

ETHNICITY AND GENDER DYNAMICS OF LIVING IN BORDERLANDS:  
THE CASE OF HOPA-TURKEY

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **ETHNICITY AND GENDER DYNAMICS OF LIVING IN BORDERLANDS: THE CASE OF HOPA-TURKEY**

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The aim of this dissertation is to investigate how the border economy shapes inter and intra group dynamics of ethnicity and gender for those who live in these regions. This study based on the qualitative research conducted in the town of Hopa in the Turkey-Georgia border region. The most fundamental argument of the study is that border regions have economic activities that are specific to these regions and the form of participation in these activities shapes the dynamics of social and cultural life. The field study which has been build around this argument raises questions on the socio-economic relationships as well as family and kinship relations involving two ethnic groups, Lazis and Hemshins.

This study shows the crucial role gender and ethnicity play in determining negative and positive effects of the border economy. After the opening of the Sarp

border gate Hemshins and Lazis experienced the effects of the border in different ways. Consequentially, discourses of exclusion and othering between these two groups have deepened. Moreover, gender inequalities gained new dimensions when women from the post-Soviet nations across the border have entered the picture. Representations of the life styles of immigrant female workers employed in the so called “entertainment sector” enhanced imprisonment of the local women in the private sphere. However this difference between ‘local women’ and ‘immigrant women’ did not create any sense of solidarity among Hemshini and Lazi women to surpass ethnic divisions and gender inequalities.

This study which focuses on the new inequalities those emerge at the intersection of gender and ethnicity in the border regions. It demonstrates the slippery grounds upon which socio economic life of the border towns are established, which eventually brings forth new forms of inequalities, by the changing definitions of winning and losing parties.

Key Concepts: Border Economy, Ethnicity, Gender, Intersectionality, Turkey Georgia Border

## ÖZ

### SINIR BÖLGELERİNDE YAŞAMANIN ETNİK VE TOPLUMSAL CİNSİYET DİNAMİKLERİ: HOPA- TÜRKİYE ÖRNEĞİ

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Bu tezin amacı, sınır ekonomisinin, bu bölgelerde yaşayan etnik grupların ve toplumsal cinsiyet gruplarının grup içi ve gruplararası ilişkilerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini incelemektir. Türkiye-Gürcistan sınır bölgesinde Hopa ilçesinde yapılan niteliksel araştırmaya dayanan bu çalışmada, Hopa’da yaşayan farklı etnik gruplardan –Laz ve Hemşin- kadın ve erkeklere ekonomik ve sosyal ilişkilerine, aile ve akrabalık ilişkilerine dair sorular sorulmuştur.

Bu çalışma göstermiştir ki, sınırın ortaya çıkardığı dinamiklerinden faydalanma ya da onlardan zarar görme durumunda etnisite ve toplumsal cinsiyet önemli rol oynamaktadır. Hopa’da Sarp sınır kapısının açılmasından sonraki süreci Lazlar ve Hemşinler farklı biçimlerde deneyimlemiş ve bu iki grup arasındaki dışlama ve ötekileştirme söylemleri derinleşmiştir. Dahası, toplumsal cinsiyet eşitsizlikleri,

Sovyet sonrası  lkelerden, sınırı aşıp gelen kadınların da dahil olmasıyla birlikte, yeni boyutlar kazanmıştır. Yerel kadın eğlence sektörünün yarattığı ortamda eve hapsolurken, dışarıdan gelen göçmen kadın aynı sektörün bir nesnesi, bedeni üzerinden pazarlık yapılan bir metası haline dönüşmüş, o da otellere hapsolmuştur. Ancak, ‘yerel kadın’ ile ‘göçmen kadın’ arasındaki farklılaşma, Laz ve Hemşinli kadınlar arasında, bu eşitsizliklerin aşılabilmesi noktasında hiçbir yakınlaşma ya da dayanışma yaratmamıştır.

Bu çalışmada sınır ekonomisinin etnisite ve toplumsal cinsiyetle kesişme noktalarında ortaya çıkan yeni eşitsizlikler ele alınmış ve çalışma göstermiştir ki, bu kesişme noktalarında kazanan ya da kaybeden olmanın odağı değişmiş, özellikle kadınlar sosyal yaşamlarında yeni mağduriyetlerle karşı karşıya kalmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sınır Ekonomisi, Etnik Gruplar, Toplumsal Cinsiyet, Kesişme, Türkiye Gürcistan Sınır Bölgesi

**TO MY MOTHER**

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ÇAYKUR</b>	: General Directorate of Tea Enterprises
<b>EU</b>	: European Union
<b>FH_IW</b>	: Interview with female Hemshin
<b>FG</b>	: Focus Group Interview
<b>FL_IW</b>	: Interview with female Lazi
<b>GNAT</b>	: The Great National Assembly of Turkey
<b>MH_IW</b>	: Interview with male Hemshin
<b>ML_IW</b>	: Interview with male Lazi
<b>NAFTA</b>	: North American Free Trade Agreement
<b>OH</b>	: Oral History Interview
<b>USSR</b>	: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

## **CHAPTERS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1.Introducing The Study**

This study aims to understand how border economy shapes intra and inter-group ethnic and gender relations in border regions. Hopa town which is located in Turkey-Georgia border has been taken as a case for this study.

Borders are physical, literal structures of the state, which also structure a range of meanings and belongings associated with a variety of identities (Wilson &Donnan, 1998:25). The reality that the border creates is a dynamic and dialectic reality which is constructed and reconstructed with the relationships between the structure –state (s) - and its agents -the people in this region, the state institutions, local elites, national and international organizations-. This study examines one side of this mutual relationship: borderlanders and emerging dynamics of their intra and inter group relationships.

People living in the border areas most of the time have to comply with the legal regulations of multiple states, participate into more than one economic and social structure, and are forced to reestablish their daily lives according to these relationships.

The way borderlanders experience the dynamics of these emerging new forms, is associated with how they relate to the emerging border economy.

Certain sui generis economic activity types appear in the border regions which are different from the general economic structure of the country. Smuggling, shuttle trade, entertainment sector characterized with gambling and prostitution are some examples of these activities. The main argument of this study is that the participation in this economic life provides a basis for the reshaping of the relations of the ethnic groups that live in this region and gender relations.

As Wilson &Donnan (1998:25) states “the study of borders adds our understanding of national, ethnic, gender and sexual identities, among others, because borders inflect these identities in ways not found elsewhere in the state”. Among many aspects of this unique social formation created by the border economy I am focusing on two: Intra and inter-group ethnic relations and gender relations. “How border economy shapes the ethnic and gender relations” is the fundamental research question of which ramifications would be “How are women from different ethnic groups effected by border economy?” and “How does border economy affect segregation and discrimination in intra and inter group ethnic relations?”

In order to deal with these questions, I pursued an ethnographic study at Turkey-Georgia border in Hopa. Specifically, I looked at the border experiences of different ethnic groups and genders in terms of their family relations, work life and intra and inter group relations.

As Vila (1999:85) stated “any border is an area where limits and differences are established, but it is also a place where different elements come together. Commercial, personal and cultural exchanges are continually taking place in border areas, where capital, people and culture are in constant movement”. In regards to human and vehicle transportation, after the Kapıkule border gate with Bulgaria, Sarp border gate is the second most frequented border gate of Turkey. In Hopa, both Hopa's own ethnic and cultural diversity and the fact that the people

who came by crossing the border had different cultures increase the dynamism in the social and cultural life. Different cultural values come face to face within the daily life especially in economic realm; this bilateral and continual interaction between people produces new dynamics within the daily life practices in time. One's ethnic group as well as gender affects the potential of benefiting from the opportunities that these dynamics create; or vice versa worsens the already existing the inequalities, or create new ones.

Because the relations of ethnic groups and gender relations were elaborated over the points in which they intersected with both each other and with the border economy, intersectional perspective has been adopted in this study. As my study elaborates how ethnicity and gender relations are reshaped in the border regions, I pursued the literature on ethnicity and gender within the border studies. In other word, this study focuses on the intersection of economy, ethnicity, and gender on borderlands. The method used for this is to trace the formation of intersecting discourses i.e. perceptions and representations of how each group experiences the relations among themselves, with each other and with the changing economic context.

The experience of the border, in our case display gendered, ethnicized differences in daily life. To prove that, field research designed to interview with women and men, the Hemshins and the Lazis, and shopkeepers and workers living in Hopa and to understand their interpretations and experiences of the border through their own narratives.

## **1.2.The Background of the Study**

Donnan & Wilson (1998:5), assert that border should be treated as an independent variable in border studies, without turning border cultures and communities into a

research object, by focusing on the cultural relations of power and the state. Border areas are places where state power and sovereignty become most visible due to the presence of soldiers, watchtowers, barbed wire and mined areas. Besides, in border regions state power intersects with other powers through political, economic and cultural relations. According to Tagil (1983:20);

A state's desire to protect and control its borders varies from time to time. One can find many boundaries which have been drawn without regard to the people in the border region and which have been fortified with barbed wire fences and watchtowers, preventing communication which would otherwise have taken place. Elsewhere the boundary's significance has been lessened by states' willingness to agree on facilitating border traffic, by doing away with barriers to trade, by a free exchange of ideas, and so forth.

Economic interests are of top priority in shaping the relations between states. As Tagil mentions when states want to remove the barriers to international trade, they can increase the permeability of the borders through new legislations. These regulations also affect the everyday life of the people living in the border areas. However, people of the border regions, are not passive recipients of these policies and practices. When border permeability increases and cross border trade is encouraged borderlanders try to turn the new condition into an economic advantage by actively participating in these economic relations. However, from time to time states intervene the border trade and create obstacles to the economy. as flynn (1997:318) suggests: "the border communities claim that their welfare and survival is being threatened by their very own governments because of the intensified customs controls and growing economic hardship in the shape of informal border economy". In other words, borderlanders can still create their own living spaces and economy. According to some scholars as a result of the informal economy borderlanders can become subject to labeling "as potential deviants conducting cross-border activities, including smuggling, prostitution, and illegal immigration" (Kamazima, 2004:3). Discussions of power and sovereignty have

become the major issue as relations between the state and its citizens, as well as the relationships between states dominate these areas.

