söğüt 2019, 1164-1166). The 1985 plan aimed to open green areas and agricultural land to settlement and intensify urbanization in the north, which at the same time, boosted the vertical construction in this region (Çetinkaya 2009, 69). In fact, while the presence of the Seyhan Dam Lake attracted the high-income groups to settle in the northern part of the city, the southern part became the settlement area for the low-income groups (Özyurt 2009, 27-28). Therefore, one of the significant aspects of urban planning in Adana becomes the division of the city into the North-South axis, which has led to differences in urban experiences, such as intensification of the urban fabric through high-rise buildings in the north Adana. As Caner conveys that the northern Adana has mostly become the area above *Demirköprü* and the train station: “The last place was the train station. The city of Adana ended at the station.” Then, large-scale investments in the city, both government-backed and private, in the form of hotels, shopping malls, and mass housing have been made since the 1990s (Zorlu and İlker Söğüt 2019, 1173). For example, decisions regarding the construction of the Hilton-Sa Hotel in the Yüreğir district, Carrefour Sa in the Çukurova district, the Divan Hotel (1995), and the M1 Shopping Mall in the Seyhan district were made in 1996; decisions for *TOKİ* construction were made from 2005 onwards; and decisions for the Optimum Shopping Mall and the Sheraton Hotel in the Yüreğir district were made in 2007 and 2008, respectively (1174). All these contributed to the capital-oriented urbanization processes. Caner, as someone who knows the city well, tells the story of the construction of the second regulator bridge, which he connects with the visual presentation of the landscape in relation to those huge hotels near the riverside:

So why did they make that new regulator? What was its purpose?

Caner: To consider the visual aspect. When you look at it, when the water does not flow and accumulates, it looks like a pool. There are three or four hotels being built in Adana. Two of them are very large, like the Hilton and Sheraton. When they are built right on the riverbank, and the Regulator Bridge is placed behind them, water accumulates in that area. There’s even a project where they’re putting huge fountains in the area between the Stone Bridge and the Girne Bridge, right in front of the Hilton hotel, so that water sprays out from the river. You might still be able to see the fountain right now... It is considered opening the city to tourism for its visual appeal. By building a bridge there, water is being collected here. They’re collecting water in an area between the Old Dam and slightly ahead of *Taşköprü*.²⁰

20. Peki o yeni regülatörü niye yapıyorlar? Yani ne amaçla orada?

Caner: Görselliğe de önem vermek açısından. Çünkü baktığınız zaman su akmayıp biriktirdiği

As seen, the capital-oriented approach to the river environment brought further urban projects such as the second regulator bridge and canalization of the river by removing the riverbank through *ıslah* walls, which did not necessarily focus on the local social lives.

The 1990s, at the same time, was the time Adana further became a destination for Kurdish people who were forcefully displaced by the state forces (Darıcı 2009, 14). Where they resided in the city was usually reckoned the shanty areas in the southern part of the city (9). In the 1990s, urban development planning continued to be redesigned toward the northern side again (Özyurt 2009, 28; Zorlu and İlker Söğüt 2019, 1168). While mostly the northern side residential development was planned several times, the southern expansion occurred without such plans and continued to be in the form of squatter residency (Alphan 2003, 579). In terms of informal settlement, Adana differs from other metropolises such as Ankara and İstanbul. Particularly, workers who came to work in the agricultural industry bought small plots of land from landowners, who were their employers, and built their homes on them in an unauthorized way. These comparatively less productive properties were sold to agricultural laborers after the landowners broke them up into the smallest possible sections, which is distinct from the discourse of “‘occupation’ of public or private land” that is referred as *gecekondu* (Çam and Uygur 2018, 2). Therefore, another aspect of the locality of the irrigation canals stems from the socioeconomic division, which, I observe, goes hand in hand with the housing structures. While the northern part was thought in the scope of urban planning, Caner highlighted how the plan was actually not an urban planning:

Caner: He was elected mayor of Adana for 25 years. During that period, in my opinion, he facilitated the expansion of Adana towards the north with a somewhat unplanned structure that generated excessive profits. Expansion is normal, but it was unplanned. Without any organization, without leaving any green spaces, without widening the streets, in other words, Northern Adana was built later, as a project after the 1990s. But it's a mess... purely profit... Of course, they're building apartments. But you know, you plan roads, residential areas, green spaces, parks, people's living spaces, urbanization, and urban planning. They didn't do any of that, and then they opened up the lakefront for profit, for development,

zaman havuz gibi orada Adana'da 3-4 tane otel yapılıyor. İki tanesi çok büyük. Hilton ve Sheraton gibi. Onların tam nehir kenarına verdiği zaman, Regülatör Köprüsü de onların sonrasına koyduğunda o bölgede su birikiyor. Hatta tam Taş Köprüsü'nün biraz Girne Köprüsü ile ortadaki alana tam Hilton otelin önüne oraya da dev gibi fışkiyeler koyup oradan böyle nehirden suların fışkırdığı bir proje de var. Belki fışkiyeyi hala görürsün şu anda... Şehrin turizme açılması gibi düşünülüyor görseiliği için. Oraya köprüyü yaparak burada su biriktiriyor. Eski barajla Taşköprü'nün biraz ilerideki bir alana su biriktiriyor.

in those areas.²¹

By the 1990s, the squatter areas were also aimed to be absorbed into the formal urban planning because of the increase in land values (Güvenç 2024, 368). Especially in 2000 onwards, the public debate against the squatter areas was circulating, and discourse on the administration of urbanization became “fighting against slums and illegal construction” and pronouncing “urban renewal” or “urban transformation” of residences rendered less convenient for a “city life” in order to achieve a “modern city” (Çam and Uygur 2018, 8). The mayor of the Yüreğir municipality presented the arrival of *TOKİ*s, one of the first attempted urban renewal projects in Adana, as “modern housing” which would fuel a “reverse migration”. For him, in previous years, the dwellers of the Yüreğir district have been moving to Seyhan and Çukurova districts once their circumstances improved slightly. He anticipates that dwellers who have moved to Seyhan and Çukurova would return to Yüreğir back, the southern part, and settle due to the planned and organized urbanization that the municipality has initiated. For him, “modern-looking” residences suitable for urban living are now rapidly increasing in Yüreğir as well. In fact, Halil was one of the Çıkın neighborhood dwellers who migrated to the northwestern side of the city when his economic situation and social conditions allowed:

Halil: I’ve been living in the Huzurevleri neighborhood for 14 years now. Now, when our neighbors sold, I was stuck. When they gave me the money I wanted, I sold [the house]. I went to the Huzurevleri neighborhood, and it was newly built, recently finished in 2011. It consists of five blocks. I bought a house there with the money I sold here and there.²²

Hence, the high-rise housing structure concentrated on the northern side posits both a vertical urban life and socioeconomic distinction, which are among the decisive parameters in determining the type of relationship that will be established with the city’s irrigation canals. Those who live in “modern” (and high) houses would not be

21. Caner: 25 yıl Adana’da belediye başkanı seçildi. O dönemde bana göre çok plansız biraz fazlasıyla rant sağlayan bir yapıyla Adana’nın kuzeye doğru genişlemesini sağladı. Genişlemesi normal ama plansız. Organize olmadan, hiçbir yeşil alanı bırakmadan, caddelerini genişletmeden yani Kuzey Adana sonradan yapılmış, 1990’lardan sonraki bir proje. Ama daromaduman işte gidiyorsun. Hiçbir planlama yok, hiçbir yerleşim yok, hiçbir şehir planı yok. Tamamen rant... Tabii apartman yapıyor. Ama hani mesela yollar planlarsın, yerleşim yeri, yeşil alan, parklar, insanların yaşam alanları, şehirleşme, şehir planlamacılığı vardır. Bunların hiçbirini yapmayıp ve daha sonra göl kenarını ranta açıp, imara açıp, oralarda.

22. Halil: Ben şimdi şu an Huzurevleri mahallesinde oturuyorum 14 seneden beri. Şimdi komşularımız satınca ben arada kaldım. Kabaca bir tabirle söyleyeyim mi? İstedğim parayı da verince, verdiklerinde ben de [evi] sattım. Huzurevleri mahallesine gittim orada yeni yapılmış, yeni bitmiş 2011 yılında. 5 bloktan oluşuyor. Oradan, buradan sattığım parayla oradan ev aldım.

part of canalbathing activity, that is rendered distant to such a “modern” city life. Likewise, the spatial stigmatization of *varoş*, which signifies the urban poor “who are unable to modernize” and opposite of “‘civilized’ middle class”, those who engage in the irrigation canals by bathing get also marginalized in public discourse and reckoned outside “so-called city culture” (Yonucu 2008, 57-59). In other words, the neoliberal character of urbanization and socio-political processes, such as migration and forced displacement, conjoined with changing urban topographical dynamics. Settlement forms of groups which are class-based and ethnic-based marginalized get even more dissociated from the neoliberal urban settings, which, I argue, the high-rise housing crystallized as one of the concretes in this context in Adana. The vertical distance to the water bodies, such as high-rise residences having the Seyhan Dam Lake vista, can delimit the relationship with these spaces to almost viewing only. In contrast, a reduction in the vertical distance can broaden the experiential range and provide alternative perspectives apart from viewing, which can spring diverse everyday engagements. Thus, who remained at the top of the city fabric both economically, ethnically, and volumetrically, have not become a canalbather.

3.3 Route to the Irrigation Canal

How do people become canalbathers? How do some withdraw? The route can be a path or a contact that some pass by and some maintain. It can be from somewhere to elsewhere or in different temporalities. The extreme heat effect in the urban context is an indispensable part of the route where the locals find their ways to cool off, mostly through the community and friendship they are part of. Their bodies are affected by the scorching heat and the sun in summertime. Altay utters how it feels to canalbathe as “extreme”, “Something like a whim.”, and something that “affects you beyond normal”. Similarly, Yusuf describes it as “the effect of ice on fire”. The seaside is distant, but also it might not be desirable, too, for some who search for more than water contact. Similarly, public swimming pools may not be preferred because of logistical capacity or low level of satisfaction.

3.3.1 Difference in Externality: Being “On your own” as Capacity and Secrecy

The exclusionary gender difference embedded in the language is accompanied by unequal access to swimming knowledge in practice. For Emel, the boys could learn

swimming on their own, while she and her sisters were not allowed to. One of the common aspects of swimming knowledge that the bathers of the irrigation canals speak of is that they learn how to swim from their big brothers and friends, instead of learning it alone. There is a contrast between how Emel perceives her brothers' learning process and how the bathers talk about the way they gain knowledge. On the one hand, it shows that she does not know the learning process and describes it as a solitary process. On the other hand, her highlight of "on their own" can indicate not only the absence of a professional teacher and any external support, but also no barriers to doing it. As young girls, Emel and her sisters could not become one of those kids who could attain swimming knowledge "on their own." They had not stayed on their own, as their brothers had, and had not built such a relationship with infrastructural watery spaces in the neighborhood or at the seaside.

Does staying on your own come to be one of the conditions (for women) to acquire swimming knowledge? Emel talks about her mother's experience of learning how to swim in the river:

Emel: When the neighbors would get hot in the heat, they would go into the river with their shalwar and tops. They would cool off there, take a good swim. Then they would come back out. So it was for cooling off.

At what times of the day is this more?

Emel: In the evening. I mean, before the fathers come home from work.²³

The absence of fathers paves the way for women to be on their own, which could create moments for women coming together as fellow neighbors and swimming in the river. The way Emel talks about the popular time of the day to swim in the river puts the women, including her mother, in a child's position. She does not say "before the husbands come back home," but before "the fathers."

Furthermore, her mother's situation indicates that women are not strictly restricted from learning how to swim. However, this learning process might happen at a later stage of a woman's life and in a secretive way. The absence of an external influence in the process of acquiring swimming knowledge is expressed as "on their own" for men's experiences, while it becomes "secretly" or obscurely for women's experiences, which unfolds a gender difference in the epistemic relationship with watery immersion.

23. Emel: Komşular sıcakta sıcaklayınca şalvarlarının üstleriyle beraber girerlerdi nehre. Orada serinlerlerdi, içicene yüzerlerdi. Ondan sonra çıkıp gelirlerdi. Yani serinlemek amaçlıydı.

Günün hangi saatlerinde daha çok?

Emel: Vallahi akşam üstleri. Yani babalar işten gelmeden ondan önce.

Some women could have had a chance to spend time on the riverside in their childhood. Hülya told me how she and other children enjoyed playing with water on the riverside. It was an “immeasurable happiness” she felt as a child. One day, her grandfather was going fishing and she was following her with a mood: “one eye on the river, one eye on the grandfather”. The risk of drowning makes children feel under familial surveillance. Therefore, children in general might not easily stay on their own in some cases. I argue that the gender issue may become defining for the next steps and set the path for how relationships with water bodies will continue in the following years.

Childhood period in the context of watery immersion is not free from control; however, this is more based on safety issues, such as the likelihood of drowning. At later stages, young women are confronted with another layer, which is regulated by gender order. As a result, in the river setting, young men can learn swimming seemingly by themselves in an autonomous way, and despite the external concerns of drowning, which the family might impose, whereas women find invisible or veiled ways to do it. For example, the *Çamaşırlık* area might work to conceal the experience of swimming by the laundry work. Furthermore, it is narrated that some women swim in the river because of the extreme heat, instead of any other reason, which posits that the need to cool off can be regarded more socially acceptable. Referring to the childhood period allows speaking of the pleasure of watery space that young girls experience. For Hülya, her withdrawal from bathing in the river happened because she found herself aging; as she puts it, “when transitioning from a child to a teenage girl, we abandoned it [playing in the river], which there is no such thing as age in men.”. For Foucault (1978), sexuality does not exist naturally, and power does not repress and control such a natural existence (105). Instead of repression of sexuality that already existed, power acted in furnishing “the social body with a sexual body” through different ways, such as sexualization of childhood or hysterization of women (127). The early adolescent body has undergone an aging process, which differs from some other bodies in terms of gender dynamics. The aging feminine body has become more visible compared to others. Foucault (1978) highlights how power operates through and over the body:

...deployments of power are directly connected to the body—to bodies, functions, physiological processes, sensations, and pleasures; far from the body having to be effaced what is needed is to make it visible through an analysis in which the biological and the historical are not consecutive to one... but are bound together in an increasingly complex fashion in accordance with the development of the modern technologies of power that take life as their objective.(Foucault 1978 , 152)

Aging as a physiological process contributes to the sexualization of the feminine body, which enables power to act through and sets the order of things on it by, for example, intervening in experiences of pleasure in water. As a child, Hülya could enjoy the watery space with her peers. Then, she has become one who embodies and articulates the normative one, “Girls would not enter because it is *ayıp* (shame, disgrace, or dishonor) and because they would feel embarrassed. Wet clothes stick to you. Is that okay?” Hülya’s expression of *ayıp*, both as a feeling and retreat act, signifies a dressing issue, appearance of a body with wet clothes, and a daily activity, namely bathing in the river (Abu-Lughod 2016, 108). In this context, wetness makes the body even more visible, which, at the same time, is more sexualized in the case of young girls. When the feminine body gets engendered as more of a sexual body and gets more visible, the more the social sense is expected. The sticky wetness indicates and reminds that she has a body in the first instance, and that body should not be reminded in this way.

For Ahmed (2004), shame involves being witnessed by both a present and absent audience, which one adopts “the view of the other who witnesses one’s action” (105-106). Through the adoption of the other’s approach, one feels bad about oneself, who is the doer of the action. While Hülya describes the enjoyment of playing with water as beyond measure, she witnesses herself, her teenage body, from the others’ position, which makes her say that it is not okay. The immeasurability of happiness in childhood is a very accurate description of the situation with the watery immersion in the river. When childhood is treated as gone, happiness should become moderate and measurable in relation to the gendered ideals drawn for bodies.

