Negotiating Illegality:
Bypassed Minorities' Access to Infrastructure in Middle Eastern Democracies

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Abstract

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What happens when democratic governments distribute infrastructure systems perceived as prerequisites for economic prosperity and modernization, such as systems providing water and electricity, to disadvantage their minority communities? How do bypassed communities react to the state's discriminatory distribution practices? Public goods distribution literature argues that democracies do not distribute resources discriminatorily. The premise of this dissertation, comparatively examining the distribution of infrastructure in peripheral mixed regions of Israel and Turkey, asks how politicians who disadvantage minorities during infrastructure distribution later comply with these groups' subsequent illegal access if the group holds significant electoral

power. In other words, in democratic countries, bypassed communities' ability to illegally access denied resources is determined by their electoral weight. With greater electoral weight comes greater state tolerance of illegal resource use. If minority groups do not wield such power in their region, illegal access is not tolerated, and they are left to engage in more conventional political actions, such as demonstrations, litigation, or advocacy.

I develop this argument through comparative case studies of infrastructure distribution between 1970s and 2015, in the mixed regions of two Middle Eastern democracies, Israel and Turkey. In building these case studies, I draw on textual analysis of administrative records and newspapers, in-depth interviews, and participant observations conducted during 14 months of ethnographic field research conducted in the Bedouin populated Negev/Naqab region of Israel and Kurdish populated Southeastern Anatolia region of Turkey.

Several empirical observations distinguish my theory from existing scholarship, which overlooks bypassed communities, who, it is assumed, either do not struggle against discriminatory distribution policies or, if they struggle, do so in the same ways. My research, in contrast, shows that: 1) infrastructure distribution is not a purely technical decision—politicians intervene at various stages to decide when and where to provide infrastructure; 2) the state actors weaponized infrastructure and disadvantaged the dissident minority communities during the resource distribution; 3) discriminated groups with electoral power negotiate illegal access in exchange for their votes; 4) discriminated groups without electoral power cannot negotiate illegal access with politicians, and instead engage in more conventional political actions, such as taking their case to the court, organizing non-violent demonstrations, and conducting international advocacy to put pressure on the government to alter its policy.

This dissertation reveals how infrastructure distribution, often considered a non-political process, can be a highly discriminatory practice from the perspective of bypassed communities, especially if they belong to a political minority, and how illegal access to denied infrastructure by those bypassed communities is likewise a politically sanctioned act. Scholars often assume that stealthy access to denied resources is used as a last resort by marginalized communities pushed outside of conventional demand-making mechanisms. My research instead shows that illegal access is possible only for groups with enough electoral power to negotiate politicians' compliance. In other words, illegal access is not a last resort for the marginalized. It is a tactic available only to the ones with electoral power.

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Semih'e…

Chapter 1

Introduction: Infrastructures of Politics

> Up in the north, the dam collected the river's water. Collecting, it pushed its powerful turbines down, further down. Pushing down and pushing down, it turned this water into electric power and poured it into the high voltage line. It poured night and day. On electric towers, the high voltage line reached to the plain. Stopping and standing in fields, at roadsides; cutting here and there the irrigation canals and their canalettes' installation lines, it reached the south where crowds were gathered. Reaching south, it carried its fatal and reviving power to some places. Wherever it passes, it engraved and left its name on everything and everyone it intersected. But besides reaching those places, this high voltage line, in places it passed, did not let any solid object to get closer to it more than fifty centimeters. It kept its circumference broader. It declared its rule inside a circle with a diameter of one-hundred centimeters. It was how it walked protecting its impunity, went, and poured less, far less than one in a billion of its power into the twenty-five-watt light bulb dangling from the hay roof of craneman Kadir Çiçek.[1]

In Adalet Ağaoğlu's award-winning short story "High Voltage," protogonist Kadir Çiçek is a craneman. He and his brother Hasan work on the construction of irrigation canals. They are responsible for transporting the pipes with a crane and placing them one after the other. Working for long hours, they hope to earn enough money to pay off the expenses of building a house for their family. After they pay their debt, Kadir plans to connect the house to the electrical network so he can buy and use a refrigerator. Until then, they plan to spend their nights in their living room, under the single light bulb they illegally connected to the high voltage line. On a day that started like any other, a pipe slips off its ropes, destabilizing the crane that touches the high voltage line. The electricity's fatal power ran from the grid to the crane, and from the crane to Hasan's body. He dies immediately.

[1] Adalet Ağaoğlu, *Yüksek Gerilim* (İstanbul: Oğlak Press, 1996), 10-1.

In a few pages, Ağaoğlu manages to illustrate the account of a family's relation to infrastructure torn between aspiration, access, lack, and danger. High Voltage gives visibility to infrastructure considered to be "by definition invisible."[2] Highly noticeable during construction, once they start to operate, invisibility becomes the nature of infrastructure systems,[3] until something goes awry.[4] In Kadir's story infrastructure gains visibility through its closeness, yet its place just out of the reach of the protagonists. The Çiçek family's story shows similarities with millions of others for whom the infrastructure networks, quite literally, bypass on their way elsewhere.[5] As Bruno Latour puts it;

> Between the lines of the network there is, strictly speaking, nothing at all: no train, no telephone, no intake pipe, no television sets. Technological networks, as the name indicates, are nets thrown over spaces, and they retain only a few scattered elements of those spaces. They are connected lines, not surfaces. They are by no means comprehensive, global or systematic, even though they embrace surfaces without covering them, and extend a very long way.[6]

The Çiçek family and many others living in between the lines take the risk of electric shocks and legal sanctions to be part of the connected world. Like many others, Kadir's family considered access to electricity as a passageway to the "modern life" and its promises. Infrastructure, especially electricity, has been seen as an agent of civilization and modernity since the late 19th century.[7] Modernization experts have scaled down problems of geopolitics and development into

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[2] Susan Leigh Star, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure," American Behavioral Scientist 43, no. 3 (November 1, 1999), 380.
[3] Brian Larkin, "The Politics and Poetics of Infrastructure," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 42, no. 1 (2013), 336.
[4] Dominic Boyer, "Anthropology Electric," *Cultural Anthropology* 30, no. 4 (November 1, 2015), 532.
[5] Stephen Graham, "Introduction: Cities and Infrastructure," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24, no. 1 (March 1, 2000), 116.
[6] Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 118.
[7] Sibel Bozdoğan, Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 128.

manageable sizes. They re-imagined provision of infrastructure as a medium for cultivating modern individuals.[8] Yet Kadir learnt the hard way that, in its naked form, electrical infrastructure was not harmless, but dangerous. The less direct contact with this dangerous, urgent force, the better.[9]

Timothy Mitchell claims that "Rather than politics determining infrastructure, the different ways in which populations, regions, and productive life were interconnected or isolated by an energy system shaped the very modes of government."[10] I, on the other hand, argue that the relation between politics and infrastructure is a reciprocal one. Despite a definite move towards privatization of public goods, governments are still the main distributors of infrastructure systems such as electricity, water, roads, and sewage because markets often fail or refuse to provide these resources to areas and communities considered to be non-profitable. State actors who design these projects, choose the path they will take, and ratify infrastructure systems distribute power and create winners and losers in project regions. On the other hand, infrastructure systems shape where and how political relations would be conducted. Infrastructure enables, or even imposes, new types of political actions and interactions which, in most cases, do not meet the initial goal of the decision-makers.

Infrastructure stories raise and answer multiple interconnected questions about distribution, access, and the gap in-between. At this gap, one can reveal how denial or provision of infrastructure access shape not only people's relation to their physical space and resources, but also to state and politics; and this is what this dissertation aims to achieve. The struggle for

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[8] Begüm Adalet, Hotels and Highways: The Construction of Modernization Theory in Cold War Turkey, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018), 4-20.
[9] Boyer, "Anthropology Electric," 532.
[10] Timothy Mitchell, "Introduction Life of Infrastructure," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 3 (January 1, 2014), 438.

access conducted by bypassed communities provides a clear picture of how the presence of infrastructure transforms political relations and perceptions. Access struggles are especially salient in democratic countries claiming to have broader and more equal distribution practices. To postulate that the democracies distribute resources equally leads researchers to overlook distributive inequalities and their outcomes.

This dissertation is about infrastructure, but not its complex technical structure. It approaches infrastructure as a political agent transforming state-society relations, and ultimately the working of the political system in democratic countries. This work endeavors to understand the ways in which infrastructure systems shape the relationship between states and their citizens through the enabling of new types of political conducts while disabling some others. Distribution of infrastructure is mostly overlooked as it is seen as non-political, highly technical effort. Yet in most cases, the practice of infrastructure distribution widens the existing social, political, and economic gaps and can even create new ones.

The losers of distributive politics, those in communities that infrastructure systems bypass, choose their method of struggle to access the denied resources based on their strengths and the opportunities available to them. Their struggle, in return, transforms state-society relations as well as the nature of politics in the country. Based on a comparative study of infrastructure distribution in the mixed peripheral regions of Turkey and Israel, this dissertation explores how infrastructure distribution transforms bypassed communities' relationship to their state and political system in unexpected and unprecedented ways. By following infrastructure, this dissertation addresses four interlinked questions:

(1) How are infrastructure systems distributed? Focusing on the bureaucratic and political echelons of infrastructure distribution provides a rich account of the extent to which the path and

scope of infrastructure distribution projects are an outcome of struggle conducted between state actors.

(2) Who is bypassed during the distribution? While providing infrastructural resources selectively to some communities, distributors bypass, ignore, and deny the resources to other groups. Understanding the socio-political characteristics of the bypassed communities may reveal some trends around public goods distribution.

(3) What do the groups bypassed by infrastructure do? How do the bypassed communities react to disadvantaging distribution of resources? The Çiçek family connect their single bulb to the electric grid illegally. What other struggle methods are used by the bypassed communities? Bypassed communities and their struggle method choices are salient to understand how infrastructure shape them, their actions, and relation to other actors of distributive politics.

(4) And finally, what kind of political realities emerge from the bypassed citizens' reactions to the state's distribution policies? Groups' diverging choice of action and tactics have consequences not only on their access to resources but on the practice of politics.

Each one of the following chapters answer some of these questions and the conclusion brings all the pieces together to form a bigger picture and conduct a large-scale discussion on the relationship between infrastructure and democracy. But first, I would like to give more details on the theory and research. Part 1 of this introductory chapter lays out the public goods distribution literature and identifies its gaps in relation to bypassed community. Part 2 presents the dissertation theory. Part 3 introduces the actor-network theory and state-in-society approaches as theoretical tools to delineate the puzzle set in this dissertation. Part 4 discusses the research design and case selection. Part 5 details the data collected during multiple field visits. Part 6 provides the chapter overview and summarizes each chapter's contributions to the thesis.

1.1. Public Goods Distribution Literature

If, as Harold Lasswell claimed, politics is all about "who gets what, when, how,"[11] then distributive politics, which involves allocation of goods and services, lies at the heart of it. Mainstream and critical authors of public goods distribution literature have opposing approaches to resource distribution in democratic countries. The prevailing authors of public goods distribution have identified that the allocation of goods and services is more equitable in democratic countries compared to nondemocratic ones which is later challenged by the empirical findings of critical authors.[12]

The mainstream scholars provide four explanations for the expectation on relatively fair distribution of resources in democratic countries. Some scholars argue that democracies tend to deliver more equally to their citizens because of the existence of independent check and balance structures. Amartya Sen, for example, states that in democracies that go to election regularly, have opposition party or parties to voice criticisms, and permit newspapers to report freely and question the wisdom of policies, the rulers have more incentive to listen to what people want and deliver accordingly.[13]

Some scholars expect governments in democratic countries to deliver resources more broadly as politicians need to build larger coalition bases to be re-elected. Bueno de Mesquita and others argue that "Public goods. . . are especially emphasized by leaders who depend on a larger coalition. Such goods are much less likely to be provided by those who rule with the

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[11] Harold D. Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When, How,* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1936).
[12] Miriam Golden and Brian Min, "Distributive Politics Around the World," *Annual Review of Political Science* 16 (2013), 75.
[13] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 152-53.

support of a small group of cronies."[14] As democratic systems rely on the votes of large groups, these scholars argue, the leaders would be less likely to take the risk of creating unhappy electorates.

Other scholars, however, expect the governments in democratic countries to redistribute more equally not only because they rely on large numbers of votes but also because the average voters have income below the average. Meltzer and Richard state that "any voting rule that concentrates vote below the mean provides an incentive for redistribution of income…"[15] By investing in public goods distribution, this approach argues, leaders aim to appeal the poor median voters, the backbone of the general electorate in many democratic countries.

In recent years, Brian Min brought a new explanation to the logic behind democratic governments' provision of greater access to public goods. Min claims that democratic governments distribute resources more broadly not only because public goods reach many voters or are valued by the masses, but also because of "the influence political actors have over the provision of public goods"[16] and "the benefits that flow from them."[17] From his perspective, democratic governments distribute public goods more equally not to get votes in one single election but to establish a long-term control over the flow of resources between their supporters and dissidents, forever. I agree with Min on his approach to infrastructure as a political control mechanism but disagree that politicians distribute infrastructure more broadly to control the electorate. This dissertation shows that infrastructure is weaponized in its absence much more

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[14] Bruce Bueno de Mesquita et al., *The Logic of Political Survival* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 214.
[15] Allan H. Meltzer and Scott F. Richard, "A Rational Theory of the Size of Government," *Journal of Political Economy* 89, no. 5 (1981), 916.
[16] Brian Min, Power and the Vote: Elections and Electricity in the Developing World (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 5.
[17] Ibid, 5.

than in its presence. Non-provision of infrastructure is a disciplinary tool that many democratic governments rely on to punish and marginalize minorities and dissidents.

Whether it is because of the free press, the necessity of forming large coalitions, the influence of poor median voters, or government's thirst for controlling the flow of resources to citizens, the prevailing literature on resource distribution expects governments in democratic countries to distribute resources more broadly within their territories. However, a recently growing body of empirical research points out that, contrary to expectations, many democratic countries do not distribute resources equally or broadly to their citizens.[18]

Soifer, who conducted research on Ecuador and Colombia, argues that demographic factors are the primary determinant of infrastructure provision decisions.[19] While explaining in-country distribution differences to a certain extent, Soifer accepts that the demographics argument cannot explain unequal distribution at the local level.[20] Based on their research in India, Political economists Banerjee and Somanathan ethnic identity of communities shape the provision of public goods both at the national and local level.[21] Other authors take a relativist approach to unequal distribution. Based on their study of five indicators of public goods and services (infant mortality rates, childhood vaccinations, educational attainment, access to improved water sources, and household electrification) in six African democracies (Benin, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Senegal, and Zambia), Posner and Kramon argue that it is hard to talk about absolute favoritism of a single ethnic community and terms of favoritism may change from

[18] Golden and Min, "Distributive Politics."
[19] Hillel David Soifer, "Regionalism, Ethnic Diversity, and Variation in Public Good Provision by National States," *Comparative Political Studies* 49, no. 10 (2016): 1341–71.
[20] Soifer, "Regionalism, Ethnic Diversity," 1363.
[21] Abhijit Banerjee and Rohini Somanathan, "The Political Economy of Public Goods: Some Evidence from India," *Journal of Development Economics* 82, no. 2 (2007): 287–314.

one good to another. They argue that ethnic favoritism in the allocation of some goods is mostly counterbalanced by the opposite pattern in allocation of other goods.[22] Even though they make different argument on the potential reasons of democratic governments' unequal distribution of resources, these empirical works evidence that democracies do not distribute resources as equally as claimed and tend to favor certain groups over the others.

Despite the opposing arguments of the more theoretical public goods allocation literature, the critical literature based on empirical cases identifies a gap between theory and practice in the allocation of infrastructure in democracies. Discussing democracy from a theoretical perspective, mainstream literature assumes fair distribution in democracies. Relying on case studies from full and quasi-democracies around the world, the critical literature underlines the unequal nature of resource distribution practices in democratic countries.

This dissertation aligns more with the critical literature. Diverging from most authors regarding resource distribution as a practice unilaterally conducted by the state actors, the dissertation at hand approaches distribution and access as two sides of the same negotiations conducted between multiple state and non-state actors. Sunila Kale, in her influential work on the electrification of India, takes a similar stand and examines resource distribution not as a unilateral practice but as a negotiation conducted between multiple state and non-state actors. Kale's work makes a timely contribution to the existing critical distribution literature by showing that in India, electricity distribution was the result of negotiations at multiple-levels conducted between state and societal actors.[23] Kale's findings show that Indian rural electrification occurred

[22] Eric Kramon and Daniel Posner, "Who Benefits from Distributive Politics? How the Outcome One Studies Affects the Answer One Gets," *Perspectives on Politics* 11, no. 2 (June 1, 2013), 468.
[23] Sunila Kale, Electrifying India: Regional Political Economies of Development (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014).

when local actors managed to successfully negotiate with the distributors, especially "when rural constituencies became political influential in state governments or when farmers mobilized to demand a larger share of development resources."[24]

However, this dissertation carries the debate on societal actors' role in distributive politics a step further and analyzes what the disadvantaged groups do in the face of discrimination. It argues that negotiations on distribution and access do not stop once the initial distribution is completed. Based on a comparative study of infrastructure distribution in ethnically mixed regions of Turkey and Israel, it argues that most intense struggles over distribution and access are conducted once the public goods start to distribute opportunities across communities. The comparative study of two democratic countries conducting large-scale infrastructure distribution projects delineates the differences and similarities between democratic governments' distribution practices and bypassed citizens' methods of struggle in the face of discriminatory public goods distribution. In ignoring bypassed communities and their struggles to gain access to the denied resources, the existing literature overlooks the heated political negotiations as well as the political and social outcomes of struggles conducted by these communities.

This dissertation aims to fill the gaps in the existing critical literature by shifting the focus from the questions of "who distributes the resources?" and "who gets access?" to the questions of "who does not get access?" and "what do they do then?" Translating theoretical into empirical questions, this dissertation asks: In the democratic states of Turkey and Israel, where one would presume a fairly equal distribution of government services, how are key public infrastructure projects distributed? How do the disadvantaged Kurdish and Bedouin communities

[24] Ibid, 4.

react to discriminatory distribution of resources? Why do these two minorities use diverging methods to secure their access to denied resources?

1.2. The Argument

The relationship between politics and infrastructure is not a deterministic but a dynamic one. Infrastructure systems are not merely state instruments carrying, producing, and disseminating state power. When governments introduce, approve the budget and the path of an infrastructure system, their decisions connect certain populations and regions and isolate others. Depending on whether they build a train station at your town or not, you become more connected to the rest of the country or remain isolated. While state actors decide who will get access to which infrastructure, infrastructure shapes the struggles and negotiations conducted between multiple state and non-state actors in unprecedented and unexpected ways.[25] While politicians, bureaucrats, and technocrats may be the ones who decide if there will be a train station built in a specific town, in many cases there are the nearby passing rails that enable train hopping and illegal train rides as well as protests and petitions for the construction of a new station. Taking infrastructure at the center facilitates a critical discussion about the existing social relations and decision-making mechanisms as well as the transformative role of material constructions over politics. In a way, focusing on infrastructure helps us, as Boyer puts it, to "re-think all-too-human histories of power and politics."[26]

This dissertation makes two main complementary arguments. The first part of the dissertation argues that democracies do not always distribute infrastructure equally to their

[25] Katie. M. Meehan, "Tool-Power: Water Infrastructure as Wellsprings of State Power," *Geoforum* 57 (2014): 215–24.
[26] Boyer, "Anthropology Electric."

citizens. The research findings show that, in the ethnically mixed regions, state actors tend to distribute infrastructure in a way complementing the state's ethnic policies. Details of infrastructure provision in the Southeastern Anatolia region of Turkey and Negev/Naqab region of Israel reveal that both of the democratic states tended to distribute resources and opportunities in a way that disadvantaged their ethnic minorities, the Kurds and Bedouin respectively. On the other hand, marginalized communities typically do not silently accept the disadvantageous distribution practices. The first part of the dissertation also details that while the Kurds accessed the denied resources illegally, the Bedouin did not.

The second part of the dissertation discusses the two communities' diverging reactions to discriminatory distribution policies from a comparative perspective. The Kurdish community in Turkey accessed infrastructures illegally and used its electoral weight to convince politicians to comply with their illegal access and pass amnesty bills. It shows that the Kurdish community's electoral weight made the politicians willing to turn a blind eye to the community's illegal access and introduce debt amnesties before each election cycle. In return, politicians expected to get the Kurdish electorate's support in the elections.

On the other hand, due to the details of Israeli electoral system that will be discussed futher in Chapter 5, Bedouin who are around one-third of the population of their region does not have any electoral weight. Not having electoral power to negotiate illegality, Bedouin built coalitions with cause lawyers to take their access demands to the Israeli courts, and also constructed NGOs to organize non-violent demonstrations to support their cause and conduct advocacy activities at international organizations. When they made their demands, they referred to democratic principles, such as rule of law, citizen participation, and human rights. As the next part discusses, to build its main thesis, this dissertation heavily relies on the actor-network theory

and state-in-society approach to delineate the ways in which infrastructure, state, and societal actors shape each other.

1.3. Theoretical Engagements: State-in-Society Approach and Actor-Network Theory

Understanding how state and societal actors negotiate distribution and access to infrastructure systems and how existing infrastructure shapes these negotiations necessitates the use of suitable theoretical approaches to delineate these complex relations. The State-in-Society approach that had grown out of political science literature suggests a process-oriented approach to the study of politics by emphasizing the transformative role of everyday encounters between state and societal agents. This dissertation takes up this suggestion and studies the negotiations over access to resources as practices transforming both state and societal actors as well as their relations to each other.

In his seminal work, Philip Abrams differentiates between the "state-idea" and the "state-system." He argues that the "state-idea," takes the state for granted as a single entity created for specific purposes in a specific historical setting. This imaginary concept, Abrams argues, does not fit in the "state-system" which is a palpable nexus of practices and institutional structures. Underlying the impossibility of talking about the State with a capital-S, Abrams suggests a shift in the analytic focus towards "[t]he relationship of the state-system and state-idea to other forms of power."[27] Along the same vein, Timothy Mitchell argues that the state image as a unity

[27] Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State (1977)," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 1, no. 1 (March 1, 1988), 82.

standing apart from society is nothing more than an appearance.[28] Both authors agree that the state should be studied in relation to non-state political actors.

Joel Migdal's groundbreaking work on state-society relations gave a new direction to this discussion by proposing an anthropology of the state to reveal these processes of interaction between state and societal actors. The State-in-Society approach advocates differentiating the image of the state as a coherent, controlling organization within a specific territory from the actual practices of its multiple parts. Emphasizing that the practice of the state, like any other group or organization, is constructed and reconstructed through interactions of its parts with each other as well as the other forces, the approach opens the ground for studying the ways in which parts of the state apparatus interact with societal actors and how they transform each other.[29]

Even though it enables researchers to focus on interactions rather than actors, the state-in-society approach stays all-too-human in its focus. Especially in cases where state-society relations are conducted around non-human factors such as infrastructure, understanding the processes necessitates the study of non-humans as active participants shaping, enabling, disabling, and transforming the existing relations. Negotiations between state and societal actors over access to infrastructure are not conducted in a vacuum. The terms and direction of these negotiations are shaped and transformed by the subject matter, infrastructure. An approach grown in sociology literature, the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) introduces non-humans to the study of social relations. The approach invites researchers to include non-humans not only as objects but as agents in social interactions that intervene and transform social relations.

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[28] Timothy Mitchell, "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics," *The American Political Science Review* 85, no. 1 (1991): 77–96.
[29] Joel S. Migdal, State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

The ANT approach is particularly well positioned to provide insights on complex, heterogeneous networks and thus, to complement the State-in-Society approach. John Law explains the contribution of ANT to the understanding of social relations as follows: "Sociology is usually interested in the whys of the social. It grounds its explanations in somewhat stable agents or frameworks. Actor-network's material semiotics explore the hows."[30] As a method for drawing descriptions, ANT is specialized in tracing connections, associations, and modes of movement among actors.[31] In ANT, the network does not designate an unknown, uncapturable thing out there. Rather it is a concept to explain the relations captured by the researcher. As Latour puts it, the network is "a tool to help describe something, not what is being described."[32] Like the State-in-Society approach, ANT focuses on the processes. As Latour specifically underlines the approach's understanding of networks is a transient one:

> ANT claims that we should simply not believe the question of the connections among heterogenous actors to be closed… ANT states that if we wish to be a bit more realistic about social ties than 'reasonable' sociologists, then we have to accept that the continuity of any course of action will rarely consist of human-to-human connections or of object-object connections, but will probably zigzag from one to the other.[33]

While tracing these heterogeneous transient networks consisting of humans and non-humans, ANT underlines that the non-humans cause social change. Bennett argues that "… an actant never acts alone. Its efficiency or agency always depends on the collaboration, cooperation, or

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[30] John Law, "Actor Network Theory and Material Semiotics," in *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*, ed. Bryan S. Turner, (Malden: John Wiley and Sons, 2008), 148.
[31] Ronen Shamir, *Current Flow: The Electrification of Palestine* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013), 12-3.
[32] Bruno Latour, Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 131.
[33] Ibid, 75.

interactive interference of many bodies and forces."[34] Thus, the understanding of human relations necessitates inclusion of non-humans within the study. Within their specific networks of operation, actions of humans are enabled, disabled, shaped, and encouraged by the non-human elements surrounding them and their relation to each other.

Political networks of distribution and access are formed not only by various state and societal agents, but also by wires, cables, canals, and grids. The type, location, and path of specific infrastructure elements affect the direction and content of negotiations, struggles, and interactions between state and societal actors striving for access to them. Therefore, I argue, struggles over access to infrastructure cannot be studied without taking infrastructure into consideration as an actor. To borrow from Bennett, "A lot happens to the concept of agency once non-human things are figured less as social constructions and more as actors, and once humans themselves are assessed not as autonoms but as vital materialities."[35] Studying human actions and interactions within surroundings crowded by non-humans not only enriches the relational picture, but also provides new details on how and why humans choose certain conducts; what are the restrictions surrounding them; and how and why their actions create unintended consequences.

The use of the State-in-Society and ANT approaches reveals how human-to-human interactions are not established in a vacuum but in relation to non-humans. In the comparative study of Turkey and Israel, these two approaches help to detail the ways in which infrastructure simultaneously enables and disables certain actions for the bypassed communities and create new types of negotiations between those communities and the state.

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[34] Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010), 21.
[35] Ibid.

1.4. Research Design and Case Selection

I aimed to draw a middle range theory on distribution of resources and access struggles conducted by bypassed communities in democratic countries. My goal was to provide insights into bypassed groups' diverging reactions to similarly disadvantaging infrastructure distribution practices. As this dissertation sought to explore struggle methods used by bypassed communities, it necessitated a focus on the groups who are mostly absent from public records. To reach these marginalized communities living in the peripheries of state power and to conduct a research on the untapped issue of their struggles to access the denied infrastructure systems, I designed my dissertation project as a multi-sited ethnography based on in-depth interviews and participant observations. As Schensul and LeCompte underline, multi-sited ethnography makes it possible to study the same phenomena simultaneously in similar settings and investigate impacts of contextual differences on the subject under investigation.[36] Using this research method enabled me to generate nuanced comparative accounts of social, political, and economic changes in my case regions.[37] I restricted my research to two cases to have enough time at each one of the research sites and conduct case specific in-depth analyses.

In this research, like in many others, specificities of the research question determined the research communities.[38] I selected my cases based on the existence of large-scale regional infrastructure distribution projects conducted in ethnically mixed regions as well as the parallels

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[36] Jean J. Schensul and Margaret D. LeCompte, *Essential Ethnographic Methods: A Mixed Methods Approach* (Lanham: AltaMira Press, 2012), 293.
[37] George E Marcus, "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, no. 1 (1995).
[38] Frank Bechhofer and Lindsay Paterson, *Principles of Research Design in the Social Sciences* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 51.

between their political systems. Both Turkey and Israel are democratic countries with large-scale infrastructure distribution projects conducted in ethnically mixed peripheral regions. In both cases, the distribution region is populated by state supporters and dissident ethnic minorities, the Jewish and Bedouin communities in Israel, and Arab and Kurdish communities in Turkey.[39]

The Turkish military's war against the *Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* – the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) is one of the longest lasting internal wars in the world.[40] For the last twenty years, the armed conflict has mostly been conducted in the eastern portion of the Southeastern Anatolia region. Şanlıurfa Province, where fieldwork of this project was conducted, falls outside of the current armed conflict zone. Yet the province is integral to the conflict in two ways. Some of the province's most prominent clans give logistical and personnel support to the PKK and some others support the state army.[41] Plus, as it will be detailed in the Chapter 2, Şanlıurfa is the province where the conflict started and took its current shape.

Besides its distinct location and position in the Kurdish conflict, there are two other reasons that made Şanlıurfa—its districts, city center, villages—the field of this research. First, Şanlıurfa is the regional center of the Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi – The Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP) that is a regional development project through which the central state distributes infrastructure and socio-economic resources in the southeastern part of the country. Besides

[39] For a detailed analysis of the Turkish state discourse and its relation to the Kurdish population, see Mesut Yeğen, *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1999). For an argument on how the Israeli state system was actively promoting ways to keep the Arab-Palestinians, not as equal citizens but as a group to be kept under the control of the Jewish majority, see Oren Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).
[40] Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Violence and Nationalist Mobilization: The Onset of the Kurdish Insurgency in Turkey," *Nationalities Papers*, 2014, 1–19.
[41] Ceren Belge, "State Building and the Limits of Legibility: Kinship Networks and Kurdish Resistance in Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 1 (2011): 95–114.

hosting the GAP Regional Development Authority and GAP Regional Directorate, the Şanlıurfa province is where the Atatürk Dam, the centerpiece of the GAP, was constructed with the promise of providing irrigation water to Kurdish citizens' lands.

Second, located in what is unofficially called the Kurdish region, Şanlıurfa is an ethnically mixed province with both Kurdish and Arab residents. There is no official data on the details of ethnic distribution in the province as ethnicity data is both a practical and a political problem in Turkey. Although a natal language question had been included in national censuses until 1990, the results of those censuses have not been publicized since 1965 due to political concerns about exposing the number of Kurds living in the country.

Therefore, one cannot go further than making some educated guesses on the current ethnic distribution in the region. Using the census data on natal language and controlling the provincial growth and migration flows,[42] Mutlu estimates that in 1990, the Kurdish population of the province was around 47.84 percent of Şanlıurfa population.[43] He also assumed that the percentage of Kurdish population in the province increased in the 1990s due to in-region migration and high birthrates. Based on these assumptions, the current distribution between Arabs and Kurds in the province is expected to be approximately 35 percent Arabs and 65 percent Kurds. The state has long considered the Arabs living in the Southeastern Anatolia region as its allies, balancing the Kurds. Outside of Şanlıurfa city center, the two ethnic communities live in segregated districts creating ethnically homogenous settlements. The

[42] For more information, see İbrahim Sirkeci, "Exploring the Kurdish Population in the Turkish Context," *Genus* 56, no. 1/2 (2000): 149–75.
[43] Servet Mutlu, "Ethnic Kurds in Turkey: A Demographic Study," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 28, no. 4 (1996): 517–41.

distribution of ethnic communities makes it possible to observe ethno-spatial patterns of infrastructure distribution.

In the case of Israel, during the 1948 war against the Arab-Palestinians, the Jewish leaders approved a plan to provide citizenship to the Bedouin tribes in the Negev/Naqab region. This policy was based on the assumption that the Bedouin are "good Arabs" who despite being Muslim, were not fully integrated into the Arab-Palestinian national movement and would be ready to cooperate with the Israeli authorities.[44] Yet, the fast-increasing Bedouin population was a demographic, and thus a political, concern. As a result, the community became the target of spatial enclaving and demographic policies.[45]

Like Şanlıurfa, the Be'er Sheva metropolitan area of the Negev/Naqab region was an ethnically mixed area where Bedouin and Jewish communities live in segregated, ethnically homogenous settlements. According to figures from the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, in 2016 the Bedouin population of the Negev/Naqab was 250,800, representing 37 percent of the total regional population.[46] Even though the Bedouin and Jewish Israelis co-populated the Be'er Sheva city, surrounding towns and villages are either Bedouin or Jewish.

Like the Southeastern Anatolia region, the Negev/Naqab region was central to the state's regional development efforts. In the early 2000s, the government initiated an intensive integrated infrastructure provision effort in the region and Be'er Sheva became the administrative center of these projects. During my field research, I was based in Be'er Sheva city center and made regular

[44] Hillel Cohen, Good Arabs: The Israeli Security Agencies and the Israeli Arabs, 1948-1967 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 181.
[45] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*.
[46] "Statistical Abstract of Israel 2017: Table 2.16," Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, http://www.cbs.gov.il/reader/?MIval=%2Fshnaton%2Fshnatone_new.htm&CYear=2017&Vol=68&CSubject=2&sa=Continue.

visits to surrounding Bedouin and Jewish settlements (towns and villages) to observe the similarities and differences between these communities in terms of their access to infrastructure.

Conducting sub-national regional analysis helps me to eliminate the potential role of geographical factors, such as the distance of the distribution region to the state center, in distributional inequalities. Living in close proximity but segregated from each other, studying distribution of infrastructure between Jews and Bedouin, as well as Arabs and Kurds measures the role of non-geographical factors on resource distribution in the ethnically mixed regions of democratic countries.

Another similarity between the Turkish and Israeli cases is the historical trajectory of the Kurds and Bedouin communities. Both the Bedouin and Kurdish communities were nomadic tribes mostly sedentarized under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. As Reşat Kasaba states in his seminal book on the imperial institutions' approach to nomadic groups which took shape in the late 19th and early 20th centuries:

> Under the influence of their European contemporaries and constrained by the requirements of running a modern state, Ottoman and Turkish intellectuals and statesmen grew increasingly wary and harshly critical of nomadic tribes and other migrants in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[47]

Many of the early state directives for settling the nomadic tribes focused on the tribes located in the Southeastern Anatolia region. The Kurdish tribes were one of the main targets of the empire's sedentarization efforts.[48] As an extension of this policy, the imperial center introduced land laws in Palestine region to sedentarize nomadic tribes of the Negev/Naqab Bedouin.[49]

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[47] Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009), 7.
[48] Ibid, 69.
[49] Mansour Nasasra, "Bedouin Tribes in the Middle East and the Naqab: Changing Dynamics and the New State," in *The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism: New Perspectives*, ed. Richard Ratcliffe et al., (New York: Routledge, 2015), 36.

Following the transition of power from the Ottoman to the British Empire, the new rulers continued to implement sedentarization policies throughout the Mandate for Palestine.

With the rise of Turkish nationalism, sedentarization and individualization of the Kurdish tribes who did not fit in the idea of national homogeneity became a major policy concern.[50] Forced sedentarization of the Kurdish population living in the Southeastern Anatolia region gained speed and was completed to a large extent when the Turkish Republic was established in 1923. Like the Kurdish sedentarization, Ghazi Falah argues, the Bedouin sedentarization was already completed to a large extent in the Negev/Naqab region before the establishment of the state of Israel.[51]

Following the declaration of independence, the Israeli state leaders established military rule in regions populated by Arab-Palestinian Israelis, including the Negev/Naqab region. Military rule forcefully relocated the Bedouin clans living in various parts of the region into an enclosed military area, close to Be'er Sheva city. The relocation significantly restricted the Bedouin's freedom of movement. The state required Bedouin men and women to obtain travel permits to leave the enclosed zone.[52] For the tribes, being contained in a highly restricted area completed the sedentarization process. When military rule was abolished in 1966, the sedentarization of the Bedouin was not a concern anymore.

Despite their similarities in terms of the conditions surrounding them, the Bedouin and Kurdish cases bore striking differences in terms of the communities' reactions to disadvantageous public goods distribution practices. Şanlıurfa had the highest illegal electricity

[50] Kasaba, A Moveable Empire, 137.
[51] Ghazi Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization in the Negev," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 2 (January 1, 1989): 72.
[52] Issachar Rosen-Zvi, Taking Space Seriously: Law, Space and Society in Contemporary Israel (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004), 45.

consumption in the country. Province residents were using between 65 to 80 percent of their annual electricity consumption illegally. Only in 2011, Şanlıurfa residents consumed more than three-million-megawatts of electricity illegally.[53] Having such high level of illegal access to infrastructure, despite its central role in the most expensive development project of the country, made Şanlıurfa an interesting case to study the conditions of illegal access as well as the relation between regional development and illegal use of resources. The Bedouin, on the other hand, did not access the denied infrastructure—such as electricity, water, sewage, and transportation—illegally, even though in most cases the amenities were passing near or above their villages.

Similarities between the Southeast Anatolia and Negev/Naqab regions, between the Kurds and Bedouin, and between infrastructure distribution projects provides the perfect ground for comparison and form the basis of the first part of the dissertation. Composed of two chapters, the first part of the dissertation analyzes infrastructure provision projects in terms of how they distribute the resources between ethnic groups. The differences between the disadvantaged communities' reactions to discriminatory distribution policies give direction to the second part of the dissertation and form the basis of this dissertation's main thesis.

1.5. The Data

The findings of this dissertation are based on a 15-month period of fieldwork. Between June 2014 and December 2015, I visited my research sites—Ankara and Şanlıurfa in Turkey, and the Negev/Naqab in Israel—multiple times. During each visit, I stayed for periods ranging between two weeks and three months. Visiting each research site multiple times made it possible to

[53] "Annual Report 2011," TEDAŞ (*Türkiye Elektrik Dağıtım Anonim Şirketi* - Turkish Electricity Distribution Company).

conduct simultaneous fieldwork in both countries. During my multiple visits, I had the opportunity to check my findings from one site at the other one, which significantly contributed to the richness of the comparative analysis.

In Turkey, while conducting a large portion of the research in Şanlıurfa, I also conducted interviews in the capital city, Ankara. Despite its role as the administrative center of the GAP, most of the offices directing different parts of public goods distribution projects were not in Şanlıurfa, but in Ankara. In the structure of this research, interviews conducted with bureaucrats and technocrats working at the Ankara ministries and offices responsible for infrastructure and resource distribution provided information on the regional projects.

In Be'er Sheva, on the other hand, regional development projects were part of the urban fabric and central to socio-political life. Besides hosting the Negev Development Authority, the central state institution managing the regional development projects, Be'er Sheva was populated by various governmental offices working on related projects specializing on the Bedouin as well as the nongovernmental organizations following up project implementations and assessing impacts. The richness of the data available in Be'er Sheva made travel outside of the region unnecessary for the purposes of this dissertation.

The main methodological tool used in this project is semi-structural interviews. To reach my respondents, I combined purposive and snowball sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher makes a list of targeted interviewees selected based on specific criteria.[54] This sampling method necessitates the researcher's open access specific interviewees[55] based on her

[54] Robert Mikecz, "Interviewing Elites: Addressing Methodological Issues," *Qualitative Inquiry* 18, no. 6 (July 1, 2012): 482–93.
[55] Oisin Tansey, "Process Tracing and Elite Interviewing: A Case for Non-Probability Sampling," *PS: Political Science Politics* 40, no. 4 (2007): 765–72.

own knowledge of the research population, its elements, and the nature of their research.[56] Before starting the field research, I made a list of state agents and community members whom I needed to interview to better understand distribution and access in each field. During my field research, I enriched the list through snowball/chain-referral sampling. I gradually accumulated respondents based on the recommendations of my earlier interviewees.[57] This sampling method enabled me to access and interview respondents who I did not know before starting my research. I relied on my initial interviewees as mediators/referrals to suggest further relevant interviewees.[58] This method was especially helpful for building trust among the Kurdish and Bedouin community members who previously expressed concerns around talking to a stranger about discriminatory treatment and illegality.

By combining purposive and snowball sampling methods, I was able to reach a diverse group of respondents. Interviews were conducted with (1) state agents, working in distribution and regional development institutions (e.g. GAP-RDA); (2) members of non-governmental organizations, working with communities affected from the projects (e.g. NCF); (3) community activists who mobilize people against the distribution projects (e.g. Hirak al-Shababi); and (4) members of the communities to whom state agents denied access. Overall, I conducted 39 semi-structured interviews in Turkey and 30 in Israel. Semi-structured interviews help me to identify and describe the dominant themes.[59] After identifying the themes in each of the research fields, I compared them to each other and explored the points they converge and diverge. I did not record

[56] Earl R. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research*. (Belmont: Wadsworth PubCo, 1995).
[57] Julia Lynch F., "Aligning Sampling Strategies with Analytic Goals," in *Interview Research in Political Science*, ed. Layna Mosley (New York: Cornell University Press, 2013), 31–44.
[58] Dominika Koter, "King Makers: Local Leaders and Ethnic Politics in Africa," *World Politics* 65, no. 2 (2013): 187–232.
[59] Schensul and LeCompte, *Essential Ethnographic Methods*, 173.

my interviews so as to protect my interviewees' identity and privacy. However, I took extensive notes during the interviews and reconstructed them immediately after. Each interview took, on average, about forty-five minutes. Most of the interviews with state agents took place in their offices. The rest resided in various settings, including political parties' offices, coffee shops, restaurants, NGO offices, and homes. For the purpose of confidentiality, I gave pseudonyms to my respondents, deleted all identifying references and omitted certain details that could disclose their identities.

Before starting the research project, I completed the advanced Arabic language course at the University of Washington. Even though I was comfortable with my comprehension ability in *ammiyah* (spoken) Arabic, I was not able to understand every word, idiom, and expression in Bedouin *ammiyah*. Therefore, during my research in Israel, I hired Reham, a young Bedouin woman who was a senior student in the Geography Department at the Ben Gurion University, as my assistant. Reham was fluent in Arabic, Hebrew, and intermediate in English. During most of our interviews in Arabic, I was able to follow up responses, thus able to interject as needed. We conducted only one interview in Hebrew which I found extremely uncomfortable as my Hebrew was not enough to follow-up on issues that emerged during the conversation. In Turkey, all the interviews have been conducted in Turkish.

After transcribing the interview notes, I analyzed the data using the qualitative analysis software ATLAS.ti. In analyzing the data, I followed the conventional method of starting with line-by-line coding, identifying emergent themes, and working on this thematic classification through focused coding. I had a short list of formal pre-set codes that I enriched by adding new ones after the initial coding process. Throughout the dissertation, I provide as many quotes as possible from the interviews. While using the quotations to give voice to my respondents, I am

aware that the interviewees' accounts are not representations of "reality" but my respondents' own interpretations of the situation and their experience. I tried to take this into consideration every time I used quotes from the interviews.

I conducted my research in Israel when the Bedouin were taking to the streets to demand basic rights and equal treatment. In this particular setting, I complemented my interviews with participant observations to complete the missing points.[60] During my stays, I volunteered for one of the NGOs working with the Bedouin community. I also joined multiple events, gatherings, meetings, and protests organized by the community and its allies. Since I was a regular participant, after a while, I became a familiar face among them and was expected to show up at the events. My active participation not only helped me to better contextualize Bedouin's relation to the state, the scope and content of their access struggles, but it helped me meet more people, reach more potential interviewees, and gain trust of my respondents which ultimately facilitated my access to unique, contextualized knowledge.[61]

In order to gather further information on the introduction and advancement of infrastructure projects in both regions, I conducted research on infrastructure and regional development in the archives of the national parliaments as well as multiple national and local newspapers (*Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *UrfaHizmet* in Turkey; *Ha'aretz* and *Yediot Ahronoth* in Israel). In Turkey, I conducted additional research at the online archives of the DSİ (State Hydraulic Works) and Southeastern Anatolia Project Regional Development Authority (GAP-RDA). In Israel, I complemented my findings with materials collected from the Bedouin

[60] Karen O'Reilly, *Ethnographic Methods*, (New York: Routledge, 2012), 120.
[61] Judith Okely, Anthropological Practice: Fieldwork and the Ethnographic Method. (New York: Bloomsbury, 2012), 87.

Development Authority (הרשות להסדרת התיישבות הבדואים) and the Negev Development Authority's (הרשות לפיתוח הנגב) online archives.

1.6. Chapter Outline

As mentioned before, the first two empirical chapters of this dissertation address how public goods are distributed in the ethnically mixed peripheral regions of two Middle Eastern democracies, Israel and Turkey. Chapter 2 demonstrates that even though the Turkish state promoted the GAP project as part of the state effort to reconcile with Kurdish citizens and building peace in the region, distribution of the irrigation canal under the program bypassed the Kurdish community. The state agents assigned to administer the program provided irrigation resources first and almost exclusively to the Arab districts of the region. The distribution not only opened an economic gap between Arabs and Kurds, it further distanced the Kurdish community from the state. As the last part of the chapter details, the community developed ways to access the electric grid illegally and used illegal electricity to pump up the groundwater necessary for conducting irrigated agriculture and competing with their Arab neighbors in the agricultural market. In the GAP region, infrastructure was both a mechanism widening the existing economic and social gaps and an actor enabling new methods of struggle for the Kurdish community.

Chapter 3 turns the focus to the Bedouin and demonstrates that infrastructure distribution projects conducted under the umbrella of the National Strategic Plan, known as *Negev 2015*, enabled new forms of discrimination in the region. While distributing infrastructure exclusively to the Jewish settlements, Israeli state agents conditioned the Bedouin community's access by their relocation into the state-planned Bedouin-only towns. Despite facing similar distributive

inequalities with the Kurds, the Bedouin did not access the denied resources illegally. The last part of the chapter conducts a theoretical discussion about the factors shaping communities' decision to access resources illegally or not.