Being able to establish sovereignty over anything passes through defining that 'thing' and 'yourself' that is to say defining the borders. The nation-state also defines and reestablishes itself at its margins. This is the quality of authority/power/ ruler. Deciding what/who is going to be inside and what/who is going to be left out. The state defines those who will be inside and those who will be left outside. It is possible to understand Turkish Republic by looking at what is at its margins. For this reason it is important to study the borders. As Wilson and Donnan (2005) remarks,

International borders are contradictory things for states. They are supposed to function to create coherence for the nation, by defining what is inside and what is outside. At the same time, they create difference and incoherence, providing places of symbolic interaction with other states and ethnicities, other identity forming processes and source of power. (p.11)

Border as a topic in academia has begun with the studies on the emergence of nation-states. In this period the borders have been discussed with concepts such as, nation, sovereignty, territoriality, citizenship etc. and with a classical modernist, state-centered perspective. Especially in the dualistic world of the Cold war period the borders have become a symbol of ideological power.

The Turkey-Georgia border that is the subject of this study had been also a border that was drawn between two different ideologies. The sides of the Kars treaty that was signed in the year 1921 are the GNAT (the Great National Assembly of Turkey – *TBMM*) government and USSR. The history of this border which was drawn in the year 1921, transformed into 'iron curtain' in the year 1937 and was reopened to traffic in the year 1988. The important dates in the history of Turkey-Georgia border correspond to the transformations experienced in the world

political arena. This border first started between a government representing the newly founded national assembly, and the first years of the Soviet Union. This was the time of solidarity between two regimes that fought against their own *Ancien Régimes* (Ottoman and Russian) and European imperialism. The period of economic cooperation and peaceful border policy came to a halt by Stalin's strict border policy and the tense relations between the two regimes because of Turkey's turning her face to Germany. During the years of cold war, until 1988, Sarp border turned into one of the walls that separated eastern bloc from the West. After 1988, it has transformed into a gate that opens the virgin lands of former Soviet Union to the new world order and capitalism.

Borders and walls became the symbols of the dissolution of the Soviet Union and disappearance of ideological differences. The collapse of the Berlin Wall, the expansion policies of EU and the appearance of globalization discourse and post modernist concepts in social sciences has brought the borders into the forefront again in a livelier manner with discourses of "borderless world" and post-modernist concepts. "These debates have been mainly about borders and sovereignty in globalization, scaling borders within and beyond territory, migration and transnational identities, and how borders relate to identity and belonging in an increasingly 'borderless world'"<sup>1</sup> (Konrad&Nicol, 2011:71).

Border literature<sup>2</sup> since 1990s have raised new and provocative questions about the relationships between the local and the global (Tsing 1994), space and place (Gupta and Ferguson 1992), and nation and state (Donnan and Wilson 1994). Inquiry has also broadened beyond the study of literal, official borders to include the multivocal borderlands that emerge at the intersection of less formalized

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1 For "Borderless World discussions see Ohmae (1991); Newman (2006); Diener & Hagen (2009); and or a critical analysis of this view see O'Dowd (2010)

2 See Wilson and Donnan (1998,1999,2005); Anderson and O'Dowd (1999); Paasi (1996); Berdhal (1999); Gupta and Ferguson (1992); Das and Poole (2004)

cultural and social boundaries, such as those existing between genders, ages, or classes (e.g., Rosaldo 1988, 1989).

Studies on Mexico-US border have become an indicator of a shift of emphasis in the literature from more traditional tools of analysis such as nation-state, sovereignty and citizenship to more superstructural issues such as culture, identity and space. According to Alvarez (1995:3) “the idea of borderlands as an area of study stems primarily from the work done by social scientists along the Mexican-US political boundary”. He argues here that this border has become “the icon and model for research into other borders as well as for the elaboration and refinement of the boundaries of several salient concepts and their referents. Foremost among these are culture, community, and identity”. Studies on Meksika-US border, as Kamazima (2004:3) states, “has been the site of much valuable anthropological and sociological analysis of the particular circumstances of borderland populations (e.g. Alvarez 1987; Hansen 1981; Martinez 1994; Rosaldo 1989) and of influential literary and folkloric explorations of a being a borderlander (e.g. Anzaldua 1987; Paredes 1958)”.

There are two groups of recent studies on borders: on the one hand there are studies that focus on globalization, changes in the world political map and the resulting social issues such as immigration, asylum seekers, human trafficking; on the other hand anthropological research focuses "border culture." Especially ongoing discussions on the spatial definitions of border culture focus on notions of 'in between space' and 'third space' based on Turner's liminality<sup>3</sup> which he

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3 Turner defines liminal individuals or entities as, “neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremony” (1969: 95). La Sure (2005) summarizes Turner's concept of liminality as such; “For Turner, liminality is one of the three cultural manifestations of *communitas*—it is one of the most visible expressions of anti-structure in society. Yet even as it is the antithesis of structure, dissolving structure and being perceived as dangerous by those in charge of maintaining structure, it is also the source of structure. Just as chaos is the source of order, liminality represents the unlimited possibilities from which social structure emerges. While in the liminal state, human beings are stripped of anything that might differentiate them from their fellow human beings—

defines as 'being in the threshold', 'neither here nor there'; or Foucault's (1997) concept of 'heterotopia' which he explains through the metaphors of "floating piece of space, a place without a place, that exists by itself."

In a similar way, Homi Bhabha's concept 'hybridity'<sup>4</sup> offers another useful tool for analyzing the cultural formations on the borderlands that belong to neither side of the border. Bhabha starting from Turner's concept of liminality opens up questions of "in-betweenness" within the colonial discourse. In *The Location of Culture* (1994:247) suggested that there is a 'Third Space of Enunciation' in which cultural systems are constructed. Bhabha claims that:

It becomes crucial to distinguish between the semblance and similitude of the symbols across diverse cultural experiences -- literature, art, music, ritual, life, death -- and the social specificity of each of these productions of meaning as they circulate as signs within specific contextual locations and social systems of value. The transnational dimension of cultural transformation -- migration, diaspora, displacement, relocation -- makes the process of cultural translation a complex form of signification. The natural (ized), unifying discourse of nation, peoples, or authentic folk tradition, those embedded myths of cultures particularity, cannot be readily referenced. The great, though unsettling, advantage of this position is that it makes you increasingly aware of the construction of culture and the invention of tradition.

Bhabha (2004) shows the dynamic nature of culture, and defines border space as 'the realm of the beyond'; the beyond as a contested space, 'the borderlines of the present; 'the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion

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they are in between the social structure, temporarily fallen through the cracks, so to speak, and it is in these cracks, in the interstices of social structure, that they are most aware of themselves. Yet liminality is a midpoint between a starting point and an ending point, and as such it is a temporary state that ends when the initiate is reincorporated into the social structure".

4 According to Homi K. Bhabha (1994), hybridity is a key feature of post-colonial identity. He argues that the nature of colonial identity is not monolithic, but ambiguous or hybrid and to the interaction, even asymmetrical between the culture of the colonizer and the colonized.

and exclusion. In accordance with the spatial theories of culture and identity, Dixon and Durrheim (2000:27) state, “question of ‘who we are’ are often intimately related to the question of ‘where we are’”. The places where people are from or have spent significant times often play a large role in how these people identify themselves within larger societies and cultures. Thus narratives surrounding these places become identifying narratives for the people of those places. Inhabitants of a border region construct both their identities and the discourses about their lives over the relationships they have with the border. Because the borders are the regions that include a dense human and vehicle traffic, they constitute meeting point for different cultures, peoples, economic and political systems. Therefore, borders “should be regarded not as analytically empty transitional zones but ‘as sites of creative cultural production’” (Rosaldo, 1989:2008). Although borders create political, social, and cultural distinctions, they ‘simultaneously imply the existence of (new) networks and systems of interaction across them’ (Baud&Schendel, 1997: 216). Gupta and Ferguson (1992), who see culture as a dynamic structure, emphasize the difficulties in identifying cultures of the border-crossing people, who belong to more than one identity at a time. Therefore, rhetoric of self identification takes multiple shapes under the in-between spaces of the borders.

Martinez (1998: xviii) argues that borderlands are generally situated at the peripheries of nations, and all are subject to foreign influences. These characteristics are common to borderlanders from different parts of the globe. According to him, “the determining influence of the border makes the lives of border peoples functionally similar irrespective of location, nationality, ethnicity, culture, and language. In other words, all borderlanders share the “border experience”. Although it is true that borders everywhere present people with similar structural constraints and processes, including international delimitations, cross-border trade, migration, and border conflict, for Flynn (1997: 312) people do not deal with these constraints and processes in the same way everywhere. By

looking at how the particular political, cultural, and economic histories of border populations may shape their perspectives of borders, boundaries, nationality, and community, however, we can better understand the processes of identity negotiation in borderlands. Martinez (1998) defines common ‘border experience’ regardless of national identity, ethnic identity, culture or language. These are, as also indicated by Flynn (1997) the experiences such as international commerce, border conflicts and smuggling which are a part of the daily life experience of all the borderlanders. However, the processes of experiencing, interpreting and “dealing” with these are not the same. The forms of experiencing this process and participating in this process appears from the intersection of many different variables such as ethnic identity, gender, class, age. Based upon this premise this study is designed, with an intersectionalist perspective, in order to understand how the context that is created by the types of economic activities that appear in border regions are experienced by different ethnic identities and gender, their forms of participation in this process and the new inequalities that this process surfaced through the intersection points of economy, gender and ethnicity.

Intersectionality, is a useful tool in studying multi-ethnic, multicultural and dynamic structures of the border areas. It “constitutes a critical alternative to identity politics by not only taking into account differences between groups but also focusing on intra-group differences (Acar&Altunok&Gözdaşoğlu, 2008:3). Thus, this study uses intersectionality as a key concept to analyze how border economy shapes intra and inter-group ethnic and gender relations in border regions; and focuses on the intersection of economy, gender and ethnicity.