In summary, there is a gendered issue concerning watery immersion in relation to external elements, such as the lack of barriers, surveillance, and the normative gaze. Even though young boys learn swimming with their friends and neighborhood brothers, they look like they are achieving skills on their own. Having contact with watery spaces or being able to maintain this contact happens for the masculine bodies by either making them challengers against the external restraints or those who do not have to deal with aging, which, in the case of feminine bodies, leads to the rupture between experiences of watery immersion in childhood and adolescence. When the issue is more than the question of safety, feminine-coded bodies can also be on their own in the sense of being hidden. Otherwise, they enter the water together with the husband and children. Therefore, being on your own posits being free from some barriers, such as the outside gaze presenting the gendered norms over bodies. Additionally, hiding the bathing act is followed by hiding pleasure discursively. The enjoyment they may feel is also covered by the need-based discourse, positing a justification for women bathing in the river. Therefore, for the masculine ones,

being on your own is presented as a capacity to learn swimming, whereas it becomes secrecy (of wetness) for the women.

3.3.2 The Path from Seyhan to the Irrigation Canal

Previously, the Seyhan River was so present in a canalbathing trajectory, especially for people who are now in their at least 50s. For young boys, the river could become the first encounter in a swimming journey. As shown, girls could have also contact with water in the riverside by bathing, but this relationship was mostly cut off due to gender norms. In the journey of swimming, the river's material features could facilitate the body to slowly become accustomed to immersing in water. Shallowness is the key quality that allows the bathers to discover what to do with water. The riverbank, the form that allows the water to deepen gradually, could provide the locals with shallow water, which is called *yuka* or *çipil* by some. For instance, Hülya describes spending time in the shallow water of the riverbank as a water game:

Hülya: It's not swimming, it's a water game. We would wander around in the water. My brothers would collect fish by throwing dynamite. There was no set; the water was dispersed. We would wander in the *çipils*.²⁴

For Fuat, it was not only a play zone but a pedagogical space for swimming. The gradual existence of the river in the process of learning how to swim, from shallow to deep water, was followed by another stage, which was the canal form as Fuat states:

Fuat: I learned to swim in the Seyhan River. The Seyhan River is like the sea. There were deep places ahead, and there were friends from the neighborhood splashing around in those deep places. They told us to do this and that, and we learned. So I learned in the Seyhan River. After that, I learned to swim. I transferred to the canal.²⁵

As Fuat's brother highlights that the river remains simple after a point. The irri-

24. Hülya: Yüzme değil su oyunu o. Biz suyun içinde gezerdik. Abimler balık toplardı dinamit atıp. Set yoktu, su dağılmıydı. Çipillerde gezerdik.

25. Fuat: Seyhan nehrinde öğrendim yüzmeyi. Seyhan nehri hani şey gibi, deniz gibi. İlerisi derin böyle yuka yerler vardı yuka yerlerde çırpına çırpına çırpına arkadaşlar vardı mahalleden onlar şöyle yap, böyle yap derken derken öğrendik. Seyhan Nehri'nde öğrendim yani. Ondan sonra yüzmeyi öğrendim. Kanala transfer oldum.

gation canal presents a much more challenging environment with its fast and cold water, which requires some level of competence. From the Seyhan River to the canal makes me think that there should be something more than what is lacking. If it is only about the lack of watery space, the locals who could access the river would remain satisfied with this experience. However, they moved to the irrigation canal, and they *transferred* from the river to the canal, while they could use the river water only. The newly elected headperson makes a clear distinction between the areas he preferred to swim in terms sense of fulfillment, for instance, between the canal and sea:

Melih: From the edges, from the bridge, from the tree... We have the opportunity to jump from the first branch of the tree, from anywhere here. And that's what they call adrenaline. Because you feel the adrenaline, it actually becomes more exciting. Now, we Turks don't like to swim too much in places where there is no adrenaline. Everyone prefers this place because the adrenaline is at its peak here. ²⁶

Nevertheless, the river factor is more specific to the location of this neighborhood and not consistent with every case in the city. Additionally, the Seyhan River has not been regarded as a watery space to immerse one's body anymore since it is found stinky and polluted by the locals. Those who learned swimming in the river stated that the Seyhan river has not been available lately. In other words, the path from Seyhan to the canals is not a common experience for everybody both spatially and temporally.

Trajectory of swimming in the irrigation canal is notably based on socioeconomic conditions. The inaccessibility to the seaside or highlands either because of social conditions or the physical distance, is put as a part of the picture:

Yılmaz: Now, in Adana, the sea, look at Adana, the closest place to the sea right now is Karataş. Karataş is 30 kilometers away from here. People are poor. They cannot go swimming in the sea. Where will they go? Children, especially here, that is, men except for women, children, men, they all learn to swim here. They come to these canals. ²⁷

26. Melih: Kenarlardan, köprüden, ağaçtan...Ağacın ilk ucundan, her yerinden atlama şansımız var bizim burada. Ve o zaten hani derler ya adrenalin. Adrenalinini hissettiğin için zaten orası aslında daha şey geliyor. Şimdi biz Türk insanları adrenalin olmayan bir yerde fazla yüzmeyi sevmeyiz. Burada adrenalin çok had safhada olduğu için herkes burayı tercih ediyor.

27. Yılmaz: Şimdi Adana'da deniz, bak Adana, denize şu anda Karataş en yakın yer Karataş'tır. Karataş'ın uzaklığı buradan 30 kilometre. İnsanlar fakir. Yüzmeye gidemez denize. Nereye gidecek? Çocuklar özellikle burada yani kadınlar haricinde erkekler, çocuklar, erkekler yüzmeyi hepsi burada öğrenir. Bu kanallara gelirler.

Hence, the path from Seyhan to the canal is, on the one hand, about the material qualities of the riverside, which grants engagement in the water by degrees. On the other hand, the proximity to the river conducts the route to the canal when other circumstances allow contact with water such as absence of pollution or water cut. However, this is not the general path to the irrigation canal. Socioeconomic conditions pave the way for bathing in the canal. For instance, some city dwellers learn how to swim directly within the canal environment, which is sometimes contrasted with a lack of swimming pool or seaside.

The river becomes an elementary watery space before the canal. Even in the presence of a watery space to swim, young men get oriented to the irrigation canal since they are not satisfied with the simplicity. Both the speed and thermal effect, “ice on fire” contribute to the desire for canalbathing. From-river-to-canal context exemplifies how young men experience it moving from easy to hard mode, which fuels the act of challenge and can prove competence. As a result, this conjoins with the aspects reinforcing establishment of masculine existence.

3.3.3 Unsettled Masculinities around the Irrigation Canal

Locating masculinities happens so visibly yet, at the same time, so complicated in the context of bathing in the irrigation canals. The fact that the canalbathers are not graced (anymore) by the public and some canalbathers quit the activity make the masculine quality of relationships with the irrigation canals in the form of bathing an intricate issue.

Seher describes bathing in the irrigation as “ghetto culture” which can be seen not only in Adana but also in the region such as in Mersin, Osmaniye, and so on. For her, it is a “symbol of transition from adolescence to manhood”, a “sign of courage”, and an “effort to prove oneself” instead of cooling off. She is suspicious of the drowning cases in the sense that if there were no drowning cases, they would not insist on entering the canal water. Similarly, Yilmaz mentions bathing in the canal as “a complex among men” which makes them enter the canal not necessarily for the sake of the canalbathing, but for the social status they would build:

Yilmaz: Look, there are three children here. Even if one of them says, “I’m scared,” if the others are going in, you’ll automatically go in with them. Women don’t really know this, but it’s complex for men. You’re going in, but I’m not. That’s a man thing. That’s the way it is. Even if I knew I was going to die, I’d still jump. That’s how it is. That’s how

men are. It's psychology. ²⁸

Fear is not absent in the local boys or men; however, it is not posited as a deterrent in the presence of a group of people. One does not follow that feeling, but the social call that drags the masculinized body to the irrigation canal. However, a fearful relationship might not be experienced in this way in each watery context because of the community that one finds or does not find. For instance, İzzet (75) talked about how a drowning case influenced his canal experience, "One drowned right before my eyes. We reached out our hands. We could not save him, he was gone. That's when I made the decision. I did not enter, then." Yılmaz, experiencing drowning himself, describes a different trajectory from İzzet's:

Yılmaz: [After experiencing drowning] Of course, I was scared at first, but now, do you know what influences and surrounds people? It's their friends. Now, you two are my friends. I experienced fear. You are my friends. I spend time with you. Now you have come here to swim. I have no choice but to go along with you. It is one's friends and surroundings that influence a person. ²⁹

It can illuminate the situation that being with a group of fellows can outweigh such a feeling. It is not always the case that canalbather boys and men are "fearless", but they appear as such. Hence, fear is conceived differently among men whom I could talk to. For some, likewise in the narrative posed in the news media, those who enter the irrigation canals act "fearlessly" since they do a risky activity. For some other locals, fear is not even a relevant aspect of the irrigation canals. It is not a question they have to live with in daily life. Yusuf is one of them, who presents himself among ones who know the lore of the irrigation canal or who reached the level of "making fun of water". The more knowledge and capacity the locals obtain, the less fear becomes a relevant feeling in the canal environment. To gain such skill and insight is sustained by continuation of bathing in the canals, which is boosted by the community effect. The (big) brothers, while they are "the elders" for the boys, the middle-aged refer to them *mahallenin gençleri* (the neighborhood youth),

28. Yılmaz: Bak şurada üç tane çocuk. Bunlardan birisi ben korkuyorum dese bile bu kadar diğerleri giriyorsa onlarla birlikte otomatikmen gireceksin. Niye kompleks olur. Kadınlar bunu pek bilmez ama erkeklerde komplekstir. Siz giriyorsunuz, ben girmiyorum. Bu erkek şeyidir. Havası onu bu şeydir. Ben de öleceğimi bilsem yine atlarım yani. Öyle bir şey vardır. Erkekler içerisinde böyle bir şey vardır. Psikoloji vardır.

29. Yılmaz: Şimdi ilk başlarda tabii ki korktum ama şimdi ya insanları etkileyen, çevreleyen şey nedir biliyor musun? Arkadaşlarımdır. Şimdi siz ikiniz benim arkadaşımsınız. Ben korkuyu yaşadım. Siz benim arkadaşımsınız. Sizinle beraber geçiriyorum. Şimdi siz geldiniz buraya suya yüzmeye. Ben de mecbur size uyacağım. İnsanı etkileyen arkadaşdır, çevresidir.

are key mechanisms to access the irrigation canal, which applies to both women and men. The brothers can be both recruiters and safety mechanisms who can be trusted. They act in a “fearless” way and try to teach how to defeat feeling fear. They develop methods to ensure safety, such as tying ropes in the iron railing and calculating intervals between stairs within the canal. Yilmaz states, “You tell me, come on, jump, we are here. Don’t be afraid, nothing will happen... The way to overcome fear is to live that fear.” Living the fear turns into a joyful part of bathing in the irrigation canal. The excitement and stimulation arising from the (cold) forces of the canal water are particularly preferred to other areas such as the sea or swimming pool since the latter is predictable and simple in the coastal form or form of still water. Hence, the big brothers not only inspire bathing in the canal but also impress what to enjoy. They become recruiters because they intentionally or involuntarily influence the youngsters what to do and what to feel:

Yilmaz: Many people drown. But mostly they come in groups. Our older brothers from the neighborhood, for example, ... older brothers too. I don’t know how to swim. So I jump in, there are some iron bars here. I hold on to them. If I lost control, my brothers would rescue me. That’s how the children of Adana learn to swim in these canals. Boys, of course, not girls... It’s very difficult. But there’s no other way to cool off. You have to learn because you’re a boy. You’re 7 or 8 years old. You’re with us in the neighborhood, and we’re older than you. You have older brothers... You came here with us. You have to come here, you have to go in. We tell you to jump in. We’ll save you, we’ll do something. You’ll learn here. That’s the culture. Everyone, all the boys, are in this channel... And they’re the kings of swimming. They do things under the toughest conditions.³⁰

Similarly, Seda states how one is affected by the another’s state of existence, “This is how you overcome your fears. When you have someone fearless by your side, you become fearless, too.” They are reckoned also ones who could save one’s life from drowning. Notably, the (big) brothers are so fundamental for canalbathing as Yilmaz highlights:

30. Yilmaz: Boğulan çok olur. Ama çoğunlukla işte grup gelirler. Mahalleden abilerimiz mesela, ... büyük abiler de olur. Ben yüzme bilmiyorum. İşte atlarım bir, şurada demirler var. Ona tutunurum. Eğer ben kendi kontrolümü kaybedersem abiler beni kurtarırdı. O şekilde yüzmeyi Adana’nın çocukları yüzmeyi bu kanallarda öğrenir. Erkek çocuklar, tabi kızlar yok. ... Çok zordur. Yani ama başka çaren yok serinlemek için. Mecbur öğreneceksin çünkü erkek çocuğusun. Yaşın 7-8. Mahallede bizimle, işte biz senden büyüğüz. Daha büyük abilerin var. ... Bizimle geldin buraya. Mecbursun buraya, gireceksin. Biz sana deriz zaten, atla. Biz seni kurtarıyoruz, şey yaparız falan. Burada öğrenirsin. Kültürü o şekildedir. Herkes, erkek çocuklarının hepsi hemen hemen bu kanalda, Adana’da büyüyen çocuklar kanalda mutlaka yüzmeyi orada öğrenir. Hem de yüzmenin kralını. En zor şartlarda yani şey yaparlar.

Yilmaz: There is no safety mechanism except for the big brothers who know how to swim... In this natural environment, your swimming teacher, your savior and your lifeguard are all the big brothers. ³¹

Hence, the authority of the brothers come from many directions such as knowledge and capacity they have, ensuring continuity to exist in the canal environment and block deaths. Gilmore (1990) conveys one sort of manhood, called "*hombria*," which diverges from economic and sexualized strength and reflects more "physical and moral courage" (44). In this way of manliness, the basis comes from being the "guardian of his society's moral and material integuments" (48). In the case of big brothers of the irrigation canals, one aspect of the masculine relationship is built around the act of protection against anticipated hazards in the canal environment. The protected is not "wife and children", but the fellow canalbathers (48). In fact, this act of protection expands the neighborhood fellows and is operated on situations when anyone needs them in the canal. Therefore, while the family or friendship relations might be significant when learning how to swim in the irrigation canal, there is no need for such a relationship for the activation of the rescue act. To rescue someone from drowning in the irrigation canal is an initiative every canalswimmer does without knowing who the person in need is.

I evaluate bathing in the canal as involving distinct lines: learning, acknowledging, and withdrawing. In the learning process, when the feeling of fear is more intense, the normative masculine codes deliver, showing a moral courage enough to bathe in the irrigation canal. It is not so good to say "I am afraid" or refuse to enter the canal because of fear. However, in acknowledging the ins and outs of the canal and body's capacity, when the danger element becomes more of a standard criterion to feel pleasure, the canalswimmers get involved in an ethical-practical courage. What I mean is that those who have a less contingent relationship with the canal are also positioned as having more capacity to exist in relation to it.

I suggest that they are entangled with the power of acting to prevent a death incident, apart from a moral fearlessness or bravery, which is completely based on a duty to be carried out. To illustrate how bodily capacity is significant in the rescue act, I bring a case of suicide-bathing. She tried twice. In the first one, bystander neighbor-brothers could intervene and save her from drowning. The second time, Erdal said that there were no people witnessing her drowning except an old man who could not punch his way out of a paper bag. Similarly, in the incident where Seda took the initiative to save her nephew, she stated "I am glad my brothers got

31. Yilmaz: There is no safety mechanism except for the big brothers who know how to swim... In this natural environment, your swimming teacher, your savior and your lifeguard are all the big brothers.

me into the canal back then. If they had not, I would not have been able to save a life.” Even though she found herself drowning at the end, the past experience in the canal could make her move for a rescue act, which her nephew’s aunt stated “If it were me, I would not be able to jump. How did you dare?”. Being courageous is a key issue in canal bathing, as it relates to both learning how to swim and to the rescue act. Similar to what Gilmore (1990) posits as “man-the-protector”, to become man-the-rescuer is an act of honor, which I believe, has to do with building and maintaining a competent bodily existence around (not only within) the irrigation canal (47).