Building on Chapter 1 and 2, the second part of this dissertation tries to understand the determinants of communities' diverging response in the face of disadvantaging distribution policies. Chapter 4 documents the critical role of discriminated group's electoral power in its ability to negotiate illegality with politicians. The chapter argues that members of the Kurdish community, holding significant electoral power, were able to use this power as leverage in their negotiations with political actors for access to public goods. Specific features of the Turkish electoral system made politicians there eager to conduct negotiations with the Kurds and comply with their illegal access by passing amnesty bills forgiving illegal electricity use in exchange for the Kurdish votes in the elections.

Chapter 5 shifts the focus to the Bedouin and their access struggle in the absence of significant electoral power. The Negev/Naqab Bedouin were not in a position to make politicians turn a blind eye or comply with their illegal access to resources. Rather, they built solidarity networks with NGOs, cause lawyers, and activists. Together with their allies, the community managed to bring its demands to Israeli courts, organize demonstrations, and conduct advocacy activities at international organizations. Referring to democratic principles such as rule of law, citizen participation, and human rights, the Bedouin put enough pressure on politicians to change some of the existing resource distribution practices in the region.

The concluding chapter of the dissertation, Chapter 6, provides a summary of the major findings of this research and underlines its contribution to the field of literature on the topic. It situates the research findings in the context of discussions conducted in political science about

resource distribution, in sociology about non-human actors, and in anthropology about everyday resistance. Last but not least, it leverages this dissertation's findings to reflect on what focusing on politics of infrastructure reveals about the discriminated communities' approach to the theory and practice of democratic politics.

Chapter 2

Distribution of Infrastructure in the GAP Region:

Grid and Canals

Fırat dağı deliyor
Harrana su geliyor
Aney kalk bir zılgıt çal
Urfama su geliyor…

[Fırat drills the mountain
Water is coming to Harran
Mom, get up and ululate
Water comes to my Urfa…]

(Halil Ekmen, Urfa Folk Song)

On a sweltering July day of 1992, top government officials—including Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel, President Turgut Özal, Deputy Prime Minister Erdal İnönü, and President of the Assembly Hüsamettin Cindoruk—drove toward the plains of Şanlıurfa province in the Southeastern Anatolia region, also known as the Kurdish region of Turkey. Political elites of the Turkish Republic gathered in the region for the opening ceremony of the first two water turbines of the Atatürk Dam. The Atatürk Dam was a political hot topic not only because it was one of the biggest energy projects of the world and had the capacity to meet most of the country's significant energy and irrigation needs, but also because it was constructed in a region where there was an ongoing armed conflict between the Turkish state army and the Kurdish separatists. In his opening speech, President Özal defined the dam not only as a project to develop the

economic and social life in the Southeastern Anatolia region, but also as a symbol of peace. As he put it, the Atatürk Dam would be "the symbol of the Turkey's unity and integrity."[62]

The Atatürk Dam for which folk singers composed songs was the centerpiece and biggest project of the GAP, an ambitious plan which included a designs for 22 dams, 19 hydraulic power plants, and irrigation networks covering an area of approximately 1.8 million hectares (ha).[63] Constructed on the Euphrates at intersection of Adıyaman, Şanlıurfa, and Diyarbakır provinces, on its completion, the Atatürk Dam became one of the largest dams in the world. The dam's energy production capacity of 2,400 MW made its hydroelectric power plant among the largest ever constructed with the ability to supply 20 percent of the country's energy needs.[64] With its 48.7 billion m^3 reservoir, the Atatürk Dam would also have the capacity to provide irrigation water for 18,000 km^2 of land, being the highest irrigation capacity in Turkey and thirteenth in the world.[65] Authorities expected irrigation water from the dam to change agricultural practices in the broader region. In a later interview, Prime Minister Demirel described construction of the Atatürk Dam as a project to fight backwardness. He continued to say:

> Light defeats darkness. That means electricity. . . For this, you will produce electricity. . . This project will at the same time be coupled with hydraulic projects to make use of water—in irrigation, in stopping inundations, creating electricity, as well as recreation and making the country more beautiful—for everything. First, you need to tame water.[66]

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[62] "GAP Kutlu Olsun," *Milliyet,* July 26, 1992, 1.
[63] "What is GAP," GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/en/.
[64] Between 1992 and 2014, the Atatürk Dam hydroelectric power plant produced a total of 157,642,587,790 kWh of energy. For more information, see "GAP Eylem Planı (2014-2018)," GAP-RDA, December 2014, http://www.gap.gov.tr/upload/dosyalar/pdfler/icerik/GAP_EYLEM_PLANI.pdf.
[65] Necati Ağıralioğlu, *Atatürk Barajı ve Türkiye'ye Etkileri* (İstanbul: Scala Publishing House, 2014).
[66] "Aşı/Graft: Süleyman Demirel," Youtube video, 14:34, SALT Online, published on September 11, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0Cpx-wDxM0&list=PLxt4JrsezyzXqwV_wiSTU_unTVGLuC7U_.

Focusing on the GAP projects in general, and the Atatürk Dam in particular, this chapter attempts to answer two interlinked questions: What are the economic and political realities that the GAP and its centerpiece the Atatürk Dam have created in the region? How did state agents redistribute resources and, in relation to them, power in the region through their infrastructure provision decisions? How did the Kurdish community react to infrastructure distribution practices that disadvantaged them? The chapter is divided into four parts, each focusing on a different aspect of this distribution puzzle.

Part 1 focuses on the central state and its relation to the GAP and the region. It provides a general background on the GAP and discusses its role in the broader political discourse and armed struggles conducted in the region, between the PKK (*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan* – Kurdish Workers Party) and the Turkish state. It argues that the distribution of infrastructure in the Kurdish region has been central to the political discourse of the centralized state whose authority has been challenged by the PKK militias. The state actors embraced and promoted the GAP infrastructure distribution projects as mechanisms to end the dissidence in the region by developing regional economy and increasing household income.

Part 2 shows the gap between the image of the state as a coherent, controlling organization and the actual practices of its multiple parts.[67] By focusing on the hierarchy of GAP administrative offices and their relation to each other, to other state institutions, politicians, private firms, and finally residents of the region, this part of the chapter examines how the implementation of GAP diverged from what was initially promised. Promoted as a peace-building and unification project, once implemented, GAP created new types of inequalities,

[67] Migdal, State in Society.

widened the existing divides, and enabled unprecedented encounters between the state and minority citizens in the region.

Building on the previous parts, Part 3 uses the case of Şanlıurfa province that has been the administrative center of the GAP and promoted as its biggest success to discuss the ways in which implementation of the GAP irrigation projects not only opened economic gaps between Kurds and Arabs, but also widened the Kurdish community's distrust of the Turkish state.

The last part of the chapter delineates the Kurdish community's reaction to unequal irrigation canal distribution in the region. The state-centered approach—on which the existing public goods distribution literature heavily relies on—fails to capture the societal agents and their role in struggles central to public goods distribution project. Turning the focus from state agents to Kurds and their reaction to unequal distribution of resources in the region provides unprecedented details on the community's power, will, and methods of struggle. This last section of the chapter sets the groundwork for an in-depth analysis of how region-level access struggles transform country-level electoral politics, further explored in Chapter 4.

2.1. State Discourse on Development and Infrastructure Distribution

After graduating from Istanbul Technical University, Süleyman Demirel received a scholarship that made him the first Turkish engineer that the state sent to the United States for postgraduate studies. During his stay—between 1949 and 1950, and again between 1954 and 1955—Demirel visited the hydroelectric power plants and dams built around the country. He later described his time in the United States as a milestone in his political career: "I sat on a wall and watched the Boulder Dam for three days wondering whether we would have a dam like that in my country

one day."[68] On his return to Turkey, Demirel quickly climbed the bureaucratic career ladder, soon becoming the General Director of State Hydraulic Works. He administered construction of various hydroelectric projects including the first dam project of the multi-party era, Seyhan Dam, and the first big dam constructed in the Kurdish region, Keban Dam.[69] Demirel's political career gained momentum with his election to the executive board of the Justice Party, in 1961. Throughout his long political career, Demirel served five times as prime minister in different periods. He also served as the President of the Turkish Republic between 1993 and 2000.

Demirel incorporated his passion for dams into his political career. He was one of the masterminds and the most fervent supporter of the GAP. His passion for infrastructure in general and dam construction in specific brought him a political nickname that he fully embraced: "King of Dams."[70] When his long-term political rival Turgut Özal claimed that it was the political party Özal founded, the *Anavatan Partisi* – the Motherland Party, that initiated the GAP infrastructure projects, Demirel reacted with a sentence that, in the following years, became an iconic statement pointing the political significance of the GAP as well as the race between politicians to own its infrastructure projects: "*Üzerinde GAP yazıyor diye GAP'ı gapamazsınız*!" In English the phrase can be translated as "Just because it says '*gap*' on it you cannot snatch the GAP." *Gap* means 'snatch' in the dialect of the province where Demirel was born and raised; it is also the homonymic acronym of the Southeastern Anatolia Project, the GAP. It was widely accepted within the Turkish political circles that, as a Kurdish politician later put it, "Whoever resolves

[68] "Aslıhan Demirtaş in conversation with Süleyman Demirel for the exhibition "Modern Essays 5: Graft," May 17, 2012, Ankara, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0Cpx-wDxM0&list=PLxt4JrsezyzXqwV_wiSTU_unTVGLuC7U_.
[69] Hulûsi Turgut, *Demirel'in Dünyası* (İstanbul: ABC Ajansı Yayınları, 1992), 109.
[70] Necati Zincirkıran, *Olaylar, Anılar ve Gerçekler* (İstanbul: Epsilon Yayınları, 2007).

the Kurdish problem will be a hero."[71] Both Demirel and Özal have been considering the GAP as the panacea for the Kurdish dissidence. Their hope was that resolution of the situation through public works projects would constitute the biggest achievement of their political careers.

The Kurdish dissidence came to light mostly with the establishment of the Kurdish armed organization the PKK. The PKK is an illegal party established by Abdullah Öcalan in 1978 aiming to establish an independent Kurdish state in the southeastern region of Turkey. The PKK has advocated for armed struggle against the Turkish state.[72] The party made the headlines the year after its formation, a couple of months before Demirel ascended to the office of Prime Minister for the fourth time, when its fighters attempted to assassinate Mehmet Celal Bucak, a parliamentarian from Demirel's *Adalet Partisi* (Justice Party). Mehmet Celal Bucak was also a powerful Kurdish landlord and the leader of one of the largest Kurdish clans in the Southeastern Anatolia region, the Bucak clan in Şanlıurfa that later became the regional center of the GAP.[73]

Following the assassination attempt, the Minister of the Interior Hasan Fehmi Güneş visited the region and prepared a report for President Korutürk. In his report, Güneş stated "The

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[71] Co-chairman of the Kurdish political party BDP Gülten Kışanak voiced this during her party's group meeting at the Parliament, when she was talking about why she does not credit the criticisms made in the Turkish media against her meetings with the leader of the PKK Abdullah Öcalan. "Kürt Sorununu Çözen Kahraman Olur," *Milliyet,* January 16, 2013, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/-kurt-sorununu-cozen-kahraman-olur--siyaset-1655861/.2

[72] Aliza Marcus, Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence (New York: NYU Press, 2007), 9.

[73] The relationship between the Turkish government and the Kurdish population has always been complex and fluid. The Turkish state made alliances with some of the Kurdish clans from the region in its fight against the PKK. One example of the multiplicity of alliances established between the clans and the state was the village guard system initiated in 1985. Village guards were local Kurdish militias who would fight PKK. They were recruited through individual applications, as well as informal deals between security forces and influential Kurdish clans. For a more detailed account of this ambivalent relationship, see Ceren Belge, "State Building and the Limits of Legibility: Kinship Networks and Kurdish Resistance in Turkey," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 1 (2011): 95–114.

new type of bandit groups, such as *Apocular*[74]" take advantage of "the governmental deficiencies in the region."[75] Güneş was hopeful that the state could easily turn the situation in its advantage. He stated that citizens in the Eastern regions had been "waiting for the state to reach them, with all of its institutions, for the last fifty years" and all the government needed to do was to "meet the economic and cultural expectations of the citizens from the region."[76] The report was a reflection of the hardline state approach reducing the Kurdish dissidence into an economic problem.[77] The association made between economic problems in the region and support given to the PKK turned the provision of infrastructure, and economic boom expected to follow it, into an essential component of the state discourse on defeating the *Apocular* and restoring peace and building loyalty to the Turkish state in the region.

In 1980, military chiefs of staff, headed by General Chief of Staff Kenan Evren, overthrew the civilian government. The junta government jailed more than half a million people, many were tortured and killed.[78] The military regime was particularly vicious in the Kurdish region. In the first couple of months of its rule, the junta arrested, tortured, violated, and killed thousands of Kurdish activists and political figures.[79] It banned any manifestation of Kurdishness, from speaking Kurdish in public to listening to Kurdish music.[80] The junta government, like the previous governments, embraced the Atatürk Dam and its irrigation canals

[74] The supporters of Abdullah Öcalan who are known as Apo.
[75] "Güneş: Apocular, Doğu'daki Yönetim Boşluklarından da Yararlanmıştır," *Milliyet,* September 4, 1979, 12.
[76] "Güneş: Apocular Doğu'daki Yönetim Boşluklarından da Yararlanmıştır."
[77] Kemal Kirişci, "The Kurdish Issue in Turkey: Limits of European Union Reform," *South European Society and Politics* 16, no. 2 (June 1, 2011): 335–49.
[78] Kerem Öktem, *Turkey since 1989: Angry Nation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 61.
[79] Ibid, 64-66.
[80] Senem Aslan, Nation-Building in Turkey and Morocco: Governing Kurdish and Berber Dissent (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 131.

as the solution of economic underdevelopment and Kurdish dissidence. In October 1981, Evren visited the region for the groundbreaking ceremony to start the construction of diversion tunnels to direct the Euphrates water towards the dam reservoir.

Military rule lasted for three years. In 1983, the political authority returned to a civilian government headed by Demirel's long-term political rival Turgut Özal. Özal, who was an electrical engineer, started his career at the State Electrical Power Planning Administration. He set total electrification of the country as his primary project. Before his time as Prime Minister, electrification of the rural areas was not a central issue for the TEK (*Türkiye Elektrik Kurumu* - Turkish Electricity Administration). The TEK had been conducting village electrification projects based on the "participatory electrification" model. Accordingly, electricity was provided only to the villages paying one third of the electrification cost and providing laborers to carry the transmission towers and to dig holes. Özal's total electrification approach initiated a shift from co-paid to state-sponsored electrification. His government completed rural electrification around the country, including the Southeastern Anatolia region, in only three years.[81] In 1986, the majority of the villages in the Kurdish region were connected to the national electric grid.

Rural electrification was a show of state power and reach in the region. It was also a medium for the country's ideological penetration by TV and radio stations, and economic penetration by durable consumer products and electrical appliances. Özal's post-coup government took steps for a speedy transition from import-substitute industrialization to a market economy.[82] The market-oriented reforms necessitated a nationally integrated market structure

[81] "Statistical Indicators 1923-2011," Turkish Statistical Institute; and "6cı 5 Yıllık Kalkınma Planı," Grand National Assembly of Turkey.
[82] Ziya Öniş, "Turgut Özal and His Economic Legacy: Turkish Neo-Liberalism in Critical Perspective," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 4 (2004): 113–34.

accompanied by a change in lifestyle for every segment of the population.[83] Electrification opened the Southeastern Anatolia region to new lifestyle and consumption practices. The former TEK president Ismail Ayvalı stated that despite the reactions from the TEK bureaucrats, Özal managed to open the Kurdish region to economic and ideological presence of the state. He explained it as follows:

> We got mad at him during that time for changing the system, but Özal had a broad perspective. He was saying that everything is dependent on electricity. If you bring electricity, they [Kurds] would listen to the radio, watch the TV, get a fridge. . . There would be social development there, and it happened.[84]

When modernization of the periphery expanded fully, electricity and electronic devices started to influence everyday life.[85] Kurdish villagers started to buy electric appliances. Washing machines, fridges, electrical heaters, and dishwashers became indivisible part of everyday life, even in the remotest villages. Wherever it reached, the electric grid connected various localities in new ways and opened new perceptions of belonging.[86] In villages with electricity, people started to follow the nationally broadcast news and entertainment programs on the television and radio. The *Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurumu* – the Turkish Radio and Television Corporation (TRT), funded and controlled by the state was the only institution broadcasting throughout the country until 1993.[87] This single TV channel was a medium for the political elite to establish an official

[83] Rıfat N. Bali, Tarz-ı Hayat'tan Life Style'a: Yeni Seçkinler, Yeni Mekânlar, Yeni Yaşamlar, (Cağaloğlu, İstanbul: İletişim, 2002).
[84] Interview in Ankara, September 17, 2014.
[85] Kristin Ross, Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995).
[86] Tanja Winther and Harold Wilhite, "TENTACLES OF MODERNITY: Why Electricity Needs Anthropology," *Cultural Anthropology* 30, no. 4 (November 1, 2015): 569–77.
[87] Ece Algan, "Development of Local Radio in Southeast Turkey," *Journal of Radio Studies* 11, no. 2 (November 1, 2004): 254–67.

culture of the republic and build loyalty to the state, especially in the peripheral regions.[88] By making use of its hegemony on cultural assets,[89] the central state authorities were able to diffuse the Turkish language and promote "Turkification."[90] The promotion of Turkification would not be enough if people did not have enough money to buy the products and access the resources they saw on the TV.

A few years after the completion of electrification, in 1989, the government published the GAP Master Plan. The master plan shifted the focus from dam construction and hydropower generation to integrated regional development with irrigation—the main economic activity in the Kurdish region—at its center. When the GAP Master Plan was ready to be launched, President Özal asked for the establishment of a specific TV station to promote the GAP in the Kurdish region.[91] The TRT administration established "TRT GAP", first and only national public broadcasting targeting a specific region in the country. Until its closure in 2015, the TRT GAP had broadcast programs encouraging irrigated agriculture and suggesting more efficient farming methods. The channel also regularly broadcasted education programs targeting the Kurdish community, especially women by teaching reading and writing in Turkish.[92]

The Master Plan established four main goals: 1) Development of water and land resources for irrigation as well as urban and industrial usage; 2) Development of land usage by

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[88] Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins, "Peripheral Vision: Cultural Industries and Cultural Identities in Turkey," *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 29, no. 11 (November 1, 1997): 1937–52.
[89] Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992).
[90] Mesut Yeğen, "'Prospective-Turks' or 'Pseudo-Citizens:' Kurds in Turkey," *The Middle East Journal* 63, no. 4 (2009): 597–615.
[91] Ömer Serim, *Türk Televizyon Tarihi 1952-2006* (İstanbul: Epsilon Yayınları, 2015), 156.
[92] Özden Cankaya, *Bir Kitle İletişim Kurumunun Tarihi: TRT 1927-2000* (Ankara: İmge Kitabevi, 2015), 249.

implementing better agricultural business management, agricultural practices, and crop patterns; 3) Promoting manufacturing industry related to agriculture and local resources; and 4) Development of urban infrastructure and services to meet the region residents' needs and attract qualified personnel to the region.[93] Irrigation was central for the achievement of each one of the stated goals. The plan set the goal of irrigating 1,820 million hectares of land by year 2010.

The GAP's success in achieving the stated socio-economic goals was intertwined with the ultimate resolution of the Kurdish problem.[94] From the official state perspective, construction of dams and development of economic opportunities in the region would bring the Kurdish dissidence to an end. President Özal called the Atatürk Dam the symbol of "unity and integrity."[95] Prime Minister Demirel embraced it as the state's call for peace to its Kurdish citizens, saying:

> We won't let any land in this beautiful region remain without irrigation. We won't let anyone be unemployed. Thus, we will all see our country's advancement in an environment of peace, unity, and order. And, we are frankly saying that the state's compassionate hand is reaching out. Embrace your state; the state is ready to embrace you. This is the reason why we are here… We came here to say 'let's be free, let's be together, let's be in peace, in order, and let's get rid of things that bother you, and let's make you happy in this country.'[96]

While the GAP was starting to occupy a central role in state's discourse on peace, a fierce fight continued in the region between the Turkish army and the Kurdish fighters. A month after the opening ceremony of the Atatürk Dam, in August 1992, the Turkish army conducted a military operation that lasted four days in the Şırnak province, the city where the PKK was most

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[93] "GAP Master Plan," GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/gap-master-plani-1989-sayfa-26.html.
[94] Ali Çarkoğlu and Mine Eder, "Developmentalism Alla Turca: The Southeastern Anatolia Development Project (GAP)," in *Environmentalism in Turkey: Between Democracy and Development?*, ed. Fikret Adaman and Murat Arsel, 167–185 (Burlington: Ashgate, 2005).
[95] "GAP Kutlu Olsun," *Milliyet,* July 26, 1992, 1.
[96] *Başbakan Süleyman Demirel'in Konuşmaları, 20.11.1991-29.02.1992,* Başbakanlık Basın Merkezi (Ankara: Başbakanlık Basın Merkezi Yayınları, 1992), 180.

powerful.[97] The official argument was that three-hundred PKK fighters simultaneously attacked police headquarters, gendarmerie commands, as well as public institutions in the city with rockets, small arms, and howitzers, and the army responded.[98] Yet witnesses insisted that the army entered the city and slaughtered the Kurdish residents without any provocation.[99] Commonly referred as the "Battle of Şırnak", the operation was one of the bloodiest urban fights between the PKK and the Turkish army. The unity that Özal had emphasized during his opening ceremony of the Atatürk Dam was not on the horizon, yet. The Kurdish region that the state agents were struggling to integrate and embrace, was the site of a bloodbath.

The PKK's capability increased throughout the construction of the Atatürk Dam and reached the zenith of its power in 1992, the year the Atatürk Dam started to operate. The party's recruitment reached the highest rate with a total of at least 1,192 new members. The intensified clashes increased the number of PKK casualties to at least 800 the same year.[100] Considering security forces fatalities are highly correlated with PKK fatalities, 1992 has been considered as the most violent year of the conflict in terms of casualties from both sides.[101] Besides the casualties from the fighting parties, there was also a considerable number of civilian fatalities in the region. The Turkish armed forces already had been experiencing difficulties distinguishing

[97] Öktem, Turkey since 1989, 89.
[98] "Şırnak'ta Meydan Savaşı," *Milliyet,* August 20, 1992, 1.
[99] In the 2010s, some of the witnesses started to give statements uncovering new information on the events. The witnesses underlined that it was the army not the PKK that raided the city and killed civilians. For a detailed witness statement, see Evin Çiçek, "Şırnak'ta 1992'de Neler Oldu?," *Bianet*, December 20, 2013, https://www.bianet.org/bianet/insan-haklari/152201-sirnak-ta-1992-de-neler-oldu.
[100] Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Risks: Participation in an Ethnic Rebellion" *American Political Science Review,* 110, no. 2 (2016): 247–64.
[101] Güneş Murat Tezcür, "Electoral Behavior in Civil Wars: The Kurdish Conflict in Turkey," *Civil Wars* 17, no. 1 (2015): 70–88.

between the PKK militias and non-combatant Kurds,[102] and eventually started to make little distinction.[103] The army started to consider the Kurds living in the region either as potential militants or as traitors providing logistic or economic support to the PKK fighters. On the other side, the PKK was executing Kurdish civilians suspected of cooperating with the army.[104] Between 1984 and 1995, a total of 20,181 people, including 5,041 civilians, were killed during clashes and attacks in the region.[105] With violence reaching its peak, the politicians started to further emphasize the role of investments in the region to end the violence and integrate the Kurds into the national economic system. Opening for operation in 1992 when the armed struggle peaked, the Atatürk Dam was an important asset for the state agents in their effort to build loyalty to the state in the region.

With the completion of the dam, the attention turned to the distribution of water collected in its reservoir to the agricultural lands around. In 1995, the Şanlıurfa tunnels—two parallel tunnels of 26.4 km long[106]—carrying irrigation water from the Atatürk Dam, reached the Harran Plain. The opening ceremony of the Şanlıurfa tunnels took place on April 11, 1995 which was also the seventy-fifth anniversary of Şanlıurfa's liberation from the allied forces during the Turkish War of Independence. In her opening speech, Prime Minister Tansu Çiller drew parallels

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[102] Aslan, Nation-Building in Turkey and Morocco, 137.
[103] Marcus, Blood and Belief.
[104] *PKK Files: How the PKK Terror Has Destroyed Its Civilian Targets,* Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press, 1999).
[105] Kemal Kirişci and Gareth M. Winrow, The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict (London: Frank Cass, 1997), 126.
[106] Ayşegül Kibaroğlu, "Design and Management of Irrigation Systems: The Southeastern Anatolia Development Project," in *Modern and Traditional Irrigation Technologies in the Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Özay Mehmet and Hasan Ali Bıçak (Ottawa: IDRC Books, 2002), 155-72.

between irrigation water reaching the Harran Plain and the independence of the province. Çiller said:

> Today we are celebrating two separate sagas. The first one is the heroic saga. The other one is our unity and our indivisible integrity. Today we also have a water festival. In the water festival, we are writing a new saga. We brought the Fırat (Euphrates) to Harran. We value this land that our veterans and martyrs took by sacrificing their lives and blood.[107]

Emphasizing the solidarity built between Turks and Kurds during the war of independence, Prime Minister Çiller reiterated the state discourse on infrastructure provision and its role as a sign of the state's willingness to integrate the region. She continued, "We came to pay the state's debt to you. Of course, we know that we cannot pay that debt to our martyrs. But we came here to pay our debt to you by embracing the children of those heroes and taking care of these lands."[108] The top-level politicians have been tirelessly repeating that the irrigation canals would bring economic development to the region. They expected the dam and distribution of irrigation to create economic integration that would secure political integration of the Kurds, decrease the support provided to the PKK fighters, and end the armed resistance.

According to the Master Plan, after reaching the Şanlıurfa-Harran Plain, the tunnels carrying irrigation water would split into two canals. One of the canals would pass under Siverek district and reach Cizre district of Şırnak province, the second one would pass from Suruç district and reach the plains in Gaziantep.[109] Connected canals would be fed by multiple dams and form an irrigation system carrying water to most of the agricultural lands of the region. With the construction of canals and provision of irrigation water, the farmers conducting dry agriculture—

[107] "Toprak Suyla Öpüştü," *Milliyet,* April 12, 1995, 17.
[108] Ibid.
[109] *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi,* Volume 3, Session 63, April 9, 1975, 418.

such as lentil and barley—were expected to shift to profit-generating irrigated crops, such as cotton and soy.

While the state leaders at the commanding heights had been building a discourse around infrastructure projects and their role in developing the Kurdish economy and the end to the dissidence, the practice of GAP infrastructure projects were pointing to a different reality. In their discourse, politicians were building a state image as a coherent body.[110] Yet there was a wide gap between the image built in the politicians' discourse and cross-cutting practices of state agents. The GAP projects have been challenged, negotiated, and transformed by multiple actors, including politicians, bureaucrats, and technocrats, as well as private firms, farmers, villagers, and urban residents. Each one of the actors involved in the GAP projects allied and struggled to establish its own command on the projects. The next part tackles the administrative structure of the GAP to delineate struggles conducted between state actors which had unexpected consequences not only on the implementation of the GAP but also on the state-society relations in the project region.

2.2. Faces of the State, Phases of the GAP

Before 1989 the state effort in the region was mostly focused on energy generation projects run by the *Devlet Su İşleri* – the State Hydraulic Works (DSİ). For a long time, DSİ's budget was up to one third of the overall investment budget of the Turkish state. The DSİ's mandate was to plan, design, construct, and operate single and multi-purpose dams, including electricity

[110] Joel S. Migdal, "Researching the State," in *Comparative Politics: Rationality, Culture, and Structure*, ed. Mark Irving Lichbach and Alan S Zuckerman (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 166.

generation and irrigation facilities.[111] As its main goal was to construct dams for energy generation, the DSİ's work would fall between the jurisdictions of the Ministry of Public Works which specialized in public goods systems and Ministry of Energy specialized in energy production and distribution.

The two ministries competed to include the prestigious DSİ office under their command. Until 1985, the DSİ worked under the Ministry of Public Works. In 1985, the government passed a decree and moved the DSİ office under the jurisdiction of Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources. The next year, with another decree, the DSİ office returned to the Ministry of Public Works. The relocation of the DSİ from one ministry to another slowed down its operation and prevented the establishment of a consistent and effective work structure. Having strongly hierarchical structures and lacking the necessary cooperative practices, each ministry was working independently and implementing decisions through their strict internal hierarchical structures. The ministry personnel did not have either the experience or the incentive for the horizontal coordination necessary to conduct integrated regional development projects, including the GAP.[112] When the GAP started to branch out, the cabinet assigned different parts of the project to different institutions. While the DSİ operating under the Ministry of Public Works was directing the dam construction effort, the Ministry of Agriculture and Village Affairs was responsible for the construction of irrigation canals. Dam construction and energy generation were national projects and received more attention and larger budget compared to regional irrigation that was considered a secondary project.

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[111] Ayşegül Kibaroğlu and Argun Baskan, "Turkey's Water Policy Framework," in *Turkey's Water Policy: National Frameworks and International Cooperation*, ed. Ayşegül Kibaroğlu, Waltina Scheumann, and Annika Kramer (New York: Springer, 2011), 11.
[112] Andrés Rodríguez-Pose, "Do Institutions Matter for Regional Development?," *Regional Studies* 47, no. 7 (2013): 1034–47.

In 1986, the government delegated the administration of the infrastructural development projects conducted in the region to the *Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı* – the State Planning Organization (DPT). Working under the Prime Minister's office up until that point, the DPT was only responsible for planning the national five-year development plans. The DPT personnel did not have any previous experience in project management. The DPT's GAP team encountered various difficulties in overseeing the implementation of the GAP projects, conducting impact analyses, and coordinating project stakeholders. When the cabinet of ministers introduced the previously mentioned GAP Master Plan in 1989, they also called for the establishment of a new and independent entity, the *GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Başkanlığı* – the GAP Regional Development Administration (GAP-RDA) to plan and run inter-sectorial coordination of the GAP.[113]

The GAP-RDA had three separate offices: The High Commission, the Regional Directorate, and the Presidency. The High Commission—consisting of the prime minister and other ministers, including the minister of public works and settlement, the minister of agriculture and rural areas, and the state minister in charge of the GAP—was the highest decision-making authority within the GAP-RDA structure. The Commission would set the GAP targets and approve project implementation details prepared by the GAP Presidency. Projects approved by the High Commission would be implemented by either the GAP Presidency or the GAP Regional Directorate, the project office located in Şanlıurfa.

[113] Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi Teşkilatının Kuruluş ve Görevleri Hakkında Kararname, Decree No. KHK 388 published in the Official Gazette No.20334, dated 6 November 1989.

The Regional Directorate was operating at, what Migdal calls, the "trenches" of the GAP projects.[114] The Directorate executed state directives in the face of strong societal resistance. Technocrats working for the Directorate were under the double pressure in part from the GAP Presidency asking for the fast completion and from the villagers resisting forced relocation and land seizures. The GAP Presidency was the "field office" of the projects. Bureaucrats working at the Presidency were responsible for the course of each project and management of the resources approved by the High Commission.[115] The High Commission, I argue, was between, what Migdal calls, "Agency's Central Office" and "Commanding Heights." The Commission was a body composed of heads of relevant ministries and the Prime Minister. Together they worked as the agency's central office formulating and enacting policies and allocating resources. They had the overall responsibility for the GAP projects.[116] Yet it was also headed by the Prime Minister who was under higher political pressure as his political success was partially attached to the successful completion of the GAP.[117] Different layers of the GAP echelon were in continuous struggle with each other which often resulted in actions bearing little resemblance to the original policies.[118]

The GAP Presidency was the public face of the regional development projects, but lacked the power or the authority to make the relevant state offices work together to implement the multi-sector integrated regional development goals. Coordination problems that was predating the master plan exacerbated with the establishment of the GAP-RDA. Mesut Sabuncuoğlu who was the head of the DPT team managing the GAP became the first president of the GAP-RDA.

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[114] Migdal, State in Society, 117-18.
[115] Ibid, 118.
[116] Ibid, 120.
[117] Ibid, 121-22.
[118] Ibid, 123.

Sabuncuoğlu stated that the ministries refused to cooperate in multiple key instances and seriously harmed the implementation of the GAP.

The salinization of the Harran Plain, Sabuncuoğlu explains, was one of many examples on how the ministries' lack of communication and unwillingness to cooperate harmed the GAP irrigation projects. Just as the folk song quoted at the beginning of the chapter prescribed, the Euphrates water first reached the Harran Plain. In 1995, 30,000 ha of land on the plain was receiving water that the Şanlıurfa Tunnels carried from the Atatürk Dam.[119] The following year, the total irrigated area of the plain increased to 40,000 ha. In 1999, it had reached 120,000 ha.[120] To educate the farmers on best practices, the GAP Presidency developed an irrigation training program. Outside of the GAP, irrigation and agriculture-related education programs were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture. When the GAP Presidency contacted the ministry for implementation support, the ministry bureaucrats refused to cooperate. Sabuncuoğlu described the process saying:

> We established a research station in the region. We said 'let's include the Ministry of Agriculture in this project and turn this station into an agricultural research center where we can conduct research on what can be cultivated here, what kind of crops.' The center would also serve as a training center. . . We had a meeting with various national stakeholders. Authorities from the Ministry of Agriculture said, 'we already have a research center there.' They have, but they only have six personnel and four hectares of land. They said, 'this is our fundamental duty, our jurisdiction as a ministry. There is no need for others to get involved...' They said, 'Even if you want to transfer funds into this project, this cannot be done like this. You have to give the fund to the related ministry, and the ministry assigns it...' We could not implement the research project.[121]

[119] Turhan Akuzum, Süleyman Kodal, and Belgin Çakmak, "Irrigation Management in GAP," *International Journal of Water Resources Development* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 1997): 547–60.
[120] Saadettin Paksoy and Bahri Karlı, "GAP Kapsamında Sulamaya Açılan Harran Ovasındaki Tarım İşletmelerinin Ekonomik Analizi," *Balikesir Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* 3, no. 4 (2000): 154–75.
[121] Interview in Ankara, September 19, 2014.

Ministry of Agriculture bureaucrats saw the GAP-RDA's irrigation education project as an undermining of the ministry's role and jurisdiction. They not only refused to comply with the plan, but also ignored the need for irrigation training and failed to develop their own education plan. Sabuncuoğlu argues that Harran farmers who were new to working in irrigated fields flooded their land.[122] Excessive irrigation caused salinization and desertification of the Harran plain in a period of twenty years.[123] One of the Kurdish farmers I interviewed recalled the time when irrigation canals reached Harran:

> Electricity came, TV came to their houses. During the time, there was this TV series called Mariana on TV every day. I saw when I went there [the Harran Plain]; they were turning the water on and going to watch the TV series. The water was almost reaching the next village's land, but they were all in front of the TV. They did not care at all.[124]

Power struggles between state agencies harmed the GAP's implementation and challenged the image of the coherent state. As Migdal puts it "While the image of the state implies a singular morality, one standard way, indeed the *right* way of doing things, practices denote multiple types of performance and, possibly, some contention over what is *the* right way to act."[125] One of the GAP personnel interviewed described the dissonance between the image and practice of the GAP as follows:

> Development is not well planned. Decisions are political. . . No one reports their works to us. . . Sometimes it can even be a provincial director who resists the implementation of the project. They don't come to the meetings, they don't report, they don't do. You cannot do anything when the bureaucrats resist.[126]

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[122] Flooding irrigation is basically letting the water flow over the ground through the crops.
[123] Sedat Benek, "Şanlıurfa İlinin Tarımsal Yapısı, Sorunları ve Çözüm Önerileri," *Coğrafi Bilimler Dergisi* 4, no. 1, (2006): 67-91.
[124] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 22, 2014.
[125] Migdal, State in Society, 19.
[126] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 4, 2014.

The GAP Presidency lacked the political support and implementation power to conduct GAP projects necessitating coordination of multiple stakeholders. Located in Ankara, the Presidency was preparing plans for the GAP projects and taking them to the High Commission for ratification. Once the High Commission, meeting also in Ankara, set the targets and ratified the plans, the Presidency would detail and delegate implementation work to the regional directorate located in Şanlıurfa. Most of the GAP-related decisions were made in Ankara and were delegated to the regional office located in Şanlıurfa, which did not have decision-making power. The decision-makers in Ankara were both physically and politically distant from the Kurdish region. Only in 2009, twenty years after the GAP started, the government moved the GAP Presidency from Ankara to Şanlıurfa.

Located four hundred meters apart, the Presidency and the Regional Directorate kept the business as usual. Regional Directorate personnel I interviewed referred to the bureaucrats working at the Presidency as "the ones up on the hill," referring to the location of the GAP Presidency building, which was at the top of a steep hill, but also to their being detached from regional realities. Years after its relocation, the GAP Presidency is still a stranger to most Şanlıurfa residents. Every time I needed to go to the Presidency during my visits in 2014 and 2015, I needed to give specific directions to taxi drivers as they insisted that there was no other GAP office than the Regional Directorate in the city.

Politicians who prepared the Master Plan put extremely high irrigation targets to appeal the electorate in the GAP region. In 2015, percentage of irrigation projects completed was only 26.4 percent of the target set in the Master Plan for 2010.[127] Sabuncuoğlu remembers the initial

[127] *GAP'ta Son Durum 2015*, GAP-RDA, May 2016, 29, http://yayin.gap.gov.tr/pdf-view/web/index.php?Dosya=ef1457f5bl.

disagreement on the high irrigation targets between bureaucrats and politicians when the Master Plan was prepared, explaining:

> They [politicians] said 'We will open 1.7 million hectares of land to irrigation.' Ok, fine, but they act as if this can happen from today to tomorrow. 'We will produce this much cotton, that much pomegranate, this much almond, that much pistachio. . .' Everyone made an agricultural plan in his way. 'We will sell it to this and that country. . .' but you need to build the adequate infrastructure first. . . We went to France. They have a region called Rhone that they opened to irrigation, but only 100,000 hectares, which is only 17 percent of it. Plus, they opened it to irrigation in thirty years. This is the technical aspect of it. . . If France could do it in thirty years, we had to be more cautious about our decisions.[128]

Three years after its first election as the governing party, the *Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – the Justice and Development Party (AKP) embraced the Kurdish issue and claimed to have a resolution to it via peaceful means. Prime Minister Erdoğan expressed his vision saying:

> A big state, a strong nation is the one that has the confidence to walk towards the future by facing its mistakes and sins. . . we don't name every problem. Because these problems are problems for all of us. But if you want us to call it, "the Kurdish problem" is not a problem for a group of people, but for all of us. It is a problem for me as well.[129]

In 2007, Erdoğan re-claimed the GAP and introduced the "GAP Action Plan 2008-2012." The Action Plan reduced irrigation target from 1,820 million to 1,060 million hectares (58.24 percent of the Master Plan irrigation target). The Action Plan also promised to complete four times more irrigation canals than what had been completed in the previous 20 years.[130] Not surprisingly, the project advanced slower than the politicians promised. The year after the targeted completion year of the Action Plan, the total area opened to irrigation was only 411.508 ha, 38.8 percent of the area targeted in the Action Plan. Şanlıurfa was the province where most of the GAP-related

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[128] Interview in Ankara, September 19, 2014.
[129] "Erdoğan: Kürt Sorunu Hepimizin Sorunu...," *Bianet,* August 12, 2005, http://bianet.org/kurdi/siyaset/65194-erdogan-kurt-sorunu-hepimizin-sorunu.
[130] "GAP Eylem Planı (2008-2012)," GAP-RDA, May 2008, http://www.gap.gov.tr/upload/dosyalar/pdfler/icerik/GAP_EYLEM_PLAN_2008_2012.pdf.

investments had been made. The state canals reached only 23.6 percent of overall agricultural lands in 2013.[131] In 2014, the AKP government introduced a "Second GAP Action Plan" to complete the project. The Second Plan kept the same irrigation targets with the first one and extended the implementation period until 2018.[132] At the end of 2018, the area opened to irrigation was 558.507 ha, only 53 percent of the Action Plan target and 31 percent of target set in the Master Plain for 2010 (1,820,000 ha).[133]

Besides the targeted areas, electoral ambitions of politicians shaped their approach to project actualization and implementation figures. In summer 2014, the armed conflict between Deash (الدولة الإسلامية في العراق والشام – the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant) and Kurdish militias in Kobanî, a Syrian town adjacent to Suruç district of Şanlıurfa, intensified. Many of the Suruç residents had relatives living on the other side of the border in Kobanî. Once the armed conflict started, the residents of Suruç started to cross the border to support the resistance in Kobanî. Suruç which was one of the districts the government had promised irrigation canals to almost thirty years prior but failed to provide. When the conflict intensified on the other side of the border, Suruç became the center of political attention in Turkey. Soon, construction of the irrigation canals promised to the district decades earlier started. In June 2014, national newspapers and the government institutions were fast to announce that irrigated agriculture had begun in the district.[134] The DSİ organized an opening ceremony to celebrate "the day the water reached the lands of the Suruç plain", as stated in its newsletter, during which Prime Minister

[131] Numbers on the irrigated area in Şanlıurfa and in the GAP region have been taken from the DSİ website and DSİ Mapped Statistical Bulletin 2013. According to State Statistical Institute of Turkey, in 2012, total cultivated area of Şanlıurfa was 890,825 hectares.
[132] "GAP Eylem Planı (2014-2018)."
[133] "GAP'ta Son Durum," GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/gap-ta-son-durum-sayfa-32.html.
[134] "Suruç Ovası Suya Kavuştu," *Milliyet*, June 22, 2014.

Erdoğan released water from the tunnels to the constructed irrigation canals.[135] Two years later, in the summer of 2016, many of the Suruç farmers were still waiting for irrigation canals to reach their lands.[136] Talking about Suruç, former director of the GAP Regional Office warned me during the interview to be careful about the area state institutions claim to irrigate. He continued saying:

> As a matter of fact, you need to twice-check the districts that they claim to open to irrigation. If you check the dossiers, Suruç is irrigated. In state reports, it seems to be watered, but this is not the case on the ground. They write that for political reasons. They write it even though the canals are not completed, or there are no pumps, no water, no this, no that.[137]

Bureaucrats and technocrats working for a large-scale infrastructure project take their authorities from their hegemony over technical knowledge.[138] In the Turkish case, the power of the GAP bureaucrats and technocrats was significantly curtailed when politicians started to distort the numbers to achieve their short-term political goals and, even more, when the government started to delegate construction work to private companies over which bureaucrats did not have any power.

Delegation of infrastructure projects to private firms started in 1994 when the government of the time headed by Prime Minister Tansu Çiller passed an investment law that opened the construction of infrastructure projects to private participation. Accordingly, state institutions could delegate construction of infrastructure projects necessitating "advanced

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[135] "Suruç Ovasında Suya Hasret Bitti," *DSİ,* June 24, 2014, http://www.dsi.gov.tr/haberler/2014/06/24/suyahasretbittisuruc.
[136] "Suruç Halkı Ayaklandı," *Urfanatik*, May 9, 2016.
[137] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 7, 2014.
[138] Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

technology and high budget"[139] to private firms. Working on a build-operate-transfer model, private companies constructing mega infrastructure projects could operate them for a set period of time before transferring their rights to the state. In 2008, the year when they introduced the first GAP Action Plan, the AKP government made a change on the 1994 law that totally transformed the process. In the old 1994 law, it was stated that privatization would be possible only for projects that had been demanding "advanced technology and high budget." By replacing the "and" with "or,"[140] the government opened all infrastructure projects to private firms.

For a long time, the World Bank encouraged privatization of public service delivery around the world as a method to cut costs and help states to save money and distribute goods and services more efficiently. Proponents of privatization of public goods distribution refer to it as a means to increase of efficiency by a significant reduction in the authority of the state and transfer power to private actors.[141] However, privatization of public services also risks eroding the accountability and transparency of the state as well as the public works projects.[142] Before delegation of work to private firms, the DSİ office was the main office overseeing the GAP irrigation canal construction. With delegation of part of the canal construction to private firms,

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[139] Bazı Yatırım ve Hizmetlerin Yap-İşlet-Devret Modeli Çerçevesinde Yapılması Hakkında Kanun, Law no.3996 published in the Official Gazette No. 21959, dated 8 June 1994.
[140] Bazı Yatırım ve Hizmetlerin Yap-İşlet-Devret Modeli Çerçevesinde Yapılması Hakkında Kanun ile Devlet Su İşleri Umum Müdürlüğü Teşkilat ve Vaziferleri Hakkında Kanunda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun, Law No.5762 published in the Official Gazette no. 26882, dated 9 May 2008.
[141] Ioannis N. Kessides, "Reforming Infrastructure: Privatization, Regulation, and Competition," Policy Research Report (Washington D.C.: World Bank, January 2004), http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2004/01/4297210/reforming-infrastructure-privatization-regulation-competition.
[142] Russell Nichols, "Benefits and Downsides of Privatizing Municipal Services," in *Privatization in Practice: Reports on Trends, Cases and Debates in Public Service by Business and Nonprofits*, ed. Joaquin Jay Gonzalez III and Roger L. Kemp (Jefferson: McFarland, 2016), 195–96.

the DSİ lost its hegemony over information. Neither DSİ nor GAP Regional Office bureaucrats and technocrats knew exactly which districts were receiving irrigation water and which ones were not.