In this study a discussion pattern as such has been created. First of all the context that was created by some economic opportunities –legal or illegal- and the new means of earning money that appear in border regions and not present in any other place has been defined. Then the border experiences of the people who have either directly or indirectly participated in this economic life have been examined. That

is to say how the borderlanders related with the border, what kinds of meanings they have attributed to the border, how they experienced the border and the new “economic, social and cultural life” that has appeared in the process of mutual relationships in the border space have been examined. Then, the new dynamics of in-group and inter-group ethnic and gender relations have been discussed with the help of intersectionalist perspective. This study has been formed around these fundamental concepts and discussions. These are borders, border regions, border economy and intersection of economy, ethnicity and gender on borderlands.

### **1.3. Organization of The Thesis**

This dissertation comprises of eight chapters. After the introduction in which we lay out the aim, problem and fundamental arguments of the study, the methodology chapter explains in detail the research design and field work.

Even though it is not a historical research, the third chapter summarizes the historical development of Hopa and the Sarp border gate, along with the background of the dominant ethnic groups of the region. As following chapters show traces of historical transformations are visible today both in identity formation and Hopa's economic, social and political structure.

Fourth chapter is devoted to the theoretical foundations of the study. I will first examine the evolution of border studies in social sciences. Then I will discuss how border studies have been received in sociology. This part also will examine the ways in which economics, ethnicity, and gender and their intersections are studied by the scholars working on borders. The border studies in Turkey are discussed under separate heading in this section.

As discussed in the theory section, the opening of the Georgian-Turkish border after fifty-one years in 1988 was the result of the dynamics involved in the border studies. The opening of this border created new forms of relations in Hopa's economic, social, and cultural life. In the fifth chapter I look at how economics has been shaped and I examine the dynamics emerging in response to the new relations in economic life since the 1988 opening of the border.

As we have indicated before we can pursue the traces of the new dynamics that the border economy creates at most by starting from the border experiences of ethnic groups and gender groups. For this reason the sixth and seventh chapters are devoted to investigation of border experiences of ethnic and gender groups. Lazis and Hemshins who are the two fundamental components of Hopa's economic, political and socio-cultural life, the relationships of these groups with each other and the new dynamics that the border economy creates in these relationships have been handled in the sixth chapter.

Seventh chapter evaluates the relationship that gender establishes with the border economy and the direct or indirect affects of participating in these relationships. The focus is the household, which offers the most in reading these transformations. Thus, separate interviews were conducted with women and men of the same household to identify the effects of the border life over intra-group relationships and family. The perceptions of 'immigrant woman' becomes a core component of this chapter to observe gender based discourses of changing family life.

The eighth chapter is the general evaluation of the study and conclusive remarks.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY and THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

This work is the product of field research I have carried out in different times in for years that has combined by in-depth, oral history and focus group interviews, and also personal observations.

This research is based upon 52 recorded (voice recording and note taking) and many unrecorded interviews that were conducted at different times at central Hopa, the border village of Sarp and the district of Kemalpaşa and the observations of the interviewer. The 6 of the recorded interviews were conducted as a pilot and I have discovered after the pilot study that what determines the way of life in this small town is the existence of the border. Even in the most haphazard of conversations, something related to the border was mentioned. Almost everyone was telling about how their lives become more dynamic and how rapidly it changed after the reopening up of the border.

When I went to Hopa in order to do a pilot study in the year 2007, I had very little knowledge concerning the economic, social and cultural structure of this district. What is more, I neither had any idea what kind of difference this region's being a border region created. However, following the pilot study I have seen that it wasn't possible for any subject that was to be researched here to be elaborated without relating it to the border. I was going to study border but I had no idea how

the border could be studied, what is more I have seen in the literature review that I had done initially that there was very few studies done on this subject in Turkey. As a result I first had to learn what subjects are studied related with the border and the characteristic structure of the Turkey-Georgia border region and by extension the history of this border and the affects it had on this region. Starting from there I have designed the first field research in order to understand the history of the Sarp border gate and the process since the establishment of the border to this day. I have made the oral history interviews for this purpose, in order to learn the history of the border and how the people who lived in this region passed on this history.

In America, where I resided in order to complete my deficiencies regarding the literature and to build up the theoretical bases of the study, I have learned how highly the subject of border is thought of in social sciences and that borders are discussed in a very wide variety of dimensions from national identity to world citizenship, from culture to identity, from space to dislocation. What was important in the Hopa case was again determined by the data that I had acquired from the field research. Three basic emphases were coming forward from the data that I had acquired from both the pilot study and the oral history interviews. These had been; the positive or negative emphases regarding the economic activities that the border created, the losses that women who live in Hopa have experienced because of the existence of the entertainment sector and the Lazi-Hemshin distinction that we have faced in every corner of the daily life in Hopa. Based on these emphases that were acquired from the field I have organized the final field work in a way that the interviews would be conducted with shopkeepers and workers, Lazis and Hemshins and women and men. The shopkeeper and worker interviews would enable us to understand the data related to Hopa's economic life, the interviews conducted with people from different ethnic groups the affects that the border economy had on the relations within ethnic groups and the relations they have with other ethnic groups and the interviews with women and men the interactive relationship between gender groups and border economy. Again, these

emphases necessitated the inclusion of the border economy, and ethnicity and gender discussions in the border regions in the theoretical and conceptual basis of the study.

To summarize, in this study, first the data that has been acquired from the field was elaborated and then a literature review was done taking these data into consideration and a study plan was constructed with this knowledge that has been synthesized to go out into the field again. And it has taken its final form with the analysis of the data that was acquired in the final field work through the lens of the economy, ethnicity, and gender discussions within the border studies. These analyses have been made with the light of intersectional perspective and have been presented in detail in fifth, sixth and seventh chapters.

The concept of border has been defined and discussed in different forms in border literature. It will be helpful for how the 'border', 'border economy', and 'intersectionality' which are the most fundamental concepts of this study, are established within this study and in light of these discussions.

## **2.2. Definition of the Basic Concepts**

### **2.2.1. Borders**

Borders are, in the most general sense, geographical and physical lines that separate nation-states from each other and mark the sovereign territories of states. It is possible to talk about two main camps within border studies with regards to the conceptualization and usage of the border. While some border studies regard the border as a “barrier” that separate the people and states, and controls them; the other scholars reject the idea that borders control, prevent, and regulate economic, political, and social interactions among the borderlanders. Instead borders are both

sources of unity and identity, conflict and conflict resolution, and are important in defining and transforming national culture and identity (Donnan and Wilson, 1999).

An international border signifies a barrier to a state's ability to exercise authority and power in a number of fundamental respects. Within its borders a state lays claim to the exercise of the monopoly of power. On the other side of the border another state authority takes over with its own administrative system and its own sanctioning capability. In a political sense such a state border is understood as a separating factor. Using other starting points one can focus on other characteristics of a border, for example, a discontinuity or a filter for activities of basically the same character. A border can thus have both separating qualities and the character of a contact area, depending on the observer's purposes and assumptions (Tagil, 1983:18). Borders, in this study, have been considered as both barriers and opportunities for people living in these areas and for states in both sides of these borders.

In this study, the concept of "border" will be used when talking about the physical, geographical border that separates two states from each other and also about the region, while the concept of "symbolic boundaries" or "boundaries" will be used when talking about the separation lines between the identities which live in this border region.

### **2.2.2. Border Economy**

The border regions contain certain economic activities that are not present in any other region. The foremost amongst these are smuggling and border trade –small-scale trade, suitcase trade- that pedestrians can achieve on a daily basis. While these provide some economic opportunities for the people in the region, these

regions also bring great economic risks at the same time. “Unlike other regions, borderlands connect two economic systems. The economic policy of one state may create a scarcity or abundance of certain goods and services on one side of the border. Different national taxes may lead to sharply different prices and a reversal or intensification of existing commercial activity” (Baud&Schendel, 1997: 229-230). The occasion that was experienced in Kemalpaşa district of Hopa which will be presented in the following sections has just developed as a result of such practices.

Smuggling is a typical border activity in which the political and the economic come together. It develops whenever a state tries to impose restrictions on border trade that are not acceptable to (some of) those living in the borderland and that cannot be enforced. Of course, smuggling is not confined to inhabitants of the borderland, nor does it involve all (or even most) of them. But it is most evident in the borderland, and this gives the entire border economy an air of stealth and subterfuge in the eyes of the state. Special economic policies may be devised to curb smuggling, and these affect border economies in several ways. For example, markets near the border may be closed, or people may be forbidden to carry more than small quantities of certain commodities within a certain range of the border. Such restrictions may lead to adaptations in marketing and transport, as well as in smuggling practices. Smuggling always involves some members of borderland society and, depending on its profitability, often state officials and nonlocal entrepreneurs as well (Baud&Schendel, 1997: 230-231).

When using the concept of border economy, in this study we refer to an economy that affects the border regions directly, comprising of smuggling, suitcase trade, international transportation, sex work and especially supported by trafficking. In addition, the side sectors that these sectors create such as hotels, restaurants, beauty shops, etc. are main components of the border economy. The main reason behind the social and cultural change in border regions is this border economy.

### **2.2.3. Intersectionality**

Another crucial concept for this study is intersectionality that had developed within feminist theory to incorporate issues of class and race into feminist studies. It focuses on gender, class and race inequalities. Davis (2008:67) uses a broader definition of the concept: “the interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies and the outcomes of these interactions in terms of power”. According to Crenshaw (1989) who came up with the concept of intersectionality, race and gender must be taken together for understanding violence and discrimination against black women, and the layers of their vulnerability. Crenshaw's concept attracted many feminist scholars from various disciplines, it even as Davis (2008:68) suggests seemed to be "exactly what is needed."

Within the border studies Anzaldua is the first dealing with the issue of identity at the border with an intersectionalist perspective. She (1999, cited in Fernandez, 2009) claims that we are always on the borderlands—between people, between races, between genders, and between classes. She views this intersectionality as fundamental to understanding our own identities. In a similar way, experiences of the Mexican immigrant women have been studied to analyze “gendered, racialized, classed, and immigrant experiences of these women who seek acceptance without relinquishing their difference” (Vega, 2013). Intersectionality is the study of the ways in which differences such as race, gender, sexuality, class, ethnicity and cultural identities interrelate. That’s way it will be the most appropriate tool to understand the dynamic, multicultural, sometimes multi-racial, multi-ethnic and generally gender based life of borderlands.