The other aspect that qualifies the masculinities pertaining to the irrigation canal not as being absolute, but vacillating, emerges in the withdrawal stories of the canalbathers. The withdrawal, which can be defined as one of the canalbathing processes, happens or is regarded in various contexts such as after marriage, military service, property ownership, having a child, and specific incidents such as losing a relative. Feride mentions obtaining a job and possessing a house, which led her boys to retreat from canalbathing that she associates with being ignorant.

Erdal talked about how he has reduced his time entering the canal and has made himself less exposed:

Erdal: So, most young people in the neighborhood cool off in the canal. We’re past that age now, we don’t go to the canal anymore. We used to go there all the time, but now we have children. I still go there, but not like I used to. I used to go there every day.

What has changed?

Erdal: Now we’re married, settled down, have a family, have children. You can’t go wherever you want, whenever you want. Now, if there are three months of summer, that’s maybe 10 or 15 times in those three months. And that’s in the evenings, when no one is around... It requires a bit of maturity, you know. So, a man walking around the neighborhood in shorts, especially an older man, isn’t appropriate. Going to the beach is different, but not in the neighborhood. It’s inappropriate.³²

After becoming one of those who withdraw, the language changes to one that signifies

32. Erdal: Yani ekseri gençlerin mahallenin çocuklarının yaptığı şey, kanalda serinlemek. Bizim yaşımız geçti artık, biz kanala gitmiyoruz. Eskiden biz de kanaldan çıkmıyorduk ama şimdi çocuk var. Yine giriyorum da, eskisi gibi değil. Eskiden her gün giriyordum.

Ne değişti?

Erdal: Şimdi evlendik, barklandık, çoluk var, çocuk var. İstedğin zaman, istediğin her yere gidemiyorsun. Şimdi atıyorum 3 ay yaz varsa, o 3 ay yazın içinde yani toplansan 10 kere, 15 kere. O da akşamları yani, kimse olmadığı zaman... Biraz olgunluk gerektiren bir şey çünkü. Yani sadece şortla mahallenin içinde bir erkeğin gezmesi yani yaşça büyük bir erkeğin gezmesi hoş değil önce. Hani denize falan gidersen o ayrı bir şey ama mahalle içinde olmuyor. Ayıp.

the canalbathers as the neighborhood children and youth. Getting married and having children put him more on the side of maturity, which is contrasted with the canalbathing activity. Moreover, he finds the exposure of an aged man's body wandering around inappropriate, even *ayyp* (a disgraceful situation). Revealing the body in this way becomes *ayyp* because it happens in the neighborhood context, where it is not supposed to exist in this way. The social sense, which comes from marriage and parental status in this case, is also brought up in Seda's narrative "after reaching a certain age, no one considers it appropriate for themselves. Why? because you are married and have children."

Therefore, they could not generate consent among the broader social order. The activity is not within the norms of city life. Their bathing activity could not be involved in discourse as hegemonically. In fact, their class position and lack of legal authority made them marginalized in the news media (Demetriou 2001, 342). Representation of the bathers appears as irrational, sometimes childish, or ridiculous. In this way, they could produce a counterpublic that is at odds with the general public. In his work, *The Publics and Counterpublics*, Michael Warner (2005) explores the idea of the public. He communicates that the public is defined as "people in general, such as the city or a community," or "social totality," which is thought to encompass everyone (65). However, there are counterpublics created in an edgy way in relation to the normative codes of the social environment. The way they relate to the irrigation canal shows the layers of masculinities they are involved in. Their nonhegemonic masculine activity diverges from the institutional and common rational order. On the one hand, if the statistics speak of a pattern of deaths in the canal, the legitimate reason recommends not to enter the irrigation canals. However, they appear to jump into the hazard zone on the news reports. On the other hand, for the canal swimmers, those who die in the irrigation canals are not the locals of the canals. Death can only be a possibility for the non-swimmers of the irrigation canals, if not a suicide or an extraordinary situation. They both act and present themselves as the ones who are so able that they cannot be affected by the external factors. Moreover, the ability to act in confidence and self-reliance is accompanied by the capability to do something against authority. The municipality officers or the police warn young men around the canals since they are not allowed to enter. As Connell and Messerschmidt denote, economically less powerful social position, violation of the rules, and claiming authoritative approach deviating from the infrastructure's designed function reinforce their masculine relationship with the canal environment, which might be also named "protest masculinity" (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, 847-848).

In the transition from childhood to adolescence, bodily changes do not prevent

them from watery immersion. The aging process does not apply to them like in the feminized body. They obtain an age through these socioeconomic changes instead of the flesh-wise alterations. When these changes happen, they bring some sort of social status, such as a married man, man with children, a man with a job, and so on, which makes them feel and think accordingly. They strive to prove other qualities required for their masculine presence instead of proving that they are fearless men who challenge death in the irrigation canals. In fact, they have already done it. They do not necessarily cease to bathe in the canal, but they do not focus on demonstration of how they are such challengers. Indeed, some began to prefer entering the canal in the evening or alone, when they would be less visible. In other words, for some canalbathers, showing off canalbathing does not align with their masculine recognition anymore. Besides, canalbathing might be considered even a damaging activity over their social recognition as a respectful man like in the commonsense representation.

Different processes of canalbathing at which various ways of masculinities are enacted, such as learning, acknowledging, and withdrawing, are not chronological. Not every boy becomes a competent canal swimmer, or not every man withdraws from the irrigation canal after such social changes. Rather, these indicate swinging movements of socially recognized masculinities around the irrigation canal. While performing a “fearless” boy feeds the masculine relationship in its right track within the community, the general public deems it absurd. The competency acquired from swimming experience, especially the rescue act undertaken by the canal people, furnishes them with wisdom and physical power. Without losing this proven capacity, some internalize the social codes of the outside public and re-arrange their relationship with the canals. There is a kind of route to the irrigation canal, which is both access to and direction to the agricultural infrastructure which was not constructed for such a local engagement. It usually starts from childhood in which the boys and young men challenge fear of drowning in the canal water, look “fearless” like the big brothers, acknowledge their capacity and forces of the canal water, then establish themselves as canal swimmers who can also rescue anyone from drowning in the canal. After getting involved in other social passages, some quit or lower the intensity of being the big brother, and head toward a more mature man.

Consequently, drowning moments reveal how the administrative and local scales differ from each other in approaching the engagement in the irrigation canals. While the legal and bureaucratic avenues aim for a security-based relationship between the infrastructure and its unexpected participants, the locals regard the relationship as more of a safety issue. For instance, the locals prioritize the well-being of the drowning or trying to cancel the possibility of death by using ropes, showing the

tricks, and watching over each other within the community. Furthermore, a security-based approach constitutes drowning incidents more of a risk issue and frames a risk management. As Beck (2000) suggests that the concept of risk is about “perception” of the anticipated hazard that defines practices and ideas on it (213). I convey that there is no totality of perception of risk among the locals regarding drowning in the irrigation canal. Some evaluate the issue through the lore of the infrastructure, that is, if someone knows it, it is not a risky thing to bathe in the canal. This idea is even followed by an argument that many death cases are resulted from suicide-bathing instead of involuntary death. However, some others acknowledge the risk of drowning and put friends and big brothers as the only safety mechanisms.

What drowning reveals is also the differentiation of swimming knowledge from bathing activity. To know how to swim in the canal is a very particular capacity, which is not the same as swimming in the sea or a swimming pool. To swim in the canal is about being able not to drown in the canal water, whereas bathing is to be immersed in the water body in general. There are locals of the irrigation canals, the canalbathers as I put, and the non-canalbathers who might or might not know how to swim in other places, but do not engage in this environment. In many cases, women are significantly not among the canalbathers, even though there are some who could access and experience canalbathing. The socioeconomic division of the city brings up other non-canalbather positions. The class-based and ethnic-based marginalization of urban dwellers are spatially reinforced by the north-south separation, which mostly reflects itself in the material qualities of housing.

The material proximity of the irrigation canals in daily life is accompanied by these social positions. Following the marginalization of social positions such as being a Kurdish, Syrian and/ or working-class immigrant, the act of bathing in the irrigation canal is further marginalized and found inappropriate for urban life. Therefore, the route to the irrigation canal, becoming a canalbather is related to being a part of a specific social community. In addition to the painful heat and socioeconomic conditions, one needs to have a masculine link to engage in canalbathing, which is both a safety and accessibility issue. This masculine feature is not praised by the social sense of the canal outsiders. In fact, bathing in the canal might also be marginalized internally by those who become positioned less proximate, the withdrawers. Thus, encounters between the irrigation canals and the local men under hot weather conditions create relationships out of both need and enjoyment, which cannot produce an agreement with urban social life in general. Neither having contact with water nor dying in the canal is included in the social codes. The hegemonic way of living and dying with-in the city does not encompass this way of relating with the agricultural infrastructures. In other words, the urban social order places bathing and drowning

in the canal as marginalized instances, although the very physical existence of the infrastructures are located within the city. These happenings reveal and remind the existence of these robust and age-old constructions, which become part of the city topography. Moreover, it is so ordinary and transgressive.

Canalbathing as an ordinary transgressive act does not destroy borders established by technical design, functional systems, or property regimes. Instead, it reveals how these borders come to exist and being kept. As Foucault (1978) argues that transgression acknowledges or asserts the limited situation, contingencies in the irrigation canal, rather than “victory over the limit” (35). On the one hand, the transgressive act exposes, like “a flash of lightning” as Foucault (1978) puts, how limits of the canal emerge, in the sense of social risk and legal ground (35). On the other hand, it presents how canals are bathable spaces in limited ways, which confronts the naturalization of danger-border of the canals. Canalbathing is also ordinary, as Kathleen Stewart (2007) unfolds, that is related to “...practical knowledge, scene of both liveness and exhaustion, a dream of escape...” (1).

4. CHILDCARE AND DOMESTIC WORK IN RELATION TO THE INFRASTRUCTURAL WATERY SPACES

Figure 4.1 The *Islah* wall (the embankment) and the emergent wetland, photo by the author



For example, you've seen that park, right? It used to be all trees. It was a very beautiful area. Have they made it more beautiful now? I don't think so. Because it used to be much more fun. Everyone was there. The whole neighborhood would go there on Sundays. There's no need for a new area. We had our old dam. We would go there. We would take our ball, our rope, and our picnic basket—whether we were going to grill or make raw meatballs—and go there. We would stay there from morning until evening. (Seda) ¹

1. Mesela şu parkı görmüşsündür değil mi? Orası hepsi ağaçlıktı daha önce. Çok güzel bir alandı. Şu an daha mı güzel hale getirdiler? Bence getirmediler. Çünkü eskiden çok daha eğlenceliydi. Herkes oradaydı. Bütün mahalleli pazar günü gidecek. Yeni alana ihtiyaç yok ki. Eski barajımız vardı. Giderdik oraya. Topumuz, ipimiz, pazar sepetinin içine mangal mı yapılacak, çiğköften mi yoğurulacak alırdık giderdik. Sabahtan akşama kadar oradaydık. (Seda)

When you walk straight from the dam gate, you reach the walking trail. If you continue straight on the walking trail, the path cuts through the forest at a certain point. You can continue after the forest, as there is a bridge at the top. When you cross over, you reach Dilberler Sekisi. There, you jump directly into class. You easily enter a neighborhood where people live in fully scenic apartments, in much better conditions than us. We go there to feed the cormorants. This is a very nice activity for us. So, I can take my daughter to an activity on foot with my own means, without a penny in my pocket. I love this place. This is how our relationship with water, our family relationship is like this. (Seher) ²

Reaching out to women in the neighborhood was not easy. At one point, I realized that I did not engage in any in-depth conversations with women during the fieldwork. I wondered about what “women’s experience” would unfold, might otherwise be inaccessible, regarding infrastructural watery spaces (Smith 1990, 12). Some were about to leave their home to pick their children up from school. Some were waiting for their children who were about to arrive home, since they needed to prepare food for them. One was sweeping in front of her house with a straw broom. Even though the initial focus of the research was the bathing activity only, I decided not to limit the investigation of the everyday life of the infrastructure to bathing in the irrigation canals. Principally, approaching the infrastructures through their material and environmental aspects invites an examination that is thorough enough to look at questions beyond “young men bathing in the irrigation canals”.

Presenting gender dynamics related to the infrastructural environment in this research was not a straightforward project, even though it appears to be the most vivid and obvious one among other aspects of the research. Not surprisingly, it is so much everywhere and intertwined with many issues, such as swimming competency and knowledge. At first, I planned to spare a space for the gender issues going on. Then, I prefer not to set a separate place for the discussion of the gender issue since gender dynamics become hard to compartmentalize in some parts of research, such as bathing experience. According to McCall (1992), gendered relations can be investigated through three aspects: gender symbolism, gender organization, and gender identity (837). The first mainly refers to the gender expressions based on inconsistent hegemonic dualisms, which actually do not apply to every experience. Gendered organization conveys how gender is integral to the social conduct of institutions, such as the division of labour in the family and work. The third facet can be

2. Baraj kapağının yanından dümdüz gittiğinizde yürüyüş parkuruna ulaşıyorsunuz. Yürüyüş parkuruna dümdüz devam ettiğinizde belli bir yerde ormanda yol kesiliyor. Ormandan sonra devam edebilirsiniz, üst tarafta zaten köprü. Karşıya geçince Dilberler Sekisi’ne ulaşıyorsunuz. Orada zaten direkt sınıf atlıyorsunuz. Orada tamamen manzaralı apartmanlarda yaşayan, bizden çok daha iyi durumlarda olan insanların olduğu bir semte geçiyorsunuz çok kolay bir şekilde. Orada karabatak beslemeye gidiyoruz. Bu bizim için çok güzel bir etkinlik yani. Yani ben kızımı kendi imkanlarımla yürüyerek cebimde beş para olmadan bir etkinliğe götürebiliyorum. Ben burasını çok seviyorum suyla bizim olan ilişkimiz, ailesel ilişkimiz bu şekilde. (Seher)

said about the multiplicity of experiences regarding femininities and masculinities (McCall 1992, 837).

In this chapter, the focus is mainly on the social organization of everyday life, the work that women take on, such as childcare and the laundry. Nevertheless, other aspects of gender order are interwoven with the organization of work. For instance, one hegemonic dualism, women are assigned to a “closeness to nature” (Alaimo 2000, 2). Naturalization of women paves the way for the embodiment of the gendered assignments of work, responsibilities, and expertise; gendered distribution of feelings; and unequal socioeconomic conditions that contribute to various environmental effects. The embodiment of gender norms brings up the constitution of the subject with no determination (McNay 1999, 99). McNay (1999) presents the concept suggested by Bourdieu, *habitus*, to discuss the notion of embodiment. Bourdieu (1990) posits the making of the social corporeal on bodies as *habitus*, which refers to:

...systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures... which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. (Bourdieu 1992, 53).