Private firms constructing parts of the GAP infrastructure projects consolidated politicians' power not only by curtailing state technocrats and bureaucrats' authority over the projects, but also by working as a buffer protecting the politicians from discontented citizens. Aydeniz Construction conducting more than twenty large-scale build-operate-transfer public infrastructure projects, including prisons, governmental buildings, tunnels, highways, and dams, in Turkey and the neighboring countries won the bid of irrigation canals in Suruç.[143] A couple of months after the opening ceremony in Suruç, the company started to face financial difficulties in one of its projects. Due to its financial problems, the firm stopped all of its operations, including the canal construction in Suruç. Tired of unexplained extension and halts, village heads representing the district farmers walked to the company's local office to demand the resumption of the project.[144] With privatization of public goods distribution, private firms became the representation of the state in the region. They became the institutions the residents addressed their demands to, a role that should be the state's responsibility.

The GAP projects were at the center of struggles and negotiations conducted among multiple state and societal actors. The government incorporated the GAP Presidency in a way that lacked power to force shareholder institutions to coordinate and exchange information with each other or with the GAP-RDA. The GAP-RDA structure placed most of the power in the hands of politicians who were acting based on their electoral ambitions rather than feasibility of

[143] "Aydeniz Construction," Türkiye Müteahhitler Birliği, http://www.tmb.org.tr/tr/firma/ahmet-aydeniz/115.
[144] "Suruç Halkı Ayaklandı."

the goals they set. With the privatization of canal construction in the region, bureaucrats and technocrats lost more authority over the projects. Building on these relations, the next part discusses how struggles conducted on multiple levels between state and societal actors shaped irrigation projects' outcomes. Focusing on Şanlıurfa province that was both the regional center and best-case scenario of the GAP, it delineates the ways in which struggles conducted between multiple parts of the state as well as between state and societal agents created and widened the gap between theory and practice of the GAP irrigation canals distribution.

2.3. Distribution of Infrastructure in a Mixed Region

Agriculture was the biggest economic activity for the Southeastern Anatolia region lacking large-scale industries. As shown previously, the Turkish political elite advocated that infrastructure provision to the Southeastern Anatolia region would be a mechanism to develop the regional economy and ultimately end the Kurdish dissent. Accordingly, the GAP Master Plan provided a detailed irrigation water distribution plan covering the whole region. The plan set the goal of, as previously stated, completing the irrigation 1,820 million hectares of land throughout the region before 2010. Located adjacent to the Atatürk Dam and having very rich soil, Şanlıurfa province was the most suitable district for fast and extensive irrigation. It was expected that the shift from dry to irrigated agriculture would boost agricultural production and the province would fast set a good example for the rest of the region.[145]

As stated earlier, three years after the opening ceremony of the first water turbines, the irrigation canals started to carry irrigation water to the Harran Plain in 1995. In 1999, the total

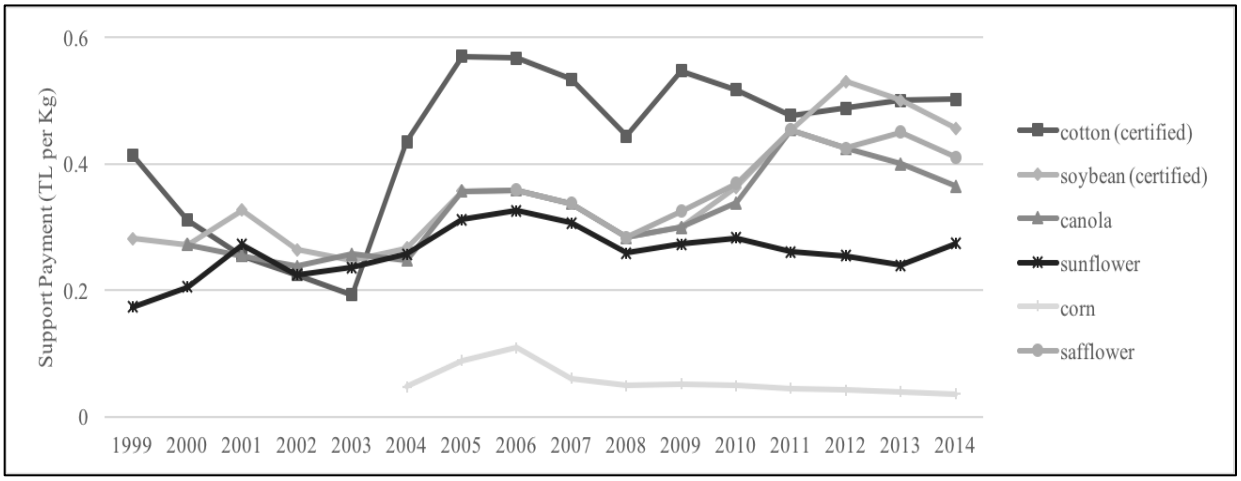
[145] Sedat Benek, "Şanlıurfa İlinin Tarımsal Yapısı."

irrigated area of the plain reached 120,000 ha of the 142,000-ha plain land.[146] Access to irrigation canals notably changed the agricultural practices at the Harran Plain. Harran farmers shifted their cultivation from dry to more profitable irrigated crops. Increased water availability made it possible to plant water thirsty and profitable crops, such as cotton as well as corn, soybeans, and sesame.[147] In one year, the area of the plain suitable for cotton production increased from 21 to 73 percent.[148] Five years later, the area of land allocated to cotton cultivation was around 91 percent of all irrigated land on the plain.[149]

Soon after the irrigation of Harran, the cabinet passed a decision to provide agricultural support payments for cultivation of certain crops, to encourage irrigated agriculture.[150] The generous support payment that became a continuous policy in the following years,[151] provided a significant extra income to Harran farmers who could produce many of the supported irrigated crops.[152] Support payment for cotton significantly increased after the election of the AKP government in 2002. In time, they became the biggest chunk of all agricultural subsidies and

[146] Paksoy and Karlı, "GAP Kapsamında Sulamaya Açılan."
[147] Akuzum, Kodal, and Çakmak, "Irrigation Management in GAP."
[148] Ibid.
[149] Tamer Isgın and Fatma Öcal Kara, "Impacts of the Harran Plain Irrigation Projects on the Well-Being of Local Cotton Farmers Operating in the Şanlıurfa Province of Turkey: Income Distribution Revisited," *Journal of Agricultural Sciences* 21, no. 4 (2015): 483–91.
[150] "Agricultural support payment" is the official term used by the Turkish Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock for direct agricultural subsidies. For more detail, see *Structural Changes and Reforms on Turkish Agriculture 2003-2013,* Turkish Ministry of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock, April 2013, https://www.tarim.gov.tr/Belgeler/ENG/changes_reforms.pdf.
[151] Tarım ve Köyişleri Bakanlığı, Sertifikalı Çeltik, Hybrid Ayçiçeği, Soya, Delinte Edilmiş Pamuk, Patates, Yem Bitkileri Tohumluklari ile Meyve ve Asma Fidanları ve Bunların Anaçlarına Yapılacak Desteklemenin Esasları Hakkında Tebliğ, Cabinet Decree no.98/6, in Official Gazette no. 23290, March 18, 1998, 46.
[152] Mustafa Acar and Erdem Bulut, "Türkiye'de ve Dünyada Tarımsal Destekleme Politikalarında Son Gelişmeler," *Sosyal ve Ekonomik Araştırmalar Dergisi* 9, no. 17 (2009): 1–19.

support money. In 2012, the agricultural crop support payment was 93 percent of the overall support money that the irrigated crop producers had received.[153] (See Figure 2.1)



*Consumer price indexes issued by TUİK (*Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu* – Turkish Statistics Institute) were used to convert current payments into real payments with 2013 taken as the base year, 2013=100
**1999 and 2000 numbers are originally in cents and converted to Turkish Lira (TL) based on the exchange rate of the Turkish Central Bank on June 30 of each year.
***In January 2005, Turkish Lira was redenominated by removal of six zeros.

Source: Official Gazette and website of the AKP[154]

Figure 2.1. Agricultural Support Payment for Irrigated Crops in Turkey (TL/KG)

In April 1993, the month after the PKK's declaration of a ceasefire and two years before the irrigation of the Harran Plain, President Özal, who was an active promotor of a peaceful resolution to the conflict, died from natural causes. Upon Özal's untimely death, Prime Minister

[153] "Agricultural Indicators," Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, April 2014, http://www.tarim.gov.tr/SGB/Belgeler/SagMenuVeriler/TAGEM.pdf, (accessed June 10, 2016), 6.
[154] The table excludes support payments for olive trees, lentils, chickpeas, white beans and barley and wheat because either their support payments were considerably lower, they were not regularly supported, or they were not cultivated in the region.

Süleyman Demirel assumed the Presidency. The following year, Turkey confronted a currency crisis during which output fell six percent, inflation rose to more than a hundred percent, the Central Bank lost half of its reserves. The exchange rate depreciated more than half in a period of three months.[155] The crisis resulted in a decrease of funds allocated to the GAP.[156] Facing the economic downfall, Demirel started to side with the hawks of Turkish politics and argue that Turkey did not have a Kurdish problem, but a terrorism problem that could only be resolved with military rather than economic measures.[157]

The political and economic turmoil that took place in the first half of the 1990s slowed the construction of additional irrigation canals after the completion of the Harran irrigation canals. Meanwhile, irrigation significantly improved the Harran economy. Before irrigated agriculture, the GDP per capita of farmers in Harran was around $596. The year when the plain started to receive irrigation water from the state canals (in 1995), the GDP per capita increased to $1,600.[158] In 2003, average household incomes in Harran was over four times higher than its 1994 level.[159] While the Harran farmers were becoming more affluent, there was no significant change in districts that did not receive access to irrigation canals.

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[155] Oya Celasun, *The 1994 currency crisis in Turkey,* policy research working paper; no. WPS 1913 (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1998). http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/965221468777258191/The-1994-currency-crisis-in-Turkey.

[156] Sevilay Topcu, "Water for Agriculture: A Major and Inefficient Consumer," in *Turkey's Water Policy: National Frameworks and International Cooperation*, ed. Ayşegül Kibaroğlu, Waltina Scheumann, and Annika Kramer (New York: Springer, 2011), 98.

[157] Henri J. Barkey, Graham E. Fuller, and Morton Abramowitz, *Turkey's Kurdish Question*, First Edition (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 136.

[158] *Meclis Araştırması Açılması İçin Önerge*, TBMM CHP Grup Başkanlığı, Proposal no.200, February 9, 2005.

[159] Income distribution within the Harran Plain was not equal either. Land distribution at the Harran Plain became increasingly unequal in the years following the provision of irrigation water. Due to unequal land distribution patterns, the increased household income was not equally distributed among the farmers at Harran. Around 10 percent of the plain farmers have been

The first irrigation canal after Harran were the Bozova Stage One and Bozova Center irrigation projects that were completed in 2005, ten years after irrigation of the Harran Plain. (See Table 2.1) None of the projects completed after Harran irrigated an area as large as the Harran irrigation area.

District	Project	Year	Area Reached by the State Canals (ha)
Siverek	Hacıkamil	1966	450
Akçakale	Akçakale YAS	1977	5,659
Ceylanpınar	Ceylanpınar YAS	1978	9,000
Ceylanpınar	Evrenpaşa YAS	1992	450
Siverek	Hacıhıdır	1995	2,080
Harran	Harran	1995	147,887
Bozova	Bozova 1st Stage	2005	8,669
Bozova	Bozova Center	2005	1,098
Bozova	Yaylak Plain	2006	18,322
Merkez	Pasabağı	2006	520
Harran	Upper Harran Plain	2008	13,455
Total Irrigated land			**207,600**

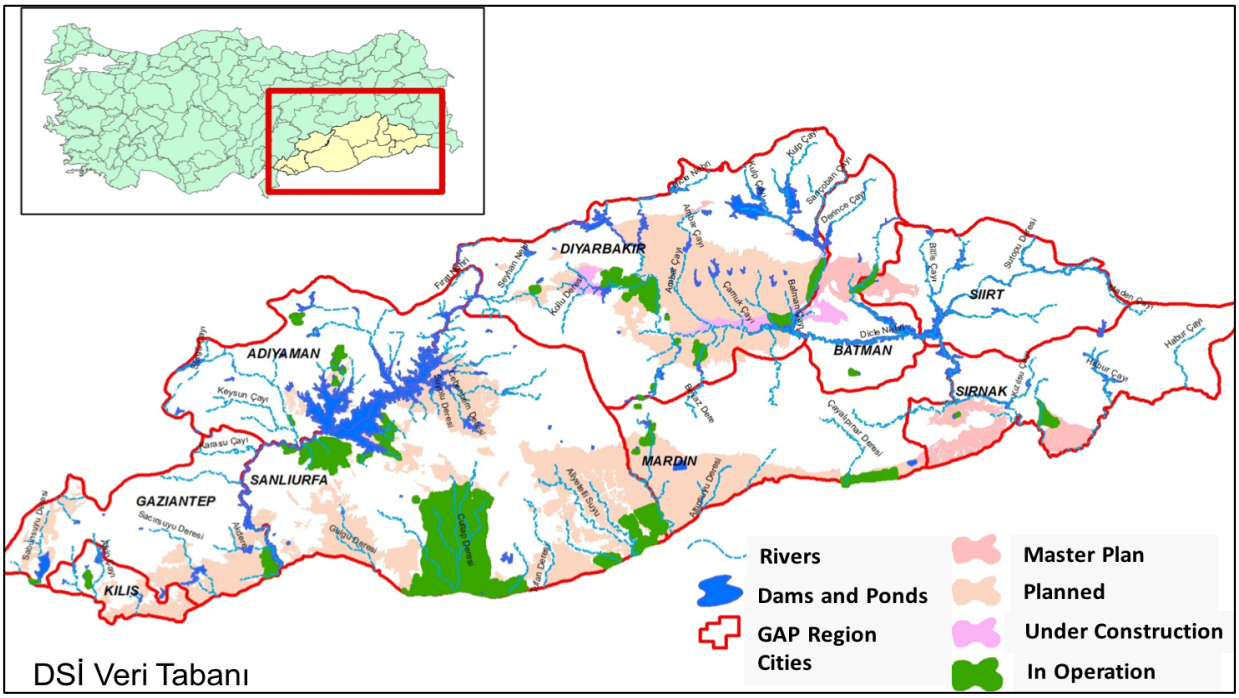
Source: DSİ Şanlıurfa Website[160]

Table 2.1. District-level Distribution of State Irrigation Canals in Şanlıurfa, until 2009

sharing 30 percent of the total income. For a detailed analysis, see Isgın and Öcal Kara, "Impacts of the Harran Plain Irrigation."

[160] "Işletmedeki Sulama Tesisleri," DSİ 16. Bölge Müdürlüğü website, http://www2.dsi.gov.tr/bolge/dsi15/sanliurfa.htm.

In 2015, the Harran Plain was still the largest irrigated area in the region. (See Figure 2.2) The map below is the official map produced and used by the DSİ to follow up on GAP irrigation projects. Irrigated areas are marked in green. Areas planned to be irrigated in the Master Plan and the Action Plan are marked in salmon and beige, respectively. In 2018, the Harran Plain was still the largest irrigated area in the region. It made up more than 28 percent of the all irrigated lands in the Southeastern Anatolia region and three quarters of the land in Şanlıurfa.



Source: Turkish Ministry of Forestry and Water Affairs, Directorate General for Water Management, 2015[161]

Figure 2.1. Map of the Irrigation Areas in the GAP Region, 2015

[161] The legend is translated by the author.

The Southeastern Anatolia region is mostly populated by the Kurdish citizens of Turkey with a small percentage of Arabs.[162] Mardin and Şanlıurfa are the two provinces in the region with considerable Arab population. As stated in the introduction chapter, finding ethnic distribution data is both a practical and a political problem in Turkey, but based on the census data on natal language,[163] Mutlu estimated that in 1990, 47.84 percent of the Şanlıurfa population was Kurdish (368,900 out of 771,200 Şanlıurfa residents).[164] Residents' statements and surveys conducted in the region[165] verified that Harran and Akçakale were Arab majority districts, Merkez was mixed, and the others were majority Kurdish districts. The Şanlıurfa-Harran Plain was between these three Arab-majority districts of the province. Based on her field research conducted at the Harran Plain in the early 2000s, Leila Harris guessed that around 80 percent of Harran inhabitants are Arabs.[166]

When irrigation canal distribution was significantly slowed down following the Harran Plain irrigation project and the government introduced generous agricultural crop support payments for irrigated crops, the Arab minority living in Harran gained a considerable economic advantage compared to the Kurds. While politicians argued that irrigation canals would bring water to Kurdish lands and thus cease the dissidence, selective and sparse distribution of the

[162] I use the categories Arab and Kurd to describe the residents who speak Arabic or Kurdish as their natal language and most often refer themselves as "*Arap*" or "*Kürt.*"
[163] Servet Mutlu, "Population of Turkey by Ethnic Groups and Provinces," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 12 (1995): 33–60.
[164] Mutlu, "Ethnic Kurds in Turkey."
[165] Bahattin Aksit and A. Adnan Akcay, "Sociocultural Aspects of Irrigation Practices in South-Eastern Turkey," *International Journal of Water Resources Development* 13, no. 4 (December 1, 1997): 523–40.
[166] Leila M. Harris, "Modernizing Gender: Social Geographies of Waterscape Evolution in Southeastern Turkey" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2004), 89.

canals widened the economic gaps between Arabs and Kurds and caused dissidence towards the Turkish state among the Kurds in the region.

Support payments and the high market value of irrigated crops whet the appetite of the region's farmers for irrigated agriculture. However, Harran farmers had almost exclusive access to state irrigation canals. During my interviews, I encountered various occasions where Kurdish farmers pointed to ethnicity as the main determinant of state infrastructure distribution decisions in the region. One of my interviewees put is as follows:

> The dam is here, in this province. Yet Mardin [a majority Arab province in the region] can receive water but we [Kurds] cannot. As this is a Kurdish area, they try to postpone us as much as possible.[167]

The fact that consecutive government regimes did not even come close to achieving the targets they set further jeopardized the credibility of politicians and GAP projects in the region. Some considered the GAP resource distribution policies as part of a long-lasting state policy of discriminating against the Kurds:

> Harran [district] is Arab. They are pro-state. Suruç [district] is dissident. The DYP [True Path Party] favored the Arabs. This is such a political issue. Besides Harran, Akçakale, and Bozova should have been the first to receive water. As they are still following the same discriminatory distribution plans, we cannot receive water before they finish to distribute to all the other [Arab] places.[168]

The view that the Turkish state purposefully discriminated against the Kurds has been widely accepted in different segments of the Kurdish community. The former Provincial Head of the Kurdish political party the *Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi* – the Peace and Democracy Party

[167] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 23, 2014.
[168] Ibid.

(BDP)[169] Ayşe Tol stated that the placement of canals has been the materialized version the historically discriminatory state policies:

> With political motives, they build irrigation canals to some regions, but not in some others. Suruç, Hilvan, Siverek, Ceylanpınar, Viarenşehir do not have irrigation water. Only Harran and Akçakale have. We are not discriminating against ethnic groups; it is against what we believe. In our opinion, all of them should get access and use the resources. It is the state that introduced discriminatory practices. They choose the Arab districts specifically, to sow discord among people [Arabs and Kurds]. Luckily, we did not have any incident based on water problems yet, thanks to the Kurds' staying calm. The Kurdish community is an important political element in the country, and they are aware of what the state tries to do here.[170]

All of my Kurdish interviewees were confident that provision of water to the Harran Plain and slowing down of the project afterwards was a political decision. With unequal distribution of irrigation resources and slow-down of the project, the argument that the irrigation canals were distributed to improve the Kurdish economy and build peace in the region lost its credibility:

> In Harran, the state pays for all the expenses of water provisions. In other [Kurdish] places, farmers have to pay for it. Harran is an Arab district and the others are Kurdish. This is the state's core political stand in the region.[171]

In another interview, one of my respondents added, "The main reason why they don't advance the irrigation canals is to impoverish the Kurds and make them dependent on the state poverty funds and the existing political system."[172] Even the Kurdish bureaucrats working for the Ministry of Agriculture in the region echoed this view, one who chose to remain anonymous explained:

> Harran did not have to be the first one. That decision was a political one. There were already state-subsidized wells in Harran. Instead, they could take the water to Suruç, but they did not. . . Hilvan, for example, is next to the dam. Yes, it is a little up the hill, you need pumps. Yet the price of those pumps is lower than

[169] The BDP existed between 2008 and 2014. It succeeded the Democratic Society Party (DTP) in 2008, following the closure of the latter party for its alleged connections with the PKK. After the local elections in 2014, BDP and HDP (People's Democratic Party) organized as a joint structure.
[170] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 5, 2014.
[171] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 23, 2014.
[172] Interview in Şanlıurfa, May 11, 2014.

> taking the water to another place. Nevertheless, Hilvan could not get water. Why? Because of its residents' political stance.[173]

Such statements clearly situated the irrigation of Harran as a mechanism through which the state generated, transported, and distributed economic power. From the Kurdish perspective, the Şanlıurfa tunnel and irrigation canals built between the dam and the Harran Plain not only carried irrigation water, but also, they transferred economic power to the Arabs while bypassing Kurdish localities on the way.

In 2009 representatives from the main opposition party brought the issue of unequal distribution of irrigation canals to the Turkish Parliament. The representatives presented a motion for the establishment of a parliamentary research commission to investigate causes and impacts of non-completion of planned irrigation canals on time. The proposal stated that the existing distribution structure "causes the rise of new injustices between irrigated and non-irrigated areas."[174] The unequal provision of irrigation water was contrary to the official argument that the state was aiming to improve the economic condition of the Kurdish community in the region by distributing irrigation canals. Representatives of the opposition party also underlined that, in parallel to my findings, "the project that should be a peace project became the very source of new forms of inequality and injustice."[175] The motion was rejected.

The distribution of irrigation canals changed the socio-economic structure of the Southeastern Anatolia region, but not in the way the state leaders were claiming during and immediately following the construction of the Atatürk Dam. Rather, the irrigation of the Harran Plain and the slow-down of the project afterwards opened economic gaps between the Arab and

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[173] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 4, 2014.
[174] "GAP Araştırma Komisyonunun Kurulması Hakkında Önerge," TBMM CHP Grup Başkanlığı, Proposal no.224, June 19, 2009.
[175] Ibid.

Kurdish farmers. Discriminatory distribution of resources further disillusioned some of the Kurds from the region towards state intervention.

Even when they started to get access to water through smaller irrigation canal projects, most Kurdish farmers had to pay a higher price for water compared to the Arabs. Most Kurdish districts of Şanlıurfa were located higher than the Atatürk Dam. The DSİ included the cost of pumping the water uphill in farmers' water bills. For example, farmers from Güzelyurt village of Harran have been paying 34 lira per hectare irrigated through state canals while Kurdish farmers from Bozova who received irrigation water in 2005, had to pay 100 lira[176] for the irrigation of a land of same size because Bozova was uphill and the DSİ had to pump the water. Ahmet is an agricultural specialist working for the Agriculture Directorate of Şanlıurfa Governorate. He also owns agricultural land in the province. Familiar with agricultural policies and pricing schemes, he argued that the state should and could implement a different pricing system. Like many others, he stated that the consecutive Turkish governments purposefully discriminated against the Kurds in the region:

> In the case of Suruç, gravity irrigation is possible only after pumping the water up to some altitude. Even where there is a pumping station the state asks three times the price they ask for gravity pumping. State policy on this should be as follows: the state should allocate energy produced by one of the hydroelectric power plants to generate energy for this project. In a word, it will gain energy from water for the water. Rather than doing this, the state puts the burden on farmers' shoulders. Farmers have abstained from irrigation canals. If this policy continues like this even if the state brings the water, the farmers will not be willing to irrigate, as it is expensive. There should be some subsidies, but there are double standards. In Urfa, there are only two Arab districts. There is water for them. The rest are the Kurds, and there is no water for them.[177]

[176] 2012 Yılında Sulama Birliklerince İşletilen Sulama Tesislerinde Uygulanacak Olan Su Kullanım Hizmet Bedeli Tarifelerine İlişkin Karar, Cabinet Decree no. 2012/3080 published in the Official Gazette No.28282, dated 4 May 2012.
[177] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 26, 2014.

As underlined by many interviewees, generous crop support policies for farmers who cultivated irrigated crops combined with selective distribution of irrigation canals and the difference in water prices put the Kurdish farmers into a tough spot. Implementation of the GAP irrigation projects shaped the local economy and cemented state power in the region in new ways.[178] Rather than improving the economic situation of the Kurdish residents, the practice of infrastructure allocation intensified economic inequalities, empowered the Arab community, and disadvantaged the Kurds, to whom the politicians continued to promise economic prosperity. However, the distribution of resources has never been without challenges. While providing the state the extensive ability to maneuver and reclaim its power in the region, the GAP infrastructure projects also opened unexpected grounds for the Kurds to access the denied resources and challenging the state's power that is detailed in the next part.

2.4. Replacing Irrigation Canals with Electric Grid

Electricity produced at the 10 operating hydroelectric power plants in the region had the capacity to produce 20.6 billion kWh of energy.[179] However, contrary to politicians' claims, electricity production did neither attract investments nor turn into industrial development in the region.[180] In 2011, Diyarbakır, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa, Batman, and Şırnak provinces of the region cumulatively consumed a total of only 17,760,918 kWh of electricity, less than one percent of

[178] Ananya Roy, "Strangely Familiar: Planning and the Worlds of Insurgence and Informality," *Planning Theory* 8, no. 1 (2009): 7–11.
[179] "GAP Eylem Planı (2014-2018)."
[180] Çarkoğlu and Eder, "Developmentalism Alla Turca."

the overall hydroelectric energy produced in the region.[181] Not being able to attract investments, the regional economy stayed highly dependent on agriculture.

From the perspective of farmers who did not receive access to state canals, irrigation was a highly expensive operation possible only through the use of underground water to irrigate crops. To access the water, they were supposed to pay for opening a well, buying a motor pump, and getting an operation permit. They also had to pay a fixed water price for every square meter they irrigated and full price of electricity they consumed to pump up the groundwater. In time, due to extensive use, the groundwater level fell.[182] Farmers had to keep pumping water sourced from deeper underground to irrigate their crops. Each year, they drilled deeper to access water. Their operations started to necessitate more powerful motors using electricity to pump the groundwater up to the surface.

During one of my interviews, two farmers from Suruç argued that twenty years ago the water used to spring from five meters. Yet in 2014, they had to drill four hundred meters down to reach water.[183] More often than not, farmers' electricity bills surpassed the sale price of their irrigated crops. One of them explained his case saying:

> I spent 15,000 TL to use groundwater for irrigation. I wish there had been no groundwater, for I would not have spent the money. When you do dry farming, if you get crops, you earn money. If you don't, you will break even. Now with irrigated agriculture, we are always at a negative. They sent me an electricity bill of 8,000 TL. Even the personnel at the company were surprised to see how high my bill was.[184]

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[181] Calculated by the author based on the data provided by the GAP Eylem Planı (2014-2018) and TEDAŞ Annual Report 2011.
[182] Zeynep Kadirbeyoğlu, "In the Land of Ostriches: Developmentalism, Environmental Degredation, and Forced Migration in Turkey," in *Environment, Forced Migration and Social Vulnerability*, ed. Tamer Afifi and Jill Jäger (New York: Springer, 2010), 231.
[183] Farmers' statement during the interview conducted in Şanlıurfa, November 5, 2014.
[184] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 5, 2014.

Cultivating irrigated crops meant more profit in the market and the relative certainty of receiving an agricultural support payment. Many of the farmers who do not have access to state irrigation infrastructure compensated for the access inequality by accessing the infrastructure illegally. Farmers whose lands were near the state irrigation canals hooked up their motor pump to the electric grid illegally and pumped water directly from the irrigation canals. (See Figure 2.3)

Source: *Diyarbakır Haber*, News Website[185]

Figure 2.2. Illegal Water Pumping from the Irrigation Canals in the GAP Region

Many farmers whose lands were not close to the irrigation canals used electricity illegally to pump up groundwater. Illegal hook-up to the electric grid necessitated directly connecting an electric cable to the distribution line and was a dangerous operation. Besides the risk of electricity leakage, illegal connections were increasing the pressure on the lines and causing

[185] "Tarımsal sulamada da kaçak varmış!," *Diyarbakır Haber*, April 12, 2014, http://www.haberdiyarbakir.gen.tr/ekonomi/tarimsal-sulamada-da-kacak-varmis.html.

sudden voltage fluctuations that were capable of breaking motor pumps. To prevent fluctuations, farmers from the region developed makeshift voltage transformation units, which they called the "mobil trafo" [mobile voltage transformer]. Mobile transformers were balancing voltage from the illegal tap before transferring electricity to the submersible motor pump.[186] The units were installed on a truck so that they could be easily transferred and hidden from the officials. (See Figure 2.4)

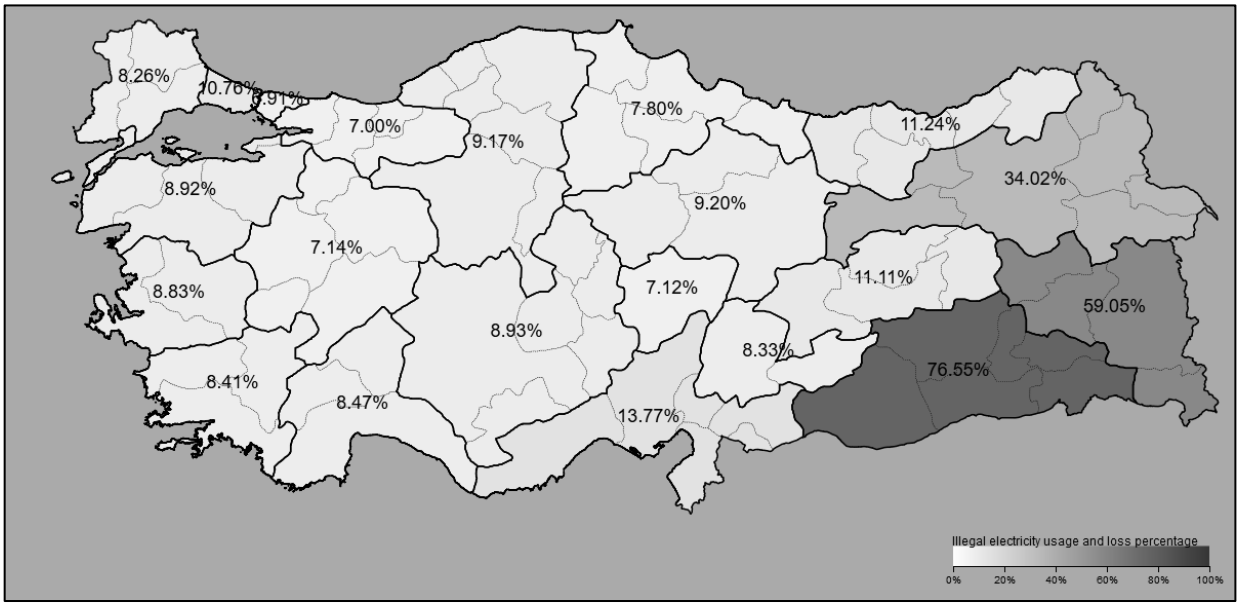
Source: *İhlas*, Turkish News Agency[187]

Figure 2.3. Illegal Hookup to the Electric Grid in the GAP Region

Illegal electricity usage that emerged from the agricultural sector diffused to other sectors as well as households. In time, many households in the region started to use electricity illegally for

[186] "Kaçak Mobil Trafo Ele Geçirildi," *Urfanatik*, November 5, 2014, http://www.urfanatik.com/yerel/kacak-mobil-trafo-ele-gecirildi-h18636.html.
[187] "Batman'da 'kaçak Mobil Trafo' Da Ele Geçti," İhlas News Agency, April 30, 2015, http://www.iha.com.tr/haber-batmanda-kacak-mobil-trafo-da-ele-gecti-459371/.

heating, cooling, and even lighting. Illegal electricity usage turned into a cross-community and cross-sectoral region-wide practice, but farmers remained the largest consumers of illegal electricity. By using electricity illegally, Şanlıurfa farmers who did not have access to state irrigation canals were able to pump groundwater and conduct irrigated agriculture without increasing their production costs. Access to ground water granted by illegal use of electricity made it possible for the farmers to cultivate irrigated crops and receive support payment. (See Figure 2.5)



Source: Energy Minister's Reply to Written Parliamentary Question No.7/42589[188]

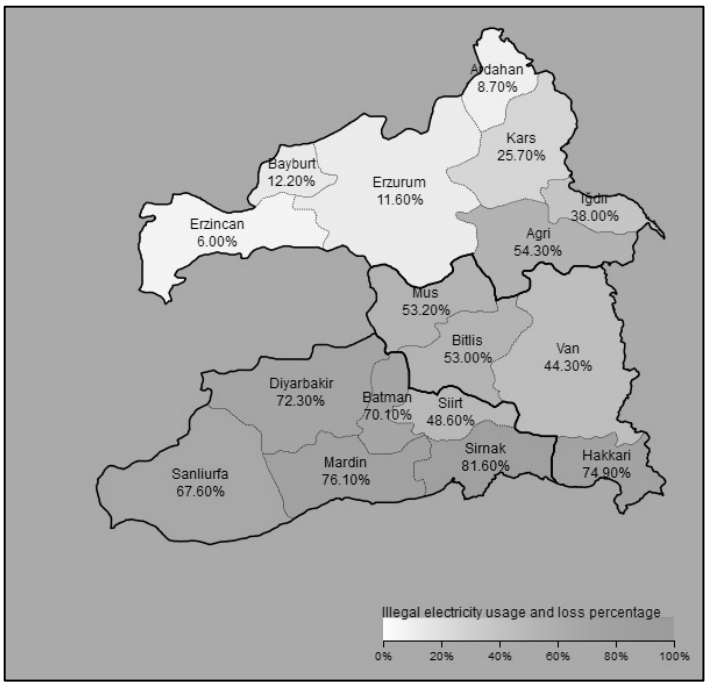
Figure 2.4. Distribution of Illegal Electricity Usage and Loss in Turkey, 2011

[188] There are two types of electricity losses: technical and non-technical losses. Technical electricity losses, also called as transmission and distribution (T&D) losses, are the operational losses happening during generation, transmission, and distribution of electricity. The T&D losses are mostly stable if there is no technical intervention to or extra load on the grid. Nontechnical losses are caused by unpaid connections. In the GAP region, the most common reason of non-technical electricity loss is stealing from the grid. For more information see Thomas B Smith, "Electricity Theft: A Comparative Analysis," *Energy Policy* 32, no. 18 (December 2004): 2067–76.

Socio-economic variables have been considered to be the most important determinants of illegal electricity consumption around the world. The GAP region has had lower income, education level, and harsher climate than the other parts of the country. However, research showed that even when all these variables held constant, living in the Southeastern Anatolia region remained the major determinant of illegal electricity consumption.[189] During the irrigation season lasting from May to September, electric lines in the region are overloaded,[190] with regional illegal consumption exceeding 90 percent of total regional electric consumption.[191]

Şanlıurfa is the leader in illegal electricity consumption. One explanation is the scope of agricultural activities in this province. In 2011, Şırnak had the highest recorded illegal electricity usage percentage, with illegal users consuming 82 percent of total electricity used in the province. (See Figure 2.6)

[189] Çağlar Yurtseven, "The Causes of Electricity Theft: An Econometric Analysis of the Case of Turkey," *Utilities Policy* 37 (2015): 1–9.
[190] Hasan Sami Aksüyek et al., "GAP Yöresinde Tarımsal Sulama Amaçlı Elektrik Kullanımı," (Paper presented at the 10th Energy Congress for the World Energy Council, Istanbul, 27-30 November 2006), http://www.dektmk.org.tr/pdf/enerji_kongresi_10/gap_tarimsal_sulama.pdf.
[191] "Public Enterprises Committee" (2015), TBMM, https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/develop/owa/komisyon_tutanaklari.goruntule?pTutanakId=1188.

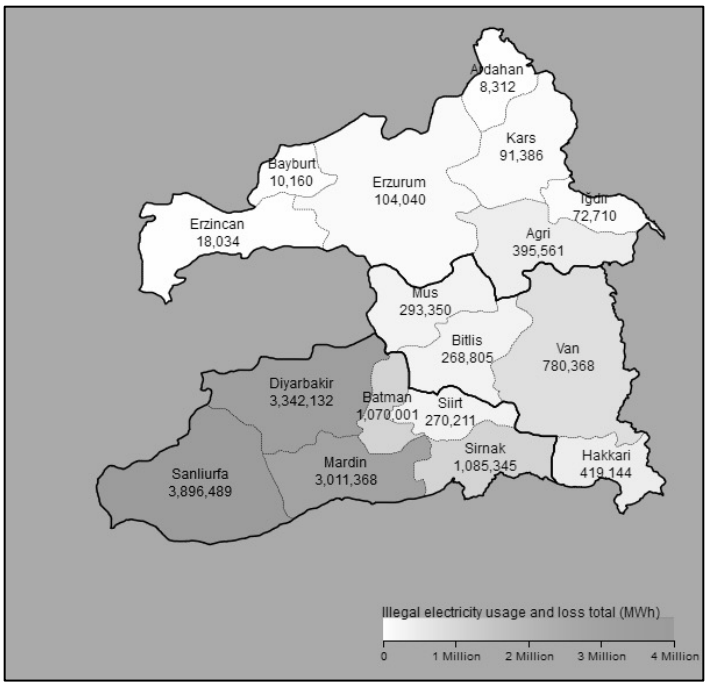


Source: Prepared by the author based on TEDAŞ 2011 Report.[192]

Figure 2.5. Illegal Electricity Usage Percentages in the Southeast and East Anatolia, 2011

Even though the percentage of illegal electric usage in Şanlıurfa was lower than Şırnak and many other provinces in the region, by simple quantity Şanlıurfa farmers were consuming three times the amount of electricity illegally. (See Figure 2.7) Şanlıurfa was followed by two other provinces with large agricultural sectors, Diyarbakır and Mardin.

[192] "Annual Report 2011," TEDAŞ.



Source: Prepared by the author based on TEDAŞ 2011 Report.[193]

Figure 2.6. Illegal Electricity Usage in MWh in the Southeast and East Anatolia, 2011

The "champion" of illegal electricity usage, as named by a national newspaper,[194] Şanlıurfa has also been the cotton hub of the country. In 2013, the province single-handedly met 30 percent of the country's overall cotton production.[195] Between 1995 and 2014, cotton fields in Şanlıurfa increased from 15 to 34.7 percent, a point where one out of every 3-hectares land in the province was a cotton field.[196] Despite not getting access to state irrigation canals, most of Şanlıurfa districts cultivated cotton, on around 75,397 hectares of agricultural land.[197] The same year, the Harran Plain had a total cotton area of around 127,923 hectares.

[193] Ibid.
[194] "Rekor Şanlıurfa'nın," *Hürriyet*, January 1, 2013, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/rekor-sanliurfa-nin-22268653.
[195] "Cotton production areas 2013", TUİK.
[196] "Regional Statistics on Cultivated Areas", TUİK.
[197] Ibid.

Cross-examination of irrigated areas and cotton production levels in Şanlıurfa districts reveals that in many districts the area of the cotton fields was higher than the total area irrigated by the state canals pointing to extensive groundwater irrigation and probable illegal electric usage. (See Table 2.2)

District	Area Reached by the State Canals (ha)	Area of Cotton Production (ha)
Siverek	2,613	21,626
Ceylanpınar	21,450	6,486
Bozova	19,411	11,554
Hilvan	0	9,545
Viranşehir	10,372	24,099
Birecik	0	83

Source: DSİ Mapped Statistical Bulletin 2015 and TUİK data

Table 2.1. Cotton Production and Irrigated Areas in Kurdish Districts of Şanlıurfa, 2013

The GAP and its ambitious irrigation projects did not bring the promised economic development to the region. In 1985, the GAP region's GDP per capita was 862,000 TL, less than half of the country average of 1,822,000 TL.[198] Despite the 153 percent GDP increase between 2004 and 2011,[199] the regional income failed to catch up the country average. 2011 Turkey GDP per capita average was $9,244. The same year, GAP region had an average GDP of $4,500.[200] The

[198] Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı, *GAP Master Plan Nihai Raporu Cilt 1* (Ankara: Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık Devlet Planlama Teşkilatı Yayınları, June 1990), 1.
[199] "Gayrisafi Katma Değer," GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/upload/dosyalar/pdfler/icerik/istatiski_veriler/GSKD_Istatistikleri.pdf.
[200] Average GDP per capita in Gaziantep, Adıyaman, and Kilis was $4,952; in Şanlıurfa and Diyarbakır $4,282; and in Mardin, Batman, Şırnak, and Siirt $4,689. Calculated by the GAP-RDA based on TÜİK, 2014 data.

increased income was also not fairly distributed within the region. The primary beneficiaries were the owners of large agricultural lands with access to state irrigation canals.

The relationship between distribution of state irrigation canals and illegal usage of electricity was also visible in the official documents of state electric company. In its 2011 Annual Report, the national public electricity distribution company the *Türkiye Elektrik Dağıtım Anonim Şirketi* – the Turkish Electricity Distribution Company (TEDAŞ) pointed to agriculture as the main reason behind the high illegal electricity usage in the GAP region. The report continued as follows:

> We observe illegal usage especially in agricultural irrigation… For this reason, to prevent illegal usage of both water and electricity the DSİ, the provincial directorates of agriculture, and the regional electricity distribution organization need to work in coordination.[201]

In face to face encounters, bureaucrats and technocrats working on the distribution of electricity openly blamed the politicians and pointed to the state's failure to distribute irrigation water as fairly as promised as the main cause of high illegal electricity use in the region. A high-level TEDAŞ bureaucrat put it as follows during an interview:

> The GAP is an unsuccessful project. It [the project's failure] is mainly about irrigation. . . Those canals do not reach Şanlıurfa. Thus, people pump groundwater and use big motor pumps to do it. There is an incredible amount of electricity consumption. If they pay, they will not be able to earn a living. This is the reason why they are stealing electricity.[202]

Electricity and irrigation water infrastructure reaching Şanlıurfa were not connected only because they were coming from the same source, the Atatürk Dam, but also because one's presence compensates the other's absence in majority of Kurdish districts. Using electricity

[201] "Annual Report 2011," TEDAŞ.
[202] Interview in Ankara, September 18, 2014.

illegally to pump irrigation water, farmers from the region individually compensate for their relative discrimination of unequal distribution of resources between Arab and Kurdish districts.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter tackled how the GAP infrastructure projects worked simultaneously as discursive unification mechanisms and discrimination tools against the Kurdish population in the peripheral Southeastern Anatolia region. The chapter showed that the GAP which state politicians promoted as a means to bridge the existing political, social and economic gaps between the Turkish state and the Kurdish community, ended up deepening the economic divides between ethnic groups in the region and further disillusioning the Kurdish community.

Most of the GAP investments have been made in Şanlıurfa. The province was adjacent to the Atatürk Dam, the centerpiece of the GAP. Şanlıurfa's microclimate and soil type were highly suitable for a shift from dry to more lucrative irrigated crops. However, a close-up of this success case shows the ways in which the practice of infrastructure projects opened new economic inequalities on the ground. Due to sparse and selective distribution of irrigation canals, infrastructure distribution enriching the mostly Arab Harran farmers further marginalized the Kurdish community. Harran farmers conducting irrigated agriculture with subsidized water provided by the state started to receive agricultural crop support payment as early as 1995. Most of the Kurdish districts did not have access to the irrigation canals in 2015. Even when they could receive legal access to canals, most Kurdish farmers had to pay extra for pumping the water uphill.

The GAP irrigation projects that served as peace and unification symbols in politicians' discourse, once implemented, turned into discriminatory mechanisms. Yet the state policies were

not unchallenged. As shown in the last part of the chapter, Kurdish farmers managed to bypass the state power and get access to irrigation water through illegal hook-ups to national electric grid.

The next chapter discusses similar large-scale infrastructure projects conducted in the ethnically mixed Negev/Naqab region of Israel. Drawing on infrastructure provision in peripheral and ethnically mixed regions of Southeastern Anatolia and Negev/Naqab, first two chapters of the dissertation compare the discourse on and practice of resource distribution in Turkey and Israel. The second part of the dissertation, composed of Chapter 4 and 5, focuses on the Bedouin and Kurdish communities' diverging reactions in the face of disadvantaging distribution practices, and the reasons lying behind their chosen methods of struggle. Thus, Chapter 4 returns to the Turkish case and explores the political and institutional reasons behind the Kurds' ability to illegally use electricity as well as the political ramifications of their actions.