‘Intersectionality’ addresses the most central theoretical and normative concern within feminist scholarship: namely, the acknowledgement of differences among women (Davis, 2008:70). It addresses precisely these differences by providing a ‘handy catchall phrase that aims to make visible the multiple positioning that constitutes everyday life and the power relations that are central to it’ (Phoenix, 2006: 187; cited in Davis, 2008). Intersectionality offers a useful theoretical tool for analyzing the case of Hopa, where border economy has created new dynamics and new inequalities, and where gender remains an incessant issue in the context of changing relationships among / within the two ethnic groups.

### **2.3. Aim of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the economic activities that originate with the border – i.e. the border economy – is perceived and experienced by different ethnic and gender groups that live in the border regions through the example of Turkish-Georgian border. This purpose of the study is relying on two major assumptions. These are;

**Assumption 1:** Border regions are the center of certain economic activities that cannot be found in any other location similar to the one at the border within the nation-state like smuggling or sex work. Smuggling is the most distinctive one. It can be found only in border regions, thus it is a phenomenon that peculiar totally to border. Although it can be found in any or every region, sex work has a different dynamics in border regions. In Hopa case, all the sex workers are migrant women and this creates a more ambiguous, flexible, and fluid situations. These economic activities, i.e. the border economy lie at the root of the dynamics of intra and inter group relations of ethnic and gender groups in border regions.

**Assumption 2:** The changes that the border creates is experienced and interpreted differently by different ethnic groups and gender groups.

With regard to these assumptions, the guiding questions for the research are:

- 1- What is the border economy? And how this economy differs from national economy?
- 2- In border regions, an economic life emerges in relation to the changes of border policies. How do these changes in border policies affect the economic dynamics of Hopa?
- 3- How do these new economic dynamics affect the work life and emerging of new money earning opportunities in Hopa?
- 4- How do ethnic and gender relations are affected by border economy?
- 5- How do the perceptions of everyday life in Hopa and living with a border differ among different gender and ethnic groups?

#### **2.4. Method of the Study**

Since the field study to reach the aim of the study depends on the opinions and experiences of regional people who participate in research, this work is planned as a qualitative work that contains sociological and anthropological approaches with cultural, social and economic dimensions. Oral history, structured in-depth interview, semi-structured in-depth interview and focus group interview techniques were used together.

In compliance with the purpose of the study, the research was handled in two parts that complete each other and the field work was conducted accordingly. Expanding this proposition; the border economy and the other side commercial activities that this economy creates cause certain social and cultural changes in the

border regions. Looking broadly at what is border economy and what are these changes, i.e. the social and cultural effects of the border economy in border regions, constitute the first part of the study. In order to obtain the knowledge that is aimed at this first section, a research was required that would enable us to understand the social and economic condition of the region since the establishment of the border. In addition to the literature review, interviews with the local elites in the field were conducted and furthermore, the history of the border was recorded first hand through the lives of those who have experienced that history by the oral history studies conducted with 5 people over the age of 80 who live in the border village. While oral history focuses on the individual and her narrative, it can be used to link micro- and macro phenomena and personal life experiences to broader historical circumstances (Hesse & Levy; 2010:152). The personal histories of interviewees have enabled us to understand the bordering process more deeply.

Understanding how the ethnic and gender groups who live in this region perceive, and experience this process constitutes the second part of the study. These interviews constitute a great part of our field research. For this reason, separate interviews were conducted with women and men from different ethnic groups and different occupational groups, living in this region, talking about their perceptions and experiences regarding the border. Under the section that tells about how the field work was organized, the reasons for ethnic groups were chosen are detailed. The in-depth interviews that were conducted separately with the woman and man in the same household and free interviews that are categorized as focus group interviews and life histories have provided the essential source of information for this part.

Analyses of the interviews were made especially in fifth, sixth, and seventh chapter and quotations from interviews were given as follows;

FH\_IW- Interview No: The interview done with a Hemshin woman  
FL\_IW- Interview No: The interview done with Lazi woman  
MH\_IW- Interview No: The interview done with a Hemshin man  
ML\_IW-Interview No: The interview done with a Lazi man  
FH\_FG- Interview No: Focus group interview done with Hemshin women  
FL\_FG- Interview No: Focus group interview done with Lazi women  
FH\_OH- Interview No: The oral history interview done with a Hemshin woman  
FL\_OH- Interview No: The oral history interview done with a Lazi woman  
MH\_OH- Interview No: The oral history interview done with a Hemshin man  
ML\_OH- Interview No: The oral history interview done with a Lazi man

The excerpts from the interviews done with local elites are quoted by giving the institutional identity of the interviewee.

I analyzed the transcriptions of interviews by highlighting some common points that interviewees have mentioned and organized the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters according to these points. “The first step in data analysis is to look for *themes*. We may not know *a priori* (that is, before we begin) what these themes are, but they may become evident during the analysis of data. One way in which you recognize a theme is when you begin to see the same idea repeated within a case and/or repeated across cases. You want to look for words, phrases, or behaviors that meet the criteria of *frequency across cases, dominance in emphasis, and repetition within cases*” (Vanderstoep & Jhonston, 2009:167).

Even though there is a certain amount of interviews that are recorded, many interviews that have developed spontaneously and that were not recorded have also provided basis for this research. Staying at the site of the research at different times and for different durations has improved the chances of observation and has helped in completing many different aspects that were missing in the interviews.

## 2.5. Organization of the Fieldwork

The pilot study was conducted as semi-structured interview with 3 women and 3 men from different age groups in the year 2007, and general information was gathered regarding Hopa and living at the border. There are three steps or phases of inquiry in qualitative research: (1) determine what is happening; (2) find out about it; and (3) verify that what *you* think is happening is really what *the research participants* perceive is happening. You should begin with exploratory questions designed to find out what is salient or important in the culture, group, experience, or text you are analyzing (Vanderstoep & Jhonston, 2009:192). With this pilot study we learned what is happening in Hopa in generally.

Again, in the year 2007, an opportunity for learning more about the Hopa district and the general structure of the district was found as a part of the research titled “The Social and Economic Transformation in a Border District, Hopa” which was conducted by Assoc. Prof. .Dr. Sibel Kalaycioglu and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Helga Rittersberger- Tilic. Later on, oral history with 5 people who lived in Sarp border village above the age of 80 was conducted in the year 2009, and the life histories of the interviewees were recorded through the history of an event, i.e. their relation with the border. Oral history is a method of collecting data, and it is also a contribution to the understanding process of the past in order to know today and to form future (Caunce, 2001: 11). It can focus on a person’s life history, family history, institutional history or the history of an event; depending on what kind of information is aimed at obtaining. In this study, through the application of a mixed form, history of an event –the history of the border- was obtained in the interviews over the life histories of the people. With the information obtained in these interviews, a new interview guide was prepared and the field research was completed with the final interviews conducted in the April of year 2010.

I have reached to the interviewees with the help of the people who were included in the pilot study and of the people with whom I have met in a field study about Hopa in which I participated. In this process purposive and snowball sampling techniques have been used.

Hopa is a shore district where different ethnic identities (Lazi, Hemshin, Georgian, Lom, Kurd and Turk) have coexisted for long years. Because the Lazis and the Hemshins are the largest population in the district and more importantly because they are the most effective in the social and political life of the district, the field research was conducted with these two groups.

For the reasons of being a shore district and the existence of the harbor, Hopa has always been an economically active place. Consequently, it has always contained the tradespeople potential that would embrace this commercial life. There have always been hotels, restaurants, bakeries and teahouses. As a result, it has always been a district with a wide tradespeople culture and a district which answered such needs of the neighboring districts. However, this process which continued on placidly and with its internal dynamics has changed dimensions with the opening up of the border.

Starting from the pilot study, it was observed in all the interviews that were conducted until the main interview form was prepared that women and men's perceptions and experiences regarding the border were very different and for this reason it became inevitable to conduct separate interviews with women and men. In order to be able to include more detail into the subject, separate interviews were conducted with women and men in the same family, which was affected from the border economy in the same manner.

Briefly put, because the households were the location that we could observe the social and cultural transformations that the border economy has created over the

daily lives of different ethnic and gender groups that live in the border region, I have based my field research around the unit of household. In households belonging to different ethnic groups (Lazi and Hemshin), we have conducted separate in-depth interviews with men and women. Even though the age was not held as a variable, a consideration was held for attempting to conduct interviews with people from different age groups. 42 interviews have been recorded at the end of the last field research. Certain qualities of these interviews are as such;

In 14 of the families, men and women were interviewed separately, making up 28 of the interviews. In additions only men were interviewed in 2 families, where we couldn't interview the women because they were out of town. Both of these families are Laz families. In 2 families, it was only possible to interview the women; it was not possible to interview the men. One of these men rejected to speak with us and the other couldn't be interviewed because he was out of town. Together with these, 32 interviews were conducted.

Two focus group interviews were done; first one with 5 women from Hemshin above the age of 60 in the Sundura district, and the second one with 5 women from Lazs between the age 45 to 70 in the central Hopa. The focus group practitioner is invariably interested in the ways in which individuals discuss a certain issue as members of a group, rather than simply as individuals. In other words, with a focus group the researcher will be interested in such things as how people respond to each other's views and build up a view out of the interaction that takes place within the group (Bryman: 2004:346). The interactional nature of focus groups can also stimulate respondent's memory of specific events and facts. Moreover, participants have the opportunity to elaborate on each other's answers to produce richer data (Fontana& Frey 2000). From the beginning to the end of the study the female interviewees were emphasizing both the transformation in their family life and the Lazi-Hemshin separation more than the male interviewees. For this reason I have thought that doing these a focus group interview done with

women from different ethnic groups will enable me to get deeper and richer information on these subjects and have done these two focus group interviews.