In this sense, it can be said that gender relations are inscribed on bodies in a regular way that is not necessarily operated at the grand institutional level. Some criticized the concept of embodiment with respect to *habitus* in Bourdieu’s works since it is found to be deterministic and static (McNay 1999, 100). However, he explicitly describes it as an “acquired system of generative scheme” that is the output of the structure and that conducts the social practice in a non-mechanical way. He differentiates the limited generative quality of the social practices from mechanical determinism. *Habitus* is introduced as a prolific capacity through which thoughts, perceptions, and actions are generated within the constraining conditions produced historically and socially (Bourdieu 1990, 55). McNay (1999) further argues that the embodiment of gender norms is generally thought by its repetitive quality, which signifies how the temporality aspect of gender issues is mostly neglected. In addition to repetition, “creative anticipation of future uncertainty” is suggested, which diverges from “uniformity of gender norms” (McNay 1999, 102).

Division of labour in daily life emerges as one of the facets of gendered relationships with watery spaces. The work women are expected to do is similar to the general gendered division, which assigns the childcare and the housework to women. Women

act as caregivers and housewives, which, however, does not need to be called gender roles. According to critiques of the concept of social role, at least three drawbacks arise from using it as an analytical tool to examine social relations. Some argue that analysing gender via the concept of role disregards the power structures and gender hierarchies (Krais and William 2000, 55). The gender issue is beyond the gender difference, which the “gender role” approach might not satisfy its indication. Secondly, for some, the concept of social role calls for particular situations, such as family, work, or school, in which one’s other roles are dismissed in other settings. However, gender is not reserved for particular settings to be crucial. In fact, it remains prevailing in each situation. Thirdly, some argue that the concept of role presumes a static action taken by people, which eliminates the angle of the social encounters affecting social action (55). Bourdieu (2013) also introduces how practice should not be understood as a “mechanical reaction” and that it is not a “mechanical functioning of preestablished assemblies, ‘models,’ or ‘roles’” (73). His emphasis goes twofold: the disqualification of the mechanical understanding from practice is followed by the warning that it does not mean offering a kind of free will with a constitutive power (Bourdieu 2013, 73). Therefore, the caregiver can be regarded as social (dis)positions inscribed in women’s lives from which they think, act, go back, react, and feel. As caring and cleaning bodies, they enact or pause some codes in relation to the riverside or canalside.

Farhana Sultana (2010) calls for attention to the gender aspect of waterscapes as she significantly conveys in relation to the disaster context (46). She points out how gender-based inequalities fuel women’s vulnerable position against water-related hazards like floods. She further shows how water management issues intersect with women’s experience (Sultana 2010, 50). Notably, she emphasizes how not all women live and act in the same way in the face of disastrous waterscapes (Sultana 2010, 46). As part of this research, I also investigated how relationships with the infrastructural watery spaces, such as the canalside and riverside, are gendered and how structural aspects of gender are not mechanically lived. For example, it cannot be stated that women do not have contact with water bodies. Contrarily, within the structural aspect of gender, women generate various relationships that are not easy to generalize or cannot be regarded as standards. I use the expression of infrastructural watery spaces in order to articulate that these are neither “natural” bodies nor human-made projects. In this part of the research, the childcare and domestic work come forward as areas that are decisive for women as caregiver bodies relating to the infrastructural watery spaces. They act, think, and feel from the position of the caregiver, which shapes their relationship with those spaces.

In terms of accessibility to outside water, they are again more likely to watch over

the children who try to cool off at the riverside or canalside and are distant to cooling off themselves. Nevertheless, they are not at zero contact. Some women could spend time with the riverside in order to do laundry work in front of the dam gates, in addition to picnic times at the Old Dam area. Recently, this practice is not common mainly because of an urban planning project that wiped out the riverbank and built an embankment wall made of concrete (the *ıslah* wall) instead. Additionally, the construction of an urban park by the deforestation of the area has further affected the neighborhood locals' engagement with the environment. For example, walking to the northern side of the Seyhan Regulator, where river water is held and appears like a lake, with their children, becomes one of the activities that women can do without paying for it. However, the relationship with infrastructural watery spaces becomes more of viewing the "natural" scenery, which falls into rather upper-class activity, than living the environment by spending much more time through several activities and engagements.

As caregivers, women's relationships with infrastructural watery spaces are further configured according to forms of water such as high volume, flow of water, wetland, still water, vapor, and so on. As interventions, infrastructures have got involved in the production of topographies and have become part of the environment. They are not abstract designs. Consequently, inquiry on women's experiences with those infrastructural watery spaces brought up the everyday work aspect they need to take care of, which is only one facet of the relationships with those spaces.

4.1 Childcare in Relation to Affective and Environmental Stress

As indicated above, many women feel anxious or fearful about the irrigation canals and the river. Similarly, Sultana (2010) discusses the "emotional and psychological stress" that women experience during floods and water-related disasters (48). In this context, caregiver women also feel unease, along with physical and affective pressure around watery spaces. Moreover, in extreme heat conditions in summers, giving birth to a child can weaken the resilience of the postpartum mothers against the heat stress because of having less contact with water (e.g., in a way of bathing). Nevertheless, internalization of the caregiver position defines not only the mother's experiences. Here, the caregiver is not the primary designated person to take care of children, but those who take the responsibility, experience relevant feelings, and think in relation to the cared ones and related work. Through this position, one gets a sense of the environment they live in and knowledge of what to enjoy or refrain

from. Accordingly, the caregiver bodies live with affective and environmental stress, both regarding themselves and the cared.

4.1.1 The Caregiver of the Children

In the neighborhood, almost all the women I spoke with had to look after their children, siblings, or grandchildren, and some were watching over them at the moment of our interview. They needed to manage both answering my questions and watching over the kids for whom they are responsible. Sometimes, we had to stop the conversation since some of the children woke up from their sleep or ran into the road where cars pass by. Some put their motherhood experience forward compared to their housewife experience, as in the case of Seher:

Seher: I am a housewife now, but I'm more of a mom than a housewife. My daughter is 3 years old. She will turn 3 in 15 days. We are dealing with her. When I say dealing with her, I spend 20 hours of my 24 hours on her. ³

Seher was very careful regarding what her child would be exposed to during our interview. While talking about the safety issues going around the canal environment, she brings another level to the topic. She argued that an increase in the cases of child deaths in the canals made room for organ trafficking. She said, "Those jumps into the canal prepared the ground and became the infrastructure for it". The moment she discussed these double safety problems, her daughter woke up and entered the kitchen where we were chatting. Seher did not want to pronounce organ trafficking, *organ mafyası*, and uttered "kidnapping" in English. Then, she used the word "*organ mafyası*" again because she convinced herself that her daughter did not know the meaning of the word.

The situation in which women undertake the care work continues in the context of the Seyhan River and the irrigation canals. One of the most striking moments happened during the fieldwork, which occurred in relation to how the canals caused an uneasy feeling for one particular woman. I was in the middle of a conversation with a woman who was a *tuhafiyeci*, shopkeeper selling stationery materials, ice cream, and small stuff related to home. The shop was directly in front of the irrigation canal, on the other side of the road. We moved our chairs to the canalside

3. Seher: Şu an ev hanımıyım ama ev hanımından çok annelik yapıyorum. Kızım 3 yaşında. 3 yaşını 15 gün sonra dolduracak. Onunla uğraşıyoruz. Uğraşmak derken 24 saatimin 20 saatini ona ayırıyorum.

to speak comfortably. I was writing down what she said in my little notebook. While we were chatting, suddenly, a woman expressively interrupted our conversation and spoke to me about the situation with the canals. She talked about how she was afraid of the irrigation canals because she could not control or prevent her children from entering them. She supposed that I was an official and authorized to do things regarding the neighborhood. She voiced a request concerning the level of water in the canal, which she wanted the canal water released “at least halfway”. Emel also neatly narrates the watery context of the care work:

Emel: I was the oldest, I was 9. It was hard to keep the children at home. They were small children. They were going to the water. One of my brothers went into the water, and the canal [water] was cut. He did not know they were going to release the water... we did not know that they would give water to the canal. All three children were playing in the canal. My older brother could swim. His younger brother, Altay, also knew how to swim. My youngest brother could not swim. When the water came, the boy got caught in the water. My older brother dug his fingernails into the concrete to save him, and his fingernails all came off. So, my father took us back to the village. We were afraid of the water, that the children would die. My mother was always after the children. It was really hard to raise a child between two waters.⁴

Women’s work shifts in child-rearing are endless, which is evident through Seher dedicating time to her daughter nearly an entire day, and Emel, who has had concerns with the issues regarding the children, first her little brothers, then her own children, and now her grandchildren. Emel, as the eldest sibling, speaks of the difficulties of childcare as if she were her brothers’ parent. The fact that what she referred to not her own children but her young brothers indicates how she undertakes the responsibility of the care work as her mother. While the father was the author of the decision on where to live, the mother was the person who constantly watched over the boys. She internalizes the position of those who take care of the children, even though she was a child herself.

The other aspect of the internalization of childcare is reflected in her engagement in the conversation itself. The answers she gave tend to put the situations with the

4. Emel: En büyük bendim, ben 9 yaşıyordum. Çocukları evde tutmak zordu yani. Şöyle küçük küçük çocuklardı. Suyu gidiyorlardı. Kardeşimin bir tanesi suya girmiş, kanal kesilmiş. Suyu bırakacaklarından da haberi yokmuş çocuğun... kanala su verileceğinden haberimiz yoktu. Çocukların üçü de kanalın içinde oynuyormuş. Büyük kardeşim yüzme biliyordu. Onun küçüğü bu Altay da biliyordu. En küçük kardeşim yüzme bilmiyor. Su gelince çocuk suya kapılmış. Büyük kardeşim onu kurtaracağım diye tırnaklarını betona geçirmiş ve tırnakları hep söküldü. O yüzden babam bizi geri köye götürdü. Sudan korkuyorduk, çocuklar ölecek diye. Annem sürekli çocukların peşindeydi. İki su arasında çocuk büyütme de gerçekten çok zordu.

children/ her brothers forward, instead of her experience. She narrates her story in line with her family's story, her father's employment in the city, relocation processes, and difficulties arising from living between two waters. She talks about the situation with raising children *between two waters* as if it were difficult for *her*; however, she was neither the parent nor the one who was about to drown.

Living between two waters, meaning the river on one side and the irrigation canal on the other side, has generated a risk zone for the boys, which has created another dimension for looking after children. Both her being the eldest sister, as "the natural" assistant to the mother of the family, and being the one who has had no bodily contact with watery spaces in the form of immersion, put her in an external position from being a child and a bather. Therefore, she is included in the side of those who take care of the children.

I realized that the tendency to talk about not her own experiences happened, in fact, more strongly, while chatting with Seher, too. Most of the time, she replied to my questions in relation to her daughter. The first words of Seher are about how *her daughter* feels about water. She talks in detail about how she could supply alternative ways and objects for her child to facilitate spending time with water. This is the story of how her child developed a relationship with water. Becoming a mother happens to be like a mission that has been infiltrating her whole life:

How does water make you feel? What do you do with water?

Seher:...It was something we could easily access. Bathing the child in the bathtub is our favorite thing since childhood, as it gives her the feeling of a pool, which, judging from the many services in the sector, makes everyone feel good too...It started with a neck brace. Then we never used a lifebuoy. Then she continues with arm floaties now. Anyway, sometimes in the pool, if the older kids are swimming without arm floaties, she throws them away: "I will jump in myself right away."⁵

At some later moments, when she repeated my question loudly in the flow of conversation, she began to mention her own experiences, such as the hardship of the postpartum period.

While thinking about watery spaces, I mainly imagined the riverside and the canal-

5. Su sizi nasıl hissettirir? Ne yaparsınız suyla?

Seher:... Kolay ulaşabildiğimiz bir şeydi. Çocuğun küvette yıkanması ona bir havuz hissi hissettirdiği için çocukluğumuzdan beri en sevdiğimiz şey. Ki sektörde bunun üzerine yapılan birçok hizmetten yola çıkarsak demek ki herkes de kendini iyi hissettiriyor... Boyunlukla başladı. Sonra can simidi hiç kullanmadık. Sonra kollukla şu an devam ediyor. Zaten havuzda bazen bakıyor büyük çocuklar kolluksuz yüzüyorsa atıveriyor kollukları: "Hemen ben kendim atlayacağım."

side. Then, listening to Seher's experience with water after she gives birth, I questioned whether the indoor bathroom can be counted as one of those spaces. The riverside and canalside are not only about bathing activity, but this activity was the first aspect I investigated. As bathing places, they are experienced differently concerning gender differences. The full-time child-rearing is perfectly conveyed by Seher, who loves being with water, but is so deprived due to her motherhood situation. This time, early motherhood and its temporal and bodily discomforts shape women's relationship with an indoor bathing space. In this case, bathing activity is not something that one needs to be cautious against child drownings or that should be avoided. Contrarily, it is an activity desired by the caregiver to take care of her own body. I was too focused on the relationships with open spaces that I hardly recognized other sorts of experiences. Hence, what Seher points out concerning the childcare and bathing enriches the idea of watery spaces that I initially had:

Seher: I am the kind of person who finds water as the solution to everything. I used to be like that. I lost that for a while when nervousness and stress came together during postpartum syndrome. Then I said, I mean, because my biggest problem in this life after Umut was born was not being able to take a bath. I mean, getting permission from someone to take a bath, not being able to take a bath all the time, was really troublesome. I could not do it every day. I would do it once a week sometimes, and I would have a hard time because I could not find the time.⁶

The outdoor bathing on the riverside or canalside already appears not to be for women. However, women can also have limited access to a bathing area within her house, as around-the-clock organization of childcare work indicates. Being restricted by permission and time poverty does not remain only a gendered *difference* in the childcare work with respect to watery spaces. As the caregiver to a child, her capacity to bathe is diminished. As a disempowering factor for her life experience, this posits a gender-based *inequality* pertaining to care work in the context of accessibility to water. Significantly, the situation she mentions would get layered in the context of the extreme heat in the summers in the city. It would simply become a part of the struggle against the hot weather conditions in Adana.

6. Seher: Her şeyin çözümünü su olarak bulan biriyim. Eskiden böyleydım. Bir ara o bir özelliğimi kaybetmişim lohusa sendromunda sinir stres bir araya gelince. Sonra dedim ki yani ben çünkü en büyük problemim bu hayattaki Umut olduktan sonraki en büyük sıkıntım banyo yapamamaktı. Banyo yapamamak benim için çok büyük bir sorundu. Yani banyo yapmak için birilerinden izin almak, banyo yapamamak, sürekli banyo yapamamak gerçekten sıkıntılıydı. Ben yapamadıkça çocuğumu sürekli küvete sokardım. Ben her gün yapamazdım. Haftada bir bazen yaptığım olurdu çok zorlanırdım. Çünkü vakit bulamazdım.

In some cases, time restrictions to engage with the watery spaces by any form of activity, for instance, enjoying the vista of the riverside, can result from the presence of the increasing heat. Seher talks about the only likely time when she can occupy herself with the river view by watching the scenery that can be spared early in the morning, before the sun rises, at the same time, which happens until her childcare duty starts:

Seher: The balconies get 24/7 sunlight. You know, there is no time to sit and watch the river in summer. Maybe very early in the morning, before the sun rises. My favorite thing is waking up for the morning prayer, if I can get up after morning prayer, I cannot always get up. It is so nice for me to get a coffee and sit here and watch the color and wait for my daughter to wake up.⁷

The childcare positions women in a particular way, which becomes one of the main axes of women's relationship with infrastructural watery spaces in Adana. Investigating relationships between women and those spaces significantly culminates in the carework dynamics, which comes out both in women's articulations in the conversation, such as taking questions in relation to one's child instead of her own experience, feelings, such as fear or anxiety of drowning, and practical aspects of everyday life, such as timelessness. Therefore, both responsibility and affection in care define the presence of watery spaces in women's daily lives. The caregiver position forms women's everyday experiences both in practices and in their thoughts and feelings.