Chapter 3

Distribution of Infrastructure in the Negev/Naqab Region: Water Pipes, Electric Grid, and Transportation

Jamal was a nineteen-year-old Bedouin man living in Wādi an-Naʿam. Located in the Negev/Naqab region of Israel, Wādi an-Naʿam was the biggest 'unrecognized' Bedouin village[203] with 13,000 inhabitants. Jamal was born and raised in the village. He lives in a house adjacent to his childhood home with his wife and three children. The Israeli military relocated the inhabitants of Wādi an-Naʿam from their villages in the western Negev/Naqab to their current location in the early 1950s. Years after the relocation, the state gave permission for construction, adjacent to the village, of the regional electricity station and the Ne'ot Hovav Industrial Zone, the site of Israel's main hazardous waste disposal facility. Wādi an-Naʿam residents were partially enclosed by the electricity station to the north and the industrial zone to the west.

Both Jamal and his father were working for the electricity company. They wired factory buildings and checked electricity connections all around the northern Negev/Naqab region. When they came home after long workdays, like the Çiçek family, they chatted under constant buzzing of the high-voltage electric lines bypassing their house. Jamal was responsible for distributing, controlling, and securing the power that he did not have access to. Israeli state agents denied electricity to Bedouin villages arguing that the Bedouin were trespassers occupying state land. The only way for Wādi an-Naʿam residents to access infrastructure was to

[203] 'Unrecognized' Bedouin villages are the villages that the state of Israel does not recognize as legal.

move to state-planned Bedouin-only town of Šgīb as-Salām. Electricity was only one of the infrastructure systems bypassing the Bedouin community, besides water, sewage, and transportation.

In parallel with Chapter 2, this chapter focuses on distribution of infrastructure as part of a development project, the *Negev 2015*, conducted in an ethnically mixed region. Regional development projects provide rare instances of large-scale infrastructure distribution. This chapter attempts to delineate distribution of infrastructure in the region and discuss how and why Bedouin villages such as Wādi an-Naʿam have been denied access to public infrastructure passing next to them.

This chapter argues that the Negev/Naqab development projects promoted as attempts to develop and integrate the region turned into mechanisms discriminating against the Bedouin community by hindering its access to resources. Israel politicians, like their Turkish counterparts, used regional development as an opportunity to impose their rule in a mixed region. The state distribution of infrastructure transferred limited resources, including agricultural land, from the Bedouin minority to Jewish majority in the region.

In recent decades, land disputes between the state and the Bedouin community started to receive scholarly attention as a determinant of the state policies in the region as well as a factor shaping the Bedouin identity.[204] To take control of the land occupied by Bedouin, state agents

[204] Even though it is central to the relationship between the state of Israel and its Bedouin citizens, land disputes were mostly ignored in the literature on the Bedouin community. Ghazi Falah published several articles on the land dispute between the state and the Bedouin in the Negev/Naqab. See Ghazi Falah, "The Spatial Pattern of Bedouin Sedentarization in Israel," *GeoJournal: An International Journal on Human Geography and Environmental Sciences* 11, no. 4 (1985): 361–68; and Ghazi Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization in the Negev," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 2 (January 1, 1989): 71–91. Starting from the early 2000s, more analysis of the land dispute using internal colonialism as a theoretical framework started to be published. See Oren Yiftachel and Haim Yacobi, "Control, Resistance,

utilized their power over infrastructure distribution. The struggle over resources created new forms of discrimination as well as new forms of resistance. Focusing on infrastructure, this chapter discusses not only Israeli politicians' use of their distributive power to strengthen their hands in land disputes but also the Bedouin resistance against discrimination.

Part 1 discusses the state discourse on development and distribution of infrastructure in the Negev/Naqab region. Like the Turkish case, political actors who introduced infrastructure distribution projects promoted regional development as an effort to increase economic and social wellbeing of the entire region, including the Bedouin community. This first part also establishes the background of the tense relationship between the Bedouin and the state with a specific focus on the official measures taken to restrict the Bedouin community's access to land and resources.

While Part 1 introduces the divergence between state discourse on equal access to state resources and its historical discriminatory practices in the region, Part 2 details how the state has practiced the distribution of infrastructure over the last fifteen years. This part shows the Bedouin were not the beneficiaries of regional infrastructure projects—such as highways, railways, electric grid, or water pipes—conducted under the umbrella of *Negev 2015* regional development effort. On the contrary, authorities used most of these projects to justify the evacuation of the Bedouin villages.

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and Informality: Urban Ethnocracy in Beer-Sheva, Israel" in *Urban Informality: Transnational Perspectives from the Middle East, Latin America, and South Asia*, ed. Ananya Roy and Nezar AlSayyad (Maryland: Lexington Book, 2004), 209-42; Ahmad Amara, Ismael Abu-Saad, and Oren Yiftachel, eds., *Indigenous (In)Justice: Human Rights Law and Bedouin Arabs in the Naqab/Negev* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Oren Yiftachel, "Bedouin-Arabs and the Israeli Settler State: Land Polices and Indigenous Resistance," in *The Future of Indigenous Peoples: Strategies for Survival and Development*, ed. D. Champagne and Ismael Abu-Saad (Los Angeles: American Indian Studies Center, UCLA, 2003), 21–47; and Mansour Nasasra et al., eds., *The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism: New Perspectives*, Routledge Studies on the Arab-Israeli Conflict (London: Routledge, 2015).

Part 3 focuses on how the Bedouin's access to infrastructure became a disciplinary mechanism to enforce the Bedouin's compliance with relocation policies. Concentrating on the official conditions for the Bedouin's access to infrastructure, this part spotlights the ways in which infrastructure provisions became a carrot-and-stick policy.

Even though the state actors discriminated against the Bedouin when they distributed infrastructure and conditioned the community's access to resources by their relocation to a state-planned town, the Bedouin did not encroach on infrastructure. Part 4 delves into the literature to build an argument on why some communities choose to access the denied resources illegally and some others do not. The theoretical discussion conducted in this last part of the chapter lays the groundwork for the empirical analysis of the Kurds and Bedouin communities' diverging reaction in the face of similar, discriminatory resource distribution policies that is further analyzed in the in the following chapters.

3.1. State Discourse on Development and Infrastructure Distribution

In January of 2005, the Knesset approved the establishment of the Ministry for Development of the Negev and the Galilee[205] that would lead development projects in these two peripheral regions with high numbers of Arab-Palestinians. The Ministry's goals were many: implementing strategic development plans, encouraging investors in the region, advancing various projects on employment, settlement, education, industry, tourism, and culture, and handling the needs of the non-Jewish community in the region.[206] Accordingly, the Ministry was responsible for

[205] In 2015, the Knesset expanded the power of the ministry and named it the Ministry for the Development of the Negev, Galilee and Periphery.
[206] "The Ministry of Development of the Negev and the Galilee," Galilee Development Authority, http://www.galil.gov.il/EN/?p=1633.

conducting development and resource distribution efforts in coordination with the other ministries, ministerial committees, and authorities, as well as semi- and quasi-governmental bodies.[207]

A couple of months after the Ministry's establishment, the government adopted the "National Strategic Plan for the Development of the Negev," known as *Negev 2015*.[208] It also approved the allocation of 17 million Israeli New Shekel (NIS) for its implementation.[209] Only two years before the establishment a new Ministry and the launch of the *Negev 2015* by the government, the קרן קיימת לישראל – Jewish National Fund (JNF) started a 10-year development initiative called *Blueprint Negev* that costed 600 million US dollars. *Blueprint Negev* was composed of multiple interlinked development projects, including the transformation of the Be'er Sheva riverfront into a 1,700-acre park, the construction of new settlements for affordable lifestyle to retirees and young Jews completing their military service and moving to the region, and the improvement of existing communities by building parks and youth centers. Once the government launched *Negev 2015*, regional development became a joint effort conducted by multiple governmental, semi- and quasi-governmental bodies.

In 2007, the Minister of Construction and Housing appointed an independent committee to recommend policies on how to "regulate" or "fix up"[210] Bedouin settlement. The committee headed by Retired Supreme Court Justice Eliezer Goldberg was composed of two public

[207] Oren Yiftachel, Planning a Mixed Region in Israel: The Political Geography of Arab-Jewish Relations in the Galilee (Brookfield: Ashgate Pub Co, 1992), 89.
[208] Shlomo Swirski, "Current Plans for Developing the Negev: A Critical Perspective," ADVA Center report, January 2007, http://adva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/AdvaNegevJanuary2007.pdf.
[209] Swirski, "Current Plans for Developing the Negev."
[210] The Hebrew word used in the document is "Hasdara." The closest meaning in English is "fixing up" in a manner that will fit with governmental criteria.

representatives appointed by the Ministry of Housing, two representatives from the Bedouin community, and three government representatives. In 2011, the committee, known as the Goldberg Commission, issued a detailed report on the Bedouin's living standards and made policy recommendations to improve those conditions. The committee found that most of the 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages were not interfering with the regional development plans and recommended recognition of most of the existing Bedouin villages.[211] The Israeli government shelved the report prepared by the Goldberg Commission.

The same year, the Netanyahu government asked the head of the Policy Planning department in the Prime Minister's Office, Ehud Prawer, to plan how to implement the recommendations of the Goldberg Commission on resolving outstanding land issues between the Bedouin and the state. Based on the Prawer's plan, Minister Ze'ev Benjamin Begin drafted the "Bill on the Arrangement and Bedouin Settlement in the Negev," known as the Prawer-Begin Bill. Diverging from the Goldberg Commission's recommendations urging the recognition of many Bedouin villages, the Prawer Plan advocated for the forced evacuation the Bedouin villages and relocation of thousands of Bedouin to state-planned Bedouin towns. During the public hearing of the Bill, Begin underlined importance of the Negev/Naqab development calling it one of the most important national tasks for the coming decade. He added that as they did not have an official status, the Bedouin "would be unable to enjoy the large resources that are expected to be channeled into the Negev in the coming years, and it would be impossible to fully accomplish the mission of developing the northern part of the Negev for the benefit of all its

[211] "Goldberg Commission Report," Ministry of Construction and Housing, November 20, 2011, http://www.moch.gov.il/SiteCollectionDocuments/odot/doch_goldberg/Doch_Vaada_Shofet_Goldberg.pdf, 24. (Hebrew)

residents."[212] Begin proposed the forced relocation of between 30,000[213] and 70,000[214] Bedouin from their villages to state-planned towns.

The Knesset approved the Prawer-Begin Bill on its first hearing. A couple of months after the Knesset hearing, in July 2013, the cabinet approved a new National Negev Development Plan and allocated another 500 million NIS to reach the goals set in the *Negev 2015*. Subsidizing industrial zones, establishing industrial parks, and developing infrastructure and housing solutions were some of the projects to be undertaken. Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu promoted the development project as "a sign for the future, a better future for Be'er Sheva and the communities of the entire Negev."[215] Netanyahu argued that the regional development plan would join government's existing plan for socio-economic development of the Bedouin population and the *Negev 2015* would serve the Bedouin by creating new industrial, commercial, and environmental opportunities for the community.[216]

While the Goldberg committee considered recognition of the Bedouin villages as a viable solution to resolve the land issues, the Prawer-Begin Bill presented forced relocation from villages to towns as the only option. The opposing nature of those policy recommendations hints

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[212] Ze'ev B. Begin, "Regularization of the Bedouin Communities in the Negev: Summary of the Public Hearing on the Draft Law and Recommendations for Policy and for Amendments to the Draft," January 23, 2013, http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/Documents/begin-bedouin270113.pdf.
[213] "Behind the Headlines: The Bedouin in the Negev and the Begin Plan," Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/ForeignPolicy/Issues/Pages/The-Bedouin-in-the-Negev-and-the-Begin-Plan-4-Nov-2013.aspx.
[214] "Demolition and Eviction of Bedouin Citizens of Israel in the Naqab (Negev) – The Prawer Plan," *Adalah* (القانوني لحماية حقوق الأقلية العربية في اسرائيل المركز - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel), https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/7589.
[215] "Cabinet Approves New 5-year Negev Development Plan Worth Approximately 500 million NIS," Prime Minister's Office, July 14, 2013, http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Spokesman/Pages/spokenegev140713.aspx.
[216] Ibid.

at the non-coherent nature of the state. Like any other state, the state of Israel is a conglomeration of its multiple parts that conflict with each other. The two opposing reports represented two faces of the state in the Negev/Naqab region. While talking about the regional development plans, politicians claimed that the Negev/Naqab Bedouin would be among the main beneficiaries of the projects. The language of regional development was an inclusive language. However, they were the same politicians who supported enclavement of the Bedouin population in high-density urban settlement. Duality between the state discourse of development for everyone and discriminatory practices of its parts was not surprising to the Bedouin based on a long history of discrimination.

When the leader of the pre-state Mapai Party Ben-Gurion visited the Negev/Naqab region in 1932,[217] Bedouin were the overwhelming majority, with a population exceeding 70,000.[218] Ignoring the Bedouin presence, Ben-Gurion argued that the region had the potential to become the Jewish heartland. To withstand Bedouin demographic hegemony in this strategic border region, located between the Sinai dessert and the Jordan River, leaders of the pre-state Jewish community in Palestine encouraged Jewish immigration.

Jewish settlers moving to the region mostly adopted Bedouin behavioral norms. Some kibbutzim established Bedouin-style hospitality tents at their gate where they served coffee and cigarettes to their visitors as their Bedouin neighbors practiced. Some others adopted Bedouin clothes and weapons, participated in horse and camel races with them.[219]

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[217] Lisa Alcalay Klug, "The Desert Will Rejoice," *The Jerusalem Post,* March 1, 2007, http://www.jpost.com/Travel/Around-Israel/The-desert-will-rejoice.
[218] Ghazi Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization, 78.
[219] Avinoam Meir and Ze 'ev Zivan, "Sociocultural Encounter on the Frontier: Jewish Settlers and Bedouin Nomads in the Negev," in *Ethnic Frontiers and Peripheries: Landscapes of Development and Inequality in Israel*, ed. Oren Yiftachel and Avinoam Meir (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996), 250.

The Arab-Israeli War of 1948 transformed the relationship between the Bedouin and Jews in the region. During the war, the Jewish army expelled most of the Bedouin from the region and allowed only a few clans to stay.[220] When the war ended, the number of Bedouin in the region was around 11,000.[221] Nineteen out of the original ninety-five Bedouin tribes of the region remained in sufficient numbers to get recognition from the newly established state of Israel.[222] In a short period, the Negev/Naqab Bedouin turned from being the overwhelming majority in the region into a minority living in the "Jewish national state."[223] The Jewish settlers' power in the region increased considerably with the heavy backing by state authorities.[224] A month after the declaration of independence, Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Ben-Gurion wrote a report on the Jewish military and political situation. The report had a specific section on the Negev/Naqab. According to Ben-Gurion, the region was highly important for the future of Zionist project:

> The Negev differs from every other section of the country for a very simple reason: it is a 12-million-dunam (1.2-million-hectare) area which is both empty and desolate. In ordinary circumstances, this would certainly be no great advantage. A settled area would ordinarily have been better, but not from our point of view. From a Zionist viewpoint, an empty and desolate area is better, because we can turn it into a flourishing centre of Jewish settlement. . . The Negev is an enormous Zionist asset, and there is no substitute for it anywhere else in the Land of Israel. First of all, it is half of the Land of Israel. There is no such thing as the northern and the southern Negev. The Negev is barren and empty now, and that is why it is important. We can create there a densely populated Jewish area, perhaps with room for millions of people. Moshe Smilansky thinks that it would be possible for 2 million Jews to make a living from farming in the Negev. If he is correct, then an additional 3 million could make a living from

[220] Hillel Cohen, *Good Arabs*, 181.
[221] Emanuel Marx, *Bedouin of the Negev* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967); and Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization in the Negev."
[222] Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization," 78.
[223] Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness State, Society, and the Military* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 134.
[224] Meir and Zivan, "Sociocultural Encounter on the Frontier," 259.

> industry. The Jews who might be settled there are, unfortunately, not yet with us. Even so, the Negev still offers very great opportunities.[225]

Contrary to what Ben-Gurion argued in the report, the Negev/Naqab was neither empty nor desolate. Despite the considerable decrease in their number, Bedouin still made up a majority in the region. According to the national census conducted a couple of months after the war, population of the Negev/Naqab region was 14,200 and only 1,200 of it was Jewish.[226] In the 1950s, the government started to establish planned Jewish towns, known as development towns in the Negev/Naqab and Galilee regions where there was a considerable Arab-Palestinian Israeli population and thus, "whose development is of particular interest to the state."[227] Until the end of the migrant influx from the ex-soviet countries after the dissolution of the USSR, Jews immigrating to Israel were relocated to the development towns.[228] With considerable tax reductions given to their residents, development towns secured Jewish migrants' access to better accommodation, jobs, cultural, and educational opportunities.[229] Yet the Negev/Naqab region was still lacking in social and economic opportunities and most of the Jewish migrants saw the region as a provisional home.[230] After spending couple of years in the region, most migrants moved to the north, hoping for better conditions and opportunities.

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[225] "12 Report of the Provisional Government by Prime Minister and Minister of Defense," Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, June 17, 1948, http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/foreignpolicy/mfadocuments/yearbook1/pages/12%20report%20to%20the%20provisional%20government%20by%20prime%20m.aspx.
[226] "Population by District, Sub-district, and Religion," Central Bureau of Statistics, 2015.
[227] Erik Cohen, "Development Towns: The Social Dynamics of 'Planted' Urban Communities in Israel," in *Integration and Development in Israel*, ed. Shmuel. N. Eisenstadt, Rivkah Bar Yosef, and Chaim Adler (New York: Praeger, 1970), 588.
[228] Richard Isralowitz and Jonathan Friedlander, eds., *Transitions: Russians, Ethiopians and Bedouins in Israel's Desert* (Brookfield: Ashgate, 1999).
[229] Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, "Saints' Sanctuaries in Israeli Development Towns," in *Grasping Land: Space and Place in Contemporary Israeli Discourse and Experience*, ed. Eyal Ben-Ari and Yoram Bilu, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), 61–83.
[230] Isralowitz and Friedlander, *Transitions*.

While trying to make the region appealing to potential Jewish residents, state leaders were also trying to constraint the Bedouin community's living space. Following the declaration of independence, the new state established military rule in regions with large Arab-Palestinian populations, including the Negev/Naqab. One of the first activities of the military rule in the region was to relocate the scattered Bedouin into an enclosed military area the Bedouin called *siyag.*[231]

Relocation created three interlinked outcomes. First, relocation to the *siyag* considerably shrank the area occupied and cultivated by the Bedouin. The *siyag* was known for its low fertility land and was not preferred by most Bedouin tribes for settlement.[232] Following the relocation, the cabinet passed the 1953 "Land Acquisition Law." The law gave the Minister of Finance the right to confiscate lands that were not being actively used by its residents and owners on the 1st of April 1952 in order to answer security and settlement needs.[233] As the military government had already relocated the Bedouin tribes before 1952, Bedouin lands were within the scope of the law. Bedouin relocation to the *siyag* and the following Land Acquisition Law transferred control of fertile territories to the state.

Second, the military rule transformed the Bedouin lifestyle by restricting various aspects of the community's daily life. Bedouin living in the region were required to obtain a permit to leave the enclosed military zone and were rarely allowed to work outside of the area.[234] The

[231] The Arabic word for fence or enclosure. For further details on the term see Hussein Abu Hussein and Fiona McKay, *Access Denied: Palestinian Access to Land in Israel* (New York: Zed Books, 2003).
[232] Ismael Abu-Saad, "Spatial Transformation and Indigenous Resistance: The Urbanization of the Palestinian Bedouin in Southern Israel," *American Behavioral Scientist* 51, no. 12 (August 1, 2008): 1713–54.
[233] Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization," 79.
[234] Rosen-Zvi, Taking Space Seriously, 45.

permits were issued only for a very limited period, only for certain places, and, in some cases, only for certain actions. Bedouin men working outside of the *siyag* had to return to renew their permit.[235] Even though the military rule was abolished on the 8th of November in 1966, military permits continued to be required for the Bedouin to work outside of the region, until 1967.[236] In 1958, Eliahu Elath, the Israeli Ambassador to London justified the restrictions imposed on Bedouin's freedom of movement as a necessary step for sedentarization and development of the community. Elath continued as follows; "We hope and believe, they will come to live by agriculture run on modern lines, like their neighbors in Jewish settlements."[237]

Third, besides restricting Bedouin's living space, the military rule gave the civilian government enough time to decide what to do with the Bedouin community. The military rule defined the relocation of Bedouin tribes to the enclosed area as a temporary, short-term security measure.[238] It lasted longer than the Israeli government anticipated. Throughout the 20-year military rule, dozens of spontaneous Bedouin settlements characterized by tin shacks, cabins, and tents evolved inside the military zone.[239] Planning authorities neglected these 'temporary' settlements. The military government denied construction permits, refused to provide basic infrastructure and public services to these settlements.[240] Three years before the abolition of military rule, in July 1963, a Ha'aretz correspondent conducted an interview with the Minister of Agriculture and the former Commander in Chief of the צבא הגנה לישראל – Israeli Defense Force

[235] Marx, Bedouin of the Negev, 38.
[236] Nasasra, 45.
[237] Mansour Nasasra, "Bedouin Tribes in the Middle East and Naqab," in eds. Mansour Nasasra et al., *The Naqab Bedouin and Colonialism: New Perspectives*, Routledge Studies on the Arab-Israeli Conflict (London: Routledge, 2015), 47.
[238] Marx, Bedouin of the Negev.
[239] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy,* 199-200.
[240] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*; and Abu-Saad, "Spatial Transformation and Indigenous Resistance."

(IDF) Moshe Dayan and asked questions about the Bedouin. Dayan described the future that the state of Israel anticipated for its Bedouin citizens as by saying:

> We should transform Bedouins into an urban proletariat – in industry, service, construction, and agriculture. Eighty-eight percent of the Israeli population are not farmers, let the Bedouins be like them. Indeed, this will be a radical move which means that the Bedouin would no longer live on his land with his herds but would become an urban person who comes home in the afternoon and put his slippers on. His children would be accustomed to a father who wears trousers, does not carry a Shabaria [the traditional Bedouin knife] and does not search for head lice in public. The children would go to school with their hair properly combed. This would be a revolution, but it may be fine in two generation. Without coercion but with governmental direction … this phenomenon of the Bedouins will disappear.[241]

Dayan underlined that to be like the rest of the Israelis and integrate into the broader community, the Bedouin had to be urbanized and change their means of subsistence. To initiate fast urbanization, Israeli politicians developed new forms of governance and established new state institutions focused on the Bedouin.[242]

The master plans drawn during military rule did not acknowledge the Bedouin living in the Negev/Naqab region. Therefore, none of the Bedouin settlements had master plans. The Planning and Construction Law that came into effect in 1965, the year before abolition of military rule in the region, made having master plan a prerequisite for getting construction permits. As they were not acknowledged by the authorities, the Bedouin settlement could neither get master plans nor building permits. The state deemed illegal all the structures in Bedouin villages, even those existing before the passage of the law.[243] The law legalized the state denial

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[241] Moshe Dayan's interview in *Ha'aretz*, July 31, 1963 quoted in Talia Berman-Kishony, "Bedouin Urbanization Legal Policies in Israel and Jordan: Similar Goals, Contrasting Strategies," *Transnational Law & Contemporary Problems*, 2008, 396.
[242] Nasasra, "Bedouin Tribes," 49.
[243] "Off the Map: Land and Housing Rights Violations in Israel's Unrecognized Bedouin Villages," Human Rights Watch, (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2008), 14.

of infrastructure to the Bedouin villages[244] and introduced a penal mechanism including administrative and legal demolition orders for violators.[245] By definition, the 1965 law declared the designated areas for the townships as the only lands qualified to ask for building permits.[246] The laws denied the Bedouin access to infrastructure in existing villages and conditioned their access by their move to state-planned Bedouin-only towns.

Following the abolition of military rule, the Ministry of Interior published the Physical Master Plan for the Northern Negev/Naqab. One of the main missions of the plan was "to alleviate Bedouin nomadism in order to integrate the unstable population with high natural growth, into the realm of state administration and services."[247] Accordingly, construction of the first state-planned Bedouin town, Tal as-Sabaʿ, was completed in 1969. Tal as-Sabaʿ was composed of forty-nine small houses, each of seventy square-meters on four-hundred square-meter lots.

The houses in Tal as-Sabaʿ were too small for large Bedouin families, who mostly practiced polygamy. Traditionally, Bedouin women had minimum interaction with unfamiliar men and each Bedouin family lived in a separate village. Ignoring the Bedouin lifestyle, Tal as-Sabaʿ was designed as a high-density urban settlement where families from different clans were to live in the same bloc or on the same street.[248] Most Bedouin families refused to move into the town. Between 1969 and 1989, the state constructed a total of seven Bedouin-only towns in the

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[244] Ibid.
[245] Ronen Shamir, "Suspended in Space: Bedouins under the Law of Israel," *Law & Society Review* 30, no. 2 (January 1, 1996), 246.
[246] Ibid.
[247] "Physical Master Plan for the Northern Negev," Ministry of Interior, (Jerusalem: Government Print, 1966), 17 quoted in "State and Bedouin Policies and Plans," in *Emptied Lands: A Legal Geography of Bedouin Rights in the Negev*, Alexandre Kedar, Ahmad Amara, and Oren Yiftachel (Stanford: Stanford Universiy Press, 2018), 222.
[248] Abu-Saad, "Spatial Transformation and Indigenous Resistance" 1732.

Negev/Naqab. Jewish planners had to find ways of settling the tension between "neighborhood-oriented planning" where the tribe structure and culture played a stronger role, which was supported by the community, and "comprehensive urban structure" that would break the tribal structure as the politicians demanded.[249]

While claiming to develop the region and the Bedouin in an integrated way, Israeli state policies discriminated against the Bedouin, enclaved the community in the *siyag,* restricted their movement, and conditioned their access to infrastructure by their relocation to Bedouin-only towns. The following part details infrastructure distribution in the region to point the wide gap between the unifying discourse and discriminatory practice of the state in the region. Once introduced, infrastructure projects turned into mechanisms for further constraining the Bedouin living space and forcing the community to move into state-planned towns.

3.2. Distribution of Infrastructure in a Mixed Region

Negev 2015 was built on proposals made in three previous plans: National Master Plan TAMA 35, National Outline Plan (NOP 35) which was the national plan to determine how Israel's physical territory was to be used up to 2020, and "Be'er Sheba Metropolis" Outline Plan (DOP 4/14).[250] The Master Plan TAMA 35 had ignored the 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages[251] and defined most of the Negev/Naqab region, including the Bedouin villages inside the *siyag* as open space for potential recreational and military activities. Despite having the goal of responding to

[249] Shlomit Tamari et al., "Urban Tribalism: Negotiating Form, Function and Social Milieu in Bedouin Towns, Israel," *City, Territory and Architecture* no. 3:2 (December 1, 2016).
[250] Swirski, 5.
[251] "Off the Map," Human Rights Watch.

demands of various sectors among its ten primary objectives, [252] taking TAMA 35 as the starting point, NOP 35 defined the region as a highest-priority development target for the state.

The "Be'er Sheva Metropolitan Plan (4/14) that was approved in 2000 ignored the objectives set in the NOP 35. Before its approval, the Bedouin petitioned the בית משפט גבוה לצדק – the Israeli High Court of Justice (HCJ) stating that the plan-in-the-making took no account of their needs and demands.[253] In 2001, HCJ suggested the authorities include recommendations for the Bedouin in the Be'er Sheva Metropolis Outline Plan. The court also required the planning authorities to include representatives of the Bedouin community to the planning process.[254] The planning authorities revised the plan and published (new) Metropolitan Plan (4/14/23) in 2006. The revised plan included a "search area" to determine the sites for potential Bedouin settlements. The new plan did not improve the provisions of the previous one.[255]

Based on the above-stated three plans, the *Negev 2015* recommended relocation of five military training bases from central Israel to the Negev/Naqab region.[256] The Ministry of Development was responsible for securing a soft transition of the bases and improving the economy in the region before the relocation. In relation with the goal of improving the regional economy, the הרשות לפיתוח הנגב – Negev Development Authority (NDA) served as an executive

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[252] Swirski, "Current Plans for Developing the Negev," 19.
[253] HCJ 1991/00, Abu Hammad et al. vs. The National Council for Planning and Construction et al.
[254] Shadow Report Summited by ACRI Regarding Israel's Consolidated Tenth, Eleventh, Twelfth, and Thirteenth Periodic Report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)," ACRI, January 2006, 40, https://web.stanford.edu/group/scai/images/acrireport.pdf.
[255] Alexandre Kedar, Ahmad Amara, and Oren Yiftachel, *Emptied Lands: A Legal Geography of Bedouin Rights in the Negev* (Stanford: Stanford Universiy Press, 2018), 226.
[256] John Reed, "Israel Looks to Fulfil Desert Dream with Military Base," *Financial Times*, May 27, 2013, http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/77940556-c6ac-11e2-a861-00144feab7de.html#axzz3WFXfb9S7.

body of the Ministry working on the fast implementation of the regional development and infrastructure distribution projects as well as overseeing construction of the bases. The NDA arranged workers, suppliers, and builders for construction of the IDF bases.[257] The first mega military base in the region, Ir Habahadim, opened in 2014.

Ir Habahadim, sat on an area of 106.5 hectare, was ready to house over 10,000 soldiers as well as the IDF's School of Technology and Maintenance, the army's Command, Control, Computers, Communications and Information Branch, Logistics Training School, Military Police, Military Medicine, School of Education and Youth, and the School of Human Resources. There were two additional large-scale bases—one for intelligence and the other for communications—under construction and not expected to be completed in 2022.[258] Planners anticipated the relocation of the bases to bring over 30,000 soldiers and officers, including 6,000 career personnel to the region.[259]

Military service is compulsory for the Jewish citizens, but not for the Arab-Palestinian citizens. Thus, the Israeli army was an overwhelmingly Jewish body.[260] Relocation of the army bases from Tel Aviv to the Negev/Naqab was expected to bring more Jewish Israelis to the

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[257] Yuval Azulai, and Lilach Weissman, "Cabinet Sets up Company to Move IDF Bases to South - Globes English," *Globes*, January 4, 2015, http://www.globes.co.il/en/article-cabinet-sets-up-company-to-move-idf-bases-to-south-1000998342.

[258] Anna Ahronheim, "Defense Ministry Presents Plans for Two Additional IDF Bases in the Negev," *The Jerusalem Post,* November 13, 2017, http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Defense-Ministry-presents-plans-for-two-additional-IDF-bases-in-the-Negev-514126.

[259] "PM Netanyahu Tours the IDF Training Base Complex in the Negev," Government Press Office, December 10, 2014, http://gpo.gov.il/English/PressRoom/Pages/pm101214.aspx.

[260] Contrary to most of the Israeli Arabs, Bedouin served in the Israeli army. For more details on the ethnic structure of the Israeli army, see Baruch Kimmerling, *The Invention and Decline of Israeliness State, Society, and the Military* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). However, since the early 2000s, the number of Bedouin serving in the army dropped around fifty percent. See Gili Cohen, "As Bedouin Sign-Ups Drop, Israeli Army Cuts Terms to Two Years," *Haaretz*, August 7, 2016, http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/.premium-1.735715.

region, and this would serve the long-term goal of Judaization of the region. In an article published on the official IDF blog, Lieutenant Colonel Shalom Alfassy defined the relocation as a pioneering activity. In the article headlined as "Like Israel's Pioneers, the IDF is Making the Dessert Bloom," Alfassy continued stating "We [the Israeli military] are establishing an anchor in the Negev."[261] The relocation of the army bases to the Negev/Naqab was already referred as "Project IDF Ascent to the Negev" within the military structure.[262] From the military perspective, the Negev/Naqab was a region yet to be conquered even though it was part of Israel since its establishment.

To prepare the region for the expected influx of the army personnel, their relatives, and low-income families, the *Negev 2015* proposed a broad range of actions, from real estate projects to education, health, and transportation initiatives. The NDA established the "Negev Business Initiative" database serving as an information source for economic entities to find potential business engagements in the region.[263] To conduct its projects, the NDA, like the GAP-RDA, had been trying to secure coordination of government ministries, authorities and bodies.[264] However, again like the GAP-RDA, the NDA has faced difficulties in make the ministries work together. One of the bureaucrats working for the authority put it as follows:

> The municipalities don't work together. If they have to build a road, clean the garbage at a touristic place, you need ministries work together but they don't talk to each other. At the tourist attraction, the road is not fixed, and nobody comes and collect the garbage.[265]

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[261] "Making the Desert Bloom: IDF Heads South," IDF Blog, July 23, 2013, http://www.idfblog.com/blog/2013/07/23/making-the-desert-bloom-idf-heads-south/
[262] Ahronheim, "Defense Ministry Presents Plans."
[263] The Negev Development Authority, http://negev.co.il.
[264] "About Us," The Negev Development Authority, http://negev.co.il/about-us/.
[265] Interview in Be'er Sheva, May 21, 2015.

Besides specific development projects, the NDA was also working as an umbrella organization with two forums operating under it. One of them was the "Negev Tourism Forum" (פורום תיירות בנגב), an umbrella forum promoting tourism in the region. The other one was the "Forum for Demographic Growth and Settlement" (צמיחה דמוגרפית והתיישבות), a forum for settlement agencies constructing new Jewish settlements.[266] Even though the Ministry of Development set "handling of the needs of the non-Jewish sector" as one of its main goals,[267] there was no project to improve life in the Bedouin villages or towns. The only project targeting the Bedouin community was the plan for a rehabilitation center for Bedouin children with special needs, in the Bedouin town of Tal as-Sabaʿ.

A couple of months after the approval of the budget for 2013-2017 National Negev Development Plan, on the 10th of November 2013, the members of the cabinet traveled to Sde Boker kibbutz to conduct a special session. Sde Boker was not one of the oldest kibbutzim in the region, but it is the settlement the founder and first prime minister of the state of Israel David Ben-Gurion moved to after his resignation from the office and where he spent the rest of his life. When he died in 1973, Ben-Gurion was buried in the kibbutz in accordance with his will. During the Sde Boker meeting, the Cabinet members restated their commitment to the development of the region. Following the meeting, Prime Minister Benyamin Netanyahu explained his government's Negev/Naqab development vision to the press saying:

> This meeting at Sde Boker expresses our commitment to develop the Negev and cancel the periphery, to link the Negev and the Galilee to the center of the country, and to expedite the development of both of these areas. Today, we will decide on two new communities that we would like to build in the Negev and on a visitor's center in Be'er Sheva. Of course, this is in addition to the briefings on continued development, moving IDF bases to the south, building railroads and

[266] "About Us," The Negev Development Authority.
[267] "The Ministry of Development of the Negev and the Galilee," Galilee Development Authority.

> expressways, and turning Be'er Sheva into a global cyber center, which will expedite the development of the entire Negev, which Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, very much wanted to do, and which we will greatly expedite with a combination of government investments and market forces.[268]

The regional development plans promoted by the government not only ignored the Bedouin in practice but also necessitated their relocation. To reduce the travel time between the country's central region and the Negev/Naqab, the *Negev 2015* proposed upgrading the road and rail systems. As for rail transport, the plan proposed upgrading the Tel Aviv-Be'er Sheba rail line. (See Figure 3.1) As shown on the map, the planned highway (blue line) was to pass through the land of both 'unrecognized' (red circles) and 'recognized' Bedouin villages (purple circles). Shortly after the demolition order, Naim and Musa A-Sayed from the 'recognized' Bedouin village of As-Sayyid (shown with an arrow) brought the issue to court. They objected to the construction stating that it would violate the Bedouin villagers' right to shelter, honor, and property as citizens of Israel.[269] Yet, in 2010, the HCJ rejected the petition on the basis that the petitioners failed to file their appeals within the relevant period.[270] The construction plan stayed intact. The court decision was one of multiple instances where dislocation of the Bedouin community was justified as technical necessities for regional development and access to infrastructure.

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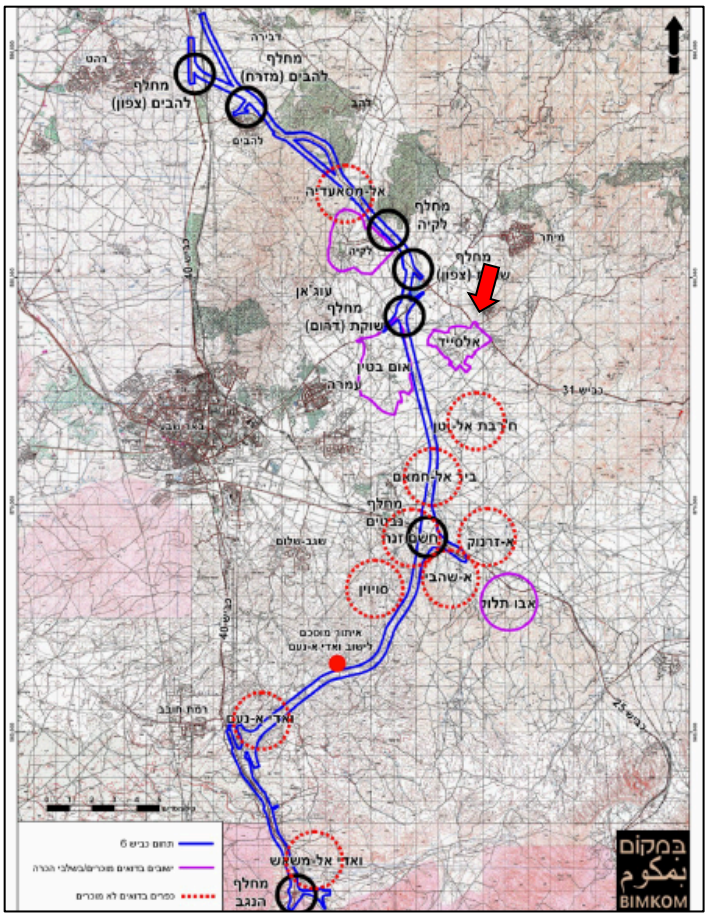
[268] "PM Netanyahu's Remarks at the Start of the Weekly Cabinet Meeting," Prime Minister's Office, November 10, 2013, http://www.pmo.gov.il/English/MediaCenter/Spokesman/Pages/spokestart101113.aspx.
[269] HCJ 9817/08, *Nice Elsayad vs. Ministry of Education*, November 20, 2008, http://elyon2.court.gov.il/scripts9/mgrqispi93.dll?Appname=eScourt&Prgname=GetFileDetails&Arguments=-N2008-009817-0. Petition in English https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/.../al%20sayed%20pet.doc. HCJ
[270] HCJ 35459/10, *Attia Alataimn vs. The Israeli Government*, May 5, 2010, http://elyon2.court.gov.il/scripts9/mgrqispi93.dll?Appname=eScourt&Prgname=GetFileDetails&Arguments=-N2010-003459-0.



Source: Bimkom - Planners for Planning Rights in Israel[271]

Figure 3.1. Plan of the Highway 6 South

In August 2001, the Israeli Land Administration prepared a report discussing the establishment of new towns. When ratified, *Negev 2015* included these projects. In July 2011, the government approved cabinet decree (no.2265) on "Building New Settlements and Recognizing Existing Ones" for the establishment of 14 new Jewish towns and villages in Galilee and the Negev/Naqab regions. Once the cabinet approved the plans, the National Council for Planning and Building amended the Master Plan for the Southern District accordingly. The amendment

[271] Bimkom, "NOP 31/A/21 The Plan for Route 6 South" (תמ"א/31/א/21 תכנית כביש 6 דרום), April 2010, http://bimkom.org/wp-content/uploads/6-חוות-דעת-תכנונית-כביש.pdf

included the Hiran settlement, a Jewish town to be built at the exact location of the Bedouin village Umm al-Ḥīrān. In 2015, the Supreme Court rejected the Bedouin petition against the removal of the community and ruled that the village land belongs to the state and the Bedouin have no legal rights on it.[272]

The JNF introduced the expansion of the man-made forest Yatir as part of the regional development effort. The planned expansion of the forest route was to pass through the Bedouin village ʿAtīr. Another JNF forest project, the "Ambassador's Forest" was to begin in the middle of Bedouin village Al-ʿArāgīb. In 2010, the מנהל מקרקעי ישראל – Israeli Land Administration (ILA) inspectors accompanied by over 1,500 police officers demolished the village. Besides demolishing forty-six buildings and eleven shacks, the ILA, planning to open the area for a forestation project, uprooted 850 of the village trees.[273] Soon after the demolition, villagers returned to rebuild their houses. In the following seven years, the government razed the village more than 120 times.[274] Samim, the son of the village head Juma al-Turi, compared the infrastructure and development projects to military operations, saying, "For us, every tree is an Israeli soldier. They try to take out land from us."[275]

On multiple occasions, development projects conducted in the region transferred resources from Bedouin to Jews. Underneath their technicality, these projects were tools for

[272] Shirley Seidler, "Supreme Court Allows State to Replace Bedouin Village With Jewish One," *Ha'aretz*, May 06, 2015, https://www.haaretz.com/court-okays-replacing-bedouin-village-with-jewish-one-1.5358889.
[273] Jack Khoury and Yair Yagna, "Police Destroy Dozens of Buildings in Unrecognized Bedouin Village in Negev," *Ha'aretz,* July 28, 2010, https://www.haaretz.com/1.5152643.
[274] Farah Najjar, "Israel Destroys Bedouin Village for the 119th Time," *Al-Jazeera,* October 3, 2017, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/10/israel-destroys-bedouin-village-119th-time-171003135958243.html.
[275] Interview in al-ʿArāgīb, February 1, 2014.

expropriation and relocation of the Bedouin. To the Bedouin "development" meant something completely different from what it meant to the Jewish residents of the region:

> When they have a development project, when they apply this project they ask, "how this community [the Bedouin] will serve to the project?" they never ask, "how this project will serve to the community?" how the community will serve to the project of the state, not how the state will serve to the community. This is not the case for Jews, because they own the state.[276]

Director of the Regional Council for the Unrecognized Villages of Negev – المجلس الاقليمي للقرى غير المعترف بها في النقب (RCUV) Fadi Masamra stated that the Bedouin community considered infrastructure projects as tools serving the Jewish community in displacing the Bedouin. He continued stating:

> Development plans conducted in the Naqab lately, they don't have anything to do with my community, it is over my community, not for us. It is for military basis, for new Israeli towns. It is never for us. We feel this development projects as part of the policy of displacement. If they can do it for the Jews, they can do it for us as well, because we exist… This discrimination is so visible in the field that we see next to my village that they can create a Jewish village, they can put waterfalls, electricity lines but not for me. These people are virtual, they are not here yet, but they do everything every kind of modern infrastructure that the nation can receive, but not for me.[277]

The Bedouin were not the beneficiaries of highways, settlements, electricity, water, and forests distributed by various official and semi-official stakeholders in the region. On the contrary, most infrastructure projects necessitated the forced evacuation of the Bedouin. Part 3 focuses on how the Bedouin's access to infrastructure became a carrot-and-stick, a disciplinary mechanism to force the Bedouin to comply with the state's relocation policies.

[276] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 13, 2015.
[277] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 26, 2015.

3.3. Access to Infrastructure as a Carrot-and-Stick

The relocation of the Bedouin from villages to towns as a developmental necessity obscured social, economic, political, and ideological relations underlying the Bedouin urbanization policies.[278] When they protested the compulsory relocation, the Bedouin were labeled as a violent community resisting development. State officials defended the relocation effort as a necessary step to provide a better life to the vague specification of "all the Negev citizens," but they did not explain why relocation was still considered as a necessity despite the Goldberg Commission report stating the opposite. When they protested the Prawer Plan of forced relocation, the Prime Minister Netanyahu condemned the protestors as a group preventing development. He stated:

> The attempts of a boisterous and violent minority to deny a better future for a large population are grave. We will continue to promote this law for the better future that it will provide for all the Negev citizens.[279]

In 1986, the Israeli politicians established a separate body to address the Bedouin community's needs and demands. Initially named the Bedouin Implementation Administration, the Bedouin Authority was under the supervision of the Israel Land Administration. The main responsibility of the Authority was to negotiate land title claims with the Bedouin and settle the cases. In the mid-1990s, the name of the administration became to the Administration for the Advancement of the Bedouin in the Negev, known as the Bedouin Administration.[280] In 2007, with the

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[278] Daiva K. Stasiulis and Nira Yuval Davis, "Introduction: Beyond Dichotomies" in *Unsettling Settler Societies Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class*, ed. Daiva K. Stasiulis and Nira Yuval Davis (London: SAGE Publications, 1995), 1-38.
[279] Noah Browning, "Arab Bedouins Protest Against the Israeli Plan to Move them into Towns," *Reuters*, November 30, 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-israel-bedouin-idUSBRE9AT0AG20131130.
[280] Avinoam Meir, "What Public, Whose Interest: The Negev Bedouin and the Roots of Planning from Below," *Geography Research Forum* 29, no. 0 (February 26, 2016): 103–31.

introduction of development plans, the government closed the existing organization and established the Authority for Bedouin Development and Settlement in the Naqab (הרשות לפיתוח והתיישבות הבדואים בנגב- السلطه لتطوير واسكان البدو في النقب), which the Bedouin call the Bedouin Development Authority (BDA), under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The BDA's role was defined broadly as governing all the aspects of Bedouin life, from planning and development of the existing Bedouin communities to allocation of drinking water. The BDA was responsible for developing neighborhoods and plots in the state-planned Bedouin towns, managing education, employment, and infrastructure related projects in these localities, and strengthening the local authorities.[281] However, the BDA had neither the vocational skills nor the resources to satisfy the community's needs.[282] Rather, in accordance with state priorities, the office focused exclusively on relocation of the community to state-planned towns. The BDA was composed of employee teams assigned to each Bedouin town, trying to convince the Bedouin in villages to move into closer town that the state designated for their relocation. Each of the teams had an annual quota, a number of Bedouin that they needed to convince each year. One BDA bureaucrat explained the working of the teams by saying:

> This is the amount of the deals we want to make (with Bedouin) this year. This is what we want to do, but I am not sure about it. For example, in Abu Grīnāt, we want to make fifty contracts this year, but so far we only have two. Fifty people should come from the villages, but nobody wants to live there.[283]

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[281] "The Authority for Development and Settlement of the Bedouin in the Negev," Government Services and Information Website, https://www.gov.il/he/Departments/about/odot_harashut. (Hebrew)
[282] Suleiman Abu-Bader and Daniel Gottlieb, "Poverty, Education, and Employment among the Arab-Bedouin in Israel," in *Poverty and Social Exclusion around the Mediterranean Sea*, ed. Valerie Berenger and Florent Bresson (New York: Springer, 2012), 213–46.
[283] Interview in Be'er Sheva, May 28, 2015.