Additionally, an interview on the subject of life and culture in Hopa was done with a person, Cemil Aksu, who is knowledgeable on the subject and researching Hopa's history.

Aside from these, 7 interviews were conducted with the institutional actors in governmental offices of District Governor, Customs House Officer, Narcotic and Trafficking Commissioner, Head of the Chamber of Artisans and Craftsmen, Head of the Chamber of Commers, Surgeon General and Director of Population Office. I couldn't record the interview with Custom House Officer because he didn't allow me to any kind of (voice recording or not taking) recording.

When determining the economic status of the interviewees a scale from 1 to 4 have been constructed. According to this, the numbers represent: 1 - Low, 2 – Medium, 3 – High and 4 –Very High levels of income. When assessing the levels of their income a numerical value was not asked to the interviewees, but they were asked if they cultivated tea or not, how many tones of tea do they harvest and if they have any other source of income besides tea, in addition to their status of home ownership and whether they owned a car or not; and the scale was determined accordingly.

Those who only have several acres of tea fields and don't have any other source of income are deemed low, those who own a house and have more than 10 acres of tea fields are deemed medium, those who have incomes from artisanship and working wages in addition to the income from tea cultivation are deemed high and those who have income from both tea cultivation, artisanship or working wages, as well as the income from trans-border trade are deemed as having Very High level of income. None of the interviewees are from low income group.

The chart for the income statuses of the 32 interviewees are as such:

	HEMSHIN	LAZ
1	-	-
2	7	7
3	8	7
4	2	1
Total	17	15

The socio-demographic profile of interviewees has shown on Table-1. In next chapter, the socio-demographic, economic history of the Hopa border region and the history of the Sarp border gate will be analyzed.

**Table 1: Socio\_ Demographic Profile of Interviewee**

NO	SEX	ECONOMIC SITUATION	AGE	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION	Ethnicity
1	M	3	40	PRIMARY	FARMER	H
2	M	3	45	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	H
3	F	3	35	TECH.VOC.	WORKER	H
4	F	4	37	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	H
5	F	3	58	PRIMARY	SHOPKEEPER	L
6	M	3	61	TECH.VOC.	SHOPKEEPER	L
7	F	3	44	HIGH	HOUSEWIFE	H
8	M	2	49	HIGH	WORKER (RETIRED)	L
9	F	2	42	HIGH	HOUSEWIFE	L
10	M	3	43	UNIVERSITY	WORKER	L
11	M	2	40	SECONDARY	SHOPKEEPER	H
12	F	2	38	HIGH	HOUSEWIFE	H
13	M	3	48	HIGH	WORKER (RETIRED)	L
14	F	3	38	OPEN UNI.	WORKER	H
15	M	3	39	UNIVERSITY	GOV.EMPLOYEE	H
16	F	2	34	HIGH	WORKER	H
17	M	2	49	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
18	M	3	70	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
19	M	4	63	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
20	F	2	42	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
21	F	2	42	PRIMARY	HOUSEWIFE	L
22	M	4	44	TECH.VOC.	SHOPKEEPER	H
23	M	2	51	HIGH	WORKER (RETIRED)	L
24	M	3	54	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
25	F	2	44	PRIMARY	HOUSEWIFE	L
26	F	2	36	SECONDARY	SHOPKEEPER	H
27	M	2	57	PRIMARY	WORKER (RETIRED)	H
28	F	2	56	ILLITERATE	HOUSEWIFE	H
29	F	2	41	HIGH	TEMP.TRAINER	L
30	M	2	36	HIGH	WORKER	H
31	F	3	33	HIGH	SHOPKEEPER	L
32	F	3	43	HIGH	HOUSEWIFE	L

1- LOW, 2- MEDIUM, 3- HIGH, 4- VERY HIGH

## **CHAPTER III**

### **FROM EMPIRE TO NATION STATE**

#### **History of Hopa and the Sarp Border Gate**

##### **3.1. Introduction**

This chapter opens up with the history of Hopa and the Sarp border gate by taking into consideration especially the effects of the changes on the latter had upon the region. In this exposition, I will also give a brief evaluation of the social, cultural and economic structure of Hopa. This analysis will help us with having a more comprehensive framework regarding the economic, social and cultural structure of Hopa and the changes that are experienced in this structure, which will be detailed in the later chapters.

##### **3.2. The History behind the Border**

Hopa<sup>5</sup>, a border town having strategic importance by virtue of its being located at Turkey-Georgia border, is located in the Eastern part of the Black Sea region. Hence, it can be reached through land, sea and airline transportation. In the introductory document issued by the government of Hopa, the place is described being situated "in the eastern part of the district of Georgia Republic, in the western part of Arhavi, in the southern part of Borkça and in the northern part of Black Sea. Distance of the district from Sarp Border Gate by which the transition

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<sup>5</sup> See Map 1 at the end of this chapter

to Georgia Republic is provided is 18 km and from the City Center is 65 km. Hopa is in the intersection position on the international highway which interconnects Trabzon, Rize, Artvin, Ardahan, Kars, Erzurum and Georgia Republic to each other" (Introductory Document issued by Hopa District Governorate).

Hopa was included in the territory of Ottoman Empire during the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century with the military expedition that Mehmed the conqueror has launched over Batumi. In 1519, Trabzon has become an independent province having Batumi in its borders (Kırzioğlu, 1976: 89). Hopa had been part of the Çıldır Province founded after Lala Mustafa Pasha's conquest of 1578, until Ahıska was given to the Russians in 1829. After that date Hopa was made dependent on the Trabzon province. (Introductory Program Document issued by Hopa District Government).

Evliya Çelebi traveled around this region in 1640. His view on Hopa, at the time known as Hoban, gives us a description of the population of that time. He states "it is a beautiful place which is abounding in vineyards and gardens along the seashore and bounded to Trabzon territory. Almost all people living in here are Çağatay Laz and a small part of the population is of Greek origin." The name of Hopa is derived from the words Hub and Khub in Persian language and means "beautiful, charming place" (Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi, 2011:97).

Up until the Ottoman period, Hopa was a part of Lazika. The seashore beyond Rize was called Lazistan<sup>6</sup> both in Pontus Empire and Ottoman Empire. After its conquering by Ottomans, Turks have been moved in the region especially to those places where there are fertile grounds and farms that Evliya Çelebi mentions in his travelogue.

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<sup>6</sup> See Map 2 at the end of this chapter

Both Halit Özdemir's "Artvin Tarihi" (History of Artvin) and Nebi Gümüş's doctoral dissertation, "XVI. Asır Osmanlı-Gürcistan İlişkileri" (Ottoman-Georgian Relations in the 15th Century, indicate that at the beginning of the 16th Century, the heir prince Yavuz Sultan Selim came to Melo, (a central village in Artvin, currently called Sarıbudak), and then descended to the Castle of Gönye and conquered the regions of Arhavi, Viçe (Fındıklı), Atina (Pazar), Hopa, Gönye, Batum, Chala, Beğlevan, Noğedi (Kemalpaşa) and Sarp. These regions surrendered to Ottoman sovereignty after the negotiations following a very long lasting war<sup>7</sup>. Recai Özgün's in "Lazlar", states that Yavuz Sultan Selim has conquered Melo together with settlements like Hopa, Gönye, Batum, Arhavi, Viçe (Fındıklı), Atina (Pazar), Çhala, Beğlevan, Makriyal (Kemalpaşa) and Sarp much later following the battle of Çaldıran (1514). Considering these historical statements, it is safe to set the early 16<sup>th</sup> century as Hopa and its surroundings' inclusion to the Ottoman Empire by Selim I.

The 1869 Trabzon annual indicates the male population of Hopa district as 4.496. It also shows 1261 households in Hopa district including its villages, 27 Islamic schools with 925 students, 27 madrasah teachers, 45 orators, 31 imams, 17 masjids and 3 madrasahs of science (ilmiye) with 80 students. Following the separation of Ahiska from Ottoman territories and its surrender to Russians as a result of the Edirne Treaty on September 1829, the Hopa district (with its Arhavi and Gönye regions) that was within the State of Trabzon had been placed under Batum county having Batum as the center. In 1865, the province system was established in Ottoman Empire instead of the state system and as a result of this reorganization Atina, Hopa and Hemşin districts were made regions and were placed under Arhavi which was turned into a district center with an arrangement made in the year 1867. In 1869, the district governorship of Arhavi was carried out by Kapıcıbasi Suleyman Bey and a municipality organization was established at this

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<sup>7</sup> The war is told to have lasted three months without any ceasefire.

date. Three years after this shift in the center, Hopa was given the status of being a district with an alteration in the governing structure and Arhavi was turned into a region and put under Hopa district. In 1871, a municipality structure was established in Hopa.

A part of Hopa region remained under Ottoman rule until their surrender to the Russian Empire following the war between Ottoman Empire and the Russian Empire during 1877 and 1878. Kars, Ardahan, Doğubeyazıt and the adjacencies of Batumi were given to Russia as war compensation. Doğubeyazıt has been taken back from Russia with the Berlin Treaty of 1878, yet, "Kars, Ardahan, Batum and the what we call today as Artvin, Ardanoç, Borçka, Şavşat which were the districts bounded to Batumi in the meantime and also Kemalpaşa district from Hopa had been left to the Russia. Turkish-Russian Border defined immediately after the Berlin Treaty had been going through the line of Artvin Mountain – Melo (Saribudak) – Orcuk (Oruçlu) Steep – Down Hod (Maden) – Erkinis (Demirkent) – southeastern plateaus' hills – Tavusker – Oltu" (Çoruh Postası, Muhacirlik Yılları Yazı Dizisi, 22<sup>nd</sup> February of 2008). "By this way, the settlements of Limanköy, Kemalpaşa, Osmaniye, Karaosmaniye, Köprücü, Dereiçi, Kayaköy, Çamurlu, Üçkardeş, Kazımiye and Sarp which are situated in the east of the today's Esenkıyı village had remained under the occupation of Russia up to the Proclamation of The Republic" (Koday, 1995: 113).