4.1.2 Childcare in the Deserted and Polluted Area

Childcare determines what to do in particular places and times, what to feel, and what to enjoy or sidestep for women with children. One aspect of this situation is accessibility to infrastructural watery spaces due to safety issues, such as social disturbance women feel, and discomfort with pollution in those spaces. Later in our conversation, this time I asked Seher a direct question about raising a child in a neighborhood next to the water bodies. The first thing Seher talked about was the border of accessibility to water. I was not sure what she meant by the end of access to water, which coincides with also end of the settlement area in the

7. Seher: Balkonlar 7/24 güneş alıyor. Hani oturup nehri izleyecek bir zaman olmuyor yazın. Belki sabah çok erken saatlerde, güneş doğmadan. En sevdiğim şey sabah ezanına, sabah namazına kalktıktan sonra kalkabilirsem her zaman kalkamıyorum. Bir kahve alıp şurada oturup rengi izleyerek kızımın uyanmasını beklemek benim için çok güzel.

neighborhood. Her answer made me remember the day I walked towards that part of the riverside. At some point, the crooked iron bars end on the edge of the river, and no barriers remain towards the boulevard bridge. Likewise, on the other side of the river, there were reed-type grasses, plants of which I did not know the names, and the shallow waters. Some birds, which I recognized as swallows, were flying in this foul-smelling area. Some kind of water was flowing from a pipe inside the concrete wall, the edge of the river, into the river basin. Some swallows sat on these tall, slightly tilted, stick-like reedy plants. The others were ceaselessly flying this and that way. They were very active, as if they did not want to touch the ground. As I continued walking along the concreted edge of the Seyhan River, I saw a man approaching me from the boulevard bridge. I asked him about the water flowing from the pipe and he said it was dirty. Also, another man warned me, "This place is not safe. They do everything here" and after spending some time with this area, I continued to walk in the direction to the neighborhood. After this warning, there were stirring parallelisms coming to my mind between the part of the riverside called unsafe, stinky air and water, and the absence of iron bars. Later on, I realized that it was more about becoming a wetland form, which brings being devoid of people.

In one aspect, the accessibility to water appears to signify the presence of the people around. The situation of an area that is deserted goes hand in hand with no access to water in her narrative. Notably, the deserted area invites some people to flock in the absence of a general social existence. Seher prefers another path to walk with her child due to those people whom she considers unsafe:

Seher: . . . [at the riverside] There were always spooky people there. We could not walk from there. We had to walk through the area where there was traffic, where there were cars. Now we are walking through the trees. This is a very beautiful thing for me.⁸

On the one hand, one of her emphases is about how it is so ordinary for her and her daughter to spend time on the walking track, the part close to the Seyhan Regulator, which shapes river water as a lake. Her highlights of "no settlement, no accessibility to water" and the walking track contrast two states of the riverside. One is at the southern part of the Seyhan Regulator, towards the boulevard bridge, which falls on the edge of the neighborhood. The other side is at the northern part of the regulator, which is, actually, not within the neighborhood borders on paper. Her answer presents that the static presence of the river can bring about modified and

8. Seher: Bir de orada her zaman tekinsiz insanlar olurdu. Oradan yürüyemezdik. Trafik olan, arabaların olduğu alandan yürümek zorunda kalırdık. Artık ağaçların içinden yürüyerek gidiyoruz. Bu benim için çok güzel bir şey.

designed surrounding areas, such as this walking track in some parts, which falls into the high volume of water body in this case:

What is it like to raise a child in this neighborhood, in a neighborhood with water all around?

Seher: Our access to water ends after the park. There aren't many settlements after the park. After the carpet field. After the carpet field, the water also ends in the neighborhood. Going to the walking trail is a big event because it used to be a big deal to go anywhere. It's something we do every day with Umut... for us, it's a place we go to when we say, "Let's go for a walk with Umut, daughter."⁹

Not surprisingly, the riverbed in the form of a wetland is conceived as useless and "dangerous to health and safety," as James Scott conveys this association for the wetlands (Scott 2017, 44). Seda also mentions that the riverside does not make her feel safe to pass with her children because of some people hanging out and using cannabis, drugs, or alcohol there. Then, she enlarges the issue of safety towards one that is related to her previous experiences of harassment:

Seda: For example, imagine that this is a walking area and it gets crowded. What happens then? As a woman, I could take my child and walk through here alone, but I can't right now. Why? There are people smoking drugs, smoking marijuana, drinking alcohol. Believe me, you don't even need them. Even when you're walking down the street, one of them turns around and looks at you, and might say something. In the past, I could react. Now, with children around, you can't react. It's not that you're afraid for yourself, but you can't say anything because you're afraid for your children. Look, I've experienced this. I told my husband about it. I said that in the past, I would carry something with me, like a knife. Why? We have a fear of dishonor. We wouldn't do anything that would harm our honor or our lives. We wouldn't risk our reputation. But let me put it this way. Now I'm afraid for my children, not for myself. Until now, we came into this world for honor, we lived for it. Now honor has taken a backseat. Even the children have taken precedence over it, I can say that. You can say, for example, "As long as nothing happens to my child, I don't care what happens to me." That's why I want these places to be more beautiful. I want them to be more livable.¹⁰

9. **Bu mahallede, her tarafı su olan bir mahallede çocuk yetiştirmek nasıl bir şey?**
Seher: Suyu erişimimiz parktan sonra bitiyor. Parktan sonra çok yerleşim yok. Halı sahadan sonra. Halı sahadan sonra su artık mahallede de bitiyor. Eskiden bir yerlere gitmek büyük bir olay olduğu için yürüyüş parkuruna gitmek çok büyük bir etkinlik. Bizim Umut'la her gün yaptığımız etkinlik... bizim için Umut'la hadi yürüyüşe çıkalım kızım deyip gidip geldiğimiz bir yer

10. Seda: Mesela, düşünsene şurasının yürüyüş alanı olduğunu, buranın kalabalıklaştığını.

She suggests that transforming the space, for example, building a walk track; therefore, crowding the area with people, could have helped her use the area with her children since she anticipates an offensive action coming from the bystander men otherwise. This anticipated offense is created in relation to her womanhood. How is such an offense based on her gender identity expected by her? She connects it with *namus*, an aspect of the code of honor for her. For Bourdieu (2013), “game of honor” presumes that the two parties are capable of playing it and that they are equal in this social order. The logic of equality in honor, however, remains an assumption positing that each one can act with “challenge” and “riposte” against the offense (Bourdieu 2013, 12-13). He states that “A gift or challenge is a provocation to reply” in the logic of honor (12). The offended might challenge or riposte the provocation; however, they can also show no-reply, which might have different meanings. Regardless of the satisfaction of its logic in some cases, the game of honor is played not by “rules” but by “sense of honour” that has been embodied as dispositions (Bourdieu 2013, 15). Seda talks about various situations in which she could respond to a challenge or not take it as a challenge. For instance, the provocations addressing any aspect of her life are not such a challenge that she would credit. Bourdieu’s discussion presents the game of honour as full of indeterminateness and uncertainties that “the distance between failure to riposte owing to fear and non-reply bespeaking contempt is often infinitesimal” (14). Apart from an offense against her *namus*, the other things that would ruin her life are not accredited/ “honored,” as Bourdieu (2013) states “...non-reply can also express the refusal to reply: the man who has suffered an offense refuses to regard it as such...” (13).

In Seda’s case, she talks about how her reaction to the provocation to reply would differ in the presence of her children. What Seda conceives about the unsafe situation is that she is the person who would be the addressee of the offensive action as a woman. The point she arrives at is about her *namus*, which must not be derogated by anyone. Significantly, she is not a woman who waits to be saved or feels the need to be protected by others when she is alone. She introduces herself as the likely protector of her *namus*, which is initiated by an act of reaction.

O zaman ne olur? Ben çocuğumu alıp buradan tek başıma geçebilirim kadın olarak ama şu an geçemiyorum. Neden? Bir sürü madde içeni, esrar içeni, alkol alanı. Onlara bile gerek yok inanki. Yolda yürürken bile bir de bir tanesi dönüp sana bakıyor, bir şey söyleyebiliyor. Eskiden olsa tepki verebiliyordum. Şimdi yanında çocukların olduğu için tepki de veremiyorsun. Hani kendinden korktuğundan değil aslında çocuklarından korktuğundan bir şey diyemiyorsun. Bak ben yaşadım bu olayı. Eşime de anlattım. Dedim ki ben daha önce olsam mesela bir şeyle gezerdim, çakıyla gezerdim. Neden? Bizde namus korkusu var. Biz namusumuz dışında canımıza gelecek zevale şey yapmayız yani. İtibar etmeyiz. Ama şöyle söyleyeyim. Artık çocuklarımdan korkuyorum, kendi canımdan değil he. Artık hani şimdiye kadar namus için geldik bu dünyaya, onun için yaşadık. Şimdi namus bir arkaplana geçti. Yani çocuklar bile onun önüne geçti, öyle söyleyebilirim. Hani şey diyebiliyorsun mesela, çocuğuma bir şey olmasın da bana ne olursa olsun kafasına giriyorsun. Onun için buraları daha güzel yapmasını isterim. Daha yaşanılacak bir alan olmasını isterim.

In the *Veiled Sentiments*, Abu Lughod (2016) suggests that sexuality and reproductive qualities are pejoratively regarded as “natural”, which also means that women’s control over their bodies is so limited. If women have limited control over their sexuality and reproductive qualities, this paves the way for being controlled by others (133). For example, Seher talks about how her daily life is determined by taking care of her daughter, and she is not in a position to control the time as she wishes. When being together with children, Seda is positioned as the one who can be controllable, which requires a protective action that would curb the confrontation with the situation in which she appears as if she lacks the code of honor (117). She finds herself in a situation where she is challenged by the gaze or words of bystander men, but she cannot reply to the provocation, which can leave her with a feeling of dishonor.

Abu-Lughod (2016) also mentions the modesty code that diminishes the hazard against the social order, resulting from sexuality, by affiliating the denial of sexuality with moral action. The acts of the women of modesty can be counted as covering themselves up, showing no interest in men, or not drawing men’s attention to themselves so that they renounce their sexuality. Avoiding men is one of the ways not to be recognized by them in this sense (152). Furthermore, modesty is related to the fear of facing oneself, which is weaker than the one confronts with; therefore, it is a fear of realization that one can be controllable by others, which is also antithetical to autonomy and being equal (Abu-Lughod 2016, 117). Seda navigates between the code of honor and the code of modesty. As she talks about herself, she is as if among “the men of honor” that Abu-Lughod (2016) conveys “In both Awlad ‘Ali and the Kabyle codes, men of honor share a general orientation toward assertiveness and efficacy...[men of honor,] those responsible for dependents, embody the value of the system and also represent it and bear responsibility for upholding it...” (90, 157). The fear of (loss of) *namus* outweighs any other harm against her life. However, the presence of the children generates the fear that concerns an “anticipation of hurt or injury” against her children, which determines her actions and location in the riverside (Ahmed 2004, 65). In other words, the fear of harm against the children puts the fear of loss of *namus* on the back burner. In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed (2004) discusses fear in relation to the spatial dynamics. She conveys how feminine vulnerability is articulated concerning women’s access to the public space. The two-fold discourse suggests that the outside world is dangerous for women who would rather be safe at home. Hence, the safety is established for women by not existing in the outside world or “not moving through that space alone” (Ahmed 2004, 70). Seda’s outside mobility in watery spaces is greater when she is alone, which contrasts with the situation in which her acting

capacity is restricted when she is with her children.

She has dependency and respect for her husband to some extent, but I would say this does not put her in a position of full dependency. In fact, as a woman who has been likened to a “man” or called “manly” and who has done things that men have been doing, such as driving motorcycles, bathing in the canals, or fighting, she does not fully conform to the dependency/ non-dependency dualism. On the one hand, she internalizes the moral system of honor as *namus*, establishes the value of her life on it, and protects it by carrying a penknife and replying to challenges in the absence of her children. For instance, she looks them in the eyes corresponds to their challenge, which is so distant to an act of modesty and is a sign related to autonomy (Abu-Lughod 2016, 115). On the other hand, not being able to respond to the provocative action and anticipated offense or to walk through the bystander men can be interpreted as the weak’s reaction to those who could be more powerful than her as a woman with children. Her capability to riposte or to challenge the challenge diminishes when she is with them. She does not find the autonomy in some watery spaces (to expose herself and to reply) that can be rendered a “real man” quality (118).

Appearing with children at the wetland side signifies that Seda is most likely a married woman, who is with a man, therefore among the dependents. She becomes not only a dependent of the value system of honor as a woman with children, which becomes as if the evidence of her sexuality and reproductive qualities, but also a protector of the children, another group of the dependents. The presence of the children generates the desire to be veiled by the crowded people in the riverside. “Protection involves nonexposure”, which is operated in the presence of the more powerful ones (Abu-Lughod 2016, 112). In other words, the desire to be veiled by the crowd emerges as a form of nonexposure in the riverside. As the protector of the dependents, she voluntarily enacts the code of modesty, the act of avoidance. The protector should be protecting the dependents. Caring and protecting dependents by avoiding men’s attention can be regarded as a modestly honorable act.

The act of avoidance indicates the modest way to exist or not to exist on the riverside. While her position to look after the dependent is reinforced as a caregiver, to prioritize their safety as a protector by eliminating the men’s attention makes it an honorable act. Protecting them and acting modestly is a path for her to be an honorable woman, which defines her experience with a watery space in the presence of the children (166).

The childcare that she undertakes makes her map the places to go or avoid through her “sense of honor” instead of “rules” of honor, as Bourdieu (2013) suggests (15).

Accordingly, the riverside is revealed by her as deserted and neglected by the municipality and the government. This corresponds to the area overlooking a lack of pure borders between land and water in the riverbed when the flow of water is cut in sometimes, where the watercourse is regulated with different volumes, and the construction of the concrete wall-edge following the removal of the riverbank. Ahmed (2004) states that “Openness of the body to the world involves a sense of danger, which anticipated as a future pain or injury” (69). The lack of crowded people in the riverside, end of the settlement area, the riverbed not filled with higher volume of water, and so on can create such an openness which makes some bodies restrain, “shrink back from the world” or desire to be veiled (69).

The other aspect of the wetland that fashions the childcare emerges in its polluted quality. Seher says that she could not let her child play around the riverside because of the pollution:

Seher: I could not let Umut play by the river because it used to be full of cigarette butts and alcohol bottles. Now, the headman had it cleaned, but it has been like this for 3 years. It has just been cleaned. It has been like this for 3.5 years.¹¹

Women with children, bodies of the caretakers, affectively position themselves in watery spaces, which is resulted from the material qualities of those spaces. The south part of the riverside has transformed into a wetland, which is due to a train construction happening at a bridge on the path of the Seyhan River for the neighborhood locals in addition to the irrigation season. Wetland, where there is an uncontrollable ecosystem emerging and no neat boundaries between land and water, arranges women’s access to the riverside in the presence of children. Lack of general sociality and pollution are the main determinants of the sense of safety both for women themselves and the children they take care of. In other words, the caregiver’s body designates areas with being uncharted by proper social activities and dirtiness. While the deserted state can allow some people to do things that are not preferred to be done publicly, hence, making the zone further useless and troubling, pollution reveals health concerns, which reflects the topographical distinctions defining the acts of the caregiver.

11. Seher: Yani nehrin kenarında Umut’u oynatamam çünkü inanılmaz sigara izmariti ve alkol şişeleri doluydu eskiden. Şimdi muhtar temizletti ama 3 yıldır böyleydi. 3,5 yıldır böyleydi. Yeni temizlendi. 3,5 yıl boyunca orada oynatamazdım.