One of the BDA's responsibilities was to bring infrastructure up to the plot chosen by Bedouin families agreeing to move to the towns. It was the Bedouin families' responsibility to build their house and connect their house to the infrastructure system. The BDA embraced relocation as the only way of improving the Bedouin community's lifestyle. The interviewed BDA personnel explained:

> If they don't move, we cannot develop them. We have to convince them to come so that we can develop. The government cannot waste a lot of money. Umm al-Ḥīrān [village] must move into Ḥūrah [a state-planned Bedouin town]… If you decide to move them by law, you have to destroy the place. You don't have another option. If you don't do it, they won't move. Even when you destroy, they attempt to rebuild it.[284]

The demolition of Bedouin villages for infrastructure projects and the relocation of the Bedouin to state-planned towns have worked hand in hand. The Ministry of Public Security established a specific force, the Yoav Unit, exclusively responsible for conducting demolition operations at Bedouin villages. Even though the interviewed BDA personnel rejected the Authority's connection to Yoav Unit, the website of the Ministry of Public Security stated the Coordination Directorate of Land Law Enforcement in the Negev, the body supervising the Yoav Units "works closely with the Authority for Regulating Bedouin Settlement in the Negev" in "planning its operations and policies."[285] The Arab-Palestinian MP Aida Touma-Suleiman introduced a motion calling for an investigation of the BDA's role in village demolition and eviction orders and suggested the abolition of the Authority. Touma-Suleiman argued that the BDA has been

[284] Interview in Be'er Sheva, May 28, 2015.
[285] "The Coordination Directorate of Land Law Enforcement in the Negev," Ministry of Public Security, http://mops.gov.il/English/PolicingENG/Negev_Land_Law_Enforcement/Pages/default.aspx.

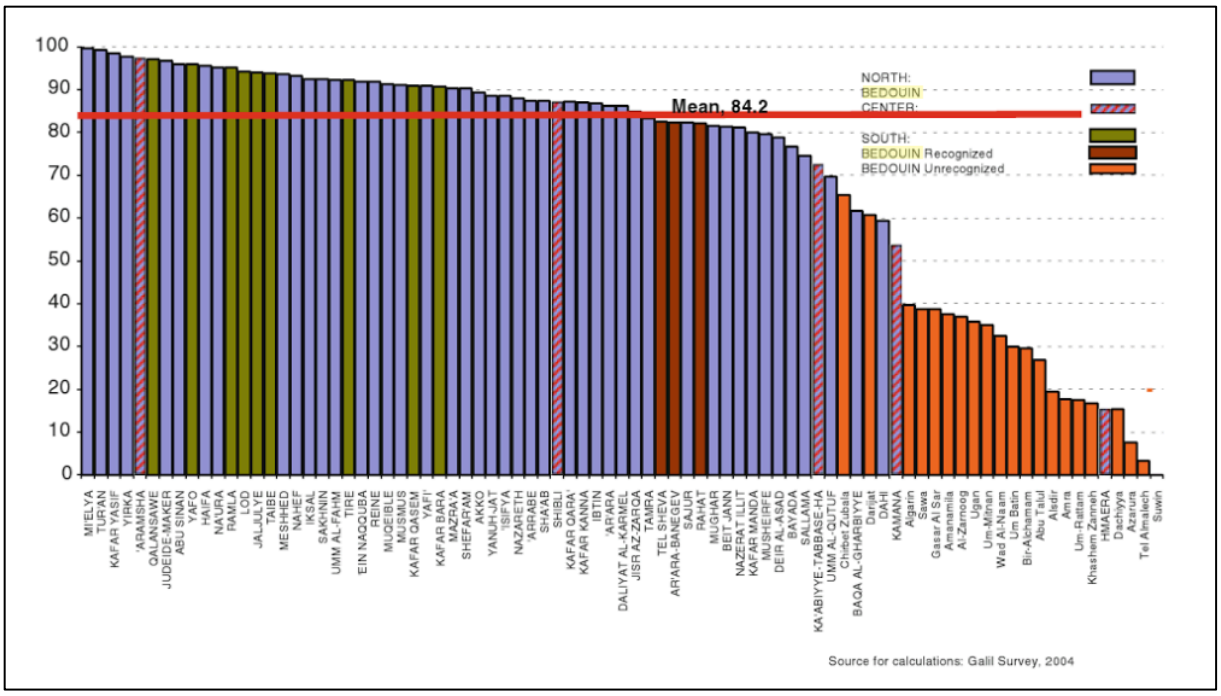
actively following a policy of dispossession rather than staying true to its duty of improving the living conditions of the community.[286]

According to the official figures, between 1967 and 2001, state agents convinced 73,000 Bedouin to move to state-planned towns, but another 73,000 refused relocation and continued to live in the villages to which the state institutions refused to provide infrastructure.[287] As an interim solution, the Ministry of Interior recognized 11 out of 51 Bedouin villages in the late 1990s,[288] and created a third type of Bedouin settlement, the 'recognized' Bedouin villages. The distribution of Bedouin population between recognized settlements and 'unrecognized' villages did not change in the following years. In 2011, the total number of Bedouin residents was 136,500 in recognized state-planned towns and villages, and 163,100 in 'unrecognized' villages.[289]

There are no official statistics on infrastructure investment by community. However, the findings of the Galilee Society's *Socio-Economic Surveys* provided indirect indicators for access to infrastructure. The first survey conducted in 2004 had questions on Bedouin access to infrastructure. Using the data from this survey, Abu-Bader and Gottlieb calculated the Arab-Palestinian sectors' access to basic infrastructure in Israel based on nine infrastructure variables: access to running water, telephone, electricity, a sewage system, the distance between house and

[286] "Bill to Abolish the Authority for the Development and Settlement of the Bedouin in the Negev," Knesset, bill no. 723/20/D, www.knesset.gov.il/privatelaw/data/20/723.rtf.
[287] "Demographic" (דמוגרפיה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority (הרשות להסדרת התיישבות הבדואים).
[288] "Arab-Bedouin Community in the Negev- A Short Background," Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality (פורום דו-קיום בנגב לשוויון אזרחי – NCF), http://www.dukium.org/the-arab-bedouin-community-in-the-negev-nagab-a-short-background/.
[289] Demography (דמוגרפיה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority.

nearest public transportation stop, and access to a clinic, a hospital, an elementary school, a high school, and shopping areas. (See Figure 3.2)



(100=full accessibility, 0=no accessibility)

Source: Abu-Bader and Gottlieb, based on the Galilee Survey 2004.

Figure 3.2. Access to Infrastructure in Arab-Palestinian Settlements, 2004

The data showed that the Bedouin living in the south had lower access to infrastructure compared to the Israeli average as well as the Bedouin living at the north and center of the country. Among the Bedouin settlements in the south, the 'unrecognized' villages had the lowest access to infrastructure. The following two subsections focus on the Negev/Naqab Bedouin community's access to infrastructure in relation to settlement type.

3.3.1. State-Planned Bedouin Towns

Since the establishment of the first state-planned Bedouin town Tal as-Sabaʿ, the state of Israel promoted the urbanization of the Bedouin as a necessary step for cost-efficient service provision and community economic development.[290] Despite the state effort, less than half of the Bedouin population moved to the towns.[291] Bedouin towns have the right to access the same infrastructures and services as other towns. However, some practical decisions taken by the state agents made access to opportunities and resources highly limited and more expensive in Bedouin towns as compared to their Jewish neighbors. The state-planned towns have been built without a realistic estimation taking high birth rates in the Bedouin community into consideration. With rising town population, infrastructure systems became insufficient. The town residents were suffering from frequent infrastructural breakdowns as well as inadequate and expensive supply.[292]

With its approximately 60,000 residents, Rahaṭ was the largest Bedouin town. However, it had only two banks, one social service office, and only a couple of restaurants. The population of the town of Rahaṭ built in 1972 on 22,000-donum of land increased from 23,200 to 60,400, in less than twenty years.[293] Besides the tripling of the population in Rahaṭ, the government decided to extend the town's jurisdiction area to cover two formally 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages, Khirbit Zabbālih and Umm Nmīlah. The government connected both villages to Rahaṭ's infrastructure and service systems.

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[290] Abu-Saad, "Spatial Transformation and Indigenous Resistance," 1732.
[291] Demography (דמוגרפיה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority.
[292] Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization."
[293] "Population and Density per Sq Km in Localities Numbering 5,000 Residents and More on 31.12.2014," Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics.

The planners of Bedouin towns did not allocate much space for parks and recreation areas. Rather than being the gateway of access to resources, infrastructure, and prosperity, the Bedouin towns looked deserted. Rahaṭ had one park, which was mostly dry due to neglect and a lack of irrigation. A municipality personnel underlined the lack of green space, explaining, "We do not have enough gardens. You don't see green spaces when you come to Rahaṭ. It is mostly desert."[294] Salem, a local activist, explained life in Rahaṭ saying:

> We have a police station in Rahaṭ… but if you look for a bank office and social service centers. . . You didn't use to have one until last year. Two banks opened last year when the head of the Rahaṭ Municipality went to the West Bank banks, because there was no bank willing to open a branch here. After media pressure, the banks started to open. Also, for the social services, they opened an office last year, but it was only one room to service 70,000 people. Plus, you cannot get the monthly payment here. You have to go to Be'er Sheva. Here, you can only do the paper work.[295]

Rahaṭ roads were unpaved and driving in the town was especially dangerous at night as there was not adequate public street lightening. Even though the Bedouin community had a very young population, in Rahaṭ, there are only four soccer fields and fifteen basketball courts. Every 19,000 residents under 19-year had to share the same basketball court. (See Table 3.1)

[294] Interview in Rahaṭ, February 16, 2015.
[295] Interview in Rahaṭ, May 20, 2015.

Bedouin Town	Popu. in 2001	Popu. (0-17)	Swimming pool	Soccer field	Basketball court	Number of people under 18 per basketball court
Rahaṭ	32,400	18,881	0	4	15	1,259
Ḥūrah	6,900	3,408	0	2	3	1,136
Kseifa	5,600	4,114	0	4	3	1,371
Lakiya	7,500	2,759	0	1	7	394
Ar'ara BaNegev	10,000	6,101	0	1	3	2,034
Šgīb as-Salām	5,000	2,928	0	1	4	732
Tal as-Sabaʿ	10,600	6,330	0	1	5	1,266

Source: Statistical Yearbook of the Bedouin in Negev 2004, 2004 published by Negev Center for Regional Development at Ben Gurion University[296]

Table 2.1. Sport Facilities in the Bedouin Towns, 2001

Abu-Bader and Gottlieb (2012) argued that Israel neglected to make investment in infrastructure at the Arab-Palestinian settlements partly because of its discriminatory practices. They stated that "the lack of adequacy of basic infrastructure also reduces private incentives for building infrastructure."[297] Up until 2008, Rahaṭ did not have a mass transportation system. The public bus company bypassed the Bedouin town and isolated Rahaṭ from rest of the region. The lack of a public transportation access was less important for families with higher income, since they could more easily substitute the deficiency with their private cars. For the poor, however, the

[296] "Statistical Yearbook of the Bedouin in Negev 2004" (שנתון שטטיסטי לבדוים בנגב), Negev Center for Regional Development at Ben Gurion University, http://www.geog.bgu.ac.il/fastSite/coursesFiles/bedouins/publications/statistical%20yearbook.pdf.

[297] Abu-Bader and Gottlieb, "Poverty, Education, and Employment," 231-32.

lack of public transportation was costly. In 2008, a local Bedouin businessman established a bus line operating between Rahaṭ and Be'er Sheva, making the trip a couple of times per day.

On top of having highly limited access to infrastructure, residents of Bedouin towns payed more for access to the same infrastructure compared to their Jewish neighbors. Water used in state-recognized agrarian settlements was subsidized by the state. Thus, Jewish residents of kibbutzim and moshavim payed less for their water use. Development towns that were paying the same amount as the Bedouin towns for their water and electricity use were getting part of their spending back as a tax deduction. The tax deductions were an indirectly subsidy that the Bedouin were not allowed. A Bedouin teacher living in Rahaṭ explained the diverging ways the state agents treated the Bedouin and the Jews by explaining:

> Moshavim pay less for water as they are considered to be agrarian societies. Here in Rahaṭ we pay more, we don't pay as much as unrecognized villages, but we pay a lot. People living in the development towns have tax deductions. I have a fellow teacher, we get the same gross income of 30,000 shekels, but what I get at the end of the day is 20,000 and he gets 25,000 shekels only because he lives in a development town. They don't give development town status to Bedouin towns.[298]

The Bedouin explain infrastructure-related problems in towns as part of the state's discriminatory policy towards the Bedouin. Fadi Masamra explained his hometown Rahaṭ's problems saying:

> The infrastructure itself right from the beginning was so poor. They created infrastructure for a village not for a city including the streets, lightening, public space, and only one small park. It is a city without its own industrial zone. This shows how they think of the community. They are not looking forward when they build infrastructure. They don't take into consideration the rate of expansion and population growth. . . People need more housing, places to work, education…[299]

[298] Interview in Rahaṭ, February 2, 2015.
[299] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 26, 2015.

The poor living conditions and access to resources in the Bedouin towns disillusioned the community. Bedouin generally refer to their towns as "dormitories," "ghettos," or "hotels." Living in Bedouin-only towns puts the Bedouin in spatial isolation with less opportunities for economic and social development.[300] Even the town mayors, the highest public officers in the towns, typically lose hope in the future of these settlements. The mayor of one of the Bedouin-only towns drew an analogy between the town he was governing and a refugee camp during an interview saying:

> This place is like a refugee camp. We don't have industrial area, commercial places or businesses… We get a budget from the state, but not enough to develop the place properly. We don't have opportunities here, but they still call us 'modern.'[301]

While being equal to other towns on paper, Bedouin-only towns were lacking what Amartya Sen calls "basic capability equality," compared to the rest of the Israel society.[302] Not having full and equal access to infrastructure and services prevented the Bedouin living in towns from "making [their] life richer and more unfettered," but also from being "fuller social persons, exercising [their] own volitions and interacting with–influencing–the world in which [they] live."[303] Inadequate infrastructure systems in towns as a potent factor for Bedouin disappointment with the state was also underlined in the Goldberg committee report. The report stated that the conditions in Bedouin towns were not considerably better than the conditions in the 'unrecognized' villages:

> Living conditions in towns are far from being a real improvement over life in unrecognized settlements, in particular, following various judgements by the High Court according to which unrecognized settlements are entitled to receive basic

[300] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 201.
[301] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 2, 2015.
[302] Amartya Sen, "Equality of What?," in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values 4*, ed. Sterling M. McMurrin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 195–220.
[303] Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, (New York: Anchor Books, 2000), 15.

> services. If we add to this the lack of workplaces in towns which are built without an appropriate economic infrastructure, we can understand why the Bedouin prefer to remain in their unrecognized settlements where they do not have to pay municipal or other taxes, rather than move to recognized towns.[304]

The low level of income in Bedouin towns made it difficult for the town municipalities to generate enough local tax to finance infrastructure projects independently. In 2004, average per capita local revenue of a municipality in Israel was 3,194 NIS per month. The same year, average per capita local revenue of a Bedouin municipality was only 628 NIS, one-fifth of the country average. Compared to local revenue collected in surrounding Jewish settlements—1,937 NIS in state development towns, 3,664 NIS in Be'er Sheva City, and around 3,500-4,000 NIS in Jewish towns such as Omer, Lehavim, and Meitar[305]—Bedouin towns were facing challenges to make ends meet.

Besides their low local revenues, the Bedouin towns were also receiving considerably less budgetary support from the state compared to Jewish settlements. A municipal officer from Rahaṭ argued that the Bedouin towns were considered lower priorities in central budget distribution decisions and economically discriminated against. He continued saying:

> When we go to a governmental office to ask for anything, they stall and procrastinate. It is like if there is an excess of food after the Jews are done eating, they give us the left-overs… If there is an excess of money after distributing them on Jewish cities, they give us some.[306]

Residents of the Bedouin towns were trying to make sense of their access to resources by comparing their situation with surrounding Jewish settlements. For the residents of Rahaṭ, the ultimate comparative case was the closest Jewish settlement, Lehavim. Established in 1983, four

[304] "Goldberg Commission report." (Hebrew)
[305] Swirski, "Current Plans for Developing the Negev," 5.
[306] Interview in Rahaṭ, February 16, 2015.

kilometers away from Rahaṭ, Lehavim was the reference point by which many of the Rahaṭ residents I interviewed have been measuring their access to infrastructure. (See Figure 3.3)

Source: GoogleMaps, 2017

Figure 3.3. Distribution of Transportation Infrastructure Between Rahaṭ and Lehavim, 2017

Even though Lehavim's population was one tenth of Rahaṭ's, national inter-town bus system had multiple stops in Lehavim but not one stop in Rahaṭ. The only mass transportation in Rahaṭ, as stated earlier, was the privately-owned bus company plying between Rahaṭ and Be'er Sheva. The railway connecting the Negev/Naqab to the central region of the country passed between Rahaṭ and Lehavim. Titled the "Lehavim-Rahaṭ Station," the train station was situated in Lehavim from where there was no public transportation or pedestrian road connecting it to Rahaṭ.

Besides its infrastructure related advantages, Lehavim was one of the towns at the higher edge of the national socio-economic scale and Rahaṭ was at the bottom. Lehavim residents were

making around ten times more money than Rahaṭ residents.[307] Thus, the Lehavim municipality was able to collect more local taxes to improve its existing infrastructure. Many Rahaṭ residents expressed their frustrations with their city in comparison to Lehavim. Fadi Masamra is one of them; he explained:

> The distance between Rahaṭ and Lehavim is about three or four kilometers. They are next to each other, and you can see a major difference in every stage that you check. Economically, we have no way to make a comparison, neither in education. The quality of life that people have, in no way to compares to Lehavim. If you try to look at the educational achievement of people of Rahaṭ and Lehavim… If you look at the quality of services that people get in Rahaṭ and what people get in Lehavim, it is two different worlds. In infrastructure, Lehavim has the size of two neighborhoods in Rahaṭ, but still they have the train station, we don't have it in Rahaṭ. Public transportation and national transportation companies has the all-day bus to Lehavim, but no bus coming to Rahaṭ. We have our own private company for transportation, established only four years ago. There are 60,000 people living here and we did not have a regular transportation up until 2011.[308]

When they chose where and how to provide infrastructure, the state agents designed the winners and losers of infrastructure projects and distributed opportunities between communities. Despite the promises for full and uninterrupted access to infrastructure, Bedouin towns' access to infrastructure was minimum and failing to meet their demands and needs. Bedouin who moved to state-planned towns hoped for a better life while being integrated into the broader Israeli society, but they did not find what they had been promised. The towns promoted as gateways to access became sources of disillusionment and disappointment. Comparing their level of access to infrastructure systems in the neighboring Jewish towns, the Bedouin were convinced that the state actors were determined to discriminate against them, no matter how much they

[307] "2008 Socio-Economic Index of Local Authorities," Israeli Bureau of Statistics.
[308] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 26, 2015.

compromised. While the Bedouin living in towns were suffering from limited, inadequate, and expensive access to infrastructure, the ones living in villages faced even worse conditions.

3.3.2. 'Unrecognized' and 'Recognized' Villages

As stated earlier, in 2003, the Ministry of Interior recognized seven Bedouin villages. It established the Regional Council of Abu Basma to administer the 'recognized' villages' needs and address their problems related to their lack of access to public services and right to vote in municipal elections.[309] By 2006, the number of villages that had been recognized increased to eleven.[310]

On July 18, 2005, the Ministerial Committee on the Non-Jewish Sector, chaired by the Prime Minister Ariel Sharon announced a development plan for the Abu Basma Council[311] and promised to invest a total of 470 million NIS between 2005 and 2008 to develop education, health, employment, social services, and infrastructure such as sewage, water, and electricity in the Council's jurisdiction area.[312] Based on this plan, in 2005, the Council was supposed to receive a total of 48.6 million NIS; distributed as 30 million NIS from the ILA for planning and construction, 14 million NIS from the Ministry of Transportation for building roads, and 4.6 million NIS from the Ministry of Health for the provision of health services. However,

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[309] Meir, "What Public, Whose Interest."
[310] The eleven 'recognized' villages were the following: Abu Grīnāt, Abu Tlūl aš-Šahbī, As-Sayyid, Umm Batīn, Bīr Haddāj, Tarābīn aṣ-Ṣāniʿ, Drījāt, Gaṣir as-Sirr, Kuḥlih, Makḥūl, and Mūladaʾh.
[311] In 2012, the council was split into two smaller councils: Neve Midbar and al-Kasom Regional Councils.
[312] "Comprehensive Development Plan for Abu Basma Regional Council Approved," Prime Ministry's Office, July 18, 2005, http://www.mfa.gov.il/mfa/pressroom/2005/pages/comprehensive%20development%20plan%20for%20abu%20basma%20regional%20council%20approved%2018-jul-2005.aspx.

institutions handed over only a small percentage of the promised amounts. The Council received only 584,000 NIS in total; of which 210,000 NIS was earmarked for planning and construction, 56,000 NIS for sanitation, and 318,00 NIS for water infrastructure.[313]

Even though their status changed from 'unrecognized' to 'recognized,' life in these villages did not change in terms of the residents' access to infrastructure and services. Apart from Tarābīn aṣ-Ṣāniʿ, which after a long struggle was reestablished in a totally new location to open more space for the expansion of the Jewish town Omar, none of the 'recognized' villages gained access to basic infrastructure following the recognition. Abu Grīnāt was one of the first seven villages 'recognized' in 2003. The public electric company agreed to connect the village school and clinic to the electric grid 11 years after its recognition, but refused to connect the houses, arguing that the village did not have a master plan.

District planners refused to draw the villages' master plans before the resolution of land ownership cases. To make matters worse, the courts were extremely slow in reaching a decision in land dispute cases. In 1969, the Ministry of Justice had established a mechanism for land settlement under which anyone who possessed a land title might file a claim with the land settlement office. In a very short period, the Bedouin filed around 3,000 title claims for over 99,100 hectares of land. Between 1969 and 2005, the government reached settlements for only 14,000 hectares of land. The rest of the cases remained incomplete.[314] Recognition did not improve life in villages in terms of their access to infrastructure. As stated before, the 1965 law made having village master plan the prerequisite for infrastructure provision and resolution of

[313] "Off the Map," Human Rights Watch, 45.
[314] Abu-Bader and Gottlieb, "Poverty, Education, and Employment among the Arab-Bedouin in Israel," 217.

land claims the prerequisite for getting master plan for the 'recognized' Bedouin villages.[315] One of the Umm Batīn residents explained the situation saying:

> Our village has been recognized but they continue demolishing the houses. Even today there were some demolitions going on. We don't have electricity in the village. Everyone has a solar panel of his own. The water [carried from the connection point with above-ground communal water hoses] is so poor. Our situation is not that different from the unrecognized villages, even though we have been recognized many years ago.[316]

Apart from not getting access to public infrastructure similarly to the 'unrecognized' villages, all the structures built after the documentation of the village properties following the recognition on 2003 were considered illegal. As the chair of the Regional Council for the Unrecognized Villages of Negev –المجلس الاقليمي للقرى غير المعترف بها في النقب (RCUV) put it, from the state perspective, recognition of the village was not the same thing with the recognition of the houses in it:

> Even though the village is recognized all the houses in it are illegal. Recognition of the village does not mean recognition of all the houses. It is just the recognition of the planning area. The state will provide a master plan and accordingly will decide which house is legal, and which one is illegal.[317]

Since its recognition, the state issued only three building permits in Abu Grīnāt. Every other concrete structure built in the village, including solar panels that villagers were using to generate electricity that the state was refusing them, were considered illegal and subjects to demolition orders. While the 'recognized' villages were denied infrastructure, Jewish settlements were fast receiving access. Even the Jewish farms built illegally were able to gain ex parte recognition from the state in order to be connected to infrastructure systems. In a July 2007, the Minister of the Interior confirmed that many of the existing 60 individual Jewish farms in the region had not

[315] "Off the Map," Human Rights Watch.
[316] Interview in Be'er Sheva, January 20, 2015.
[317] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 1, 2015.

been built following proper planning processes. Yet it ex parte approved their construction.[318] A legal activist from האגודה לזכויות האזרח בישראל — the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) stated that the ex parte recognition was part of the Jewish-centered approach to the development in the Negev/Naqab region stating:

> When comparing also to the case of Jewish farms that have been legalized in a special law after they have been built—they have been built illegally. The state promotes [the region] to its Jewish population. 'Come to the South we will give you water, anything you wanted. Come and revise the South.' During the years, they built a few dozen farms and then the state legalized them by a law [implemented ex parte]. They gave them permission to use everything that the state provides.[319]

Retroactively recognizing the Jewish settlement and connecting them to infrastructure, the state agents were denying basic infrastructure to the 'recognized' Bedouin villages. The two pictures below evidenced the difference between the Jewish settlements and 'recognized' Bedouin villages. (See Figure 3.4.) The picture on the left shows access to electricity at religious kibbutzim, Shomriya established in 2006. The picture on the right is from 'recognized' Bedouin villages As-Sayyid, recognized in 2003. The physicality of infrastructure and the lack of it in their communities was a visible anchor for the Bedouin to refer to the state's discriminatory policies and the privileged position of the Jewish citizens in the region.

[318] Letter sent by the Minister to Human Rights Watch, quoted in "Off the Map," Human Rights Watch.
[319] Interview in Be'er Sheva, January 15, 2015.

Source: Yotam Ronen, ActiveStills Collective [320]

Figure 3.4. Access Electricity in the Jewish Settlement Shmoriya and ‘Recognized’ Bedouin Village of As-Sayyid

One of the officials advising the Abu Basma Regional Council explained how the wide gaps between the ‘recognized’ Bedouin and Jewish localities in terms of their access to infrastructure opened new social and political divides between the two communities stating:

> In Abu Basma, what have they delivered? People want electricity, water, paved roads. . . None of these villages have water or electricity yet. There is a new generation of Bedouin today who can see what is happening in Jewish communities and can make the comparison. When the government wanted to establish Givaot Bar it only took a couple of months to deliver water, electricity, and a paved road.[321]

Selective distribution of infrastructure widened the divide between the Bedouin and the Jews not only in terms of access to resources but also, and partially in relation to that, access to socio-economic development. The situation was much worse, but hard to measure for the Bedouin living in ‘unrecognized’ villages. As the villages were not recognized by the state, there was no

[320] In “Between Discrimination and Abandonment: The Bedouin Recognized Villages and the Jewish Settlements in the Negev,” Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality (פורום דו-קיום לשוויון אזרחי בנגב – NCF), March 21, 2014, http://www.dukium.org/eng/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/IDERD_English.pdf.
[321] “Off the Map,” Human Rights Watch.

data collected on them. Yet the findings of the *Socio-Economic Survey* conducted by the Galilee Society in 2004 revealed that among the Bedouin living in 'unrecognized' villages only 0.7 percent had access to a public sewage network and only 7.7 percent to an electric grid.[322] Access to water in 'unrecognized' villages considerably increased following the HCJ's 2003 verdict defining access to water being as an inseparable part of Bedouin's rights as Israeli citizens.[323] More than half of the Bedouin living in Negev/Naqab region had access to water.

The third survey conducted six years later compared the Negev/Naqab Bedouin's case with the Bedouin living in other parts of the country. Not conducting a fierce struggle with the state over their right to land ownership, the Arab-Palestinians living in the other regions had almost full access to water, electricity, and sewage infrastructure.[324] (See Table 3.2)

Percentage of Household with Infrastructure Connections	North	Haifa	Center	South (Negev/Naqab)
Connection to Water Network	100	100	100	56.8
Connection to Electricity Network	99.8	97.2	100	54.4
Connection to Sewage Network	95.6	75.7	97.3	53.5

Source: Galilee Society's Third Socio-Economic Survey, 2010

Table 3.2. Arab-Palestinians' Access to Basic Public Infrastructure in Israel, 2010

The Israeli state agents used access to infrastructure as a stick to force the Bedouin out of the villages and as a carrot to make the state-planned Bedouin towns appealing to them. State

[322] Ahmad El-Sheikh Muhammad, "Palestinians in Israel, Socio-Economic Survey 2004," Galilee Society and Rizak Databank, July 2005, http://www.rikaz.org/en/index.php?s=publications_SE.
[323] HCJ 3586/01, Regional Council of Unrecognized Bedouin Villages in the Negev et al. vs. Ministry of Infrastructure, May 7, 2001.
[324] Ahmad El-Sheikh Muhammad and Mohammad Khatib, "Palestinians in Israel, Socio-Economic Survey 2010," Galilee Society and Rizak Databank, May 2011, http://www.gal-soc.org/gal-soc/files/userfiles/Third%20Socio%20Economic%20Survey.pdf.

institutions refused to provide infrastructure to the 'unrecognized' villages, emphasizing that the inhabitants were considered trespassers illegally occupying the state lands. However, receiving recognition did not change the situation in Bedouin villages. Refusing to complete the master plans, the state agents refused to connect the 'recognized' villages' to public infrastructure. The state promoted Bedouin towns as modern settlements with full access to infrastructure and services. However, as the inquiry into life in Bedouin towns showed, the towns had limited and inadequate access to infrastructure and they had to pay more for what they received compared to their Jewish neighbors.

Despite the visibility of state's discriminatory infrastructure distribution policies, there was no evidence for the Bedouin's illegal access to resources. The last part of this chapter discusses illegal access from a theoretical point of view that the second part of the dissertation further explores and tests comparing diverging methods of struggle used by Kurds and Bedouin to gain access to infrastructure.

3.4. Theorizing Illegal Access

Like the Kurdish community, the Negev/Naqab Bedouin community was disillusioned with the state's infrastructure provision. Facing similar distributional discriminations, there was no evidence that the Bedouin gave the same reaction with the Kurds and tried to access the denied resources illegally. In 2014, Israel's overall electricity losses[325] were at 2.9 percent, lower than the world average (8.3 percent). The same year, Turkey's loss was five times higher than Israel.

[325] High electricity loss is considered to be a good indicator of illegal consumption as well as existence of technical problems.

(See Figure 3.5.) The wide gap in electricity loss levels between the two countries indicates that while Turkey suffers from high illegal access to the grid, Israel does not have the same problem.

Source: The World Bank

Figure 3.5. Electricity Power Losses Percentages in Israel and Turkey

The difference in numbers was also supported by the accounts of the bypassed communities' members. During the interviews conducted in Şanlıurfa, Kurds bypassed by irrigation canals owned their illegal access to resources. They justified illegal hook-ups to the national electric grid as an economic necessity and defended their actions as a way of compensating for the state's discriminatory resource distribution practices. I did not hear anything similar from Bedouin, even though many of them were living either next to an electric station or near overhead power lines carrying electricity to the neighboring Jewish settlements and providing electricity to schools but not to their houses. (See Figure 3.6)

Source: Picture taken by the author.

Figure 3.6. Power Lines Stopping at the Entrance of the ‘Recognized’ Village As-Sirrah

The second part of this dissertation grapples with the puzzle of the Kurdish and Bedouin communities’ diverging reactions to their states’ discriminatory distribution of infrastructure. Rather than taking the path of explaining illegal access to resources with psychological or cultural factors, or labeling the ones accessing resources illegally as thieves or anarchist heroes, this dissertation aims to find a relational explanation for how and why some groups do or can access the resources illegal and some others do not or cannot. Where shall one look for the answer to the two communities’ diverging reaction their states’ denial of infrastructure? Why can some people access the resources illegally, but not others? This last part of the chapter turns to

the existing literature and briefly discusses effects of socio-economic and political structures in cases where groups can successfully access the denied resources illegally.

In the rural Malaysian village Sedaka where James Scott conducted his research, theft was a part of the everyday life. Fruits, water containers, bicycles, paddy, water buffalos, and even motorcycles were among the frequently stolen items. The perpetrators were mostly among the village's poorer residents who did not have access to these items. Their targets were the wealthy. Apart from water buffalos and motorcycles, Scott states, some poor villagers were frequently stealing rice from the well-off villagers' lands. In *Weapons of the Weak*, Scott states that some poor residents of the village have been considering stealing not so much as theft, but as the appropriation of what they feel entitled to. Scott, himself, overheard poor men refer smilingly to paddy thefts as "*zakat peribadi* [charity payments] that one takes on his own."[326] The relative absence of open confrontation between rich and poor, Scott argues, is what preserves "the onstage theater of power that dominates public life in Sedaka."[327] He describes stealing as an everyday resistance, a prudent and silent weapon that the poor were using against the rich to negotiate their demands without publicly disturbing the local power relations.

Asef Bayat disagrees with Scott's definition of illegal access as an act of resistance. Even though many poor families illegally tap into electricity and running water from the municipalities, Bayat argues, they do not do this to express their defiance vis-à-vis the authorities. Bayat continues explaining:

> In Cairo or Tehran, for example, many poor families illegally tap into electricity and running water from the municipality despite their awareness of their behavior's illegality. Yet they do not steal urban services in order to express their defiance vis-à-vis the authorities. Rather, they do it because they feel the necessity

[326] James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985), 269.
[327] Ibid.

> of those services for a decent life, because they find no other way to acquire them.[328]

Bayat calls these mundane acts a "quiet encroachment" that he explains as "silent, protracted, but pervasive advancement of the ordinary people."[329] As marginalized members of the society, Bayat claims, slum dwellers represent groups in flux that "structurally operate largely outside of institutional mechanisms through which they can express grievances and enforce demands."[330] For these and similar groups lacking access to collective demand making mechanisms, illegal access to infrastructure works as a mechanism to reach what is needed.

I agree with Bayat that ordinary people do not access resources illegally to express defiance, but to survive and improve their lives. Yet I disagree with his argument that "encroachment begins with little political meaning attached to it" and it becomes a political struggle only when people, whose gains are threatened by the authorities, start to defend them in collective and audible fashions.[331] Contrary to what Bayat argues, the Bedouin and Kurdish examples show that, in most cases, the conditions creating the necessity of accessing the resources illegally are already political, which makes the act of stealing an intrinsically political response. Besides, their actions can turn from a one-time act into a prolonged practice, as in the case of Sedaka peasants, only when the owners of the stolen and illegally used resources comply and do not increase their efforts to punish or stop them.

Accessing the resources is not an act of resistance but a necessity for ordinary people. Yet, its being a necessity does not mean that it is not a political action, with political reasons and

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[328] Asef Bayat, *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2010), 43.
[329] Ibid, 46.
[330] Ibid, 48.
[331] Ibid, 50.

outcome. Bedouin and Kurdish groups make sense of the Israeli and Turkish state agents' distribution policies in their region by referring to their status as ethnic minorities and states' discriminatory policies against them. When the Kurds access electricity illegally, their action is taken as a political statement. Besides, to be able to continue to use the denied resources illegally, perpetrators need to secure compliance of resource owners. Therefore, I argue, to answer "Why can some people access the resources illegally but not some others?" one should first ask "Why do some resource owners comply with illegal use but not some others?" That is the question the second part of the dissertation focuses on.

3.5. Conclusion

The Negev/Naqab region has long been at the central issue in the development agenda of the state. State leaders argued that development projects would benefit everyone in the region, including the Bedouin community. However, the implementation of resource distribution projects enabled new forms of discrimination against the Bedouin. Infrastructure distribution projects such as highways, forests, settlements, and railroads actively transferred the spatial resources, including land, from the Bedouin to Jewish citizens. From the Bedouin perspective, regional development became yet another tool the politicians used to discriminate against and segregate the Bedouin community. Infrastructure projects were not only bypassing the Bedouin settlements, but also forcing the community to evacuate their villages, change their lifestyle as well as economic activities and move to towns. Bedouin access to infrastructure was conditional upon their relocation to state-planned Bedouin-only towns that residents called "ghettos." Even when they move to the towns, Bedouin did not have equal access to infrastructure with their Jewish neighbors. Their access was expensive, inadequate, and highly limited.

Turkish and Israeli state agents made similar development, modernization, and integration claims for regional development projects conducted in the Southeastern Anatolia and Negev/Naqab regions, respectively. Yet, in both cases, the practice of infrastructure distribution discriminated against the minority groups. The Kurds and the Bedouin either had no access to the distributed infrastructure or had to pay more for the same public resource compared to their neighboring communities. Rather than closing the socio-economic gaps as project masterminds argued, infrastructure distribution widened the existing divides.

Disadvantaged in similar ways, minorities reacted to state policies differently. While the Kurds accessed infrastructure illegally, the Bedouin did not. Based on the theoretical discussion conducted in the last part of this chapter, I argue that illegal access to infrastructure necessitates compliance on the part of state actors distributing the resources. Therefore, one can only answer "Why can some people access the resources illegally, but not some others?" by answering "Why do some resource owners comply with illegal use but not some others?" The second part of the dissertation, composed of Chapters 4 and 5, returns to the Turkish and Bedouin cases, this time to delineate socio-political structures and relations between the discriminated minority communities and majority states in order to understand the reasons behind the Bedouin and Kurdish populations' diverging responses to similar discriminatory infrastructure distribution policies.

Chapter 4

Kurdish Struggle Against Distributional Discrimination:

Electoral Politics of Illegal Electricity

> In our village, my father is the only one paying his electricity bills. He is religious and thinks that using without paying is a sin. Yet, my uncles say, "There will be a debt relief, anyway. We don't need to pay." They say "What can the [electric] company do? At most, they can come and cut our electricity connection. When they leave, we can reconnect it."
>
> —Hamit, Şanlıurfa resident, November 26, 2015

Hamit's father and those who paid their electricity bills were outnumbered by those who refused to pay for their electricity usage. Many residents of Şanlıurfa, including Hamit's uncles, used electricity illegally and felt confident they would get away with it. Hamit's family, like many other Kurdish families in the region, was familiar with the coercive power of the state. They had relatives who had been arrested and put in jail. They had acquaintances tortured and "lost" while in custody. Familiar with state violence and possible repercussions of accessing electric grid illegally, why were Hamit's uncles so reckless?

As shown in the first two chapters, infrastructure distribution enables new disciplinary mechanisms. As discussed in Chapter 2, unequal distribution of irrigation canals opened economic divides between the Kurds and the Arabs. In a position of comparative disadvantage, Kurdish farmers compensated for their economic loss by using electricity illegally. This chapter argues that such use of denied resources was possible because of Kurdish community's electoral power and peculiar role in Turkish elections. Electricity infrastructure in the GAP region was not only a product of political discussions and negotiations, it was also an agent transforming how electoral politics were conducted in the country.

To bring different pillars of this argument together, the chapter is divided into four parts. Part 1 shows that illegal electricity usage in the GAP region was not an invisible operation unknown to state agents; rather, it was highly visible both regionally and nationally. This first part also raises two interlinked questions: If both local and national state agents knew about illegal use of electricity, why did not they stop it? Can the state's failure to prevent illegal usage be explained by state weakness in the region?

Part 2 tackles with presence of the Turkish state in the region from a historical perspective and discusses its coercive and bureaucratic power. It establishes that the Turkish state has never shied away from using its coercive power in the region to suppress and control the Kurdish population. However, the central state had difficulties with establishing bureaucratic presence in the region and making Kurdish residences of the region accept its bureaucratic power.

Bureaucratic weakness of the state can partially explain government's failure to prevent the illegal use of electricity, but not why illegal use continued in the 2000s and 2010s, following the privatization of its distribution in the early 2000s. Part 3 discusses why privatization, globally promoted as a solution for bureaucratic inefficiency, failed to reduce illegal electricity use in the Kurdish region. It argues that, the details of privatization turned the existing bureaucratic inefficiency into an electoral opportunity for the government.

Building on the previous part, Part 4 delineates electoral politics of illegal electricity usage in the Southeastern Anatolia and evidences how illegality became an electoral negotiation topic between Kurdish residents of the region and the governing party's politicians. The Kurdish community was able to continue to use electricity illegally because of its peculiar electoral power

and government party politicians' willingness to negotiate illegality in exchange for votes in the region.

4.1. Visibility of Illegal Electricity

Transmission towers and electricity lines embodied state power and the connection between center and periphery.[332] Laying out electric infrastructure all around the country, the central state showed its power and reach.[333] Yet, for most users, once construction ends, infrastructure systems, as Susan Leigh Star states, become "part of the background of other kinds of work."[334] Regular users do not notice infrastructure[335] until something goes awry.[336] For the ones accessing it illegally, however, infrastructure has a constant presence, even an over-presence. Infrastructure is the inspiration for ad-hoc technologies and street-level innovations. It is the target of everyday plans and calculations for how to establish, hide, and disconnect illegal access. They are sources of worry and fear, as well as safety, survival, and even prosperity.

Electricity meters enumerating and measuring consumption were hanging on the wall of each house, workplace, and factory. They were the symbols of connectedness and control, yet they also pointed to terrains of resistance and illegality. Standard eco-mechanical meters were using a slowly spinning disk to record the amount of power drawn from the system. Electricity distribution companies were using this number to calculate and bill the cost of electricity consumed by individual users. In Şanlıurfa, many residents bypassed their meters by impeding

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[332] Ronald R Kline, Consumers in the Country: Technology and Social Change in Rural America. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).
[333] Zeynep Kezer, *Building Modern Turkey: State, Space, and Ideology in the Early Republic*, Culture, Politics, and the Built Environment (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2015).
[334] Star, "The Ethnography of Infrastructure," 380.
[335] Shamir, Current Flow.
[336] Boyer, "Anthropology Electric," 532.

the disk mechanism with a foreign object that slows its rotation further[337] and thereby lower the recorded consumption. Meter tampering was both a craft and a source of income for many in the Southeastern Anatolia region. A resident of Şanlıurfa city center explained how this craft became one of the small businesses in the city neighborhoods saying:

> In our neighborhood, almost everyone uses electricity illegally. They [electric company inspectors] come and cut off the electricity of the lady living next door as she uses electricity illegally… When they leave, the apprentice of the pastry-maker comes and wires the meter... He is connecting everyone's electricity in the neighborhood. [338]

Besides slowing the meters, the illegal connection craftsmen knew how to temporarily deactivate the meters and how to stop recording consumption at certain times of the day when it was high. Putting a magnet near the electricity meter to slow the disk or building a remotely controlled switch mechanism[339] were among the most common methods. Illegal electricity consumption in the GAP region was a field involving residents, engineers, and utility officials in a perennial struggle.[340] Emerging from the agricultural sector as a cheap way to pump groundwater, illegal electricity usage spread to other sectors and households. In time, illegality became a region-wide practice.

The craft of illegality was so advanced in the region that officials working for the electric company have been trying to learn the latest methods from the ordinary men tampering with meters and finding innovative hook-ups to the grid. Responsible for developing "not-tamperable"

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[337] Miriam Golden and Brian Min, "Theft and Loss of Electricity in an Indian State," Working Paper, International Growth Center, February 2012.
[338] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 6, 2014.
[339] "Kaçak Elektrik İçin İcat Yaptılar," *Hürriyet*, February 16, 2002, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/kacak-elektrik-icin-icat-yaptilar-54828.
[340] Antina Von Schnitzler, "Traveling Technologies: Infrastructure, Ethical Regimes, and the Materiality of Politics in South Africa," *Cultural Anthropology* 28, no. 4 (November 1, 2013): 670–93.

meters and electricity distribution systems, the Research and Development Department (R&D) of the regional electric distribution company was testing their new equipment by asking men in the street to bypass them. The head of the R&D department explained how they had to include the street-level know-how to their development process as follows:

> There is an incredible research and development operation that they are conducting at the street. Whatever you do, they develop something to overcome it. While developing new technologies and projects to prevent illegal usage you need to keep that [street-level] R&D in mind. When we develop a new meter, I take it to people and ask them to tamper it. They don't know but this is how we develop our new and more efficient methods of preventing illegal usage.[341]

Whereas urban households and businesses in the region practiced meter-tampering, farmers mostly established direct hook-ups to the electric grid. Using extension cables, they directly connected their submersible motor pumps to the national grid. This method was visible only if electric company personnel conducted a surprise visit and caught cables hooked to the grid.