According to the 7<sup>th</sup> Article of Berlin Treaty, "The inhabitants of the abandoned neighborhood units (three districts) in Russia are autonomous in terms of leaving there by selling their properties in the event that they want to reside in the places apart from these countries" (Özder, 1971: 78). For this, three years have been allowed for them and it has been said that the ones who has not left there by selling their estates at the end of this time period will remain in the citizenship of Russia. "Both in the time of war and dating from the last treaty, a good number of people have immigrated into Anatolia from the neighborhood of Batumi, Acara,

Artvin, Borka, Ardanu and avat. These immigrants which their number is not exactly known have settled in Samsun, orum, Tokat, Yozgat, Adapazarı, İzmit and especially Bursa City and they have been called as " 93' Immigrants" (Özder, 1971: 78).

The people who had been in the Center of Artvin, Borka, avat, Ardanu and Kemalpaa region of Hopa which had fallen under the hegemony of Russia led a poor life under the rule of Russia. In a similar way, the ones settled in Arhavi, the Center of Hopa and Yusufeli regions remained in Ottoman territory had also led a poor life under various repressions and tax-related persecution practiced by local seigneurs. akir evket, who has written out the History of Trabzon in 1878, has stated that the growing crops and products in Hopa and Arhavi districts are not abundant and precious enough to be sold to the outwards like in the way that it is in Pazar (Atina) district and asserted that the people in there have engaged in agriculture and commerce and also are famous with the swordsmanship while he is making a mention of Hopa and Arhavi districts (evket, 1878: 47).

Turkic peoples who have lived in this area as being under the domination of Russia for 43 years, in other words up to Kars Treaty in 1921, have not been conscripted; have not found an opportunity of receiving education; but, they have been set free in terms of their religious activities, clothes and apparels and maintaining agricultural activities. As related to this period, there is not only demographics pertaining to Artvin City, but also is Russian statistics. According to the statistics of 1917, the ethnic division of the 985.000 'Cenb-i Garibi' Caucasian people living in Batumi, Kars, Ahıska, Ardahan, Artvin, Ardanu, Oltu (including enkaya district), Kağızman, Iğdır and Azgur is as follows:

Muslim (Turkish): 700.000,

Armenian (Most of them are in Aras and Arpaay tribes): 200.000,

Of Greek origin (all are immigrants): 40.000,

Russian (All is in the northern part of Aras and Kr tribe as colony,

immigrant and clerk-soldier): 30.000,

Georgian: 15.000, (Çoruh Postası, Muhacirlik Yılları Dizisi-6, 11<sup>th</sup> March of 2008).

Nobody had owned the right of disposition over the land; land had been given within definite limits and on behalf of the village; the work of land allocation had been carried out by the villagers. Land was apportioned once in 3-5 years in accordance with the population ratio; and the disputes arisen in the course of this arrangement had been resolved by the government. The villager had not owned the right of changing and selling the allocated land. Yet, the lands reserved for vineyards and gardens were permitted to be used as real property and had not been included within the scope of periodical allocations.

In those years, an important work describing the life in Artvin is the book called "Letters from Borçka"<sup>8</sup> which was written by İvane Caiani and published in the Droeba and İveria newspapers in Tbilisi and translated from Georgian to Turkish by Fahrettin Çiloğlu.

Rize which had been a mutasarrıflık (the local government of sancak) became a province on the date of 20<sup>th</sup> April of 1924. Hopa remained under Rize province until January 4th, 1936. After that date it was under Artvin. According to the results of 1927 census, the total population is 31.080 including Arhavi which was the sub-district of Hopa in that period, aside from Fındıklı and Kemalpaşa.

As it has been located on the shore, Hopa district shows commercial dynamism more or less comparable to the inner parts. The clearest indication of this dynamism is the population. For instance, in accordance with the results of census in 1927, the population is 687 in Şavşat and 1704 in the center township of Artvin

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<sup>8</sup> This book has been written by İvane Caiani and published in the Droeba and İveria newspapers in Tbilisi and translated from Georgian to Turkish by Fahrettin Çiloğlu.

while 4241 people reside in the central part of Hopa. This difference is explained with maritime and commercial activities carried out in the city center. (Zeki, 1927: 135-139).

The economic dynamisms that the port of Hopa created has continued with the beginning of the tea cultivation and has reached a whole different level with the reopening of Sarp border gate in the year 1988. Even though Hopa<sup>9</sup>, continued to attract migrants, population has not changed much; yet there have been transformations in the demographics of the town. According to the information provided by the director of the census bureau, it receives migration mostly from Rize and Ardahan. Most of the people from Rize have first moved to Borçka and from there to Hopa usually because of blood feuds. They are told "not to come". The migrants from "the east", come in order to work at sharecropping and construction jobs and then settle down. There is no record of the numbers of different regional or ethnic identities within the region. However, the greater part of this population is made up of Lazi and Hemshins. Lazis are the primary group of out-migrants from Hopa primarily to İstanbul and Zonguldak. Migration of the Hemshins from villages and their having more children than the Lazis has equated Lazi and Hemshin population at the Hopa center.

### **3.3. Socio-Demographic Composition**

Until the establishment of Turkish Republic, the region starting from the eastern border of Trabzon until the inner sections of Georgia have been called Lazistan. Even today, the people who live in this seashore region, which includes Hopa, are overwhelmingly Lazis. However, there is an important Hemshin population in central Hopa and Kemalpaşa district. The Hemshin who have come to the region

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<sup>9</sup> According to the 2010 TUIK data, the population is 32016 people in total with 17433 people in the district center and 14583 in towns and villages.

in the 6<sup>th</sup> Century and settled in the counties of Hemşin and Çamlıhemşin, and who have spread out throughout the region from here have resided in mountain villages which are near the summer ranges (Aksu, 2009:31). After Lazistan has been brought under Ottoman rule, a lot of Turkic clans have been settled in the region. Together with the Ottoman rule, Islamification in the region has also started. The wars between Ottoman and Russian Empires and the oppression that the ethnic cultures in Caucasia have caused a lot of huge migration waves. Because the routes that they have used during these immigration processes pass through Lazistan, there are many groups with Caucasian origins who live in the region. But there isn't adequate information about these groups. Today, the biggest two groups in Hopa are Lazis and Hemshins.

### **3.3.1. The Lazi**

The word 'Laz' has been connected with various regions and peoples of the eastern bight of the Black Sea coast since the early Christian era (Meeker, 1971:320). But Meeker situates the difference between the word of `the Laz` and the ethnic `Lazi`. 'The Laz' should not be understood as necessarily referring to a specific ethnic or linguistic group. This situation is further complicated by the fact that a Black Sea people who call themselves 'the Lazi' and who are also referred to as the Laz by outsiders do represent a specific ethnic group and do speak a language of their own. The principal settlements of the ethnic Lazi are found today at the extreme eastern end of Turkey's Black Sea shore in the coastal lowlands between Pazar and the Choruh River. Their language is closely related to Mingrelian and more distantly related to Georgian and Svan. The ethnic Lazi constitute a very small minority, even among Turkey's eastern Black Sea people. The category Laz, as used by Anatolian Turks, does not precisely designate the ethnic Lazi, but frequently refers to all Black Sea peoples of Turkey and most typically designates those peoples living along the eastern shoreline.

Before engaging the issue of who the Lazi are and their history, it is necessary that we state that in this study, following Meeker's distinction between 'The Laz' and the ethnic 'Lazi' the concept of 'Lazi' will be used and that this concept refers to an ethnic group who lives in the east of Eastern Black Sea region, from Trabzon's east to river Coruh and who speak Lazi language<sup>10</sup>.

The first thing that comes to mind when "Laz" is mentioned is someone who lives in Eastern Black Sea region and the 'Temel' and 'Fadime' stereotype of the Black Sea region jokes. According to this stereotype, everyone from the Black Sea region is Lazi who speak a heavily accented Turkish, who has a quick temper, extremely naive so as to be the subject of jokes, but at the same time very cunning and hardworking people. Such stereotypes had negative effects on the region's people so as to deny their ethnic identity. That might be seen one of the reasons to acquire knowledge of the ethnic plurality of the region, not to mention the nation state's policies of cultural assimilation. The efforts to learn and promote Lazi culture and language that have started with music in 90s have continued with the endeavors of various associations and organizations that challenge this understanding. Nonetheless, there is still no systematic academic studies on the history and homelands of Lazis.

According to Hann (1995:488) the Lazis are Caucasian origin. They have preserved their original language (Lazuri nena) which is related to Georgian and Mingrelian. Although no official statistics concerning the number of Lazuri speakers are available, it seems unlikely that there is more than 250,000 speakers in total.

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<sup>10</sup> Benninghaus (1989: 497) makes this same distinction that Meeker does. Ildiko-Beller-Hann (1995:505) has also followed this distinction that Meeker and Benninghaus does and preferred to use the concept of 'Lazi'.

Lazistan as a political and administrative unit has had varying boundaries throughout history. However, the region where the majority of the speakers of the Lazuri language live is limited to a much shorter stretch of the Eastern Black Sea coast, i.e. between the border village of Sarp in the east and the village of Melyat in the sub-province of Pazar in the west (Hann, 1995:488).

Hann (1995:491) has mentioned that he sees Bryer's (1966, 1980, 1985), Meeker's (1971), Toumarkine's (1991) and Feurstein's (1983, 1984, 1991, 1992, 1994) studies on Lazuri language and Lazi culture as an "objective history" writing and has talked about two understandings besides these studies which are in contradiction with each other and are constructed by ideological interests.

One of them is the group which is lead by Kırzioğlu who claims that Lazis are among the Turkic people who came from Central Asia. The other one is an understanding that was laid out by a book titled "Lazların Tarihi" (The History of Lazi) which was written by Muhammed Vanilişi and Ali Tandilava from Sarpi village and which claims Lazis are of a Georgian-Megrel origin. According to Hann (1995: 495), close genetic and linguistic ties with Megrel and Georgians, which the book argues, are valuable historical evidences compared to Kırzioğlu's work. However, uncritical selection of sources that are full of nationalist discourses and prejudices, makes Vanilişi and Tandilavathe's work closer to that of Kırzioğlu's.