4.1.3 Between-two-waters and Externality of Infrastructural Watery Spaces

The neighborhood is surrounded by the riverside and the canal, but caregiver women may not reckon the positions of these infrastructural watery spaces in the same way. While some regard the spatiality as between-two-waters, some live it not in an indwelling way. Seher evaluates that the river itself is useless for her experience in the carework. She presents the regulator's gates as beneficial instead, which I had difficulty grasping the direct relevance between the dam gates and question "What is it like to raise a child in this neighborhood, in a neighborhood with water all around?". I found it notable that she utters an infrastructure to tell what benefits them instead of a body of water that appears "natural". However, both what she regards as favorable (the dam gates) and what she does not subscribe to (the river) is actually not a "natural" body, but the environment that has been produced over the years. The gates are parts of the Seyhan Regulator, which divide the river on a north-south axis and regulates the level of water. She refers to the northern part where the level of water is high enough to be regarded as a lake view, unlike the wetland form at the southern part. Considering she has not seen the high volume of the river in the part of the neighborhood (the southern part of the regulator) since she got married and moved to the neighborhood, it is imaginable that she finds no use in a wetland, unlike the voluminous state of watery space:

Seher: The river has not contributed anything to my life in terms of raising children and my home... Because, as I said, it makes the house dirty. But dwelling close to the dam gates is something that almost lifts you out of depression. It is so simple, so easy. Five minutes from home, you are feeding ducks in a place with a lake view. What more could a person want? As I said, for us, the river has not contributed anything to my life for 4 years. It did not help me raise Umut either. It is always like this... For me, the river has no advantage or contribution in Umut's life, in my life. But the floodgates, the dam has a very big, very big plus. Really, that is the biggest plus.¹²

She favors where the water body exists purely, without the confusion between land

12. Seher: Nehrin benim hayatımda çocuk yetiştirmemde ve evimle ilgili hiçbir artışı olmadı. Çünkü dediğim gibi evi pisletiyor. Ama baraj kapaklarına yakın oturmak neredeyse insanın depresyondan çıkaran bir şey. Çok basit bir şey, çok kolay. Çıktım evden 5 dakikaya, göl manzaralı yerde ördek besliyorsun. Daha ne ister ki bir insan? Bizim için dediğim gibi nehrin benim için hayatımda 4 yıldır herhangi bir katkısı olmadı. Umut'u büyütmemde de bir artışı olmadı. Hep böyle. Benim için nehirin, Umut'un hayatında, benim hayatımda bir artışı, bir katkısı yok. Ama baraj kapaklarının, barajın çok büyük, çok büyük bir şey var, artışı var. Gerçekten yani en büyük artışı o.

and water. Seher and her daughter get oriented to the high volume of water where they feed the ducks, as she points out. The dam gates are appreciated by her, instead of the confused riverside, which acquires unsafe features like contamination. She took my question in a way that she answered it through the usage of the watery spaces in the context of childcare. She reviewed the watery spaces pertaining to the childcare in terms of their extra value and examined them in their additional quality, as outside entities rather than immanent part of their life.

Seher's approach, one that externalizes water bodies and conceives them through usefulness, might have been developed at least by three reasons. One is based on the class position. Both Seher and her daughter could access a swimming pool in her aunt's summerhouse. Even though Seher's family does not possess such a property, she could reach it through their familial link and could transmit this opportunity to her daughter. Accordingly, learning how to swim in the sea or in the swimming pool incalculates knowledge of immersion in this water body in a particular way. Not only is the activity of swimming learned within the sea or swimming pool, but also an image of swimming is established in this way. Which context comes to one's mind while thinking about the act of swimming? Swimming in the canal might be a distant activity for those who are used to the swimming pool or the sea, both in terms of bodily experience and conception of it. The river is more thinkable than the irrigation canals, but still might not be among the first choices to swim for those who can have access to the swimming pool or go to the seaside, especially if it is rendered defiled.

The other angle intermingled in cultivating this approach can be related to the gender of her child. Compared to Emel's little brothers, who were raised between-two-waters, Seher does not present her daughter's position in this way. Neither the canal water nor the river exists manifestly to create the space for Seher as between-two-waters. Gendered segregation within watery spaces can frame her approach to the watery spaces in the context of childcare in this way, namely, no use. She did not mention a feeling of fear about her daughter, who would drown in the river or canal. In other words, the gender identity of who is given care frames the place of watery spaces; for instance, the caregiver of a daughter conceives them outside and takes them into account with respect to usability.

Moreover, the temporality of infrastructural watery spaces can have an effect on how to address them. Emel, who moved in the neighborhood in 1969 and has been living there for many years, has witnessed different states of watery spaces. For example, she knows when the river is given its water in both irrigation and non-irrigation seasons. However, Seher has not witnessed the higher volume of water in the southern part of the river since she moved in the neighborhood. Hence, what

Seher has been seeing in the recent riverside, one part of between-two-waters, is not the same as what Emel has been seeing for many years. This being the case, in addition to economic and gender positions, temporality of water appears to be one of the crucial parts of how to relate to the watery spaces and signifies changes in the level of water, whether water flows or not, and existence of contaminants, which (re)composes how the riverside exists in the life of the caregiver women. For example, the watercourse aspect of the river, connecting with the possibility of drowning, seems to be put forward in Emel's account, which is not similarly narrated by Seher. It is rather a space to watch out for possible harmful situations against children. Even though there is no flow of water in the river, falling into the riverbed is something avoided, in addition to pollution:

Seher: And I always take care of the children, all children of the neighborhood. . . And on the road with cars leading to the river, "stop" and "be careful" It is always my duty. It is wide open now. It is more likely to fall into the river.¹³

Her narration of the caution against the riverside appears to be against the possible accidental situations rather than children's intentional decision to enter the river. She also did not specify the water aspect of the river. I found it as a spatial signification rather than a water-based calamity likely to happen as in the case of Emel's wording.

All in all, the gender difference in the organization of the childcare work is linked to the watery spaces, both through the concern about the safety of the children and through women's engagement with the environmental conditions. Socioeconomic social positions such as class and gender of the cared has to with the caregiver's relationship with the infrastructural watery spaces. Also, the state of watery space can become an aspect of the social position of those spaces. While the caregiver of lower-class little boys, living in a period when both the river and canal had a flow of water, describes the location as between two waters, the upper upper-middle-class daughter's caregiver in a wetland-river externalizes the river.

13. Seher: Bir de çocuklara hep ben göz kulak oluyorum bütün mahallenin çocuklarına. . . Ve o nehirde, nehre giden arabalı yolda "durun," "dikkatli olun," hep görevi bende. İyice açıldı artık orası. Nehre düşme olasılığı daha yükseldi.

4.2 Domestic Work in the Presence of Water Environment

Women are not in a situation of no connection with the infrastructural watery spaces. In fact, they directly revise the infrastructural construction, the Old Dam environment in order to do the laundry work. They converted the dam gates area into a place, *Çamaşırlık*, to do the domestic work. Likewise, bathing in the irrigation canal, women have an engagement in the infrastructural environment beyond design and function. However, mostly because of the *ıslah* wall that changed the materiality of the riverbank through demolition of the river's shore, many neighborhood women do not do laundry at *Çamaşırlık* anymore. While domestic work led to an inventive conduct of the infrastructural watery environment, further material alterations in riverside also changed the women's relationship with this part of watery space. At the same time, forms of water and state of the river, namely becoming a wetland, have a compelling effect on other domestic works, such as cleaning that women take on for their homes. Therefore, domestic work both shapes the infrastructural watery space and gets influenced by it.

4.2.1 Emergence of *Çamaşırlık*: Adjusting Infrastructure to the Laundry Work and Changing Conveniences

The first time I heard about *Çamaşırlık* (laundry) was when I was chatting with Yusuf, who mentioned the shallow water at the side of the dam gates, which was why women and children went there to do laundry and bathe:

Yusuf: There is a place we call *Çamaşırlık*. In the past, people used to wash their clothes there. The name remained as *Çamaşırlık*.

Where is the place?

Yusuf: It is right where the Seyhan River flows through the *DSİ* (State Hydraulic Works) gates. Because it was shallower there, families would take their children with them when they were doing their laundry, and the children would swim there.¹⁴

Obviously, “the families” refers to the women who take of the children and domestic

14. Yusuf: *Çamaşırlık* dediğimiz bir yer var. Eskiden insanlar orada çamaşırlarını falan da yıkarlarmış. Adı çamaşırlık olarak kaldı.

Neresi o yer?

Yusuf: *DSİ* kapaklarının hemen Seyhan Nehri'nin aktığı yerinin orası. Taşlıkların olduğu yer... Çamaşırlık ve orası daha sığ olduğu için aileler çamaşırlarını yıkarken çocuklarını da alıp gelip çocukların başlarında çocuklar orada yüüyordu.

work. Right at the bottom of the gates of the Seyhan Regulator, at the side of the neighborhood, was turned into a place where women wash wool, carpets, rugs, wool quilts, *çul* (gunny cloth), or *çaput* (tatters). Emel talks about the activity at *Çamaşırlık*:

Emel: We had stones and mallets there. The mallet is made of wood, you hit it like this, it cleanses the dirt. There were no carpets like that in our time. My mother and everyone else would take their wooden mallet. They would also take their rugs, which we call “*çul*” or “*çaput çul*.” We would take them there. We would beat them in the river water, wash them, and then throw them on the bushes. No one would steal them... They would also wash wool. They would wash wool, quilts, everything there.¹⁵

Women use the river water to wash the fabrics that are usually bigger, harsher, or rougher in texture compared to the daily clothes, which would require a larger amount of water and space to clean. What Emel mentions as stones are the huge rocky ones that are said to be planted by *DSİ* to prevent the riverbed from collapsing and eroding. Those big stones are transformed into solid platforms on which the laundry is cleaned by hitting them roughly. Emel highlighted that in spite of being an open public area, there were no theft cases. This indicates that there was a kind of feeling of trust that people shared to continue doing laundry there.

Çamaşırlık was mentioned both as a space and through the domestic activity, which was narrated as something that has passed. I articulated my question by referring it as an area. While some people speak of the spatial qualities of *Çamaşırlık* such as big stones, trees, or shallow water, some others refer to what people do or do not in that space. For instance, for some, it was the trees emerging from the rocks and their trunks and branches that formed this space, since things that were washed were hung there. Nowadays, even those trees do not come out of there. For some others, the heyday of *Çamaşırlık* was before the elimination of the riverbank and construction of the *ıslah* wall; therefore, nowadays there is no available space for it. Emel points out that the removal of the riverbank has made people withdraw from the area, that “Nobody goes down there because it was surrounded by concrete.” For an old man, Halil, people used the riverside to do laundry because there was a lack of water in houses; therefore, it was the place where people could find water:

15. Emel: Orada taşlarla tokaçlarımız vardı. Tokaç tahtadan yapılmış, böyle vuruyorsun, şey yapıyorsun onun kirini arındırıyor. Böyle halı malı yoktu bizim zamanımızda orada. Tokaçlarını alırdı annemgil herkes. Kilimleri de alırlardı böyle çul, çaput çul deriz biz onlara. Onları alıp giderdik orada. Döve döve onu nehrin suyunda yıkar, oraya da çalılara atar gelirdik. Hiç kimse de çalmazdı.

Halil:...since there was no water in those houses, we see in some TV series that they have a wooden mallet by the river and they hit it like this and wash themselves. That's how it was used. It was used like that. Otherwise, since there was no water in the house, they would go to the riverbank to wash themselves.¹⁶

For him, *Çamaşırlık* by the river seems to be temporally distant. He describes it by mentioning references from the TV series that represent an image of the activity. It was like a familiarization attempt by him for me, which also delivers the sense that it was not a big deal to talk about it because it was done in times of limited water. He spoke as if the usage of *Çamaşırlık* ceased to exist after the infrastructural enhancement of tap water. He further talked about the domestic work without machines that was added to the past infrastructural conditions and contrasted with today's mechanisation of the domestic work, which was undertaken by women in the neighborhood:

Halil: Of course, now there are facilities. There is a dishwasher. There is a washing machine. There is also a dryer attached to the washing machine. For citizens. All kinds of facilities are available. Now, as I said, in the kitchen, you turn on the water, and it flows. You turn it on as you like, and you use it. Where is it here? It used to come out in the courtyard, and she would squat down there. My late mother. She was washing the dishes there. Then they would cover it upside down. They would cover it with a cloth so flies wouldn't land on it. They were washing the dishes. Is it like that now?¹⁷

The new headperson, way younger than Halil, also argues that technological advancement, together with the generational change, influenced the way domestic work was operated:

Melih: Now everyone has a washing machine and a dishwasher at home. So if you would get married, they ask about the washing machine. If

16. Halil: ...o evlerde su olmadığı için ırmak kenarında bazı dizilerde falan görüyoruz televizyon dizilerinde dere kenarında tokaç var böyle vuruyorlar, yıkıyorlar. O öyle kullanılıyor yani. O öyle kullanılan bir şeydi. Yoksa özel olarak... Olmadığı için, evinde olamadığı için, su olmadığı için ırmak kenarına gidip yıkıyordu yani.

17. Halil: Tabii şimdi imkanlar. Bulaşık makinesi var. Çamaşır makinesi var. Daha şeyinde bir de çamaşır makinesinin kurutma makinesi var. Vatandaşın. Her türlü imkanın var. Şimdi dediğim gibi mutfakta açıyorsun suyu, akıyor. İstedğin gibi açıyorsun, kullanıyorsun. Nereden burada? Çıkıyordu avluda, orada yere çömeliyordu. Rahmetli annem. Orada bulaşığı yıkıyordu. Ondan sonra bir şeyin üzerine ters ters kapatıyorlardı. Sinek konmasın diye üzerine bir tül bent örtüyorlardı. O bulaşığı yıkıyorlardı. Şimdi öyle mi?

they have one, they get married, if not, they do not.¹⁸

Likewise, Halil's emphasis on the infrastructural lack of water and absence of mechanisation of the domestic work, the new headperson also presents the reason of the passive situation of *Çamaşırlık* in relation to the improvement in conditions.

At the beginning, the emergence of *Çamaşırlık* might have resulted from the issues of accessibility to tap water and the lack of machines. However, the presence of the infrastructural development and mechanization do not seem to stop the usage of *Çamaşırlık*. Halil conveyed how dwellers found their water for drinking or cleaning:

Halil: The well, for example, those who had a well used water from a well. Quite a lot. At that time, as far as I know, when it was dug 10 or 11 meters deep, usable water came out. Was it as good as tap water? No, it wasn't. We used to call it *kabak* water (referring to its heaviness)... If there were 3-5 people, you'd go to your neighbor's, use a pulley system or pull it by hand from their well, take it home, and use it as needed.

So there was no tap water either?

Halil: Of course not. Before this spring came here, we used to go all the way to the other side of *Demirköprü* to fetch water. We brought it back. Drinking water. The water we drank.¹⁹

He did not state whether they used drinking water for other things, such as cleaning or washing. However, he insisted that there was no tap water in houses, which would indicate that the water was coming from outside houses, such as the wells in the gardens, the river, or the public piped water. Therefore, it is likely that women would do the laundry work outside the houses and next to the riverbank. He said that even the irrigation canal was used for the laundry work:

Halil: Women would bring them to the edge of those stairs, especially. Carpets were a luxury back then. Of course. There were things called *savans*. *Savans*, are like hand-woven carpets. They would bring them to those stairways to wash them. They would wash them with a paddle in

18. Melih: Şimdi herkesin evinde bir çamaşır, bir bulaşık makinesi var. Yani evlensen bile çamaşır makinesini soruyorlar. Varsa evleniyorlar, yoksa evlenmiyorlar.

19. Halil: Kuyu, kuyusu olan kuyudan su kullanıyordu mesela. Bayağı. O zaman Bildiğim kadarıyla 10 metre, 11 metreden kazıldığında kullanılacak su çıkıyordu. Çeşme suyu kadar kaliteli miydi? Değildi. Kabak su derdik biz ona... Ya 3-5 kişide varsa, komşusundan gidiyordun, komşusundan kuyusundan böyle dönme dolapla şeyle, veya elle çekiyorsun, evine götürüyorsun, ihtiyacını kullanıyorsun.