Due to very high percentage of illegal usage in agricultural areas, the GAP region experienced frequent voltage fluctuations and blackouts affecting the flow of daily life.[342] Fluctuations broke appliances and submersible motor pumps. One of the residents explained the situation as follows saying:

> One morning, we heard an explosion. Whatever was plugged in got burnt. I was lucky. My cell phone was unplugged… Everything exploded. My submersible pump burnt four times this year. Each time, I paid 2,000 TL for a new one.[343]

By affecting everyone connected to the system, blackouts and fluctuations distributed the burden of illegality on everyone in the region. Furthermore, farmers who used electricity illegally invented a creative system of transferring the power by using "portable transformers." These

[341] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 23, 2015.
[342] David E. Nye, When the Lights Went out: A History of Blackouts in America (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010).
[343] Interview in Şanlıurfa, October 4, 2014.

transformers were balancing the voltage before it reached the submersible motor pump.[344] By keeping the voltage level stable, they were protecting their submersible motor pumps. Installed on the top of a truck, "portable transformers" could be easily hidden from electric company personnel and use by multiple farmers.

Illegal electricity usage in the GAP region received regional visibility due to voltage fluctuations, blackouts, and the proliferation of illegally connected wires and cables. The issue gained national visibility through the distribution companies' reports, newspaper articles, and political statements on illegal access. As part of the effort to privatize the electric distribution, the public electric distribution company started to publish detailed annual reports on regional consumption patterns in 2007. These reports underlined state failure to distribute irrigation canals equally as the main reason for high illegal consumption in the GAP region. Yet national newspapers publishing report findings deliberately ignored this causal explanation and preferred to frame illegality as an ethno-political issue. In one of many similar articles on the subject, the national newspaper *Sabah*, playing to the Turkish nationalist claims of Kurds stealing Turkish state resources, published an article titled "They Went Overboard with Illegal Electricity."[345] Another national newspaper mocked the high illegal electricity usage in Şanlıurfa with the headline, "Şanlıurfa Set the Record: There was a Reason for Prime Minister Erdoğan Asking Them Not to Use Illegal Electricity."[346] National headlines ignored the relation between high illegal use of electricity and state failure to distribute the promised irrigation canals in the last

[344] "Kaçak Mobil Trafo Ele Geçirildi," *Urfanatik*, November 5, 2014, http://www.urfanatik.com/yerel/kacak-mobil-trafo-ele-gecirildi-h18636.html.
[345] "Kaçak Elektrik İşini Abarttılar!," *Sabah*, February 18, 2016, http://www.sabah.com.tr/yasam/2016/02/18/kacak-elektrik-isini-abarttilar.
[346] "Rekor Şanlıurfa'nın," *Hürriyet*, January 1, 2013, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/rekor-sanliurfa-nin-22268653.

thirty years. White-washing the GAP's failure, they established a discourse associating "Kurdishness" and illegality.

The same approach was also appropriated by state leaders. In their public speeches, governing party politicians preferred to address illegal electricity and the distribution of irrigation canals as two separate, unrelated issues. In 2012, Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan was in Şanlıurfa for an administrative meeting at the GAP Office. Before the GAP meeting, Erdoğan visited Viranşehir, one of the districts with the highest illegal electricity consumption. After listing all the services and goods the government brought to the district, Erdoğan promised to do anything in his capacity to improve the district economy. In return, he asked for a favor:

> I have a demand for you: Stop using electricity illegally. I am sure you will stop using it illegally because you know very well what is *haram* [forbidden by God] and *halal* [permitted by God].[347]

The same day, Erdoğan attended the GAP Regional Meeting organized by the Union of Turkish Agricultural Chambers. In his opening speech, similarly to his public speech in Virenşehir, Erdoğan avoided making any connection between the GAP and illegal electricity usage. He highlighted the increased agricultural production in the region:

> I am glad to say that we started to reap the fruits of investment we made and labor we put for the GAP. Agricultural exports from the region increased about ten times and reached seven billion Turkish Lira.[348]

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[347] Prime Minister Erdoğan, Viranşehir Speech, December 30, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3boGEDggf14&index=25&list=PLxt4JrsezyzXqwV_wiSTU_unTVGLuC7U_.

[348] "Başbakan Erdoğan: GAP ile Bölge İhracatı On Kat Arttı," *Bugün,* December 30, 2012, http://www.bugun.com.tr/m/son-dakika/basbakan-erdogan-gap-ile-bolge-ihracati-10-kat-artti-304265.html.

Agricultural production in the region has indeed increased. Comparing exports from the region in 2007 and 2014, the official GAP website states that they increase from 3.3 billion to 9.2 billion dollars with the GAP.[349] While taking credit for the increasing production and export from the region, Erdoğan mentioned neither the role of illegal electricity usage in the agricultural output increase nor unequal distribution of wealth and infrastructure in the region. Deliberately disassociating illegal electricity usage from the non-completion of irrigation canals, Erdoğan claimed credit for the GAP's economic success without taking responsibility for unequal distribution of resources and high illegality electric usage in the region.

Despite its regional and national visibility, the state did not stop illegal usage in the region. Political science literature associates governments' lack of response to illegal practices with low state capacity, lack of power "to achieve the kinds of changes in the society that their leaders have sought through state planning, policies, and actions."[350] The next part tackles the Turkish state's coercive and bureaucratic power in Southeastern Anatolia region from a historical perspective. It queries to what extent the state's failure to prevent illegal access can be associated with its coercive or bureaucratic weakness.

4.2. Power to Repress and Power to Govern: Turkish State Capacity in the GAP Region

Disagreements between Kurdish and Turkish leaders on the nature of the political regime intensified in the late nineteenth century. The political tension gave way to armed struggles during the first years of the twentieth century. Once the Turkish Republic was declared in 1923, the centralized state started to operate as a suppressive, authoritarian, and rigid modernizing

[349] "GAP'ta Son Durum," GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/gap-ta-son-durum-sayfa-32.html.
[350] Joel S Migdal, Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 4.

power in the region. The authoritarian nature of the government, its interventions and social engineering projects including forced resettlement and linguistic homogenization policies,[351] ignited resistances ranging from non-cooperation to revolts.[352] In the late 1970s, the central state's manifestation of coercive power took a new form with the rise of the PKK-military conflict, detailed in Chapter 2. In the 1990s and 2000s, the Turkish state established "despotic power" in the region, detached from the people it governed. Michael Mann defines this type of state power as "the range of actions which the elite is empowered to undertake without routine, institutionalized negotiation with civil society groups."[353]

Although the coercive power of the state in the region was hard to deny, it would be wrong to assume coercion would automatically lead to a high level of state control. State power lies in the efficiency of its administrative practices and bureaucratic system in implementing state plans and projects in a multiplicity of locations as much as, if not even more than, the efficiency of its coercive presence. Foucault refers to state's more or less calculated and rational actions in shaping the conduct of people and securing rule as "governmentality."[354] James Scott argues that modern states aims to transform their relation to citizens by turning illegible territories and societies into legible ones, through the mediation of maps and projects, coupled with expertise and specialization.[355]

The Turkish state suffered from the dichotomy of its coercive over-presence and

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[351] Yılmaz Çolak, "Language Policy and Official Ideology in Early Republican Turkey," *Middle Eastern Studies* 40, no. 6 (November 1, 2004): 67–91.
[352] Senem Aslan, *Nation-Building*.
[353] Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results," *European Journal of Sociology* 25, no. 02 (1984), 188.
[354] Michael Watts, "Development and Governmentality," *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 24, no. 1 (March 1, 2003): 6–34.
[355] James C Scott, Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

bureaucratic under-presence in the region. In Mann's terminology, the Turkish state has been suffering from weak "infrastructural power" in the region, the ability to penetrate civil society and implement decisions through societal actors.[356] Senem Aslan's analysis of the state policies in the region during the first years of the Turkish Republic testifies that the Turkish nation-building project hardly achieved domination over Kurdish society. The central state had neither complete control over its bureaucrats nor the necessary personnel or financial resources to penetrate and transform the region.[357]

The state agents faced difficulties filling vacant bureaucratic positions in the region. The bureaucrats educated in the big cities were unwilling to live and serve in this peripheral region that they considered backward.[358] To make the region more appealing for bureaucrats, local governments took various measures, such as constructing modern public housing projects specifically for state officials.[359] Correspondences between the regional and central state actors during the first decades of the new regime clearly marked the problem that later became chronic. In one of many inter-institutional correspondences on the topic, Prime Minister Celal Bayar admitted that not having enough administrative personnel was "interrupt[ing] the state works in the region as well as delaying people's access to the state."[360] In a letter to the prime minister about the gendarmerie officers sent during the same period, the regional administrator also complained that bureaucrats coming to the region were getting "localized" and forgetting their duties. He stated that personnel staying in the region for more than a couple of years were

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[356] Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State," 189.
[357] Senem Aslan, "Everyday Forms of State Power and the Kurds in The Early Turkish Republic," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 43, no. 1 (2011), 77.
[358] Yunus Nadi, "Memleketin Şarkı Başka Garbı Başka mı?," *Cumhuriyet*, June 16, 1936, 1.
[359] Cemil Koçak, *Umumi Müfettişlikler 1927-1952* (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2010), 124.
[360] Prime Minister Recep Peker's letter to all the Ministries (except the Ministry of National Defense), June 7, 1938, BCA 30-10-0-0-15-87-22.

marrying local girls, becoming "localized" and losing their ability to conduct themselves as they should vis-à-vis the powerful clans. To fight this problem, the regional administrator proposed the introduction of a rotation system where officials serving in the region would be replaced every three years.[361] Soon a rotation system had been introduced, but contrary to the desired effect it further weakened the state's capacity. Coming to the region to serve only for a couple of years, officials were not learning Kurdish and developing an understanding of local customs and social cues necessary for successful governance.[362]

One of many areas that bureaucratic weakness obstructed the state's capacity was in the collection of dues. In a 1932 letter he sent to the Prime Minister, the Governor of Diyarbakır explains that people from the region did not have the habit of paying dues.[363] Not being able to fill collector positions in the region did not help. The governor continued as saying, "I am leaving it to your judgment to decide if it is possible for an institution with only one debt enforcer to achieve more than this much work in a year."[364] Like compelling people to pay their dues, the prevention of illegal resource use demanded bureaucratic rigor. Fehmi, one of my interviewees, pointed out the same bureaucratic weakness in that arena saying:

> A couple of days ago, someone told me that he has not paid his electric bill for the last 26 years; he is not subscribed. I said, 'where do you live, I want to move in there.' He said he is living in Suruç. Suruç is so close to here. He said, 'I did not see anyone [any state agent asking me to pay.]' Think about it; he did not see any state officer in Suruç. I don't want to say, 'there is no state here,' but it sounds weird.[365]

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[361] First Inspector-General's letter to the Prime Ministry, January 4, 1930, BCA 30-10-0-0-69-454-36-1.
[362] Ceren Belge, "Whose Law?: Clans, Honor Killings and State-Minority Relations in Turkey and Israel" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2008).
[363] Governor of Diyarbakır's letter to the Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, October 22, 1932, BCA 30-10-0-069-457-11-1, 3.
[364] Governor of Diyarbakır's letter to the Prime Minister İsmet İnönü, 4.
[365] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 7, 2014.

Observing the state's coercive power in the region manifested by military operations and police forces, Fehmi expected a strong state presence, but this expectation was contradicted by the stories he heard about uncollected bills and lack of personnel to check electricity usage in remote villages.

Globally, the privatization of public services has been promoted as a panacea to increase efficiency.[366] Pro-privatization literature argues the movement of work from state institutions to better equipped private actors will cut costs and improve the quality of services and products.[367] In line with this expectation, the consecutive governments planned privatization of the public electric sector throughout the 1990s. The Electricity Market Law passed in 2001 set the roadmap for the privatization of electricity distribution. The following section discusses the scope and content of electric services privatization and its impact on illegal use in the region.

4.3. Privatization and Changing Nature of Government Intervention

The 2001 Electricity Market Law projected the establishment of the *Elektrik Piyasası Düzenleme Kurulu* — the Electricity Market Regulatory Authority (EPDK), an independent authority responsible for preparing and implementing regulations of the private electricity market.[368] After the AKP took power the following year, one of the party's first actions was to speed up the privatization process. In 2004, TEDAŞ introduced a strategic paper detailing the method, scope, and process of electricity distribution privatization.[369] The paper divided the country into twenty-

[366] Kessides, "Reforming Infrastructure;" and Hidayet Taşdöven, Beth Ann Fiedler, and Vener Garayev, "Improving Electricity Efficiency in Turkey by Addressing Illegal Electricity Consumption: A Governance Approach," *Energy Policy* 43 (April 2012): 226–34.
[367] Paul Seidenstat, "Privatization," *Policy Studies Journal* 24, no. 3 (1996): 464–77.
[368] Law No.4628 published in the Official Gazette No.24335, dated 3 March 2001.
[369] Privatization High Commission Decision No.2004/22 published in the Official Gazette No.25422, dated April 3, 2004.

one distribution regions. Six agricultural provinces out of the nine GAP provinces were in the Dicle Electricity Distribution Region.[370] The privatization of electricity distribution was completed in June 2013, with privatization of the Dicle region.

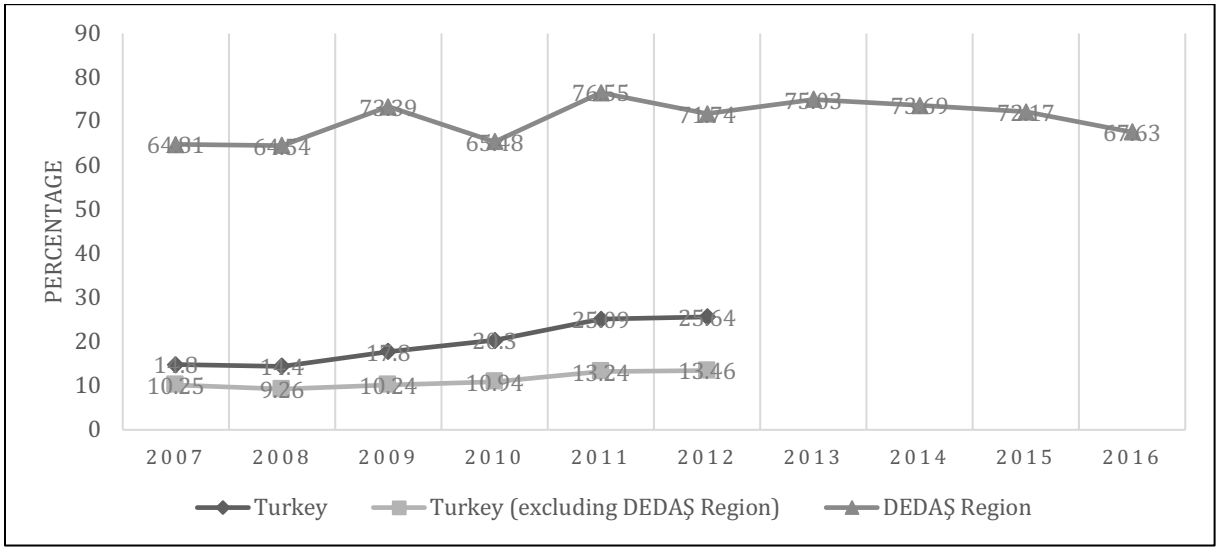
As expected, the private Dicle Electricity Distribution Company introduced a series of techno-managerial measures to reduce illegal consumption and boost its profit. The company increased the number of control visits, replaced the existing regular meters with smart meters, cut electricity connections of consumers caught using electricity illegally or refusing to pay their bills, and took legal action against illegal consumption to increase users' compliance with rules.[371] The company hired electric inspectors to check connections and collect unpaid bills. One of the subcontractors explained the hardship the inspectors encountered as follows:

> Before privatization, the state and consumers were in consensus in terms of illegal usage and payments. Now, I earn money when I cut electricity. TEDAŞ was not able to do so. In my case, if I don't cut the illegal connection, I cannot earn money. They [consumers] ask to our inspectors: 'With which hand do you cut the connections?' And they break that hand. Yet people here are starving. Our five-hundred inspectors are beaten up every single day. Yet we have another five-hundred waiting eagerly to replace them.[372]

Both Fehmi's and the subcontractor's statement suggested the existence of a tacit agreement between residents and state electric company before privatization. Before 2007, regional consumption rates were not detailed in the annual reports. Thus, there is no publicly available information on regional illegal usage from this period. Current illegal electricity usage data and residents' accounts show, despite strict techno-managerial measures, privatization failed to considerably curtail illegal consumption in the region. In fact, data between 2007 and 2016

[370] The other three fell under the jurisdiction of two separate distribution regions. Gaziantep and Kilis were under Toroslar E.D.C. and Adıyaman was under Göksu E.D.C.
[371] Dicle E.D.C. Annual Reports 2013-2016.
[372] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 23, 2014.

shows that illegal electricity consumption did not change much and remained five times higher than the rest of the country. (see Figure 4.1)



Source: 2009-2016 TEDAŞ and DEDAŞ Annual Reports[373]

Figure 4.1. Illegal Electricity Consumption Between 2009 and 2016 in Turkey

Privatization failed to create the expected impact on illegal usage in the Southeastern Anatolia region. This failure can be explained by looking into the details of Turkish electricity privatization process. Privatization of the electricity distribution sector in Turkey followed the Transfer of Operating Rights (TOR) model. Accordingly, TEDAŞ transferred its regional operation rights to private distribution companies for a period of 49 years, after which operating rights would return to state agents. TEDAŞ maintained ownership of the infrastructure and with the transfer of operational obligations and responsibilities to private companies, TEDAŞ's role shifted from an agency responsible for distribution operation to an agency approving private companies' investments, controlling their implementations, making payments for distribution-

[373] "Annual Report 2011," TEDAŞ.

related services, and providing public lighting.[374] TEDAŞ secured considerable power over private firms depending on it for permits and payments.

The EPDK board was the highest regulation authority in the privatized market structure and functioned as a "representation and decision-making body."[375] Members of the board had extensive power on direction and structure of the market. Policies developed in the lower chambers were subject to board ratification. Despite being described as a semi-independent body, the details about board members' elections made it highly dependent on government politicians. Based on the 2001 law, all members of the board have been directly appointed by the cabinet. Consequentially, it would be hard to expect the board members to decide against government policies and jeopardize their re-appointment.[376]

The 2011 law also stated that all economic activities of EPDK should be audited by the Supreme Audit Board of the Prime Ministry. The Prime Minister was the head of both the cabinet appointing the EPDK board members and the ministry auditing the board's accounts. Rather than transferring power from public to semi-independent and private institutions, the details of the electricity market privatization established a façade of non-intervention yet concentrated decision-making power in the hands of politicians.

Initially, the Electricity Market Law introduced a regional tariff system where EPDK would calculate the end-user price of electricity separately for each region. The regional cost of electric distribution, including illegal electricity usage, would be reflected in the electric bills of

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[374] Mükremin Çepni, General Manager of TEDAŞ, speaking during the session of the Public Enterprises Committee. *TBMM Tutanak Dergisi,* Session 1, January 22, 2015, 1.
[375] "Elektrik Piyasası Kanunu," Law 4628, published in the Official Gazette No. 24335, dated 3 March 2001.
[376] S. Mustafa Durakoğlu, "Political Institutions of Electricity Regulation: The Case of Turkey," *Energy Policy* 39, no. 9 (2011): 5578–87.

customers in each distribution region. While putting the burden of illegal consumption on the shoulders of consumers paying their bills, the regional cost-based tariff system anticipated region-specific solutions to region-specific problems.

In 2008, the EPDK started to calculate actual costs of electricity distribution in each region. Based on the law, the reflection of these costs would find their way to regional customers' electric bills in 2010. Before then, real cost of regional electric distribution would be reflected on the electric bills of consumers across the country. However, the cabinet passed decrees that postponed the implementation of regional tariffs, first to 2015 and then to 2020.[377] Cost-based, but universal billing introduced a situation where regions with high illegal electricity usage have been subsidized by the other regions.[378] As such, illegal usage of the GAP region was not paid from the state budget anymore. Money that electric companies were not able to collect in the region were passed to electric bills of consumers around the country. In 2008, private companies started to issue electric bills including a new item titled "illegal electricity cost."

Many consumers refused to pay for illegal electricity that they did not use and challenged the decision in the court. In 2014, the Court of Appeals made a pro-consumer decision. In the final verdict, the judge stated that "based on the existing legal structure, illegal usage cost cannot be collected from consumers paying their bills."[379] In order to avoid lawsuits, in June 2016, the Ministry of Energy prepared a change in the law that retroactively legalized collection of illegal usage costs from consumers paying their bills. The law redefined "distribution tariff" as

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[377] Cabinet Decree No.2015/8317 published in the Official Gazette No.29572, dated 24 December 2015.
[378] Tamer Çetin and Fuat Oğuz, "The Politics of Regulation in the Turkish Electricity Market," *Energy Policy* 35, no. 3 (2007), 1767.
[379] Turkish Republic Court of Appeal, Assembly of Civil Chambers, decision no.2014/679, May 21, 2014, http://www.emo.org.tr/ekler/ef5d608bef81b5a_ek.pdf?tipi=2&turu=X&sube=7.

"distribution system investment spending, system operation cost, technical and nontechnical lost electricity cost, cut-connection cost, meter reading cost, [and] reactive energy cost…" It also stated the "cost of technical and nontechnical electricity lost [including illegal electricity usage] is part of the distribution cost and would be paid by each consumer."[380] Once the government party ratified the law, the Court of Appeals dropped the existing cases and stopped accepting new ones.

Between 1994 and 2015, the state made investment worth 14,542,000 Turkish Lira (TL) ($5,406,350) in the GAP irrigation projects. In 2015, *Dicle Elektrik A.Ş.* — Electricity Distribution Inc. (DEDAŞ) declared an annual illegal electricity consumption of 15,194,189,419 kWh, worth around 2,929,789,186 TL ($1,089,221,945). The cost of illegal usage in a single year was much higher than the overall investment made to irrigation projects over twenty years. This picture suggests that illegal electricity usage causes a budget deficit. However, that is not the case. The introduction of a cost-based tariff system without regional tariffs, and the securing of the system with redefinition of "distribution tariff" shifted the cost of illegal electricity usage in the GAP region from the state budget to the pockets of individual electricity consumers around the country. With this change, illegal consumption of the region residents became costless activity from the state perspective.

For the government, stopping illegal electricity usage would not only mean creating tension by stopping an activity without any cost on state budget, but it also would be accepting that the GAP, worth around 10 percent of the national budget, failed to deliver its promise.[381] Within the existing pricing and billing structure, stopping illegal electricity usage would have a

[380] "Elektrik Kanunu ve Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun," Law No.6719, published in the Official Gazette No.29745, dated 17 June 2016.
[381] GAP'ın Finansmanı, GAP-RDA, http://www.gap.gov.tr/gap-in-finansmani-sayfa-31.html.

higher economic cost to the state than tolerating it. Besides, as the last part of the chapter shows, the high illegal consumption in the region turned into a strong electoral negotiation tool for the government party needing votes from the region.

4.4. Electoral Negotiation on Illegal Electricity Usage

Turkey's electoral system is a party-list proportional system where the parliament has five-hundred-fifty seats distributed between eighty-five electoral provinces, in proportion to their populations. Political parties need to appeal to the electorate in each province to increase their number of seats. The GAP provinces cumulatively have fifty-nine seats,[382] which correspond to eleven percent of the parliamentary seats.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the region is overwhelmingly populated by the Kurdish minority. Research shows that the region had a "mobilized voting" practice, where more than 95 percent of voters from the same village were voting for the same party.[383] Eder and Çarkoğlu point out that the regional electorate had volatile electoral support. Their research demonstrates that between the 1980s and 1990s, aggregate electoral support in the region frequently shifted from one party to another in large blocks of voters.[384] Using the method with Eder and Çarkoğlu, I extended their analysis to the October 2015 election. (see Table 4.1) Findings show that the GAP region stayed just as volatile in the 2000s and early 2010s.

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[382] In 2015 election, the GAP provinces' seat distribution was as following: Adıyaman 5, Batman 4, Diyarbakır 11, Gaziantep 12, Kilis 2, Mardin 6, Şanlıurfa 12, Siirt 3, and Şırnak 4.
[383] M. Murat Erdoğan, "'Olağandışı Oy Verme Davranışı' ve Mobilize Katılım: Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi Bölgesinde Toplu Oy Veren Köyler Üzerine Bir Araştırma," *Ankara Üniversitesi SBF Dergisi* 47, no. 01 (1992), http://dergipark.ulakbim.gov.tr/ausbf/article/view/5000054004.
[384] Ali Çarkoğlu and Mine Eder, "Domestic Concerns and the Water Conflict over the Euphrates-Tigris River Basin," *Middle Eastern Studies* 37, no. 1 (2001): 41–71.

Year	Volatility (GAP Average)[385]	Volatility (Turkey Average)	Effective Number of Parties (GAP Average)[386]	Effective Number of Parties (Turkey Average)
1983	–	–	3	2.7
1987	46.8	42.6	4.4	4
1991	31.2	16.5	3.4	4
1995	45	26.5	5.1	5.1
1999	19.1	22.7	4.2	3.2
2002	40.2	54.07	4.4	4.8
2007	48.3	22.49	2.5	3.4
2011	13.1	8.47	2.1	2.9
2015 June	53.8	17.8	2.2	3.6
2015 Oct	11.6	9	1.9	3

Source: Prepared by the author based on the method used by Çarkoğlu and Eder, and data collected from Turkish Supreme Election Council[387]

Table 4.1. Electoral Volatility and Effective Number of Parties in the GAP Region

[385] Volatility index calculated by using i=1,…N parties in the following formula $V=\{(1/2)\Sigma_N(|Vote\%_{i,t}- Vote\%_{i,t-1}|)\}$ The index lies between 0 and 1. V=1 represents a completely unstable system whereas V=0 represents a system where all parties obtained the same vote share as in the previous year.

[386] The effective number of parties (ENP) index is calculated based on fractionalization in the region (ENP=1/(1-F)). Fractionalization index calculated by $F=\{1-\Sigma_N(Vote\%)^2\}$ reaches a minimum of zero when one party receives all the vote and approaches to one when too many parties receive relatively small electoral support.

[387] The data from 1983 to 1999 election taken from Ali Çarkoğlu and Mine Eder, "Domestic Concerns and the Water Conflict over the Euphrates-Tigris River Basin" and the data from 2002 to October 2015 election was calculated by the author using the same method.

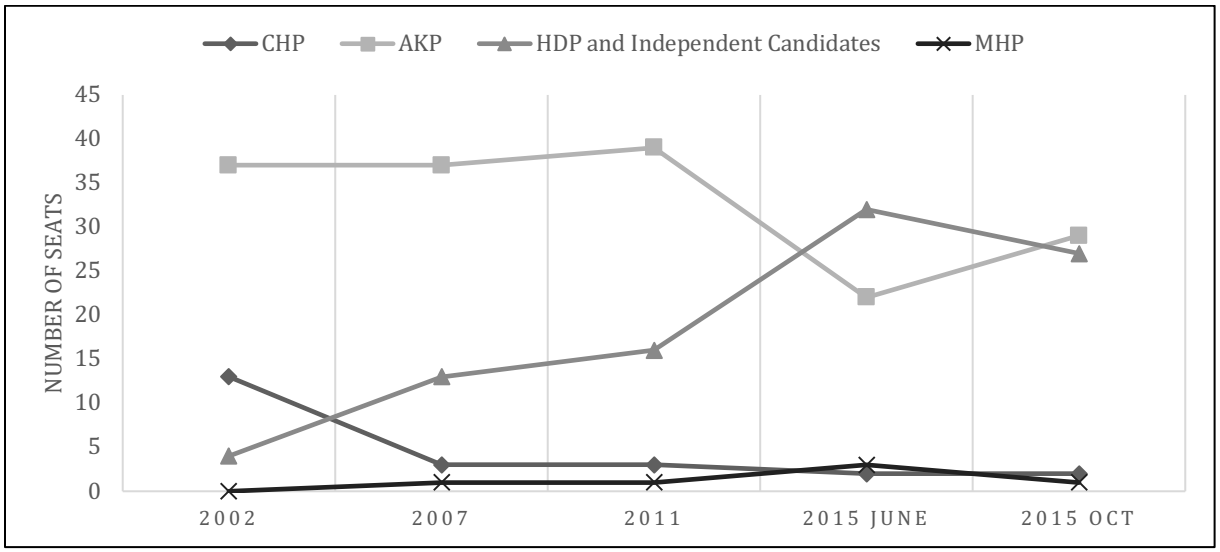
Eder and Çarkoğlu also stress that electoral competition—calculated based on the number of effective parties—was higher in the region than the country average in the 1983, 1987, and 1999 elections. There was close competition between parties in the region. The GAP region has been a poor region with high income inequality.[388] Combined with high electoral competitiveness, electoral volatility, and mobilized voting behavior in the region, Çarkoğlu and Eder expect the poverty of the region would make political parties' investments in the GAP region easily transferrable to votes compared to other regions.[389]

However, extending the data up to 2015 showed that following the AKP's election as the single party government in 2002 and consecutive elections, the number of effective parties in the region dropped below the national average. In the 2007, 2011, June 2015, and October 2015 elections, the number of effective parties in the region was averaged between 1.9 and 2.5 parties. In the same elections, at the national level, on average there were between 3.9 and 4.8 parties competing. While voters were still volatile, electoral competition in the region was mostly between two parties.

In the 2002 election, the Kurdish nationalist party, the *Demokratik Halk Partisi* – the Democratic People's Party (DEHAP), and AKP received the highest percentage of votes from the GAP region, at 32 percent and 26 percent, respectively. The 10 percent national electoral threshold for parliamentary representation impeded DEHAP representatives from winning seats in the parliament. Instead, DEHAP votes were transferred to other parties. As a result, the AKP won 37 out of 54 seats in the region (69 percent of the region's seats), and the *Cumhuriyet Halk*

[388] Bayram Ali Eşiyok and Faruk Sekmen, *Türkiye Ekonomisinde Bölgesel Gelişmişlik Farklılıkları, Doğu Anadolu'nun Bölgesel Gelişmedeki Yeri ve Çözüm Önerileri*, (İstanbul: Turkish Development Bank, 2012), http://www.kalkinma.com.tr/data/file/raporlar/ESA/ga/2012-GA/Dogu_Anadulunun_Bolgesel_Gelismedeki_Yeri_B.pdf.
[389] Çarkoğlu and Eder, "Domestic Concerns and the Water Conflict.

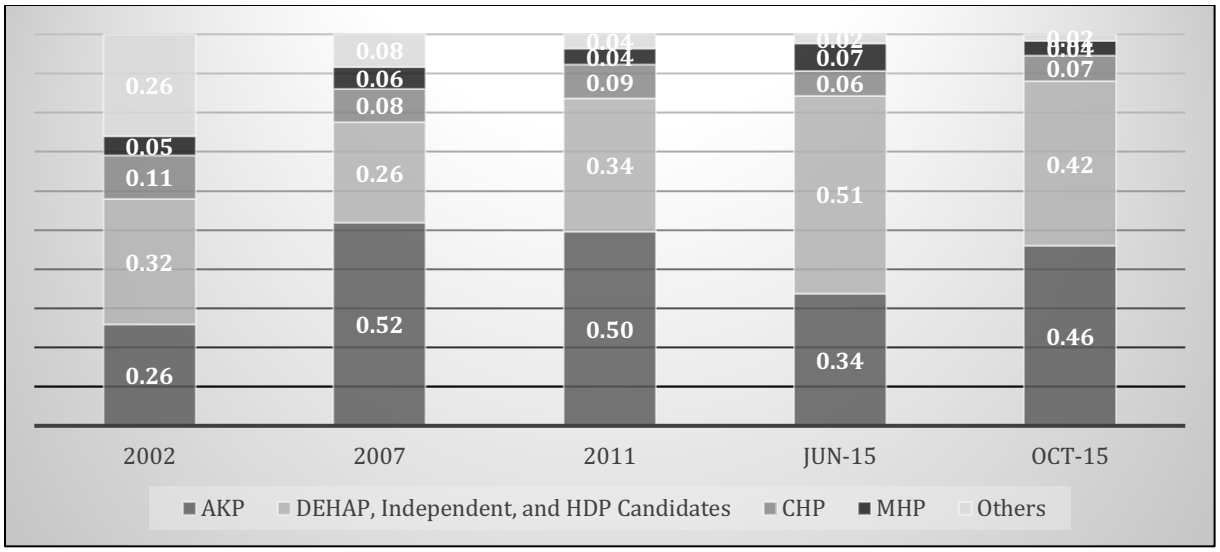
Partisi – the Republican People's Party (CHP) won 13 seats. The trend continued in the following years. (see Figure 4.2)



Source: Elections results published by the Turkish Supreme Election Council

Figure 4.2. Distribution of the GAP Region's Parliamentary Seats Between Parties

Electoral competition in the region was between the AKP and the block of Kurdish nationalist candidates initially running under DEHAP, later independently, and then, from 2015, under the *Halkların Demokratik Partisi* – the People's Democratic Party (HDP). The high number of seats AKP recieved from the Southeastern Anatolia region played a significant role in its electoral victory of being the single-party government for four consecutive terms. The GAP region's number of parliamentary seats, high volatility of the voters in the region, and mobilized voting patterns were a double-edged sword. The AKP candidates could easily win or lose the regional electorate to their DEHAP/Independent/HDP counterparts. (see Figure 4.3)

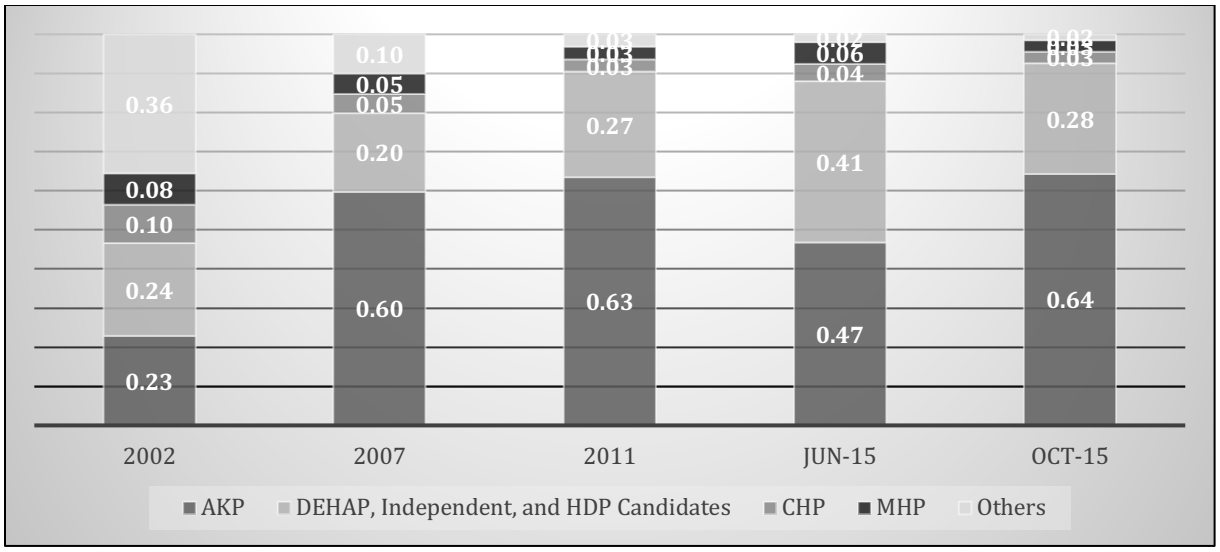


Source: Elections results published by the Turkish Supreme Election Council

Figure 4.3. Distribution of the GAP Region Votes Between Parties

Kitschelt and Wilkinson define party systems as competitive if elections results of rival blocks are close and there is a market of uncommitted voters sufficiently large to tip the balance in favor of one partisan block.[390] The distribution of votes from Şanlıurfa (see Figure 4.4) show less variation compared to the rest of the region. Yet the province is still a competitive area as there are two rival parties and a shifting electorate large enough to tip the balance. Throughout the last five elections, the province witnessed significant increase in DEHAP/Independent/HDP votes. In the June 2015 election, the DEHAP/Independent/HDP's voter turnout reached that of AKP's.

[390] Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson, "Citizen-Politician Linkages: An Introduction," in *Patrons, Clients and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, eds. Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 28.



Source: Elections results published by the Turkish Supreme Election Council

Figure 4.4. Distribution of Şanlıurfa Votes Between Parties

In this fragile competition, AKP used every negotiation tool at their disposal to secure more votes from the province and high illegal electricity consumption in the region was one of them. The AKP government was in a unique position to conduct electoral negotiation over illegal electricity usage in the region. While HDP was a strong competitor in the region, it could not receive enough votes to form a single-party government. AKP needed to get votes from the region and had a chance of being re-elected as a single-party government. Repeatedly re-elected as a single-party government, the AKP was able to pass laws and approve new budgets, fine-tuning fiscal policy to further secure its political agenda.[391] There was an unspoken understanding between the regional electorate and the party. The AKP politicians needed votes from the region and region residents needed the party to pass amnesty laws.

[391] Torsten Persson, and Guido Tabellini, "Do Electoral Cycles Differ Across Political Systems?" Working Paper, Swedish Research Council, 2002, http://cep.lse.ac.uk/seminarpapers/12-11-02-PE2.pdf.

In July 2008, eight months before the local elections, the majority AKP parliament passed a law excluding buildings with illegal electric connections from the scope of criminal law.[392] In February 2011, four months before the national election, the AKP government passed an omnibus bill providing amnesty for unpaid interest rates and fines of illegal electricity usage in agriculture.[393] Though amnesty laws were for everyone in the country, majority of the beneficiaries were residents of the GAP region. The following year, the parliament passed a law decriminalizing illegal electricity consumption.[394] The previous law had defined illegal electric consumption as an act of stealing. Therefore, residents caught using electricity illegally could be charged in the criminal courts. By redefining illegal electricity use as a "fault" rather than a "crime," the new law prevented the implementation of penal sanctions for illegal consumption. Following the change, illegal usage could be punished only by fines.

Following the privatization of electricity distribution, the government started to use amnesty bills to negotiate illegality. In September 2014, nine months before the June 2015 general election, the AKP government passed an amnesty bill for illegal usage that restructured payment of existing electricity debts.[395] The bill reduced interest rates for unpaid bills and introduced more flexible payment options. It had a separate article for farmers who did not pay

[392] "Elektrik Piyasası Kanunu ve Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılmasına Dair Kanun," Law 5784, published in the Official Gazette No. 26948, dated 26 July 2008.
[393] "Bazı Alacakların Yeniden Yapılandırılması ile Sosyal Sigortalar ve Genel Sağlık Sigortası Kanunu ve Diğer Bazı Kanun ve Kanun Hükmünde Kararnamelerde Değişiklik Yapılması Hakkında Kanun," Law 6111, published in the Official Gazette No. 27857, dated 25 February 2011.
[394] "Yargı Hizmetlerinin Etkinleşmesi Amacıyla Bazı Kanunlarda Değişiklik Yapılması ve Basın Yayın Yoluyla İşlenen Suçlara İlişkin Dava ve Cezaların Ertelenmesi Hakkında Kanun," Law 6352, published in the Official Gazette No. 28344, dated 5 July 2012.
[395] "İş Kanunu ile Bazı Kanun ve Kanun Hükmünde Kararnamelerde Değişiklik Yapılması ile Bazı Alacakların Yeniden Yapılandırılmasına Dair Kanun," Law 6552, published in the Official Gazette No. 29116, dated 11 September 2014.

their electricity bills. The bill exempted them from interest payment and penalties if they agreed to gradually pay the capital debt over a period of two years.

In April 2015, parliamentary candidates of the AKP arrived to Şanlıurfa to start the party's regional election campaign for the upcoming national election. Farmers from Bozova district, where the distribution company cut the electric connection of many villagers due to unpaid debts, stopped the campaign convoy in protest. The candidates listened to the farmers' complaints and promised to solve their electricity problems before the election.[396] The fact that farmers addressed their illegal electricity related complaints to parliamentary candidates of the governing party, who in return promised to resolve the problem, revealed three interrelated points. First, despite the privatization of distribution, the government was still the main player in the electricity sector and had a unique power to pass amnesties, regulations, and bills. Second, region residents were well-aware of their electoral power. Third, as an outcome of the first two points, illegal electricity was central to electoral negotiations in the region.

Nureddin Nabati, one of AKP candidates from Şanlıurfa and the party's vice chairman, passed the farmers' demands to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Energy. A couple of days after the protest in Şanlıurfa, Nebati organized a press conference in the province where he declared that the government agreed with the distribution company. According to this agreement, Şanlıurfa irrigation unions would sign a contract to pay a small amount of their electricity debts and the remainder would be paid through the state budget.[397] Following the press conference,

[396] "Şanlıurfa'da Çiftçiler AK Parti Adaylarının Yolunu Kesti," *Hürriyet*, April 18, 2015, http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/28770169.asp.
[397] "Nebati, 'Çiftçilerin Elektrik Sorunu Çözüldü'," *Urfanatik*, April 20, 2015, http://www.urfanatik.com/yerel/nebati-ciftcilerin-elektrik-sorunu-cozuldu-h29014.html.

AKP candidates re-started their electoral campaign in the districts with highest illegal electricity consumption.[398]

Five days before the election, the Minister of Labor and Social Security, who was also a candidate from the province, came to Şanlıurfa to meet the representatives of the private electric distribution company. Following the meeting, the minister met the local press and announced that he managed to convince the private electric distribution company to lift the blockage on the state's agricultural support to farmers with electricity debts.[399] Though the minister claimed a successful negotiation with the company, it was not the company but the minister's own cabinet that signed the edict that blocked the provision of agricultural support payments to farmers with electricity debts, only a couple of weeks before his visit.[400]

In the GAP region, illegal electricity became a terrain for electoral negotiations. Recurring amnesty bills and political negotiations curtailed the credibility and implementation power of the private distribution company. The recurring amnesty bills made region residents less willing to pay their dues and comply with rules. Hamit explained it saying, "People here don't trust the state enough to pay their bills. They know that the state introduces debt relief every six months."[401] Knowing the central state will soon pass a debt amnesty and bypass the private company, residents from the region resisted paying their electric bills. They knew that the

[398] "Çiftçilerin Elektrik Sorununda Mutlu Son," *Milliyet*, April 27, 2015, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ciftcilerin-elektrik-sorununda-mutlu-sanliurfa-yerelhaber-751624/.
[399] "Çiftçilerin Destekleme Blokeleri Kaldırıldı," *Milliyet*, June 3, 2015, http://www.milliyet.com.tr/ciftcilerin-destekleme-blokeleri-kaldirildi-sanliurfa-yerelhaber-821609/.
[400] Cabinet Decree No.2015/7700 published in the Official Gazette No.29362, dated 21 May 2015.
[401] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 22, 2014.

government would eventually pass an amnesty bill before the election. One of my respondents, Ibrahim explained this saying:

> People don't pay their electricity debts. They know that there will be a debt relief soon. I did not pay before and I benefited from the debt relief. They feel fooled if they pay. The system of the state is like that. Normal, honest citizens are fooled. The system directs you to wrongdoing, to steal.[402]

Recurring debt amnesties encouraged residents with limited budgets to channel their resources to necessities other than paying bills. Unlimited free electricity pushed some others towards lavishness. A high-level bureaucrat working at the *Türkiye Elektrik İletim Anonim Şirketi* — the Turkish Electric Transmission Company (TEİAŞ), the state institution responsible for the national transmission facilities, described his observations of the region saying:

> To prevent illegal usage, we asked the mosque to give sermons saying that illegal usage is illicit, that it is the same with stealing, but it did not work. When I was there, I saw people submerging conductive iron bars in the well to warm the water. I got stupefied. They said: 'don't worry Hodja, we disconnect the electricity before using the water…' I saw people heating their stall by directly connecting electricity to iron bed frames... In Diyarbakır, I saw that they were advertising apartments on one half of a building from 30,000 lira, and the ones on the other half from 25,000 lira. Then, we realized that the right half of the building was illegally connected to the grid, but not the left half. You pay more to buy from that right side, but you don't have to pay electricity bill ever after."[403]

Distributing goods and services to people with the hope of garnering their votes in elections is not specific to Turkey. In every electoral system, politicians use nonprogrammatic distribution to secure votes.[404] One of the most preferred distribution methods is clientelism, where parties offer material benefits to individuals on the condition that the recipient returns the favor with a vote or other form of political support. The conditional benefits that clientalism promises secures higher

[402] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 4, 2014.
[403] Interview in Ankara, September 16, 2014.
[404] Susan C. Stokes et al., *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics*, Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

electoral turnout, but also necessitates long-term and targeted information collection and control mechanisms to distribute the promised goods and favors effectively.[405] Stokes et al argue that a less-costly nonprogrammatic distribution model is the pork-barrel model, which does not ask for individual targeting and information collection. In pork-barrel distribution, politicians provide resources or goods to a community and hope to "generate good will among recipients who may, as a consequence, be more likely to support the benefactor candidate or party."[406]

Completing the irrigation canals would be a pork-barrel spending that politicians would expect to get residents' votes in return. However, the main disadvantage of this type of spending is that "recipients who defect and vote for a different party suffer no individual punishment."[407] Once the canals were completed, it would not be possible to take the investment back even if the voters decided to vote for another party, which would be a highly probable scenario in the GAP region with high electoral volatility.