According to Öztürk (2005), the politically motivated propositions like Evliya Çelebi's (17<sup>th</sup> Century) mixing of Lazis with Lezgis who are an Eastern Caucasian clan, perpetration of this even by the modern Turkish historians who use him as a source; the effort by some historians in order to prove 'Lazis are Turks' (Gologlu, 1973; cited in Öztürk) is far from the truth.

As Öztürk has stated in Black Sea Encyclopedia, the concept of Lazi as an ethnic

word; was first mentioned in Pliny's work titled *Naturalis Historia*. As Prokopius has also proposed it must be a name which identified more than one Colchis clan. The name of this clan which ruled all the Colchis people might have evolved in time from the word Lazani which means "the land of strong/noble; those who live in the mountain". The ancient region of Colchis spreads out from West Georgia to Northeast Turkey. Yet little is known about the history, people, and language of Colchis. The exact founding of Colchis is not traceable. The Kingdom of Colchis has been mentioned in ancient chronicles at least since the middle of the 6th century B.C (cited in *Corpus fontium historiae byzantinae*, cited in Sökmen; 2008:4).

According to the Scottish writer Neal Archerson (1995:199), who has written a book based on a trip that he has taken to Black Sea Region to ask:

Who are the Lazis is to be at once lost in the chaotic building-site of nationalist definitions. The language, Lazuri, is a survival from a previous, almost lost deposit of human speech. A pre-Indo-European tongue, it belongs to Kartvelian<sup>11</sup> language family of the Caucasus whose other members are Georgian, Mingrelian and Svanian. Mingrelian is the closest to Lazuri, and it would appear that both peoples were living as neighbours along the eastern shore of the Black Sea as long ago as 1000 BC. This coastal region around the river Phasis, near the modern Georgia ports of Poti and Batumi, was the land which the Greeks called Colchis..."

But, according to Archerson (1995:200), at the some point in history, a large part of the Lazis abandoned their homeland. They left Colchis and the Caucasus, and moved around the south- eastern corner of the Black Sea to their present territory in what is now Turkey. The Mingrelians, in contrast, stayed much where they

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<sup>11</sup> After lots of discussions and debates about who the Kartvelian are, Humboldt and Kretschmer, two European historians of the 19th century, `came to the conclusion that Kartvelians were closely related linguistically and culturally to aboriginal peoples of ancient Europe among them Etruscans and Basques` (Benninghaus, 1989a, pp. 475- 497, cited from Sokmen;2008:3). Between 2100 and 750 B.C., the ethnic unity of Kartvelians broke up into several branches, among them Svan, Zan, and East-Kartvelian. That finally led to the formation of modern Kartvelian languages: Georgian (originating from East Kartvelian vernaculars), Svan, Mingrelian, and Lazuri (Kutscher, n.d., cited from Sökmen; 2008:3).

were; most of them retained their Christian religion, like the Georgians, while the Lazi and the much larger Abkhazian language group living further north along the Caucasian coast converted to Islam in the fifteenth century. Why and when this migration took place is not known for certain, but it seems to have happened about a thousand years ago, in the middle Byzantine period, and the Lazi may have been displaced by an Arab invasion of the Caucasus.

Lazis were enjoying a free reign in their semi-autonomous kingdom in exchange for protecting the eastern border of Roman Empire. The Lazis who were in a position as the only ruler of countless small tribes in Kolhis, were forced to live in a position squeezed in between Persian and Roman Empires. It was not only the two empires who desired to expand their territories and establish their rule over the region, that threatened the Lazis but also the foraying nomads from the north. Because Persians' goal was to uproot Lazis from the region and settle their own people, Lazis stayed close to Rome (Öztürk, 2005).

During the centuries of Byzantine- Persian antagonism the Laz seem to have maintained a certain degree of independence. Arab conquest in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century seems to have put an end to Laz political independence. The Laz Region was later incorporated into the Empire of Trebizond, and even after the fall of Trebizond to the Turks in 1461 the Laz managed to maintain a certain degree of autonomy and remained under the rule of their local valley lords (Hann, 1995:489).

Even though the Lazis have experienced independence for a short while following the fall of Trabzon Empire, they have converted to Islam in mass under Ottoman rule in 1580. The course of the process of Islamization and Turkicization is not well documented, but something is known of three groups that retained more of the older Pontic culture than the majority of Black Sea Turks. These are the Lazi in the districts of Pazar, Ardeshen, Findikli, Arhavi, and Hopa; the Armenian speaking Hemshin in the valleys above the Lazi; and the Greek-speakers in the old

district of Of. All three of these groups are located east of Trebizond, and the villagers of the last two groups are in the upper reaches of the most inaccessible coastal valleys. The Lazi are thought to have turned increasingly to Islam after 1580, and the Hemshin may have begun to take up Islam in the early fifteenth century (Meeker, 1971: 340-341).

According to Öztürk (2005), there are three groups who call themselves as Lazi today. These are:

1. People whose mother tongue is Lazuri and live in the region starting from the east of Melyat River in Pazar district in Rize province, till the Sarpi village at the east, including Pazar (Atina), Ardeşen (Artaşeni), Çamlıhemşin (Vijadibi), Fındıklı (Viçe), Arhavi (Arkhabi), Hopa (Xopa) and Borçka district as an autochthonous group and in Sapanca, Akçakoca, Düzce, Yalova, Karamürsel, İzmit and Gölcük as migrants from the War of 93 (the Ottoman-Russian of 1877).

The number of Georgian Lazis, the majority of whom have migrated to the Ottoman lands on 1877, is not know today because of Georgian government's handling of Megrel and Lazis within the Georgian ethnic identity.

2. The group of people whose mother tongue is Turkish and who live in Eastern Trabzon and Rize's western seashore. Research done on Local Turkish showed the influence of Lazi Language (Lazuri nena), and Caucasian tongue, on the Turkish spoken in Western Rize and Trabzon and even further west (Brendemoen, 1990; cited in Öztürk, 2005).

3. The group of people whose mother tongue is Romaic and almost all of whom were sent to Greece during the 1923 population exchange and some of whom settled in Russia and ex-Soviet Republics during the Ottoman period. (Ref. Urum, Romeika)

Throughout their history, alongside their courage and bravery, the quarrelsome characters of Lazis were often acknowledged. For example, Ivane Caiani, who was a Georgian military officer assigned to Borcka, refers to the Lazi who did tobacco sharecropping in Georgian villages in his book titled *Borcka*, as such:

"There is nothing but harm that Lazi bring to this country. They don't refrain from harming the place because they are not the settled people of the region. For example, last year, a Lazi has killed a Murgulian soldier in Acarli. Two hours subsequent to that event, he crossed to the Ottoman Country and he is still on the run. And this year, they have murdered the headman Bolukvadze. One of the culprits was Lazi. He has, like the first one, crossed over to the Ottoman lands. If precautions against these Lazi could have been taken and an end could be put to their bad deeds, it would have been very beneficial and good for the people" (*Borcka Letters*, 88-89).

Prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century the region was never fully integrated into any of the large empires but remained loosely allied to them, serving as a buffer zone. Its modern history somewhat parallels that of classical times: the Persian-Byzantine threats have been replaced by Russian-Turkish conflicts (Hann, 1995:489). Like the time of Roman Empire, Lazi have been placed in this region in order to protect the borders. The Laz displayed particular loyalty to the Ottomans during World War I. In 1924 the Laz sancak was abolished as an administrative unit and the Laz region became an integral part of the Republic of Turkey.

Lazli are an inseparable component of this border that we are studying and the history of the border is at the same time their history. However before delving into the history of the border, we will talk about the other indispensable component of this border, the Hemshins.

### 3.3.2. The Hemshins

Hemshins have never been an identity as well known as Lazis, with whom they share the same region. Until the movie titled "Sonbahar"<sup>12</sup> (The Autumn), the existence of an identity such as Hemshins or a language like Hemshini was virtually unknown. We have very little information and documentation about their history and identity because they have lived in mountains, away from the city centers, in their own world and stayed out of the academic interest. For this reason, there are a lot of fundamental and unanswered questions about the history and identity of Hemshins. Do the Hemshins have Armenian or Turkish roots? If they are Turks, then why do they speak an Armenian dialect? If they are Armenian, then why are they Muslims? What are the similarities/ differences between the Hemshins of Hopa and Rize? When and where did they come from?

Elaborating these issues and debates is beyond the scope of this study. However a brief historical account of this group will be helpful for establishing the basics for this research project. Almost all researchers <sup>13</sup> who study on Hemshins, have clearly stated that there are two Hemshini groups living in the most eastern part of the East Black Sea region of Turkey. These two groups are differentiated by language, culture and territory: Bas Hemshins and Hopa Hemshins.

So far the book titled `The Hemshin: History, society and identity in the Highlands of Northeast Turkey` which was edited by Simonian in 2007 is the first and most comprehensive study on Hemshins. Simonian in the introduction asserts:

[T]he counties of Çamlıhemşin and Hemşin in the highlands of the province of Rize are the heartland of the now Turkish-speaking western Hemshinli, or Bash Hemshinli. This group is isolated by the exclusively

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<sup>12</sup> "The Autumn", is a movie that was filmed by the director Alper Ozcan in the year 2008 in Hopa, Camlihemsin and Kemalpaşa and in which Hemshini, Georgian and Turkish languages were used.

<sup>13</sup> See Hann (1995), Blasing (2007), Simonian (2007), Iskhanyan (2012), Ersoy (2007)

Lazi county of Arhavi from the Armenian-speaking eastern Hemshinli, or Hopa Hemshinli, who are mostly settled in the Hopa and Borçka counties of the Artvin province (Simonian, 2007).

Economically, the Hemshinli are originally farmers with a typical pasture and cattle economy. Culturally and especially linguistically, however, the two groups are clearly distinguished from one another today. The eastern Hemshinli or Hopa Hemshinli still speak, in addition to the official Turkish, a characteristically western Armenian dialect that is rather different from standard western Armenian. They themselves refer to this dialect as Homshetsma (or Hommecma) or, in Turkish, Hemşince. The western Hemshinli, by contrast, today speak only Turkish, and their dialects are somewhat different from those in the area of Hopa (Bläsing, 2007:279).