Şebeke suyu da yoktu yani?

Halil: Yoktu tabii canım. Buraya bu çeşme gelmeden önce ta Demirköprü'nün öbür tarafından gidip taşıyorduk. Getiriyorduk. İçecek suyu. İçeceğimiz suyu.

the canal. Where would they wash them?²⁰

The fabrics that are harder to wash or need a larger amount of water were carried next to the river or the canal to be washed by women. The carpet presented as a luxury by Halil signified once again something that “did not exist in their time”. Poverty, in this case it is the absence of carpets, is approached as if it is about the characteristic of the time they lived rather than related to socioeconomic conditions. Therefore, the locals’ narratives convey not only the poverty of infrastructure but also the poverty of goods.

The factor of the infrastructural deficiency was eliminated since the 1960s, as he mentioned. Also, putting the fact aside that widespread entry of the appliance into houses happened in a duration, the foundational actions to establish the appliance industry in Turkey started in the mid-1960s, too (Yaşar 2010, 152). Even if the Seyhan Regulator’s gates were converted into a space to do the laundry work due to these factors, its continuation as *Çamaşırlık* seems to be less determined by them. After the infrastructural development of urban water and processes that using tap water and washing machines at homes became ordinary, women did not terminate the laundry work at the gates area. If it was otherwise, the younger generations I spoke with such as Seda and Yusuf could not have witnessed *Çamaşırlık*.

When I asked Seda about *Çamaşırlık*, when she, her husband, and I were sitting in their place, she told me how the material that people use for pillows and duvets have changed from wool or cotton to synthetic fiber, *elyaf*, which she described as “ready-made” :

There used to be a place called *Çamaşırlık*. How did that work?

Erdal: The Abdals did it.

Seda: Don’t be ridiculous. In the past, but now the system has advanced so much that no one uses wool or cotton anymore. Why? They switched to fiber, ready-made pillows, ready-made quilts, and so on. Back then, no one had ready-made quilts. I remember when I was single, you could never find ready-made quilts anywhere. Everyone would go to the quilt maker to have them made. What happened? As soon as summer came, everyone would take their quilts apart. They’d leave them out in the sun. We didn’t do it ourselves, but I helped a lot, like with the aunts there. They put the wool in sacks. They come with these wooden frames. They take them and bring them here. Oh, they dip them in the water and

20. Halil: O merdivenlerin kenarına kadınlar getirirlerdi bilhassa. O zaman halı lükstü. Tabi. Savan dediğimiz şeyler vardı. Savan. El dokuması gibi. Onları yıkamak için o merdivenli yerlere getirirlerdi. Tokaçla yıkarlardı kanalda. Nerede yıkayacaklar?

pull them out. It was really enjoyable.²¹

She narrates a systematic progress in contrast with the old method, through which women made their own pillows and duvets. She specifically talked about the process of the handmade products' maintenance, which was so fun with water for her. Similarly, Fatma, in her 50s, mentioned the time when she would make her own trousseau mattress, *çeyizlik yatak*, out of wool:

Fatma: The water from the dam would come. It was clear water and not rushing. The wool came from the village. We were going to make a bed with this. We washed the wool thoroughly. We washed it very well.²²

The large amount of water not only washes the material very well, but also makes women feel good. On the one hand, they complete each step with a sense of hygienic fulfillment. When it is compared with washing at home, the wool coming from the village is made ready to produce a bed by being washed with the most abundant water possible. On the other hand, they are with water when a time it probably gives an intense sense of freshness and relief in the summer time. It would be summertime because Fatma indicated that the watercourse was not flowing roaringly and Seda underscored it "as soon as summer comes". She further talked about a memory of helping a woman wash her wool at *Çamaşırlık* and how it was highly enjoyable to spend time there:

Seda: It was a lot of fun. Now we're coming here. Why are we coming? We're going to go into the water, dip our feet in and stuff. We see the aunts dipping their wool in the water like this. We say, let's do what they're doing, let's experience that moment. So we say, let's help you, auntie. Some people were upset, some weren't. Some wanted to, some didn't, for example. One day, one of them said to me, "If you have

21. *Çamaşırlık* denilen bir yer varmış. O nasıl oluyor?

Erdal: Onu Abdallar yapıyor.

Seda: Saçmalama be. Eskiden, şimdi şu an sistem çok ilerlediği için kimse yün kullanmaz, pamuk kullanmaz. Neden? Elyafa döndü, hazır yastık, hazır yorgana falan. Eskiden kimsenin ellerinde hazır yorgan falan yoktu. Ben bekarlığında hatırlıyorum, asla hiç kimsede hazır yorgan bulamazsın. Herkes gidiyordu yorgancıya falan yaptırıyordu. Ne oluyordu? Yaz gelir gelmez, daha yaza girer girmez herkes yorganları söker. Güneşte bekletir. Biz yaptık mı yapmadık ama çok yardım etmişimdir mesela orada teyzelere falan. Yünlerini böyle çuvallara koyarlar. Gelirler, başları var bir de böyle tahtadan. Alırlar, gelirler buraya. Oh suyun içine bir yandan batır çıkar. Çok zevkliydi ama gerçekten.

22. Fatma: İşte barajın da suyu gelirdi. O zaman çok böyle... Gümbür gümbür akmadığı zamandı duru bir su. Köyden gelmişti yün. Ona da *çeyizlik* yani *yatak* yapacaktık. Yün biz bol bol yıkadık. Çok güzel yıkadık.

nothing to do, come help me a little.” I said, “Can I do it?” She said, “You can do it, it’s nothing.” Learn it. Like everyone learns it in their mother’s womb. Anyway, I went and said, “What should I do?” She said, “Look, these wool are dry, these are wet.” The wet ones have been washed, the dry ones need to be washed. Can you wash them? I said, “What should I do? Should I beat them?” “No, girl,” she said. “You’ll dip them in water, take them out, and put them in front of me. It’s all rocky there. My aunt is sitting on one rock, the dry ones are on another, and the wet ones are on another.” Just as I was lowering the wool, that is, dipping it in the water and taking it out, my aunt hit it with a stick. Auntie, my head is going to explode. “Don’t worry, we’re experts at this,” she said. It was so much fun. We’d get wet, fall, and slide on the rocks. Once I cut my foot there.²³

As in Seda’s memory, daily clothes were not among what women mentioned as the stuff they washed at *Çamaşırlık*, which might require specific techniques. It is a publicly domestic work to learn step by step. Hence, *Çamaşırlık* creates a space of encounter which could enable building relationships and transmitting knowledge among women. Through a daily encounter, Seda could learn how to wash wool in a way of quick apprenticeship. At the same time, the domestic work which would likely be undertaken alone if it was done at home or there would be a more limited chance encounter to share the workload at home, could be done through spontaneous division of labour. In addition to being a space of work, it becomes a space of pleasure where they experience a different form of getting in touch with water and people.

The construction of the concrete wall-edge, the *ıslah* wall, following the removal of the river’s shore is pronounced as another determinant on *Çamaşırlık* becoming extinct lately. Emel states that because the river is “enclosed by the concrete,” nobody goes there. Likewise, Feray talks about how going there was a popular activity before the riverbank was immured in the concrete wall, which, for her, disqualified the area in terms of its availability. Murat, Feray’s husband, further

23. Seda: Çok zevkliydi. Anlatayım evet. Şimdi biz buraya geliyoruz. Niye geliyoruz? Suyu gireceğiz işte, ayaklarımızı falan batıracağız. Bir bakıyoruz teyzeler yünlerini böyle suya batırıp çıkarıyorlar. Biz de diyoruz hani o anı yaşamak için, onların yaptığını yapmak için biz de şey yapıyoruz. İşte teyze yardım edelim diyoruz biz de size falan. Kimi kırmıyordu, kimi kırmıyordu. Kimi istiyordu, kimi istemiyordu mesela. Bir gün bir tanesi bana dedi ki, kızım işin yoksa gel bana biraz yardım et. Dedim yapabilir miyim? Yaparsın bir şey yok dedi. Öğren işte. Herkes annesinin karnında mı öğreniyor gibisinden. Neyse gittim ne yapayım dedim. Bana dedi ki bak buradaki yünler dedi kuru buradakiler yaş. Yaşlar yıkanmış, kurular yıkanacak. Yıkayabilir misin? Dedim ne yapacağım? Çitileyecek miyim? Yok kızım dedi. Suyu batıracaksın, çıkaracaksın önüme koyacaksın. Hep kayalık ya oralar. Kayanın bir tanesinde teyzem oturuyor, bir tanesinde kurular var, bir tanesinde yaşlar var. Tam ben yünü indiriyorum, yani suya batırıp çıkarıyorum ya. Kayaya indiriyorum, teyze topağı bir vuruyor böyle. Teyze kafam gidecek. Bir şey olmaz, korkma biz bu işin ustasıyız diyor. Öyle yani çok eğlenceliydi. Ne bileyim ıslanırdık, düşerdik, kayardık taşların üstünde. Bir kere ayağımı kestim orada.

adds that since the flow of water has been cut off due to the process of bridge construction, people have not come. The absence of flow of water has disturbed the area both in terms of the amount of water per se and the big stones and rocks that surfaced excessively, according to him. On the one hand, the stones and rocks are needed to beat or stretch the stuff on them. On the other hand, caregiver women went there by taking their children with them. The place was like a playground in that sense. Murat says that no children are entering the water there because everywhere gets rocky and stony. The level of water that could immerse some stones could also make the area more available for playing with water. Hence, women's workload as caregivers and domestic workers would become heavier when they also have to continue to take care actively of the children without water play. Many interlocutors mentioned the children, together with women, going to *Çamaşırlık*. Only, they play in the shallow water while their mothers do the washing. In other words, *Çamaşırlık* has ceased to be a convenient area for children to play around and do laundry for women.

The fact that the neighborhood women have not recently used the space indicates not only a change in its populous character but also its population, who appears to go there. The less convenient *Çamaşırlık* has become, in many ways, such as the installation of the *ıslah* wall on the riverbank, the more those going there have been marked by the neighborhood locals. Becoming less convenient brings primarily the problem of usability. Accordingly, *Çamaşırlık* has become a space in which those who use the area are likened to people whom the inhabitants of the neighborhood categorized as "inconvenient". In other words, the unusable situation of the infrastructural watery area denotes that it is not convenient anymore to do activities for the neighborhood locals. Those who go to *Çamaşırlık*, people using the unusable, get fashioned with an inconvenient character, a troubling or annoying image from outside gaze, which connects with an ethnic-based association made by some neighborhood locals' narratives.

The first moment I witnessed an ethnic-based distinction in a narrative of a neighborhood local was about Syrian people in general. Throughout the fieldwork, I noticed that from time to time, the old locals singled out Syrian people in many issues in their discourses, such as "behaving inappropriately," "making noise," or "polluting the environment". In the case of *Çamaşırlık*, I have not heard such "inconvenient" situations. For this specific area, I have heard other ethnic-based distinctions uttered.

When I asked Seda about *Çamaşırlık*, her husband immediately said that "The Abdals are doing it [doing washing at *Çamaşırlık*]". Then, Seda got a bit angry and surprised and responded to her husband "Do not be ridiculous". He also repeated

“what do-not-be-ridiculous?” They were about to start a heated debate on this issue. Then, Seda changed the subject to the materials that people use right now, synthetic *elyaf*, instead of wool. For me, she, as a person who enjoys being at *Çamaşırlık* and helps women’s work, approaches his statement as if it is a pejorative situation. How is it a ridiculous thing to state that Abdals do things at *Çamaşırlık*?

Abdal communities can be regarded among the subgroups of the Gypsy societies, which refers to the “craftsmen/ peripatetic nomad communities,” and are named “Roma/Rom in Europe, “Dom” in the Middle East and North Africa...” Gezicier (2019) states that it has been a still-contested issue whether the Abdal people are part of the Dom community or not (26). She conveys that Abdals do not call themselves Gypsy. Furthermore, while some interlocutors with whom she spoke called themselves Abdal, some others delivered the situation in which, while the other people called them Abdal, they did not adopt it themselves (Gezicier 2019, 19). This being the case, “Who is Abdal?” has already been a debated issue before it comes to the discussion between Seda and her husband. I am not necessarily interested in why Seda rejects *Çamaşırlık* people being Abdals. Instead, I question how she finds herself in a situation such as that she was provoked in this way. Rejecting Abdalness, which even Abdal people do to themselves, indicates that she has a different relationship with *Çamaşırlık* compared with her husband. Sara Ahmed suggests relationality of emotions which draws “awayness” or “towardness” (Ahmed 2004, 8). Seda’s husband pronouncing Abdals puts *Çamaşırlık* away from them, at least it tries to do. However, an agreement between Seda and her husband could not emerge as “us” vs “them”. She was not away from *Çamaşırlık*, even if women from Abdal community spent time there, she would possibly have a contact with them. She experienced making an offer to women to share their workload. She witnessed who goes there, including herself. Those are people she could meet and spend time with.

In Ahmed’s approach to feelings, “surfaces and boundaries” are made through feelings, which generates effects of “inside” and “outside” (Ahmed 2004, 10). The feelings that Seda and her husband experience in relation to *Çamaşırlık* people should not have overlapped; they were positioned differently in terms of proximity to them. The boundary between her and *Çamaşırlık* people and the boundary between her husband and *Çamaşırlık* people are not only not the same, but also antagonistic. Ahmed (2004) explicates such situations with the passage of the objects of feeling rather than the feeling itself (11).

Çamaşırlık-related things, such as activity or people, circulated between me, Seda, and her husband, rather than the feeling of *Çamaşırlık* -related things. Otherwise, we should have felt the same feeling. The feelings they felt created positions op-

posite to each other. For Seda, this was not solely a disagreement but also a no sense/ nonsense. The image of Abdal carries all the past derogatory connotations. Likewise, “Gypsy is not only a name defining society, but it is an “adjective,” which “devaluates and marginalizes this society by its own merits” written on the website of *Kırkayak Kültür*, the image of Abdal should have created a devaluing effect on *Çamaşırlık* people for Seda, who does not share the feeling with her husband regarding *Çamaşırlık* subjects in question, to confidently render his expression nonsense. Or, *Çamaşırlık* people are not Abdals, but they were people who were saturated with degrading connotations that Abdals have been carrying.

The other moment in which *Çamaşırlık* people were assigned an ethnicity was after the interlocutors spoke of how people did not go to *Çamaşırlık* anymore. Utterance of the enclosure of the riverbank by the *ıslah* wall and the flow of water that was cut off were followed by the expression that “There is no more of it. Saving your presence, those who do not know are coming, those Kurds.” This sentence is so vague to talk about in detail. I also did not further ask about “those who do not know”. She might have referred to not knowing how to wash the stuff, or how to behave there, or any other thing. What I can tell is that she makes a distinction between the neighborhood locals who do not go to *Çamaşırlık* much anymore and those others go there. She could have used ethnically neutral wordings such as outsiders, but she based her suggestion on the ethnic background, which was additionally posited as unknowers or ignorant.

The journey of *Çamaşırlık*, which becomes less convenient due to many reasons demonstrated, continues to exist either by being withered and getting over for the locals or being an image that the locals adopt with a withering glance. I cannot tell whether *Çamaşırlık* people are mostly Abdals or Kurds lately because I did not further investigate this aspect. However, it can be said that the material transformation of the space into another one and changes in the socioeconomic conditions in the neighborhood have made the local women less interested in *Çamaşırlık* area, and they withdraw. When they withdraw, people going there become ones who engage in the non-usable or become an inconvenience themselves. Seda further suggested that people would get bored with the situation at *Çamaşırlık*:

Seda: No one is working hard right now. No one is bothered by anything. And people aren't welcoming anymore. They send two [police] teams there by referral.²⁴

24. Seda: Şu an kimse kendini yormuyor. Hiç kimse uğraşmıyor bir şeylerle. Bir de artık insanlar da hoş karşılamıyor. Sen orada yün yıkamaya kadar iki tane ekip atarlar oraya yönlendirmeyle.