Hicken argues that what is unique about clientalist exchange is that the chief criterion for receiving the targeted benefit is voting for the politicians or party providing it.[408] Kitschelt and Wilkinson argue that many of the important benefits that politicians allocate are "club goods" that provide benefits for subsets of citizens and impose cost on other subsets.[409] When they distribute "club goods," clientalistic politicians prefer to concentrate a higher proportion of benefits on a critical mass of voter constituencies whose support they expect will bring them victory in the next election.[410] Hicken argues that such "collective clientalism" is distinguished

[405] Stokes et al.
[406] Ibid, 12.
[407] Ibid.
[408] Allen Hicken, "Clientelism," *Annual Review of Political Science* 14 (January 1, 2011), 294.
[409] Kitschelt and Wilkinson, "Citizen-Politician Linkages," 11.
[410] Ibid 12.

from pork-barrel or programmatic distributive benefits by the contingent nature of the exchange.[411]

In the GAP region, illegal electricity was a good under "collective clientalism." The AKP government passed multiple amnesty laws, postponed implementation of the regional tariff system, and imposed the cost of the "club goods" of illegal electricity on other consumers. When farmers from Bozova stopped the AKP campaign convoy to protest electricity cuts and demanded the party resolve the issue, they implied that they would vote for the party if the party secured their access to electricity. When the AKP politicians convinced the electric distribution company to reconnect the farmers and lifted the blockage on agricultural support payments, they delivered a "club good," hoping that, in return, the farmers would vote for them in the election. If they defected and voted for another party, the farmers would lose their negotiation power built upon the unique combination of the AKP's power to pass amnesty laws as the single-party government and strategic importance of Kurdish votes for the party's reelection. More permanent solutions such as completing the irrigation canals, subsidizing agricultural electricity usage or low-income households[412] would end regional electoral negotiations. By addressing the problem of illegal electricity usage with provisional measures, the government successfully turned it into a "manageable" problem[413] and a secure electoral negotiation tool.

Multiple residents from the region mentioned that the number and intensity of blackouts have been increasing before electoral campaigns to remind the region residents of their

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[411] Hicken, "Clientelism," 291.
[412] Soma Shekara Sreenadh Reddy Depuru, Lingfeng Wang, and Vijay Devabhaktuni, "Electricity Theft: Overview, Issues, Prevention and a Smart Meter Based Approach to Control Theft," *Energy Policy* 39, no. 2 (February 2011): 1007–15.
[413] Meryem Koray, "AKP Dönemi: Neo-Liberalizm, Neo-Muhafazakarlık, Neo-Popülizm Beşiğinde Sallanan Sosyal Devlet ve Sosyal Politika," in *Himmet, Fitrat, Piyasa - AKP Döneminde Sosyal Politika*, ed. Meryem Koray and Aziz Çelik (İletişim Yayınları, 2015), 47.

dependence on the government to continue accessing electricity illegally. One of the residents explained:

> Electricity cuts intensify in certain periods and reach a peak during the election period… State resources are used to serve the political goals of the government party. The state should treat each political party equally.[414]

The nature of the electoral system in Turkey coupled with government's power to intervene in the distribution sector by passing laws and amnesty bills turned illegal electricity usage into an electoral negotiation topic. Rather than introducing permanent solutions that would end the negotiations, politicians turned illegality into a provisional "club good" distributed before each election to secure electoral support.

4.5. Conclusion

As Chapter 2 showed, in the Kurdish majority region of Turkey where irrigation canals have been sparsely and discriminatorily distributed, Kurdish citizens used electricity illegally to compensate for their relative disadvantage. Chapter 4 built on this and evidenced that illegal electricity usage was a highly visible operation. Illegality was visible through connection cables, blackouts, and voltage fluctuations as well as official reports, newspaper coverage, and political statements.

Part 2 inquired into why the state did not prevent highly visible illegal electricity usage in the region. It showed that even though the Turkish state had coercive power in the region, it was weak in terms of bureaucratic power. To overcome this weakness and its implications on electricity distribution in the region, the state privatized electricity distribution in the early 2000s. Yet privatization did not create the expected outcome. While transferring bill collection and

[414] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 5, 2014.

distribution tasks to private actors and the economic burden of illegal electricity usage to legal consumers' pockets, privatization provided new opportunities for the government to intervene in the market. Rather than increase efficiency, the privatization process turned illegal usage into a costless operation from the government's standpoint.

As the last part of the chapter underlined, the high percentage of the region's seats in the parliament coupled with its high electoral volatility turned illegal electricity into a regional electoral negotiation tool. Continuity of the single-party government was partially based on its performance in the region. Thus, politicians did not abstain from using government power over the electricity distribution market as a negotiation tool to secure votes in the region. By passing amnesty bills prior to elections, the governing party turned the provision of electricity into "collective clientalism" with a high cost of defection for the region residents.

This chapter showed that high illegal usage rates of electricity in the GAP region was the result of a political phenomenon. Illegality in the region was formed and conducted around a complex web of negotiations conducted between multiple state and non-state actors. The Kurdish community was able to continue to access infrastructure illegally due to its electoral power. The government party was willing to negotiate illegality before each election with the hope of getting electoral support from the region. The details of the Kurdish case show that to illegally access the denied resources, discriminated groups must have electoral negotiation power. The next chapter compares the Bedouin case to the Kurdish one and discusses why the Bedouin community was not able to access the denied infrastructure illegally by negotiating with state actors.

Chapter 5

Bedouin Political Struggle Against Distributional Discrimination: Weapons of the Weakest

الحاجة أم الإختراع
Necessity is the Mother of Invention
(Bedouin Proverb)

The Bedouin community living the Negev/Naqab region were not connected to public infrastructure, but contrary to the Kurdish example in Turkey, they did not illegally access resources. Rather, they openly challenged the authorities denying them public infrastructure and services. Chapter 3 discussed the scope of distributional inequalities in the Negev/Naqab region and the ways in which infrastructure became an active political tool for the government to discipline its Bedouin citizens and force them to quit their rural lifestyle and become an urban proletariat living in designated urban localities.

This chapter focuses on the methods of struggle chosen by the Bedouin community to gain access to denied resources, and in the process answers four interlinked questions: Why were the Bedouin unable to illegally access the denied resources and negotiate illegality with politicians, like the Kurds? In relation to this first question: What happens when a community cannot access the denied resources illegally? How did the Bedouin challenge the state decisions? How successful were they in those challenges?

This chapter completes the theory that the previous chapter started to build by showing how communities without negotiation power struggle against discriminatory distribution policies. To open different layers of the argument, Part 1 focuses on the reasons behind the Israeli politicians' unwillingness to negotiate with the Bedouin. Detailing the Bedouin

community's negligible electoral and economic power, it argues that the Negev/Naqab Bedouin lack power to negotiate illegal access to resources.

Part 2 examines the possibility of accessing infrastructure without negotiating with the politicians. It describes the widespread use of solar panels in Bedouin villages where state agents refuse to provide electricity and inquires if the use of solar panels can be considered a form of resistance.

Once the first two parts establish that the Bedouin have neither electoral power to leverage nor enough resource to bypass the state, Part 3 discusses the mechanisms that the Bedouin community use in order to gain access the resources. Tracing Bedouin's methods of struggle, this last part establishes that not having enough electoral power to negotiate illegal access to resources in exchange for votes, the Bedouin turn towards methods of struggle based on the democratic principles of rule of law, citizen participation, and human rights.

5.1. Political Negligibility of the Bedouin

In January of 2014, SodaStream, the Israeli company producing devices and syrup to make fizzy drinks at home recruited actress Scarlett Johansson to appear in its advertising campaign. The SodaStream factory was at the illegal Israeli settlement Mishor Adumim, located in the West Bank. Shortly after broadcasting the advertising campaign in the United States, the international pro-Palestinian boycott movement, Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) started to target the company. The boycott campaign brought international pressure that forced some major

European retailers to stop carrying the brand. Johansson stepped down from her role as ambassador for the charity Oxfam.[415]

The same year, in October, SodaStream announced that it would close its factory in the West Bank and open a new one inside Israel.[416] Two years later, the company started to operate a new production facility at Idan haNegev Industrial Park located next to the Bedouin town of Rahaṭ. As Palestinians of the West Bank did not have right to work in Israel, the company fired its five hundred Palestinian workers and hired three hundred Bedouin workers to replace them.[417] Despite the state agents' claims, moving into state-planned towns did not improve the living conditions of the Bedouin. Urbanization and governmental restrictions on agriculture and husbandry shifted the center of Bedouin economy from raising livestock to salaried employment.[418] In time, the Bedouin community became the "urban proletariat" that Dayan wanted them to be, [419] but there were not enough jobs in Bedouin towns. They community was not integrated into broader Israeli society. Rather, the Bedouin living in state-planned Bedouin towns assumed the precarious position as the workforce replacing the labor of the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

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[415] Nick Robins-Early, "Pepsi Just Bought SodaStream. So About That West Bank Boycott Controversy…," *HuffPost,* August 21, 2018, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/pepsico-sodastream-israel_n_5b7c00d7e4b018b93e97aba2.
[416] Ora Coren, "SodaStream: Israel Isn't Providing Promised Aid for Plant Inside Green Line," *Haaretz*, February 3, 2014, https://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/business/.premium-1.572020.
[417] JTA, "SodaStream Hires Hundreds of New Employees in Southern Israel," The Times of Israel, July 28, 2016, http://www.timesofisrael.com/sodastream-hires-hundreds-of-new-employees-in-southern-israel/.
[418] Aref Abu-Rabia, "Employment and Unemployment Among the Negev Bedouin," *Nomadic Peoples* 4, no. 2 (2000): 84–93.
[419] Moshe Dayan's interview in *Ha'aretz*, July 31, 1963 quoted in Talia Berman-Kishony, "Bedouin Urbanization Legal Policies in Israel and Jordan: Similar Goals, Contrasting Strategies," *Transnational Law & Contemporary Problems*, 2008, 396.

For the Bedouin community living unconnected to the public transportation system, job opportunities were highly restricted. As Yiftachel described, the Bedouin were "excluded from access to capital or mobility within the labor market and are thus virtually 'trapped' as an underclass."[420] Based on research conducted in 1993, the number of jobs in Rahaṭ and Tal as-Sabaʿ was estimated at around 1,500—less than 35 jobs for 1,000 Bedouin living in these towns.[421] Many Bedouin joined the ranks of unemployed.[422] The same year, only 12,000 out of 80,000 Negev/Naqab Bedouin were gainfully employed. 30 percent of the employed Bedouin were working in construction, 15 percent worked in public services and industry, and seven percent in agriculture.[423]

Not having job security, education or occupational training, the Bedouin became a workforce in precarious circumstances,[424] employed as contractual workers[425] and living without the security of a steady income.[426] The community was at the bottom of the socio-economic scale.[427] Bedouin workers have been filling permanent job needs, but are denied permanent employee rights. They live under the constant threat of losing their jobs, experiencing job displacement, or becoming unemployed.[428] In 2011, 64.7 percent of the working population of

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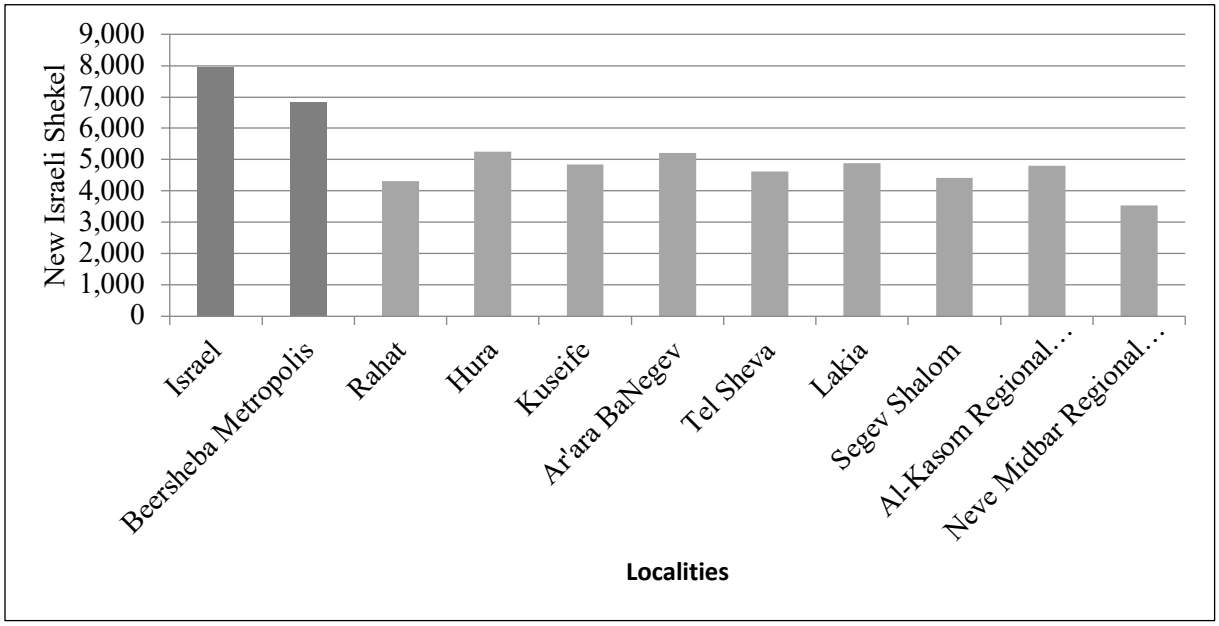
[420] Oren Yiftachel, "'Ethnocracy': The Politics of Judaizing Israel/Palestine," *Constellations* 6, no. 3 (September 1, 1999), 367.
[421] Abu-Rabia, "Employment and Unemployment Among the Negev Bedouin."
[422] Ghazi Falah, "Israeli State Policy toward Bedouin Sedentarization in the Negev," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 18, no. 2 (January 1, 1989), 86.
[423] Abu-Rabia, "Employment and Unemployment Among the Negev Bedouin."
[424] Ibid.
[425] Loïc Wacquant, "Revisiting Territories of Relegation: Class, Ethnicity and State in the Making of Advanced Marginality," *Urban Studies* 53, no. 6 (May 1, 2016): 1077–88; or Caldbick et al., "Globalization and the Rise of Precarious Employment: The New Frontier for Workplace Health Promotion," *Global Health Promotion* 21, no. 2 (June 1, 2014): 23–31.
[426] Employment (תעסוקה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority.
[427] The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics annual socio-economic indexes.
[428] Arne L. Kalleberg, Good Jobs, Bad Jobs: The Rise of Polarized and Precarious Employment Systems in the United States 1970s to 2000s (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2013).

the country had been employed for twelve months consecutively. Among the Bedouin living in Rahaṭ, the percentage was only 45.1 percent of the eligible population.[429] In the same vein, while the country's overall percentage of workers making the minimum wage was 37.8 percent, in Rahaṭ, 51.3 percent of working population was only earning the minimum wage.

In 2011, the average salary of employees in Israel was around 8,000 shekels. In the Be'er Sheva Metropolitan Region, it was 6,800 shekels. Bedouin towns ranged between 3,539 and 5,245 shekels. (See Figure 5.1) Wages in 'unrecognized' villages are not known as these settlements are not included in the official statistics, but it would be safe to assume that their salaries would be at equal or less than the salary of residents living in officially sanctioned Bedouin towns.



Source: Bedouin Development Authority[430]

Figure 5.1. Average Salary of the Employees in Israel, 2011

[429] Employment (תעסוקה) Data 2011, published by Bedouin Development Authority (הרשות להסדרת התיישבות הבדואים).
[430] Wage and Income (שכר והכנסה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority.

Bedouin who abandoned their villages found themselves in a new socio-economic system where they were at the bottom, struggling with unemployment, deprivation, and dependency. In 2011, 1.3 percent of the total Israeli population was a recipient of income support. The ratio of income support recipients in Rahaṭ was 3 times more, around 3.5 percent.[431] (See Table 5.1) Relief-giving programs, such as unemployment insurance and old-age pensions regulate the poor's political and economic behaviors.[432] Moving to state-planned towns, the Bedouin became an ethnically homogenous urban poor community, depending on the welfare system to survive. Filling the role of a precariously-employed workforce without job safety and specialization, Bedouin were easily replaceable. Neither being wealthy nor having an essential role in the production cycle, the community was not in a position to leverage its power in the economy to negotiate provision of infrastructure or illegal access.

[431] "2008 Socio-Economic index of Local Authorities," Israel Central Bureau of Statistics, http://www.cbs.gov.il/publications13/1530/pdf/tab01_01.pdf.
[432] Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Vintage, 1993).

Location	Number of Residents	Recipients of Income Support	% of Income Support Receivers	Number of Families	Estimated % of Support Receiving Families
Israel	7,836,600	104,741	1.3	1,309,029	8
Rahaṭ	54,900	1,935	3.5	4,827	40
Ḥūrah	17,000	641	3.8	955	67
Ksīfih	17,200	731	4.3	1,304	56
ʿArʿarah an-Nagab	13,600	743	5.5	1,137	65
Tal as-Sabaʿ	16,400	992	6.0	1,166	85
al-Lagiyyih	9,600	723	7.5	1,082	67
Šgīb as-Salām	7,800	449	5.6	812	55

Source: The Bedouin Development Authority[433]

Table 5.1. Percentage of Families Receiving Income Support by Location, 2011

Defined in classical procedural terms, democracy is a combination of free and fair elections based on universal suffrage, accountability through the rule of law, civilian control of the military, and freedom of association and expression.[434] Elections are accepted as defining institutions of modern democracy that provide an occasion for popular involvement, an act of direct participation in decision-making.[435] As extensively discussed in the Chapter 1, the prominent authors of the public goods distribution literature argue that in democratic countries, politicians tend to distribute the resources more equally, but they attribute distributive fairness to diverging factors. Meltzer and Richard argue that in democracies, governments favor poorer segments of the population as these groups compose the majority of the voters. They argue that

[433] Welfare (רווחה) and Demography (דמוגרפיה) Data 2011, Bedouin Development Authority.
[434] Fox, "The Difficult Transition," 151.
[435] Richard S. Katz, *Democracy and Elections* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 105.

income distribution is mostly right-skewed, meaning most of the eligible voters have lower income than the country average.[436] Based on the fact that in democratic systems with universal suffrage and majority rule, lower income voters are the main electorate, the authors expect politicians to be eager to address their demands.[437]

Being poor is not the only identity of any group. The Bedouin are poor, but they are also an ethno-religious minority with land claims and resisting the state relocation policies. These attributes make the mainstream politicians less willing to listen to their voice and address their demands during their electoral campaigns. In theory, voting is an act of participation, a universal way of gaining political voice. Yet in practice, elections are not arenas where everyone's voice is heard. Politicians listen to the groups who are either more likely to vote for them or who have larger electorates. I agree with Prezeworski et al. as they note that while over-examining elections, public goods literature mostly ignores procedures and institutional arrangements that define political representation.[438] I argue that electoral institutions and procedures are the factors shaping who will be represented in elections and who will be ignored.

Israeli electoral system is different from the Turkish one analyzed in the previous chapter. While in Turkish electoral system each province had a certain number of seats in the parliament in proportion with its population, in Israel, the whole country is a single electoral region. In this system of rigid nation-wide proportional representation, the number of seats each party gets in the Knesset is proportional to the number of overall votes it received. Parties had only to pass the

[436] Meltzer and Richard, "A Rational Theory," 914.
[437] Ibid, 916.
[438] Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, and Bernard Manin, "Introduction," in *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*, eds. Adam Przeworski, Susan C. Stokes, and Bernard Manin, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3.

electoral threshold of 3.25 percent to enter the Knesset.[439] The single electoral basket system disadvantages small, regional constituencies. Because they are not competing for regional seats, political parties lack the incentive to appeal smaller electoral groups such as the Bedouin.

In 2011, the Bedouin made up approximately 30 percent of the Negev/Naqab population, but only 2.6 percent of the overall Israeli population and 1.1 percent of the eligible voters in the country.[440] Due to its small size, the Bedouin electoral constituency was politically negligible for most of the bigger Israeli parties. In its 2015 electoral campaign, The Jewish Home that received 6.7 percent of the votes depicted the Bedouin as a threat to the state's sovereignty over its land. The party promised the dislocation of the Bedouin and settlement of more Jews in lands over which Bedouin had ownership claims. Yisrael Beiteinu, which received 5.1 percent of the popular vote, did not explicitly mention the Bedouin in its electoral manifesto, yet the party promised to fight against the "theft of state land." The largest party in the government was Likud that garnered 23.4 percent of the votes in the election. It was the Likud-led government that introduced the Prawer Plan to forcefully relocate the Bedouin from their villages to the state-planned towns. The Zionist Union (carrying 18.7 percent) and Yesh Atid (carrying 8.8 percent) used loose language and promised to find a solution to the Bedouin's land issue that would satisfy both sides. The only party that addressed the Bedouin's demands was the left-wing green social-democratic party Meretz (carrying 3.9 percent). The party promised to discard the Prawer Plan and find a solution that would be embraced by the Bedouin population.[441]

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[439] "The Electoral System in Israel," *Knesset,* https://www.knesset.gov.il/description/eng/eng_mimshal_beh.htm.
[440] Calculated by the author based on age groups and total electoral constituency data gathered from the Bedouin Development Authority and the Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics.
[441] "March 2015 Elections: What Do the Parties Have to Say on the Bedouin?," *Rabbis for Human Rights* (blog), March 11, 2015, http://rhr.org.il/eng/2015/03/march-2015-elections-party-platforms-bedouin/.

Liberal democratic theory wrestles with the problem of unrepresented voters, but discussions mostly stay at a theoretical level and are not translated into policy.[442] For the Bedouin, their concerns and problems did not find forum in the electoral campaigns. Being pushed outside of the representative system shaped the community's approach to electoral politics. Until the end of the 1980s, the Bedouin supported the Zionist parties with the hope of gaining access to critical resources such as land, jobs, services, and infrastructure. Not getting access to most of the resources, the Bedouin lost their trust in the electoral system and started to abstain from voting. In 2006, national voter turnout was 63.4 percent, but only 45 percent among the Bedouin. In the 2009 election, the Bedouin turnout decreased further, to 36 percent.[443] The 2013 election was the only election where the Bedouin turnout increased slightly compared to the previous one reaching 46.9 percent.

Research conducted by Cedric Parizot in Rahaṭ during the 1999 election shows that the Bedouin, aware of the low weight of their votes in the elections, lost trust in elections, parties, and the representative system.[444] In 2015, four Arab-Palestinian parties (Hadash, the United Arab List, Balad, and Ta'al) built an alliance and ran as a single list. The Joint List that received 10.5 percent of the votes increased the Arab-Palestinian turnout to 65.2 percent. The increase was unprecedented, but it did not change the Bedouin approach to electoral system. Electoral turnout in Bedouin settlements increase only one percent to reached 47 percent in 2015. (See Table 5.2)

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[442] Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government*, Reprint edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017).
[443] Alexander Bligh, "Political Trends in the Israeli Arab Population and Its Vote in Parliamentary Elections," *Israel Affairs* 19, no. 1 (January 1, 2013): 21–50.
[444] Parizot, "Counting Votes That Do Not Count: Bedouin and the Knesset Elections of May 17 1999, Rahaṭ, Israel."

Out of 98,894 eligible Bedouin voters, only 46,502 went to the polls.[445] The exclusion of the Bedouin from the electoral system and the community's fading hopes of representation created a vicious cycle.

Year	Election Turnout (%)			Vote for the Arab Parties (%)	
	Bedouin	Rest of the Arab-Palestinian Population	Overall	Bedouin	Rest of the Arab-Palestinian Population
2006	45.1	56.3	63.5	74.7	88.0
2009	35.9	53.4	64.7	85.3	79.1
2013	45.8	56.5	67.8	88.8	77.0
2015	47.0	63.5	72.4	87.3	82.4

Source: Prepared by the author based on data used by Rudnitzky and Bligh.[446]

Table 5.2. Bedouin and Arab-Palestinian Turnout in the Israeli Elections, 2006-2015

As mentioned in the previous chapters, the existing literature on illegal access expects marginalized groups operating largely outside of the institutional mechanisms to access the denied infrastructure silently, without openly challenging the dominant power structures. The Negev/Naqab Bedouin community that the Israeli government marginalized both economically and politically fits this definition. Yet, the last part of Chapter 3 details, the accounts of the community members and low level of resources loss evidenced that the Bedouin community was not accessing the denied resources illegally. Why?

[445] Arik Rudnitzky, "Back to the Knesset? Israeli Arab Vote in the 20th Knesset Elections," *Israel Affairs* 22, no. 3–4 (October 1, 2016): 683–96.
[446] Prepared by the author based on the data provided in Bligh, "Political Trends in the Israeli Arab Population and Its Vote in Parliamentary Elections," Rudnitzky, "Back to the Knesset?" and David Koren, "Arab Israeli Citizens in the 2009 Elections: Between Israeli Citizenship and Palestinian Arab Identity," *Israel Affairs* 16, no. 1 (January 2010): 124–41.

I argue that using resources illegally necessitate power to negotiate with the decision-makers for them to turn a blind eye to illegal access. The slum dwellers that Bayat studied were able to use electricity illegally because the municipality turned a blind eye to their illegal activity hoping to get their electoral support.[447] Landless peasants of Sedaka were able to continue to steal rice from the rich landowners because they were indispensable in the village's closed economic system which depended on their physical labor.[448] Replacing the poor peasants of the village with outsiders would disturb the existing social hierarchies upon which the power of the wealthy rested. Like these cases, the Kurdish farmers discussed in the previous chapter were able to negotiate their illegal access to electricity with Turkish politicians because the party needed their votes to get more seats in the parliament and be re-elected as single-party government.

As the first part of this chapter showed, the Bedouin community lacked economic and electoral power that they could leverage to negotiate their illegal access with politicians. Israeli politicians did not have any incentive to turn a blind eye to any illegal activities on the part of the Bedouin. On the contrary, the state actors' political and electoral preference was to appeal for votes from larger electorates with the exact opposite demands than the Bedouin. The follow-up question is: What happens when a marginalized community lacks power to negotiate? The rest of this chapter discusses the methods of struggle that the highly-marginalized Bedouin community—lacking power to negotiate illegality—use to access the denied resources.

[447] Bayat, Life as Politics.
[448] Scott, Weapons of the Weak.

5.2. Photovoltaic Resistance: The Use of Solar Panels in 'Unrecognized' Villages

Sami and his family were living in the 'unrecognized' village As-Sirrah Bedouin to which the state institutions were not providing water, sewage, or electricity. During my visit to his house, he took me for a tour to his highly technical, homemade, off-grid infrastructure system. On the roof of his single-floor house, Sami had two solar panels. One of the panels was for instant electricity consumption of the household. All the lamps, electric appliances, water heating system, heaters, and plugs were connected to this panel. The second panel was to store energy that would be used on less sunny days. Even though the state refused to connect Sami's house to the national electric grid, the family was able to produce their own electricity thanks to solar energy and the decreasing price of solar panels. Sami was not an engineer but had to learn how to build a complex off-grid infrastructure system to provide for his family. Like Sami, many Bedouin men and women became self-made technicians and mechanics. In 'unrecognized' villages, the rooftops were covered with solar panels producing electricity.

Sami and his neighbors did not install solar panels to 'go green' like many other photovoltaic panel users in the country. Environmental sensibility was a side-effect of the method they chose to survive and improve their lives. They needed artificial light, coolness, and heat as much as their neighboring communities. Solar panels enabled them to get electricity despite the state's refusal to provide them with basic infrastructure.

In his analysis of slum resistance in India, Mahmud argues that "in conditions of extreme marginality, survival itself is resistance, particularly when one perpetually has to transgress lines of legality to live, work, and survive."[449] In the Bedouin case, where the community was unable

[449] Tayyab Mahmud, "Slums, Slumdogs, and Resistance," *American University Journal of Gender, Social Policy, and the Law* 18, no. 3 (2010), 685-710.

to convince politicians either provide the resource or to turn a blind eye to illegal consumption, solar panels turned into unintentional tools of resistance. Off-grid systems significantly improved life in the 'unrecognized' villages. (See Figure 5.2.) Before solar panels, the villagers were relying on gas generators that were dangerous, environmentally hazardous, and expensive as their operating costs fluctuated with gas prices. With the proliferation of technology and with electricity becoming a fundamental need, more families bought solar panels. When a Bedouin entrepreneur started to sell solar panels to his fellows in 2003, photovoltaic panels became an indispensable part of Bedouin life in the villages.

Source: Picture taken by the author.

Figure 5.2. Solar Panels in the 'Unrecognized' Bedouin Village ʿAtīr

With increased use, solar panels turned into agents shaping the state-Bedouin struggle over access to resources. The panels transformed the scope, intensity, and timeline of the struggle conducted between the Bedouin and the state. With solar panels, Bedouin's living conditions in the villages and opportunities available to them significantly changed. Before photovoltaic technology, the only ways of accessing electricity was either being connected to the national electric grid managed by the state or buying expensive gasoline-powered electricity generators that most Bedouin could not effort. The state was using its power over access to infrastructure as a carrot-and-stick to punish the Bedouin who insist on living in villages and force them to move into state-planned towns.

The panels made it possible for the Bedouin to access the denied resource despite state agents' denial. Bedouin could heat and cool their homes and their food, connect to the world via computer, television, and cellphones, and use electrical appliances. For Salem, a local activist, the extensive use of solar panels in 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages that the state refused to provide the basic infrastructure to should be seen as a statement of Bedouin resilience. Salem explained:

> We have a saying, 'الحاجة أم الإختراع.' It means 'need is the mother of creativity.' It is like that in the Negev. People were using gasoline [powered electricity] generators, but they were expensive. So they started to use the sun of the Negev. Solar panels are things that saved the Bedouin's life and it is a very strong political message. Even though you don't give us electricity, we do have electricity, we can generate it. Even though you don't give us electricity, Bedouin can keep struggling, like in the al-ʿArāgīb [an 'unrecognized' Bedouin village demolished by the state and rebuilt by Bedouin multiple times].[450]

[450] Interview in Rahaṭ, May 20, 2015.

In the Bedouin case, solar panels were versatile tools. As Abu-Lughod suggests, such tools need to be discussed in terms of what they indicate about the forms of power that they are up against.[451] When the use of solar panels started to challenge the state's infrastructural authority over the Bedouin, public bodies found a new way of approaching the panels to re-establish their power on the community.

The Director of the RCUV Fadi Masamra, underlined that the photovoltaic technology was still inaccessible for many low-income Bedouin families. Masamra also expressed concerns that the widespread use of solar panels might undervalue the difficulties Bedouin were facing in their everyday life because of state's refusal to connect the villages to the public infrastructure.[452] Like Masamra, Salem described photovoltaic technology as part of a bigger struggle composed of multiple parts, not an alternative one:

> The struggle is kind of a principle thing in the unrecognized villages. Otherwise, no one would consent to live under the circumstances under which the Bedouin lives, even in the best unrecognized village [which are the ones with solar panels]. Bedouin lived through Naqba, they lived through racism. They got to this point and they cannot go back anymore. They cannot settle for less than what they ask for.[453]

The Bedouin's claims to their ancestral and existing village lands were at the center of the struggle between the state and the community. By using access to infrastructure and service as a carrot-and-stick device, the state agents tried to "convince" the Bedouin to give up their land claims and move into the state-planned towns. Panels intervened and deeply transformed the direction, length, and methods of the struggle between the state and the Bedouin. By making life in the 'unrecognized' villages somewhat easier, solar panels gave the Bedouin time to build a

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[451] Lila Abu-Lughod, "The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women," *American Ethnologist American Ethnologist* 17, no. 1 (1990), 42.
[452] Informal talk in Rahaṭ, May 20, 2015.
[453] Interview in Rahaṭ, May 20, 2015.

multi-level struggle repertoire without compromising their de facto claims on the land they live. The discrepancy in the state of Israel's argument of being a state for all its citizens and its Bedouin policy provided the ground for the Bedouin to voice their demands on multiple levels. The third part of this chapter examines the struggle repertoire the Bedouin community used to change state policies and gain access to the denied public infrastructure.

5.3. Return of the Outcastes: Demanding Equal Rights in a Democracy

Israeli state institutions designed to promote social reforms and amenities for its Jewish citizens turned into mechanisms oppressing and discriminating against the Bedouin community.[454] The development-focused institutions and infrastructure distribution projects were promoting the wellbeing of the Jewish community by depriving and segregating the Bedouin. In the villages, the Bedouin were punished with a denial of basic infrastructure. When they moved to the state-planned towns, they suffered from limited, expensive, and inadequate access to infrastructural resources compared to their Jewish neighbors.

For the marginalized minorities, democracy brings dilemmas of engaging with the state. The Kurds in Turkey used their electoral power to negotiate with politicians and make them compliant with their illegal electricity usage. As their engagement through electoral mechanisms to decision-makers was hampered,[455] the Bedouin developed new struggle repertoires to force the state actors to secure their community's access to resources. The Bedouin who gained time in villages by using solar energy started to build solidarity networks to carry their demands to

[454] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy*, 193.
[455] Alex Shankland, "The Indigenous People's Movement, 'Forest Citizenship' and Struggles over Health Services in Acre, Brazil," in *Mobilizing for Democracy: Citizen Action and the Politics of Public Participation*, ed. Vera Schattan, P. Coelho, and Bettina von Lieres, (New York: Zed Books, 2010), 99–119.

venues outside of the electoral system: courtrooms, streets, and the international arena. The following subsections discuss how the Bedouin used each venue for different claims. Using the advantages of each venue, the Bedouin try to corner the state actors and gain access to resources.

5.3.1. Taking Demands to the Courtrooms

The power of law is a special one. Procedural and linguistic rules of the legal system create a symbolic power necessitating the existence of intermediaries to translate demands to the language of law in the correct way, at the right place, and for the right interlocutor. As Bourdieu puts it, "The [legal] professionals create the need for their own services by redefining problems in ordinary language as legal problems, translating them into the language of the law and proposing a prospective evaluation of the chances for success of different strategies."[456] The ordinary person needs legal specialists to become a plaintiff and enter the field of law.

The Israeli legal system was formally open the Bedouin community. Yet, the community lacked the mastery over the language of law and needed intermediaries to translate their demands. The Bedouin unlocked a legal venue by cooperating with the legal centers and human rights groups experienced in translating demands into the language of law and navigating in the legal field.

The Israeli NGOs, The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel — عدالة – المركز القانوني لحماية حقوق الأقلية العربية في اسرائيل (*Adalah*) that is the first non-profit Palestinian-run legal center in Israel and the Association for Civil Rights in Israel — האגודה לזכויות האזרח בישראל (ACRI) that is a non-profit with the mission of protecting human rights and civil rights in Israel,

[456] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Force of Law: Toward a Sociology of the Juridical Field," trans. Richard Terdiman, *The Hastings Law Journal* 38, no. 5 (July 1987), 834.

provided a much needed legal service to the Bedouin community. On multiple occasions, lawyers from *Adalah* or ACRI prepared petitions and took Bedouin demands to the district courts as well as to the Israeli Supreme Court (בית המשפט העליון) acting as the High Court of Justice – בית משפט גבוה לצדק (HCJ). Pro-Bedouin NGOs leveraged their lawyers' knowledge of the legal system to create changes. The lawyers followed the cases, informed the community members on the rulings and their potential implications.

Sarat and Scheingold define lawyers who deploy their legal skills to challenge prevailing distributions of political, social, economic, and/or legal values and resources as "cause lawyers."[457] The cause lawyers working for pro-Bedouin NGOs allocated their energy and knowledge on litigation activities aimed at initiating positive changes for the community by helping them gain access to resources. In developing legal strategies, preparing case files, taking the cases to the court, collecting data to support the villagers' claims, and strengthening the application by adding their NGO's name as one of plaintiffs in cases, pro-Bedouin NGOs created a legal network and made the courtrooms accessible to the community. Their cooperation did not only open the Israeli courts to the Bedouin demands, but also shaped the way the community was seeing and understanding their case and the system. The language of law penetrated into the Bedouin language, transforming the way the community members perceived and expressed their situation. While talking about the denied infrastructure to the community, Masamra recalled the time he discussed the topic with the Minister of Wealth, saying:

> Once I asked to the Minister of Wealth, at the Knesset 'Does not every citizen have basic rights? It is a collective punishment. Not all the Bedouin have land claims. Why do none of them gets basic services?' He did not have an answer.[458]

[457] Stuart A. Scheingold and Austin Sarat, eds., *Cause Lawyering and the State in a Global Era*, Oxford Socio-Legal Studies Cause Lawyering and the State in a Global Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 13.
[458] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 3, 2015.

The solidarity network between the cause lawyers and the Bedouin helped the community to partially access water infrastructure. Many Bedouin villagers applied to the Committee of Allocating Drinking Water working under the Authority for Water and Sewage to demand access to water and were rejected. After multiple rejections, *Adalah* lawyers took the Bedouin case to the HCJ in 2001. In their HCJ petition, the lawyers defined access-to-water as an inseparable part of the Israeli Basic Law on Human Dignity and Liberty[459] attributing the state institutions the responsibility of preserving citizens' life, body, and dignity.

In 2003, the HCJ reached a final verdict on the case and accepted that access to water infrastructure as an inseparable part of Bedouin's basic rights as Israeli citizens.[460] The court asked the Bedouin community to submit individual and specific requests to the Committee of Allocating Drinking Water and dictated that Committee answer these demands in accordance with the HCJ verdict. Following the verdict, the Committee gave permits to most of the plaintiffs to connect their village to water distribution units but rejected some. Years after the initial HCJ decision, six appellants, each representing several dozen Bedouin villagers, took their case back to the HCJ with the help of the cause lawyers. The appellants argued that, by rejecting their applications, the Water Committee acted against the HCJ verdict.

In its defense, the Water Committee stated that it acknowledged the right to water as one of the basic rights and state's obligation to provide water to its citizens. However, the Water Committee defense letter continued, the HCJ should take into consideration in its verdict that the

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[459] Basic Laws are the constitutional laws of Israel. The Basic Law Human Dignity and Liberty passed by the Knesset on the 12th Adar Bet, 5752 (March 17, 1992) and published in Sefer Ha-Chukkim No. 1391 of the 20th Adar Bet, 5752 (March 25, 1992); the Bill and an Explanatory Note were published in Hatza'ot Chok, No. 2086 of 5752, 60.

[460] HCJ 3586/01, Regional Council of Unrecognized Bedouin Villages in the Negev et al. vs. Ministry of Infrastructure, May 7, 2001.

Bedouin settlements have been "illegal" and contradicting the planning law and government policy. The committee's response implied that the commission members were not denying water to the Bedouin, they were denying it to the villages where the Bedouin were living. The response continued as follows:

> The right to water is a component of the right of the appellants to health and dignity, and the State is obliged to provide them with water in order to uphold this right. However, it was determined that in the balance between the right to water, on the one hand, and the public interest of upholding policies of planning and the enforcement of planning laws, on the other hand, the public interest overpowers the interest of the appellants, and the appeal must, therefore, be rejected.[461]

The case of the Bedouin's demand to access water started a power struggle between administrative and legal actors. While trying to enforce an image of coherence and order through regularity and repetitiveness,[462] state practices were operating through chains of inter-connected prerogatives[463] producing conflicting and overlapping practices. With each of their access demands, the Bedouin were forcing the courts to conduct two separate negotiations. On one level, the courts were negotiating with the Bedouin representatives about the limits of their access. On the other level, they were renegotiating their power and role within the state system with other institutions. In her final ruling, Justice E. Procaccia accepted three of the appellants, and rejected another three cases that she sent back to the Water Committee for additional examinations. Justice E. Procaccia used her verdict as a ground to conduct simultaneous negotiations with the Bedouin community and state institutions stating:

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[461] Civil Appeal No. 9535/06, *Adalah*, June 5, 2011. English version of the appeal: https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/upfiles/2012/Supreme%20Court%20Ruling,%20Civil%20Appeal%20No.%209535.06%20-%20Abu%20Masad,%20Right%20to%20Water%20-%20English.pdf.

[462] Timothy Mitchell, "Everyday Metaphors of Power," *Theory and Society* 19, no. 5 (1990), 571.

[463] Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 58.

> As long as the problem of isolation of the unrecognized settlements continues, the existing gap regarding convenient accessibility of all services, and water sources, in particular, will remain. But one must ensure in all cases reasonable accessibility on a minimum level, even if not through private connections to homes in illegal settlements. Thus, the state must also provide for specific needs on a humanitarian basis, when the need arises.[464]

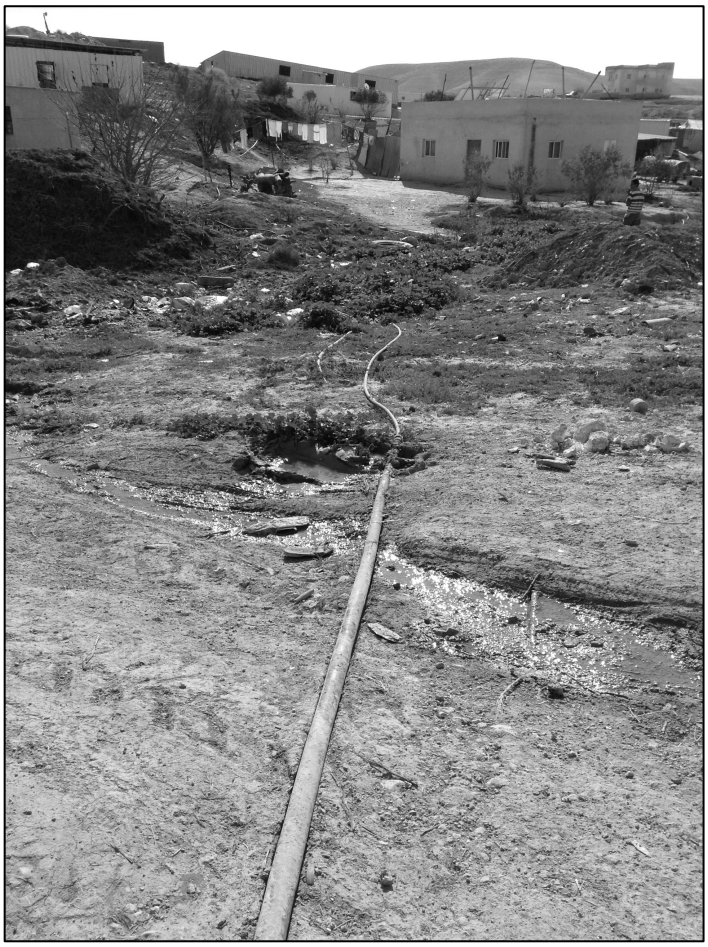
The national water company, Mekorot, implemented the "minimum access" principle mentioned in the verdict by giving the Bedouin the right to establish above-ground communal water hose to carry water from company's connection point to their villages at their own expenses. The water company allowed only a limited number of connections for each village and issued a single, village-level bill. It was villagers' responsibility to carry the water from connection point, distribute it to houses, and divide the billed amount among households.

The above-ground hoses could be damaged easily and Mekorot was not taking any responsibility for the damages. Villagers were responsible for the water loss between the connection point and their village, multiple kilometers in many cases. (See Figure 5.3) In some villages, villagers established rotating "hose checking teams" regularly walking through the hose to check any loss and fix the breaks to prevent water leakage.

The Bedouin were treated as wholesale customers—similarly to factories and companies—and were paying higher than the individual households. If an individual consumer failed to pay, the company would cut water of that specific unit. If a Bedouin villager failed to pay, the company would cut the water of the whole village. Sami's village, As-Sirrah, was one of the 'unrecognized' villages with connection permits. The closest water connection point was six kilometers from Sami's house. As-Sirrah villagers bought a meter and connected it to the

[464] Civil Appeal No. 9535/06, *Adalah*, June 5, 2011, https://www.adalah.org/uploads/oldfiles/upfiles/2012/Supreme%20Court%20Ruling,%20Civil%20Appeal%20No.%209535.06%20-%20Abu%20Masad,%20Right%20to%20Water%20-%20English.pdf.

distribution point to calculate the water pumped from the Mekorot distribution unit to the village's hose. They built a makeshift distribution unit at the village center to calculate water pumped to each above-ground water hose. Sami and his brother—living next door—have been sharing a single hose. To calculate their individual household usage, they established a third meter at the entrance of their houses. At each payment period, villagers were calculating their consumption, collecting the money, and paying the single bill sent by Mekorot.



Source: Picture taken by the author.

Figure 5.3. Above Ground Hose Carrying Water from Mekorot Connection Point the 'Recognized' Village As-Sirrah

Depending on the distance between the connection point and the village, the topography of the region, and the number of houses connected, water pressure was changed from one village to another, from one house to another. While the houses closer to the connection point were enjoying uninterrupted water, the ones located further away from the connection point were struggling with frequent water cuts and low pressure.

The make-shift solution provided by Mekorot and the court was not sustainable or ideal. However, by taking the demand for access to water to court and using the language of law with an emphasis on citizenship rights, the Bedouin managed to gain access to infrastructure that they were denied before. However, it was not the case for every one of the community's demand for access. As discussed in Chapter 3, none of the Bedouin villages—neither 'unrecognized' nor 'recognized' ones—were connected to the national electric grid.

In 1998, a group of Bedouin represented by the Clinical Center for Civil Rights at Tel Aviv University, petitioned the HCJ and demanded electricity provision to the twelve schools located in 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages.[465] The electricity company connected some of the schools to the grid and distributed electricity generators to the rest. In July 2009, *Adalah* Attorney Morad El-Sana submitted a petition to the HCJ and demanded connection of all schools located in the 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages to the national electric grid. The petition was submitted on behalf of the students and the heads of the parents' committees of each school as well as non-governmental organizations, including the RCUV, the Follow-up Committee for Arab Education, and the Association of Forty.[466] The Ministry of Education responded, stating

[465] Michal Rotem, "Pounding Pencils in the Ground: The Role of the Struggle for Education in the Production of Space in the Israeli Negev-Naqab" (Master thesis, Ben Gurion University of Negev, 2015), http://aranne5.bgu.ac.il/others/RotemMichal.pdf.
[466] HCJ 5475/09, *Aiob Abu Sabelah, et al. vs. Ministry of Education, et al.,* November 20, 2008.

that both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Interior were committed to connecting all the schools located in the 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages to the national electricity network.

In 2013, there were seven schools that were not connected to the electric grid. *Adalah* lawyers, on behalf of Ibrahim Abu Kaff and other villagers living in 'unrecognized' villages with unconnected schools, petitioned the HCJ and asked for the connection of all seven schools to the grid. The petitioners pointed out that large generators and fuel tanks located in school playgrounds have been major health and safety hazard for students and they make noise hindering teaching.[467] Before the HCJ reached its final decision, the Ministry of Education already connected three of the schools to the grid.[468]

Even though they were few, the Israeli courts' pro-Bedouin decisions significantly improved life in the 'unrecognized' villages. By connecting Bedouin houses to the water distribution system and Bedouin schools to the electric grid, the HCJ partially rewrote the state Bedouin policy. As Sally E. Merry states, "As an ideology, law contains both elements of domination and the seeds of resistance. It provides a way of legitimating property and privilege as well as a way of challenging property and privilege."[469] Accessing the legal arena was

[467] "Adalah Petitions Supreme Court to Connect Seven Bedouin Schools in the Naqab to Electricity Grid," *Adalah*, July 24, 2013, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/8192.
[468] "Three Arab Bedouin Schools in the Naqab to be Connected to Electricity Grid Following Adalah's Petition to the Supreme Court," *Adalah*, March 28, 2014, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/8262
[469] Sally Engle Merry, *Getting Justice and Getting Even: Legal Consciousness among Working-Class Americans*, Language and Legal Discourse (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 8.

particularly useful for the Bedouin to gain a voice, as courts must hear every claim and give reasons for their decisions.[470]

As stated before, every HCJ verdict was also part of a negotiation conducted between other state institutions and the court. The court's ability to intervene and reverse the political decisions was limited by the existing laws which were made and ratified by political actors. Despite securing some significant gains, court cases that the Bedouin could win by working within the Israeli legal system were highly limited, both in terms of numbers and impact. One of the legal advocates working for ACRI explained the restriction around the court power as follows:

> Most of the time the high court would say, I do not want to intervene. They say 'There are issues that should be promoted by the legislation, but these [what you bring in front of the court] are matters that should be promoted by the Knesset. If you don't have a law that legalizes the water supply, I, as the court cannot do anything about it…' In the case of water and electricity you don't have a specific law… Therefore, I think education and health are the two areas that we can do something about. They are already legalized; we have the law and very specific demands. We have feasible solutions. But for other kind of things it becomes more political.[471]

While giving access to water and electricity in schools, the Israeli courts refused cases on access to irrigation water, sewage, transportation systems, and the electric grid. While taking their demands to the courts and trying to get as much as they could from the legal system, the Bedouin community and its allies also used other venues to demand access, create pressure on the government and to create awareness on their cases.

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[470] Richard Abel, "Speaking Law to Power: Occasions of Cause Lawyering," in *Cause Lawyering and the State in a Global Era*, ed. Stuart A. Scheingold and Austin Sarat, Oxford Socio-Legal Studies Cause Lawyering and the State in a Global Era (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 95.
[471] Interview in Be'er Sheva, January 15, 2015.

5.3.2. Taking Demands to the Streets

Shortly after the formulation of the Prawer plan, in April 2012, *Adalah* and ACRI submitted their reservations regarding the constitutional issues in the draft proposal of the bill to the Minister of Justice Ze'ev Binyamin Begin and Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.[472] In June 2013, appended with Minister Begin's recommendations, the Prawer Plan was approved at its first Knesset hearing. The following month, the Israeli Cabinet approved the 2013-2017 National Negev Development Plan, including the Prawer Plan and allocated 500 million NIS for its implementation. The next day, Bedouin protestors and their allies took to the streets across Israel as well as the occupied territories in East Jerusalem, Jaffa, Shaknin in Galilee, and Be'er Sheva in the Negev to protest the plan.[473] Police arrested 13 protestors in Be'er Sheva.[474]

The Bedouin youth organized a large-scale demonstration that simultaneously took place in Israeli cities and European capitals before the second hearing of the Prawer Plan in the Knesset, on the 30 November 2013.[475] The main organizer of the "Day of Rage" demonstration was the grassroots Bedouin movement called *Hirak al-Shababi* — the Youth Movement. The movement took place outside of the hierarchical power structures of the community. Organizers worked together with young Bedouin across clans and localities as well as Palestinians, Jewish Israelis, and European activists. The movement managed to build a network of activists working

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[472] "Re: Memorandum of Law on the Regulation of Bedouin Settlement in the Negev, 5772-2012," ACRI, April 1, 2012, https://www.acri.org.il/en/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/ACRI-Adalah-Prawer-April12.pdf.
[473] "Live Blog: Protests across Israel/Palestine against Prawer Plan," News website, *+972* (blog), July 15, 2013, https://972mag.com/nstt_feeditem/photos-hundreds-protest-prawer-plan-in-the-negev/.
[474] "Latest Developments Regarding Detained Demonstrators in the Naqab," *Adalah,* July 17, 2013, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/8187.
[475] Daniel Tepper and Samuel Gilbert, "Day of Rage over Bedouin Displacement Plan," *Al-Jazeera*, February 8. 2013, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/inpictures/2013/08/20138216944374202.html.

around the Bedouin cause, which helped them reach a broader audience and receive coverage from international news agencies to draw international attention to the Bedouin case.

The November 2013 demonstration was not the first Bedouin protest action against the state. The year before the Prawer Plan and the protests around it, 2,000 Bedouin from Bir Hadaj village demonstrated outside of the government office in Be'er Sheva demanding the state rescind its plan to demolish their village.[476] However, the November 2013 demonstration was the largest, most-organized, Bedouin-initiated demonstration which showed the Bedouin were capable of bringing together community members across clans, ages, and political views.

At the heart of the protests was the state-planned Bedouin town of Ḥūrah. Some of the young Bedouin men came to the protest on horses, a gesture recalling the traditional Bedouin lifestyle. Bedouin children came to the demonstration carrying colorful kites, symbolizing hope. Demonstrations that started non-violent took a slightly violent shape later in the day. Some protestors breached the barricades and clashed with the police. They blocked the main roads inside and outside of Ḥūrah and burnt tires. The police used tear gas and rubber-coated steel bullets to disperse the protestors.[477] Authorities arrested 34 people including minors. 15 police officers and 2 fire fighters were injured in the struggle.[478]

The demonstration signaled two major changes taking place within the community. The first was the changing relationship between young and old Bedouin. Traditionally, the Bedouin

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[476] Yanir Yagna, "Israeli Bedouin Stage Mass Protest in the Wake of Home Demolition Orders," *Haaretz,* December 10, 2012, http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/israeli-bedouin-stage-mass-protest-in-wake-of-home-demolition-orders.premium-1.470792.
[477] "Activist Hold 'Day of Rage' Protests Against Prawer Plan," *+972*, 30 October 2013, https://972mag.com/activists-stage-day-of-rage-protests-against-prawer-plan/82706/.
[478] Shirly Seidler, Jack Khoury, and Yaniv Kubovich, "Police, Protesters Clash Across Israel at Rallies Against Bedouin Relocation," *Haaretz*, November 30, 2013, http://www.haaretz.com/israel-news/1.560995.

community had a strictly hierarchical structure. However, on the Day of Rage, the young Bedouin took the lead and the elders followed them. One of the *Hirak al-Shababi* members explained that the demonstration shook the internal hierarchy of the Bedouin community.

> In our society, if you are young you cannot talk. We started this movement against the local and political leaders of the community. By that time, they learned to respect our initiative. 60 percent of the community is under 18. We are well connected with the modern world around us. When the older generation steps aside, we will take the initiative. Our parents are scared of state authority. For them, you cannot resist it…[479]

The second change was in Bedouin relation to the state. The Bedouin were not fully integrated into the Arab-Palestinian national independence movement. Most of them served in the Israeli military, protected the border between the region and the West Bank, and accepted most of the state's decisions, including the relocation to *siyag*, without questioning. [480] Yet, the demonstrations against the Prawer Plan showed the Bedouin youth would not accept the state policies silently as their parents did. They were ready and able to get organized, connect with other groups to make their voices heard.

The Day of Rage was a test for the community's organizing ability and determination. For the first time, Bedouin across clans and localities came together to ask for the same thing. The *Hirak al-Shababi* built solidarity networks inside and outside of Israel. Hundreds of Europeans and Israelis took to the streets the same day to protest against the Prawer Plan. There were demonstrations in Rome, Berlin, Cairo, Istanbul and in some cities of the United States.[481] The demonstration changed the Bedouin image in the eyes of the broader Arab-Palestinian

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[479] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 26, 2015.
[480]Cohen, Good Arabs, 181.
[481] Harriet Sherwood, "Israel's Plan to Forcibly Resettle Negev Bedouins Prompts Global Protests," *The Guardian,* January 12, 2013, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/01/israel-negev-bedouins-day-of-rage.

community. Bedouin were traditionally disconnected from the rest of the Arab-Palestinian community in the country. The closed and hierarchical structure of the community, its semi-nomadic lifestyle, and living in the southern desert were the factors complicating the building of a common identity with the rest of the Arab-Palestinian Israeli citizens. As a *Hirak al-Shababi* member put it, the demonstration was the beginning of new relations between the Arab-Palestinian community and the Bedouin:

> Normally we are considered to be in the south, far from the community, illiterate. They say, 'Bedouin serve in the [Israeli] military, they are less patriotic [of Palestine].' For the first time, Bedouin community was appreciated by the broader Palestinian community. Bedouin for the first time initiated something that had a nationwide impact. Now, people wanted to work with us.[482]

For the Bedouin, taking their case to the streets was a way of making their voices heard and repeating their demands the courts did not acknowledge. In a newspaper interview, a 70-year-old Bedouin demonstrator voiced the mood saying, "We have submitted a complaint to the court, but we feel that democracy and justice in Israel do not apply to us."[483] The demonstration received broad media coverage and drew attention to the Bedouin demands as well as the discriminatory nature of the state plan. 12 days after the Day of Rage demonstrations, on the 12th of December 2013, Cabinet Minister Benny Begin announced that the government decided to shelve the Prawer Plan until further notice. The international arena was another venue for the Bedouin to voice their access-related demands and underline the discriminatory nature of the state's resource distribution and access policies in the region.

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[482] Interview in Be'er Sheva, March 2, 2015.
[483] "Protest over Israel's Bedouin Plan Results in Arrests, Injuries," *Al-Jazeera,* October 30, 2013, http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/11/30/arrests-at-protestoverisraelsbedouinplan.html.

5.3.3. Taking Demands to the International Organizations

The Negev Coexistence Forum for Civil Equality — פורום דו-קיום בנגב לשוויון אזרחי (NCF) was one of the NGOs working very closely with the Bedouin community. NCF is a community based organization established in 1997 by a group of Bedouin and Jewish residents of the Negev/Naqab to provide a framework for collaborative efforts between Jews and Bedouin in the struggle for civil equality and the advancement of mutual tolerance and coexistence.[484] Besides filling petitions against discriminatory practices of the state in collaboration with other NGOs, the NCF conducted advocacy activities to bring the Bedouin case to the international community's attention.

One among many advocacy projects conducted by the NCF was the "Alternative Naqab Tour" challenging the official claims about the Bedouin community.[485] Visiting 'recognized' and 'unrecognized' Bedouin villages and state-planned towns, international and Israeli visitors joining the tours had the opportunity to listen the Bedouin's accounts of the state's discriminatory resource allocation policies and human rights violations. During my field research, a group of ex-British parliamentarians and activists were visiting the region on their way back from the West Bank. The NCF organized a three-day tour during which the group visited villages demolished in 1948, unrecognized and recognized villages, and state-planned Bedouin towns. At each location, they visited residents' houses, the municipality building, and community centers. They talked to residents, leaders, academics, lawyers, and activists. Based on their visit, the group prepared a report to be shared with political parties back in the United Kingdom.

[484] "About Us," NCF, http://www.dukium.org/about-us/.
[485] "Join the Alternative Naqab Tour!," NCF, http://www.dukium.org/tout-the-negev-with-ncf/

In 2013, the NCF received the status of Special Consultative Organization in the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations and all its sub-bodies. This status allowed the NGO to submit updates to UN representatives, to participate in the council and committee meeting and to present its view. The organization regularly sent representatives from the Bedouin community to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues to relate the Bedouin's case in the forum. NCF also submitted multiple shadow reports describing the Bedouin's living conditions and demands to various UN committees in response to the reports submitted by the state of Israel.[486]

Beside the NCF, ACRI and *Adalah* were also conducting advocacy work in international organizations such as the European Union and the United Nations to raise awareness on the Bedouin case and to ensure international pressure on the state of Israel. *Adalah* sent concluding observations and recommendations to the UN bodies on multiple occasions. The cause lawyers worked with Special Rapporteurs, Committees, and Missions from the UN to push for measures to make sure Israel complied with the international law.[487]

Connected to social movements, state agencies, and international organizations, the pro-Bedouin NGOs took central roles in advocacy networks.[488] They documented abuses and discrimination. They mobilized information strategically to help create agendas, new categories, and gain leverage over the government. They prepared reports and booklets and fed the international institutions with information collected in the region. International organizations functioned as a safe ground for the pro-Bedouin NGOs to bring expertise to be used against their

[486] "International Lobby," NCF, http://www.dukium.org/education-advocacy/.
[487] "Achievements," *Adalah*, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/7716.
[488] Margaret E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink, *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 6.

powerful opponent and to engage in mass communication without the resources available to major public relations firms.[489] In cooperation with the Bedouin community, they developed action plans and put pressure on the powerful international actors for them to sway the state of Israel to treat the Bedouin equally, not only on paper but also in practice.

As a result of these advocacy efforts, UN and EU made various statements and declarations criticizing Israel's discriminatory policies in the Negev/Naqab region and its denial of resources to the Bedouin community. In December of 2011, United Nations Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (CESCR) issued observations criticizing the rights violations committed against the Negev/Naqab Bedouin and expressing concerns about the Prawer Plan. The committee recommended the state of Israel "ensure that the implementation of the Plan does not result in forceful eviction of the Bedouin."[490] The committee also raised concerns regarding the high unemployment and poverty rates among the Bedouin, as well as restrictions on their right to education due to lack of transportation infrastructure.[491] In June 2013, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) issued its concluding observations expressing concerns about Israel's violations of the health and education rights of Bedouin children.[492] The report urged the state of Israel "to include the prohibition of discrimination and

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[489] Johanna Siméant, "Interpreting the Rise of International 'Advocacy,'" trans. Taponier Susan, *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 5, no. 3 (2014): 323–43.
[490] UN Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, "Consideration of Reports Submitted by States Parties Under Article 16 and 17 of the Covenant: Concluding Observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights," November 14-December 2, 2011, http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/292721/E_C.12_ISR_CO_3-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y.
[491] "UN CESCR: Israel Should Fully Respect Arab Bedouin Rights to Their Ancestral Lands," *Adalah*, December 8, 2011, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/7566.
[492] UN Children's Rights Committee Harshly Criticizes Israel for Unequal Treatment of Arab and Arab Bedouin Children," *Adalah*, June 23, 2013, https://www.adalah.org/en/content/view/8178.

the principle of equality in its Basic Laws and undertake a comprehensive review of its legislation and policies to ensure that laws that discriminate against non-Jewish children be repealed without delay."[493] A couple of days after the first reading of the Prawer Plan at the Knesset, the United Nations Human Rights Chief made a public declaration urging Israel to reconsider the proposed law. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Navi Pillay stated that the government had ignored rights of its citizens. Pillay stated:

> As citizens of Israel, the Arab Bedouin are entitled to the same rights to property, housing, and public services as any other group in Israel… The Government must recognize and respect the specific rights of its Bedouin communities, including recognition of Bedouin land ownership claims.[494]

Before the tenth meeting of the EU-Israel Association Council (AC), *Adalah* and the Arab Association for Human Rights — المنظمة العربية لحقوق الإنسان (HRA) published reports listing specific steps the EU could take to improve the treatment of the Bedouin minority without harming its relations with Israel. They also sent individual letters to the EU member states' consulates in Israel on legal discrimination against the Arab-Palestinian citizens of the country. The Council put the EU-Israel relations on hold until the further notice. To pressure the individual countries that have close relations with Israel, the NCF regularly informed the embassies, organized the tours and lectures for diplomats, and submitted regular reports on their research findings. The pro-Bedouin NGOs managed to include the Bedouin case in agenda of the international organizations.

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[493] UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, "Concluding Observations on the Second and Forth Periodic Reports of Israel, Adopted by the Committee at its Sixty-Third Session," 27 May-14 June 2013, http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/co/CRC-C-ISR-CO-2-4.pdf.
[494] United Nations, "UN News - UN Rights Chief Urges Israel to Reconsider Bill That Would Displace Thousands of Bedouins," *UN News Service Section*, July 25, 2013, http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=45495#.WJPs12W_vbA.

Solidarity networks built with legal advocacy groups, Palestinian and Israeli international activists, and NGOs provided new tools and opened new venues for Bedouin to demand equal access to resources. The community turned the courtrooms, international institutions, and streets into platforms to voice their demands and repeat their equality and access demands. The NGOs and activist groups leveraged their legal experience and organizational power to put direct pressure on the state as well as gain the attention of more powerful political actors for indirect pressure. Pushed outside of the electoral system, alliances with these groups enabled the Bedouin to put indirect pressure on the government.

Solidarity networks transformed into efforts to change the dominant public discourse and create public space for the marginalized Bedouin community. Third parties supporting the Bedouin struggle against the state changed not only some part of the state's policies towards Bedouin, but also the way the Bedouin men and women described their situation and advocated for their case. The rule of law, litigation, non-violence, and advocacy became integral to the Bedouin struggle to gain access to denied resources.

5.4. Conclusion

Using resources illegally necessitates a degree of compliance from the resource distributor. Slum dwellers could keep using electricity illegally because the municipality turned a blind eye to their illegal activity hoping to get their electoral support.[495] Peasants could keep stealing rice from landowners because they were indispensable in the village's closed production system.[496] Along

[495] Bayat, Life as Politics.
[496] Scott, Weapons of the Weak.

similar lines, the Kurds were able to continue to access the electric grid illegally and negotiate their illegal access with politicians because the government party needed and wanted their votes.

The Bedouin community in Israel, on the contrary, had neither electoral weight nor been economically indispensable. Israeli politicians did not have any incentive to turn a blind eye to the community's illegal access to resources. On the contrary, they had strong electoral incentive in enclaving this ethno-religious minority by forcing them to move into state-planned towns and to distribute the lands claimed by the Bedouin community to the Jewish citizens of the country. To achieve their goals, politicians used infrastructure provisions as a carrot-and-stick device.

Not able to negotiate illegal access, the Bedouin were forced to resist the relocation policies and persuade the state agents to change their Bedouin policy simultaneously. Buying solar panels and producing their own electricity, the Bedouin were not only showing the state their determination and resilience, but also practically managing to live in the 'unrecognized' villages to which the state agents were not providing infrastructure. Solar panels transformed the terms, longitude, and direction of the Bedouin struggle conducted against the state's discriminatory policies. Installing photovoltaic panels enabled the Bedouin to continue their struggle to change the state policy without losing their de facto land claims. Meanwhile, the Bedouin community established solidarity networks with activists and NGOs that could voice their demands on multiple venues and put pressure on the state of Israel to change its Bedouin policies. The Bedouin and their allies challenged the dominant public discourse of the country and pressured the state by using different combinations of litigation, protests, and international advocacy. The language of Bedouin struggle was the language of the rule of law, citizen participation, and human rights. Ironically, while the Kurds' access to resources was achieved through negotiation of votes in exchange for access, the Bedouin community that was not

economically or electorally powerful enough for recurring stealing was obliged to use methods taking their strength from the concept of democracy, a system whose practice ironically excluded and discriminated against their community.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: What Does Infrastructure Have to Do with Democratic Politics?

Modern events have sharply reminded us that distribution depends on myth and violence (on faith and brigandage) as well as bargaining. [497]
Harold D. Lasswell (Politics: vi)

Historically, states are the main distributors of resources around the world and infrastructure systems are a major chunk of the distributed public goods. Agents of the central state, including political leaders, bureaucrats, and technocrats are the ones who decide on the scope and direction of infrastructure distribution. The idea of universal distribution of goods and services is comforting, but not real. While in rare cases, public goods distribution proceeds smoothly, mostly it overlaps with existing ethnic, religious, and economic divides. The high number of complaints around public goods distribution in democratic countries raises questions about how distributive politics interacts with these divides at the local level. Who are the ones excluded? Do they react? How? This dissertation answers these questions based on a comparative case study of two democratic Middle Eastern countries with mega region-level infrastructure distribution projects conducted in ethnically mixed peripheral regions.

Studying struggles conducted between citizens and states over access to infrastructure necessitates a two-sided analysis that incorporates distribution as much as access. Understanding resource distribution definitely calls for understanding the political climate in which state actors make decisions regarding infrastructure provision and the actual practices of distribution on which the public goods distribution literature extensively focuses. Studying cultural maps

[497] Lasswell, *Politics*, vi.

shaping distribution-related decisions provides a detailed account of how and why certain communities get bypassed during the distribution of vital resources. Yet, in most cases, distributive decisions are not the end point, but the very beginning of struggles conducted over access. The unequal distribution of public resources trigger various forms of access struggles, transforms the way disadvantaged communities see themselves and the state, and creates new forms of state-society relations that are mostly ignored in the existing literature.

Bypassed communities' diverging choices of struggle underline that distribution and access are connected processes shaped through negotiations conducted between various state and societal actors. It also illustrates they are full of unintended consequences. Showing the connections between resource distribution and access to infrastructure, underlining the role of electoral and economic power in democratic politics, discussing the role of infrastructure as a political agent enabling new conducts and relations, and delineating state-society negotiations conducted on various levels, this dissertation tackled various aspects of the topic that gave this last chapter its title.

Throughout the conclusion chapter, I will try to unpack different aspects of how physical infrastructure intervenes and transforms politics in subtle ways. Regarding infrastructure at the center of an analysis does not only help us better grasp the relations surrounding it, but the way it shapes those relations in unforeseen and unprecedented ways. Part 1 circles back to the existing literature on distributive politics to explain its missing pieces and how this dissertation contributes to it. Part 2 goes back the evidences discussed in the previous chapters of the dissertation. It situates the research findings in the context of debates conducted in political science about resource distribution, in sociology about non-human actors, and in anthropology about everyday resistance. The last part of the conclusion chapter leverages this dissertation's

findings to reflect on what focusing on politics of infrastructure reveals about the discriminated communities' approach to the theory and practice of democratic politics.

6.1. The Existing Literature and Its Missing Pieces

As detailed in the introduction chapter, the resource distribution literature expects democratic governments to allocate resources as broadly as possible within their territories, due to multiple factors. Some authors draw attention to independent check-and-balance structures, including opposition parties, the electoral system, and a free press.[498] Some authors argue that democratic governments distribute resources in a fair way because they need to build large coalitions including different segments of the electorate.[499] Some others emphasize that poor voters compose the largest body of electorate in most of the democratic countries and underline the necessity of serving the poor median voters is an indicator of a democratic government's tendency to be more diligent in the equal distribution of resources.[500]

In comparison to non-democratic countries, democracies do have more equal, transparent, and systemic distribution records. Yet, this does not mean that they distribute the available resources in a fair or equal way within their territories. Distribution of irrigation canals in the Southeastern Anatolia region of Turkey and provision of electricity and water in the Negev/Naqab region of Israel reveal that while politicians in democratic countries claim to distribute resources equally benefiting everyone, the actual practice of resource distribution widens the economic and political gaps and mostly disadvantages the already marginalized minorities. Recent empirical studies have similar findings showing that democratic governments

[498] Sen, Development as Freedom.
[499] Mesquita et al., The Logic of Political Survival.
[500] Meltzer and Richard, "A Rational Theory.

fail to live up to their citizens' expectations about comprehensive and fair distribution of public resources, including infrastructure.[501] While some groups have full and uninterrupted access to electricity or water infrastructure, some others are either denied access or provided very limited access to similar resources.

Critical scholars cast legitimate doubts on the myth of fair distribution of resources in democracies. Yet by focusing exclusively on state agents and their decisions, these works contribute to the silencing of the disadvantaged. They avoid bypassed communities' access struggles and wins as well as the transformative role of infrastructure in bypassed community-state relations. Avoiding the way bypassed communities react to discriminatory resource distribution policies not only draws an uncomplete picture of public goods distribution by outright overlooking of the access negotiations, but also causes the misinterpretation of the bypassed communities' struggles against the state and infrastructure's role in community-state relations.

By shifting the focus from state agents to infrastructure and the communities it bypasses, this dissertation provides a more realistic, yet complex account of how state officials distribute resources, it also details the disadvantaged minorities' struggle against the discriminatory distribution of resources, and it locates infrastructure as an agent shaping the state-society relations by enabling certain conducts while disabling some others. Thus, this dissertation manages to answer the long-asked question of why some communities can access the resources illegally and some other cannot.

[501] Golden and Min, "Distributive Politics." For more detail, please see Banerjee and Somanathan, "The Political Economy of Public Goods"; Soifer, "Regionalism, Ethnic Diversity"; Kramon and Posner, "Who Benefits from Distributive Politics?

6.2. Main Findings and Critical Contributions

By exploring outcomes of discriminatory distribution of infrastructure in ethnically mixed regions of two democratic countries, this dissertation establishes a triangular relationship between unequal distribution of public resources, electoral politics, and access negotiations. Through the analysis of these relations, this project makes critical contributions to the public goods distribution and everyday resistance fields of literature.

First, this dissertation shows that, contrary to the argument of mainstream public goods distribution literature, democracies are not the showcases of equal distribution. Existence of independent check and balance structures, the need to build larger electoral coalitions, or politicians' willingness to appeal the poor median voters are features that the public resource distribution literature attribute to democratic governments. However, as critical public research distribution literature shows, in most democracies these features do not work as planned: independence of the press is questionable, opposition parties are too weak to pressure the government party, poor electorates are ethnically, ideologically, or religiously fragmented, and the politicians target different segments of it. In many occasions, politicians allocate the available resources to some communities more than others.

Second, bypassed communities do not silently accept the discriminatory distribution practices. Avoided both by mainstream and critical scholars, bypassed communities find new and creative ways of struggling against discriminatory distributive practices. Even in the case of mega infrastructure projects that seem to be unalterable—including irrigation canals, national water pipes, and electric grids discussed in this dissertation—disadvantaged groups challenge, undermine, and even alter distributors' decisions. Uneven geographies and lives created by the

unequal distribution of infrastructure systems are determinant rather than deterministic.[502] This dissertation reveals that, contrary to the general belief and the literature's focus, struggles over distribution of infrastructure do not end when state agents develop plans and start to implement them. The practice of distribution triggers multi-level negotiations between state and societal actors, including the bypassed groups and their allies. The distribution is complete only when state and societal actors reach a consensus on who will access each resource and how.

Third, this dissertation underlines the role of non-human agents in human-to-human relations. Both in the Kurdish and Bedouin cases, infrastructure caused social change. They intervened and shaped the direction and content of the relations between the state and bypassed communities. They enabled new forms of interaction and types of perception. Panels, lines, canals, and cables did not only disseminate state power in the distribution region, they simultaneously enabled new methods of struggle for the disadvantaged.

Infrastructure enabled new forms of struggle for both the Bedouin and the Kurdish communities. The demand for access to resources, including infrastructure, was the building block of the Bedouin effort to establish solidarity networks, find allies, and conduct a multi-level struggle against the discriminatory state policies. The inaccessibility of nearby infrastructure made the Bedouin come up with new solutions to survive and improve their lives. The

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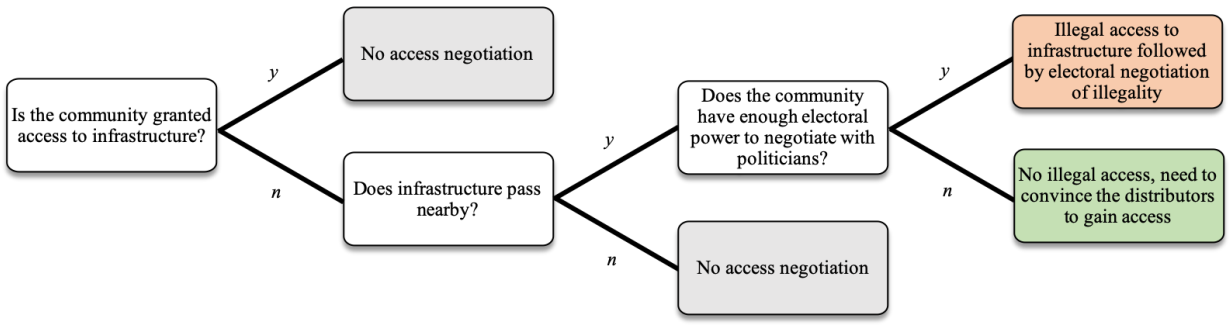
[502] Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 4. In a similar discussion on the relationship between capitalism and uneven geographies, Neil Smith attributes spatial unevenness to the uneven development inherent to capitalism. Structurally uneven development of capitalism results in uneven geographical patterns determining capitalistic results, without being deterministic. Without going into the discussion between capitalism and state's uneven distribution of resources, I turn this argument upside down and argue that while uneven development results in uneven geographies, the uneven geographies that are outcomes of discriminatory distribution practices determine uneven development patterns. Yet as they are not deterministic, there is always room to alter or distort these patterns.

community widely installed photovoltaic panels and bypassed the state monopoly over access to electric power. In the Southeastern Anatolia region of Turkey, the nearby electric grid made it possible for Kurds to connect their lines illegally, pump up groundwater from hundreds of meters below the surface, and irrigate their crops despite the state denial of irrigation water.

Fourth, based on the empirical findings, this dissertation contributes to the understanding of diverging methods of struggle used by communities facing similar discriminatory distribution practices. Even though most Kurds and Bedouin live in close proximity to infrastructure, they use different methods to gain access to resources. The Kurds illegally tap into the electric grid and the Bedouin use photovoltaic panels to meet their power need while building solidarity networks to put pressure on the government to change its policies. The findings of this dissertation show that the bypassed group's choice of methods of struggle against the discriminatory distribution of infrastructure are determined mostly by their electoral negotiation power. (See Figure 6.1)



Source: Prepared by the author.

Figure 6.1. Identifying Illegal Access

Recurring illegal access to infrastructure necessitates the compliance of politicians. Politicians become willing to negotiate only if they expect or need electoral gain in return. Kurds are able to

conduct negotiations with politicians over their illegal access to the denied resources due to a combination of (a) the Turkish electoral system's being a proportional electoral system where every province selects certain numbers of candidate based on its population; (b) the number of seats the Southeastern Anatolia region has in the parliament; (c) Kurdish electorate's being the majority in the Southeastern Anatolia region; and (d) in relation to the previous points, the significance of the Kurdish votes for the reelection of government party. In a party-list proportional system where parliamentary seats are distributed between electoral provinces in proportion to their populations, the Kurds hold the majority in a volatile region having a critical number of seats in the parliament and a determinant role in the elections. Using their electoral power, the bypassed Kurds negotiate illegal access with parliamentary candidates from the governing party. The government party politicians either turn a blind eye to the community's illegal access to electricity or comply with it and pass amnesty laws, hoping to get Kurdish support in the next elections.

While groups with electoral power can negotiate illegal access in exchange for their votes, communities with no electoral power cannot secure such negotiation space. The Israeli electoral system is a nationwide proportional representation system. The number of seats each party wins in the Knesset is proportional to the number of overall votes it receives in the election. In this electoral structure where all the votes go into the same basket, small minority votes are dispensable. Therefore, politicians do not have incentive to appeal small, regional electorates such as the Bedouin. Even though they are more than one third of the region population, the Bedouin are only three percent of the national electorate.

Fifth, a comparative study of the Bedouin and the Kurds challenges Bayat's approach to illegal access as a tactic used by marginalized groups living outside of the formal demand-

making mechanisms.[503] Findings of this dissertation point out that illegal access can be useful only when it is a recurring practice. It can be a recurring practice only when the resource owners turn a blind eye or comply with illegal access. Resource owners consider complying with illegality only when the bypassed communities have something to promise in exchange. I argue that illegal access necessitates groups must have enough electoral power to negotiate illegality with politicians. Illegal access is not a one-way action, but the outcome of continuous negotiations conducted between distributors and bypassed communities. In the same vein, slum dwellers can keep accessing electricity illegally as long las the politicians want to get their votes in the next election.[504] Poor peasants can keep stealing rice from the rich as long as the wealthy need them for stability of the local socio-economic and hierarchical system.[505] Bypassed minorities can access the electric grid illegally as long as the majority politicians want to get their votes.

Highly marginalized groups without negotiation power cannot make politicians turn a blind eye to their illegal actions. Yet it does not mean that these groups do not struggle against the discriminatory policies and meet some degree of success in accessing the denied resources. When studying marginalized communities, I argue, we need to take into consideration that there are different levels of marginalization that unlock different methods of struggle. The fact that they did not have electoral negotiation power does not mean the Bedouin were unable to fight against the discriminatory distribution policies. As a group without electoral negotiation power, the Bedouin community and its allies used demand-making mechanisms taking their strength from democratic principles that the state agents were not willing to contradict. The legal

[503] Bayat, Life as Politics, 46.
[504] Ibid.
[505] Scott, Weapons of the Weak.

advocates helping the Bedouin to translate their demands into the language of law, the NGOs helping them to conduct national and international advocacy works, and the activists co-organizing demonstrations with the Bedouin all appealed to concepts like equality, the rule of law, along with human and citizenship rights. Using the language of rights and equal citizenship, the Bedouin gained visibility, created awareness about their demands, and secured support. Together, the Bedouin and their allies put pressure on the state and secured access to some resources. Groups with nothing to offer to politicians in exchange for infrastructure access, like the Bedouin, cannot make politicians comply with their illegal access. Yet the Bedouin case shows that they can manage to access, even though partially in most cases, the denied resources by referring to democratic principles and put pressure on the politicians for them to take measures to show that they respect these principles.

Besides its direct contributions to multiple literatures, this dissertation provides the grounds to reflect on the broader discussions about theory and the practice of democracy. The illegal access to infrastructure in the Kurdish case and the Bedouin community's constant reference to democratic principles raise the question of minorities' commitment to democracy. In the following part, I will share insights from the field research and interviewees I met regarding the relationship between democracy and infrastructure.

6.3. Democracy and Infrastructure

When I started to shape my dissertation project, I was planning to conduct an anthropological study of infrastructure and analyze how access to infrastructure shaped the everyday life, social relations, and practices at the local level. Yet my field research took me in a different direction. After two years of field research in Turkey and Israel, talking to hundreds of people in and

outside of my research regions about infrastructure and everyday life, I was convinced that infrastructure shapes more than the physical space and everyday practices of the ones that get access. The bypassed communities are also part of the discussion conducted around the distribution of these resources, even more so that the communities with access.

Infrastructure systems have an over-presence in bypassed community' lives through their absence. Members of these disadvantaged communities walk past water distribution units that do not provide water to their houses every day on their way to school or work. They drive on the roads along the electric grid providing power to their neighboring settlements but not to them. They cultivate dry lands while the neighboring lands receive unlimited water from state irrigation canals. For groups living in peripheral regions, infrastructure projects are rare occasions to encounter the state and make sense of its transformative power.

Everywhere around the world, infrastructure provision is intrinsic to politics and democracies are no exception. From Canada to Germany, the distribution of infrastructure creates winners and losers. While connecting some, they disconnect some others.[506] The provision of infrastructure is a highly effective mechanism for gaining or awarding political supporters and punishing the non-supporters. By providing infrastructure systems—such as roads, highways, water pipes, electric grids—to some locations or segments of the population, politicians improve some groups' everyday life while likewise depriving some others from the opportunities infrastructure enable.

[506] Douglas Young and Roger Keil, "Reconnecting the Disconnected: The Politics of Infrastructure in the in-between City," *Cities*, The Suburban Question, 27, no. 2 (April 1, 2010): 88.

Politicians narrate the need for infrastructure, its establishment and its route in a way that legitimizes and justifies its implications, even if it is part of a highly controversial project.[507] As the previous chapters underlined, Israeli politicians mastered the use of infrastructure and planning systems as a tool that simultaneously established physical and emotional connectivity between Jewish Israelis and further disempowered the Arab-Palestinian population.[508] In the same vein, starting his political career as the Mayor of Istanbul, President Erdoğan of Turkey "won the loyalty of millions of pious, working class Turks for delivering schools, hospitals, and infrastructure."[509] While using infrastructure to build his support base, Erdoğan also weaponized the same resources to marginalize the dissident groups, as in the case of the Gezi Park Protestors.[510]

Facing openly discriminatory infrastructure distribution policies, the Bedouin community demanded access by referring to rule of law, citizen participation, and human rights. On first glance, their reliance on democratic principles can be read as a deep commitment towards the democratic nature of the country. However, the findings of this dissertation show that the highly political nature of infrastructure provision eroded the community's trust in the political system. The respondents underlined, time after time, that they don't believe Israel is a democracy. Their

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[507] Amina Nolte, "Political Infrastructure and the Politics of Infrastructure," *City* 20, no. 3 (May 3, 2016), 30.
[508] Yiftachel, *Planning a Mixed Region in Israel*; Oren Yiftachel, "Critical Theory and 'Gray Space': Mobilization of the Colonized," *City* 13, no. 2–3 (2009): 246–63; Oren Yiftachel, "Planning and Social Control: Exploring the Dark Side.," *Journal of Planning Literature* 12, no. 4 (1998).
[509] David Dolan, "Turkey's Erdogan Emerges Victorious, Setting Him up for Tighter Grip on Power," *Reuters*, June 24, 2018, https://www.reuters.com/article/turkey-election/turkeys-erdogan-emerges-victorious-setting-him-up-for-tighter-grip-on-power-idUSL8N1TQ18B.
[510] The Gezi Park Protests were a wave of demonstrations and civil unrest in Turkey that began on 28 May 2013, when the police violently evicted a sit-in at the park protesting the government's decision of cutting the trees and demolishing the park to replace it with a shopping mall.

comments about infrastructure were intermingled with their perception of democracy and citizenship. They referred to infrastructure to talk about democracy and citizenship, and to citizenship and democracy to talk about infrastructure. One of my Bedouin interviewees made this connection:

> This [Services and right to infrastructure] is something else. It is something that comes out of your citizenship in this country. Living in 'recognized' and 'unrecognized' villages should not determine your access to basic rights. These [infrastructure systems] are basic rights for every citizen, in every country. The government is using [the land claims] as a reason not to give the right [access]… I am a citizen of this country; I think I deserve my rights as I am a citizen. But they are not giving me my rights and are arguing that somebody else is claiming the land.[511]

When talking about access to resources, a Bedouin official referred to the hierarchy of citizens in the country. He explained:

> We are citizens of this country and we want to feel like citizens. We want to be desired by the state. The gap between citizens is getting bigger… High ranks [in government] still think of us and Palestinians as the same thing. If you are Palestinian, it does not matter if you are a citizen or not. Arab citizens do not get services that they should, but Jews do. We are not participating in high ranking jobs. Bedouin were here before the state and now we have to correct the gap existing between Arab and Jewish citizens of the country.[512]

The way Bedouin citizens described the Israeli political system is in line with what Oren Yiftachel calls the country, an "ethnocracy" which he describes as a political regime that promotes "the expansion of the dominant group in contested territory and its dominant power structures while maintaining a democracy façade."[513] From the Bedouin perspective, the state of Israel might be a democracy for its Jewish citizens, but not for the Bedouin. Omar made a similar reference to the hierarchical nature of citizenship in Israel, saying "Israel is a country where

[511] Interview in Be'er Sheva, February 26, 2015.
[512] Interview in Be'er Sheva, June 01, 2015.
[513] Yiftachel, *Ethnocracy,* 3.

Bedouin are second class, even forth class citizens… Basically the state proclaims itself as being a democracy, but Jewish as well."[514] The Bedouin felt that their presence in the community was and would be always treated as second-class citizens. The community members did not believe that the state policies would change in the near future. The Bedouin's relation to democracy, both as a concept and as a practice was an uneasy one. They refer to democratic principles, not because of their deep trust to the Israel's commitment to democracy, but because they hope to corner the state institutions by referring to the principles that they claim to embrace but fail to implement. As were the Bedouin, the Kurds were convinced that the state was not treating them as equal citizens and would not change its policies anytime soon. The Kurdish interviewees from the region argued that the state provided irrigation water to the Harran district because it was a majority Arab district. When asked about the distribution of infrastructure in the region, one of my Kurdish interviewees who owned agricultural lands in the Suruç District described the situation as follows:

> Harran is Arab. They are pro-state. Suruç is a dissident Kurdish district. Distribution of water is political. Bozova (another Kurdish district) was the first district to receive the irrigation canals. The Turkish politicians favored the Arabs.[515]

Like their Bedouin counterparts, the Kurds considered development projects as discrimination tools of the majority state. A farmer from Hilvan district who was also a local Kurdish politician from the BDP spoke disparagingly of the GAP. He explained, "The main reason why they introduced the GAP is to impoverish the Kurdish and make them dependent on the government's welfare provisions."[516]

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[514] Interview in Be'er Sheva, January 29, 2015.
[515] Interview in Şanlıurfa, December 22, 2014.
[516] Interview in Şanlıurfa, November 5, 2014.

Despite their similar perception of the undemocratic nature of political system they live in and mistrust to their government, the Kurdish and Bedouin communities interacted with the system in diverging ways which were determined based on their electoral power and, in relation to that, the opportunities available to them. The overall weight of elections in democratic politics and the critical role of the Kurdish votes made illegal access and electoral negotiation of illegality viable options for the Kurdish community. However, by not providing secure access to infrastructure and keeping the community's access contingent and reversible, the government party politicians attempt to secure recurring negotiations over illegal access and, as an outcome, Kurdish votes in consecutive elections.

With increasing ethnic struggles in democratic countries and high-level discussions on access to resources, the findings of this dissertation on how infrastructure distribution, minority-state struggles, and electoral politics shape one another is more important than ever. At the end, this dissertation gives an answer to the long-term question of why some communities access the resources illegally and some others do not. Some communities can access resources illegally because these communities, even though they are initially discriminated against, have assets, such as economic or electoral power, to leverage and negotiate with the distributors in return for illegal access. Some communities cannot access the nearby resources illegally because they do not have enough electoral or economic power to leverage. Yet, it is worth repeating that it does not mean that highly marginalized groups must silently accept the discriminatory policies. Rather than accessing the denied resources illegally and negotiating that access afterwards, these communities find alternative ways of putting pressure on resource owners for them to grant the resources.

Neither the Kurdish nor the Bedouin struggle can tell us much about these communities' relation to democracy and its principles. Illegal use of resources does not mean that the Kurds were undermining democracy. By accessing electricity illegally, the Kurds undermined the long-lasting discriminatory distribution practices of the Turkish state in the region. The Bedouin did not refer to democratic principles because of their commitment to these principles or the belief in the legitimacy of the Israeli democracy. They were referring to these principles to put pressure on state agents for them to change their distributive policies and grant the community's access to resources, by pointing the wide gap between discriminatory distribution practices and discourse about equality between citizens in respect to human rights.

Both communities found the Achilles heel of their respective democratic systems and tapped those to access the denied resources. In the Kurdish case, it was the power of the GAP region's role in determining the electoral outcome. In the Bedouin one, it was the Israeli state agents' interest in representing the country as a full-fledged democracy for all its citizens. Locating the Bedouin and Kurdish struggles for access within the larger picture of state-society relations in democratic countries, this dissertation demonstrated that infrastructure not only shapes the relation between state and societal agents by enabling and disabling certain actions, but also transforms what democratic politics means and how it is conducted.

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