For the neighborhood women's retreat from *Çamaşırlık*, while men signified infrastructural enhancement and mechanisation of the domestic work, women talked about the abandonment of the materials previously used and the *ıslah* wall that disturbed the material structure of the area.

Following the laundry work whose organization could have been collectively and publicly imagined and operated by women at the side of the dam gates, I found a story of marginalization of an activity in a watery space lately. Women's labour had made the side of the dam gates an appropriate area for domestic work, which would transgress the idea of so-called feminine vulnerability outside the home. The domestic work undertaken by women, who mostly do not earn their money and have a low-income background, has been stretching outside their homes, doing many things in terms of daily encounters, women's workload, transformation of a space, or making of a space. This being the case, it can be said that work time and leisure time got intertwined through the socialization or "domestication" of the infrastructural watery space. The laundry work jumping outside the home does not change the fact that it is the responsibility of women. Nevertheless, those women who usually do not touch or have limited contact with the watery spaces could create such a space where they have come into contact with water. The robust dam gates and other infrastructural parts, which were designed not for such an engagement, were made contactable. While the temporality and path of irrigation flowed in its way toward the agricultural lands and gardens, it could be localized by women's work, which generates a different flow of water. *Çamaşırlık* has come to be a spatial creation out of women's work, which created the situation of women assembling within a watery space, cooling off in the heat stress, reducing the cost of washing, and meeting people.

4.2.2 The Spiders and the Dust

In addition to the transformation of an infrastructural area, the relationship between domestic work and the presence of water can create situations in which women have to struggle. Seher's case indicates how the form of water matters in the context of domestic work. When I asked about the things she dislikes about the neighborhood, her first concern was the situation of her house. She mentions that flies, insects, and spiders flock to every corner. Specifically, she underscores the presence of the spiders, which create extra workload for her:

Seher: Spider webs appear every day. So it's not something to do with cleaning the house. There are spider webs in the house every day because they spin them overnight. Because there are so many flies and insects here, it's like a hunting ground for them. Plus, they've gotten used to the city noise here... They're not scared of people anymore. That's the bad part. It gets really dirty.²⁵

The situation with the still water, which was resulted from cutting off the flow of water due to the construction site on the river path for the neighborhood locals, influences her daily life through the domestic work she has to undertake. The riverbed in the form of a wetland and the promising temperatures in summer become a cozy space for the mosquitoes to reproduce and travel the neighborhood. For her, houses turn into "hunting areas" for the spiders. I found her emphasis on the relationship between spiders and humans noteworthy. According to her account, one of the effects of the infrastructural regulation of water has been on the spiders, which have become urbanite beings. She tries to catch the pace of the spiders spinning webs inside the house. Besides, the presence of the spiders and their webs change her concept of hygiene. She recognizes that even though the house has just been cleaned, she could find a spider web. Therefore, finding spider webs in the house does not have to do with the hygiene code, which she arrives at the point that this would not be a cleaning issue.

Another concern Seher deals with in the house in terms of domestic work is the dust. In this matter, she noted the humidity at first, which is obviously one of the evident issues in Adana. Considering the neighborhood is surrounded by the Seyhan River whose one part is held by the Old Dam/ the Seyhan Regulator and the other part by the irrigation canals filled during the summer seasons, it is imaginable how the amount of water vapor in the air is amplified by the presence of these water bodies. It is said that "high humidity levels can lead to an increase in airborne pollutants, including mold, dust mites, and other allergens." For example, in the growth of the house dust mites, humid environments matter. They sustain their existence through large amounts of water in the air that they consume (Charpin 2021, 1).

Seher argues that the humidity prevents the dust from going away from houses, so it cannot be lifted off. For her, the water in the form of vapor in the air holds the dust particles indoors:

25. Seher: Örümcek ağları her gün oluyor. Yani evi temizlemenizle ilgili bir şey değil o. Her gün mutlaka evde örümcek ağı oluyor çünkü bir gecede örüyorlar. Çünkü sinek, böcek çok olduğu için burada avlanma alanları gibi oluyor. Bir de artık şehir gürültüsüne alışmışlar burada biraz daha... Korkmuyorlar yani örümcekler insandan artık alışmışlar. O açıdan kötü. Çok kirleniyor.

Seher: ...the dust cannot reach the clouds because of the humidity, so the air cannot be cleaned. It falls back to the houses as it is. It's like constant dust. It falls back to the houses as if someone had scattered sand. Especially in this neighborhood. Because in the village, I see my parents' houses and windows, even though it's a village, even though there are streets and animals, they don't get this dirty. So I think the moisture weighs down the dust and sticks it to the house. But my opinion isn't based on any scientific research. I know because I live here. So we clean the house twice a day, for example, and wash the balconies every day, but unfortunately, our children's clothes are still covered in dust. A bit dusty.²⁶

Through the cleaning work she undertakes in her house, she evaluates how the dust exists and guesses the dust's movement in the context of the humidity. She learns how the dust can act and what it does to the houses and people through everyday knowledge. The indoor dust, therefore, has at least two aspects to discuss. On the one hand, the dust mites in the dust can affect human health through allergens that can cause allergic symptoms and lead to asthma. Seher also indicated that "Talk to a few people in this neighborhood; dust allergies are very common.". On the other hand, the dust is something that one wants to get rid of. For her, the water vapor in the air makes the dust heavier enough to be sticky, which makes the cleaning work more exhausting.

Both in the case of spider webs and the dust, she tells a story that her efforts are not enough to keep the house clean. She needs to do cleaning work repeatedly. The forms of water, as still water in the wetland and the vapor in the air, have an effect on the domestic work she needs to operate. Compared to *Çamaşırlık*, where the water is shallow, but flowing, these forms appear not to be preferable, at least in terms of the domestic work. While *Çamaşırlık* could facilitate the division of labour, diluting the work's tiredness with leisure and likely pleasure felt by watercourse, and lifting the heaviness of the work, the humidity and still water of the wetland accumulate the work speedily.

Consequently, gendered division of labour in daily life concerning the family and home issues reflects itself in gendered relations with the watery spaces. Women's relationships with the infrastructural watery spaces are mainly constituted by the

26. Seher: ...toz nemden dolayı bulutlara ulaşamıyor, hava temizlenemiyor. Olduğu gibi geri evlere düşüyor. Sürekli toz böyle şey gibi. Kumu birisi savurmuş gibi eve geri düşüyor. Bu mahallede özellikle. Çünkü köyde, annemlerde görüyorum, onların pencereleri ve evleri bu kadar köy olduğu halde, toz sokak olduğu halde, hayvan olduğu halde bu kadar kirlenmiyor. Yani nemin tozu ağırlaştırıp eve yapıştırdığını düşünüyorum. Ama benim fikrim hiç bilimsel bir araştırmam dayanım yok. Yaşadığım için biliyorum. Yani evi biz günde mesela iki kere siliyoruz, her gün balkonları yıkıyoruz ama maalesef çocuklarımızın yine üstü başı toz oluyor. Biraz tozlu.

caregiver position that encompasses childcare and domestic work. For example, the caregiver positions can manifest varying localities of infrastructural watery spaces, such as between-two-waters. Moreover, forms of water such as static, flowing, shallow, vapor, voluminous, and so on, conditions attributes of caregiver subjects' relationships with the infrastructural watery spaces. For instance, while the flow of water evokes affective stress, wetland induces accessibility issues to watery spaces because of safety concerns. Sometimes, the work requires a form of water that women follow, such as voluminous lake-like water, where a mother wants to show her daughter and shares with her the moment of feeding animals swimming there. In other times, the form of water demands work that women need to operate, like multiple cleaning shifts of the spider webs or the dust. In other words, sorts of works, such as childcare and cleaning are assigned to women who build knowledge and skills; feel fear, anxiety, tiredness, and pleasure; and find their ways in these infrastructural watery spaces differently from men in the neighborhood. Notably, in the context of the extreme heat, women as caregiver bodies are differently affected by the everyday environmental stress due to limited access to watery spaces.

The material changes in the form of the river, which were done in the name of water management in the urban context, both influenced women's access to water and the ways they have contact. When it becomes more "canalized" through enclosure with a concrete wall-edge/ the *ıslah* wall or *nehriñ içe alınması* (taking the river in) as the locals express, the spatial form loses its incremental feature. For instance, in extreme heat conditions, they are no longer able to touch shallow river water in their daily life because of the embankment wall. Sultana (2010) also mentions how water management stays blind to the local social lives, especially in terms of gendered social order (50). Hence, giving shape to the river and making it more in line with the urban planning has gendered consequences.

On the other side, the material changes in the riverbank, which define practices of the neighborhood women to some extent, makes women feel differently toward the engagement in an infrastructural area, *Çamaşırlık*, compared to the previous state of the space. The encapsulation of the river or canalization of the river (as some locals utter) makes some neighborhood women feel less proximate to *Çamaşırlık*. Alteration in the materiality of the infrastructural watery space brings inappropriateness both for usage and the image of the activity itself. In other words, material suitability is followed by normative suitability in their narratives. Furthermore, changes in material and social convenience result in marginalization of the activity, which is reinforced by ethnic-based markings. Canalization of the river clearly defines borders of land and water in a strict way, unlike a riverbank, where the transition between water and land is more ambiguous. Hence, the arrangement of

the topography in this way, a sudden concrete wall-edge instead of a confused and gradual riverbank, plays with the settings of the physical proximity to the infrastructural watery spaces, which can further prompt social distance to the undesigned engagement in the infrastructure.

5. CONCLUSION

In this research, in the beginning, what puzzled me, as an outsider, was how people continue to bathe in the irrigation canals. Then, the inquiry turns into how the infrastructural environment generates unexpected practices and relationships. Hence, the first focus was contextualization of the phenomenon of canalbathing in the city of Adana. I examined how infrastructures are used differently by the locals in the city. How did the social conditions for canalbathing come to be in the first place?

The story of Çukurova involves many interventions in its production processes, and the Seyhan Regulator Bridge and the irrigation canals are just some parts. These infrastructures are instruments for water management and the agricultural industry. In these lowlands, like mosquitoes, the heat has been sickening and exhausting for the locals. The open system irrigation canals have become spaces to escape thermal suffering since the 1940s. The state's adoption of a more finance-based managerial approach has contributed to the constitution of risk of drowning in the canals. Thus, the drowning issue is among water management issues and is tackled as risk management. Furthermore, together with the media representation, the local activity obtains its risky feature more strongly. As technopolitical projects, they have functions mostly for the rural fields, but not for urban people. However, as material infrastructures, they constitute the topography of the city, like a river or a hill. Hence, it becomes a "natural" environment for those who have physical and social proximity. The social proximity is mainly built through socioeconomic conditions and unstable masculinized attributes.

Distance to the canal is both material and social, which is interwoven with the "affective form of orientation" (Ahmed 2007, 2). The material distance is not based on the abstract metric system. The direction regarding distance has to do with the locality of canalbathing. When it is vertical, the material distance intertwined with the social creates an awayness to the canal (2). Horizontal distance does not necessarily work in this way. Even though one inhabits a distant location to a canal horizontally, they can be oriented toward the irrigation canals to bathe in. Socioe-

conomic structural ground qualifies the horizontal distance as not a determinant for being an outsider of the irrigation canal. Accordingly, the affective aspect of proximity and distance gets intensified around fear and joy.

The material and social distance not only shape ways of engagement with the infrastructural setting but also chart the formation of the risk zone. The outsiders of the irrigation canals are said to be prone to drowning. Lack of community and knowledge put women and other outsiders, like city guests, in a more vulnerable position. The outsider as a social position might encompass one more category: being a migrant to the city. Adana, known for its dynamic population movements, has continued to be as such. This research does not examine the experiences of migrants around the infrastructural environment. However, the migrant position presents one of the potential outsider experiences that can illustrate some other facets of risk in relation to locality.

Following human-water relationships with questions of all sizes in my mind has kept me rethinking the wonders and troubles of several forms of wetness in the context of heat. Water in the form of flow, such as the Seyhan River and the canal, was more visible at the beginning of the research. Then, the field revealed other forms of water, like ones around the wetland. This gave me further insight into how not only the Seyhan River, the conspicuous one, but also swamps were key elements in the making of modern Çukurova.

Forms of water are significantly constitutive of social lives around the infrastructural environment as seen in canalbathing. Additionally, women tailored the riverbank, which had a gradual fabric, and shallow water in front of the dam gates to the domestic work they undertook. Notably, the wetland zone can be a hindering element for everyday movements of women with children around the wetland. Investigating canalbathing in this research has ended up encountering both the act of transgression and the act of tailoring, which can be both articulated as undesigned engagements around the infrastructural environment. The transgressive act exposes the infrastructural, legal, and anatomical limits both by drowning moments and asserting the space as *bathable* through a demonstration of bodily capacity. The act of tailoring shows how the material qualities of the infrastructures are not isolated from the surrounding areas. They are part of the generation of the environment. While everyday works are adjusted to the infrastructural zone, the infrastructural materiality is also accommodated to these works. Therefore, canalbathing activity and the caregiver position of women speak to how forms of water matter in daily life and how social lives around (the watery) infrastructural areas are gendered.

This research can contribute to discussions on the idea of “human dominion of

nature” and its following issues, such as dualisms between nature and city. Infrastructural environment, which I suggest, can demonstrate how it is not possible to untangle “nature” from the human domain. Irrigation canals are more visible examples of how they become a natural environment for some locals. The canalization of a part of the river by the *ıslah* wall and the emergence of a wetland area can further touch upon criticisms of such dualisms by becoming prolific urban topographies.

Additionally, this research can offer an avenue for rethinking the environmental justice aspect of heat and water in the city. It demonstrates how cooling-off practices can be defined by socioeconomic and gender order. While the case conveys suffering from the extreme heat in an urban context and living with the risk of drowning in the irrigation canal, it significantly tries to address the enjoyment part of the situation. In this respect, women have different affective relationships with heat and water from men in this case, which indicates how environmental experiences can be further ordered in accordance with gender dynamics. Consequently, as part of the Çukurova projects, water infrastructures in the city of Adana participate in the production of urban topographies, which also register environmental justice issues.

Not having met anyone before was both a limitation and a potentiality that allowed me to be more flexible in the field. I would like to emphasize that it was emotionally exhausting to explain myself each time. The local elections between my two visits may have prevented the first person I met from helping me as the village headman. During my second, longer visit, the schools had not yet closed, which meant that the children’s relationship with the canal was restricted. I could rarely see children bathing in the canal because they mostly went there in their free time, when they did not have to go to school. I was not in the field during most of the school holidays. In general, I did not witness so many moments of canalbathing, which can be considered a limitation in terms of direct observation of the activity.

This research involves dimensions that are worth further careful examination. The environmental justice aspect can be studied more comprehensively, for instance, in terms of urban cooling practices and the extreme heat effects. Further research can also be directed toward the spatial distribution of drowning cases in the city, which can illustrate differences across varying water bodies, such as lakes, rivers, and canals. An intersectional approach would enrich the study, for example, by investigating urban experiences after forced displacement or migration. All in all, the question of how infrastructures, which appear to have strict functional designs and robust materials, become generative infrastructural environments can be followed by social practices, unplanned engagements, and wet materialities, such as bathing in the irrigation canals, caregivers’ relationships with the emergent wetland, and

tailoring the infrastructural zone to everyday work.

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