Linguist Vaux (2007:257), traces the above separation in the use of the language and talks about three Hemshini groups. These are;

1. Eastern Hemshinli/Homshetsik, who live in the province of Artvin (with smaller numbers dispersed elsewhere in Turkey, Central Asia and Europe), speak a language called Homshetsma, and are also Sunni Muslim.
2. Western Hemshinli, who live in the Turkish province of Rize (as well as in larger Turkish cities and Europe), speak Turkish, and are Sunni Muslim.
3. Northern Homshetsik, the descendants of non-Islamicized Hamshen Armenians formerly of the provinces of Samsun, Ordu, Giresun and Trabzon, who live in Georgia and Russia, speak Homshetsma, and are Christian.

The date of the migration of the Hemshinli to the districts of Hopa (Khopa, central district) and Makrial or Makriali (the present-day Kemalpaşa district of the Hopa county), to the east of Hemshin, remains unknown. According to Tolakyan, who

estimates that 10 to 15 per cent of the total population of Hemshin moved to Hopa, the migration took place during the second half of the seventeenth century. The same approximate date is given by Minas Gasapian. Russian sources indicate a later date of settlement, around 1780: for N. N. Levashov, for E. K. Liuzen early nineteenth century. The latter was told in 1905 by an elderly Hemshinli woman that her ancestors had come to the Makrial district a century before. (Simonian, 2007:80).

Hovann Simonian notes that according to the Ottoman files, the overwhelming majority of the population of Hamshen province was Christian until the late 1620s. The Islamicization process of the Hemshins began in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries (Simonian, 2007; Benninghaus, 2007).

In his unpublished article of "The Hopa-Hamshens: Social and Political Life", Cemil Aksu situated that the Hamshens have undergone three major historical events of disassociation:

1. Their departure from Armenia proper as a result of the first migration towards Hamshen, thus restricting future relations between them and other Armenian communities.
2. The process of Islamicization that began after the Ottoman conquest of the eastern Black Sea region.
3. The disconnection resulting from the religious and cultural assimilation stemming from the Turkification and modernization processes implemented by the newly formed centralized Turkish state.

All these are the components of the 'hybrid' Hamshen identity. There are many Hamshen villages in Hopa and Kemalpaşa today: Başoba /Ghigoba, Yoldere/Zhulpiji, Çavuşlu /Chavoushin, Koyuncular/Zaluna, Eşmekaya /Ardala, Güneşli /Tzaghista, Balıklı/Anchurogh, Kaya Köyü/Ghalvashi, Çamurlu

/Chanchaghan, Şana, Üçkardeş, Köprücü, Osmaniye, Karaosmaniye/Ghetselan, Akdere/Chyolyuket, Kazimiye/Veyi Sarp: Usually, Hamshen villages are made up of extended families of brothers. But those of Başoba, Ardala and Hendek are comprised of different families, leading us to infer that the process of settling took place in different time periods. It is only in the villages of Üçkardeş and Köprücü that the Hamshens live alongside the Laz. Today, the total population of Hemshin is estimated around 150,000. For Simonian (2007) "The Bash Hemshin are estimated to number around 29,000 individuals in the Rize province, while the Hopa Hemshin are estimated at around 26,000. To these figures must be added the dozen or so villages in the northwestern provinces of Düzce and Sakarya, settled by the Hemshin during the last decades of the nineteenth century, with a population of around 10,000. Large communities of Hemshin are also to be found in regional centres, such as Trabzon and Erzurum, and in the large cities of western Turkey, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir. Hemshin living in the latter cities probably now outnumber those who stayed in their home villages. In addition, an estimated 3,000 Hemshin live in the former Soviet Union'. Consequently, a total figure of approximately 150,000 individuals may be given as a realistic estimate.

The Hopa-Hamshens are the only Muslim Hamshens who speak Homshetsma. The fact that the Hopa-Hamshens preserved their language is linked to their isolated village life. Their continued self-sustaining village life, due to agriculture and animal husbandry, allows them to pass down the language from generation to generation and for the maintenance of certain traditions. This situation began to change with the founding of the Turkish Republic, when the central government made the teaching of Turkish mandatory. Even those who had become merchants in the towns and those wishing to obtain decent jobs were obliged to know the official state language as their native tongue.

### **3.4. Economic History of the Region**

As Muvahhit Zeki has stated in his work named "Artvin İli Hakkında Genel Bilgiler" and printed in 1927, Artvin's commerce remained stagnated because of the lack of roads and vehicles. Since the products of the soil has hardly been able to meet the requirements of the city, their consignment to abroad could not been carried out; only fruit, olive and a small amount of similar produce have been exported to Batumi. Things imported from abroad has been brought from Istanbul via Hopa harbor and as for kerosene, it has been imported from Batumi.

"Drapery and haberdashery, powder, cologne, lavender, photograph materials, etc. brought from Istanbul centrally to Borçka by way of smuggling have been exported to Russia. On the contrary, jewelry and gold have been imported from Russia; yet, both importation and exportation activities are not out of harm's way as well as not being steady. Because of that, there have been very rich people besides the ones who have been involved in a bankruptcy and even lost their lives. The arable lands in Hopa district are very few. The production of vegetable is only to the extent which is able to satisfy the self needs of each family rather than being market-oriented. It has not been given weight to the vegetable gardening since the inhabitants are mostly engaged in boating and commerce. Especially the production of hazelnut among the fruits is at the remarkable level. There are lots of hazelnut and orange trees. The significant part of hazelnut, tobacco, orange and apple produced have been exported together with the corn especially for some years." (Zeki, 1927: 135-139).

After 1937, most important source of income for Hemshenis who were unable to cultivate their lands, was fishing. Until tea production started in 1951, they only cultivated vegetables and corn barely enough to meet their own needs, besides a limited amount of hazelnuts.

“Fishing was the most important source of income for the region before the border was opened. They were catching cod and sturgeon. They were bringing good money. During the years of 1955- 1960 Russia exercised a sea drill. They used water bombs during these drills. When they dropped the water bomb this area shook and since then nets of the angler caught the skeletons. Fish disappeared then. There were various types of fishes around Hopa in the Black Sea region; they were all gone”<sup>14</sup> (ML\_OH-1).

Even though they have struggled from time to time, the people who live in Hopa have been better off economically, compared to other province and districts in the vicinity. When we look at the 40-50 years of its history, it is always a place where concentrated economic activities take place in one form. Hopa has one of the most important ports of Eastern Black Sea. It has been the access point for places like Artvin, Ardahan, Kars and Erzurum in its hinterland. These regions have been doing the commerce through Hopa and its port, since the olden times. The Hopa port had been a vital point during the Iraq-Iran war for the development of trade in the region. Transportation sector and tea cultivation had been sources of income for the region since the 1960s. The port reached its full capacity working during the 1970s. The port, alongside Black Sea Copper Enterprise and tea factories, have turned the town into a lively place.

“There were 5 enterprises in Hopa. Black Sea Coppers, thermal power station, tea factory, port management, Tekel (tobacco monopoly) headquarters, now there is only one enterprise left in here. The tea factory belonging to the state has remained. There is no other thing, and those things that were here have been sold, or privatized... Now there is only one

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<sup>14</sup> “Şimdi sınır kapalıyken ekonomik olarak buranın en büyük geliri balıkçılıktı. Morina mersin balığı avlanıyordu. Bu gayet güzel para ediyordu. Ruslar bir deniz tatbikatı yaptılar. 1955 ile 60 yılları arasında. Deniz tatbikatında su bombasını kullandılar. Su bombası atıldığında buralar deprem olmuş gibi sallandı ve bu tatbikattan sonra balıkçıların ağlarına bunların iskeletleri takıldı. Ondan sonra bu balık ortadan kalktı. Karadeniz bölgesinde, Hopa çevresinde çok çeşitli balık vardı. Bunların hiçbirisi kalmadı.”

enterprise and that is the tea factory. For example, the petroleum office, go and check it out, there is moss covered in its door. Its door is locked up; there were 50 people working there, those who left left and those who didn't leave, retired. There is Black Sea Coppers a little further down; I swear 1000 people worked there. Now there are two door keepers at the gate. Come a little further down, there is the thermal power station. 1500 people worked there. Now, there are 10 door keepers”<sup>15</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

“Now before the door opened there was the Iran gate. There were lots of trucks in Hopa, than there were no transporters but there were trucks. There were trucks with a capacity 6-7 tons, and people worked with them towards Iran. But then, Iran has suddenly stopped. I mean there was no load coming. When the load did not come to the Hopa port, it was transported to other places. Ofcourse, people of Hopa had a lot to blame in that situation. For example, a truck comes to the port, people put the truck into cars. Before delivering they use it to plow fields, for example, in Kars. Ofcourse, Iran understood this, did not do that business here. Then, it transferred ship transportation to other countries. Where? For example, to Persian Gulf; its own thing. It went there when doing it with ships, directly to its own country. Then, people of Hopa have experienced some hardships. The group of drivers. This has lasted 5-10 years. During the 70s, meaning until the September 12<sup>th</sup> coup, it was so much alive. Following the September 12<sup>th</sup>, between 80 and 88 Hopa has experienced a lot of troubles. Economically speaking”<sup>16</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

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<sup>15</sup> “Hopa da 5 tane kuruluş vardı. Karadeniz bakırları termik santrali, çay fabrikası, liman işletmesi, tekel başmüdürlüğü, şimdi burada tek bir kuruluş kaldı. Devlete ait çay fabrikası kaldı. Daha başka bir şey yok, var olanda satıldı, ya da özelleştirildi...Şimdi bir tane kuruluş var oda çay fabrikası...Mesela petrol ofisi, şimdi gidip bakalım kapısında yosun var. Kapısı kilitli, orda 50 kişi çalışıyordu, giden gitti gitmeyen emekli oldu. Az aşağısında Karadeniz bakırları var, yemin ediyorum 1000 kişi çalışıyordu. Şimdi ise iki tane bekçi var kapısında. Az daha aşağı gel, termik santrali var. 1500 kişi çalışıyordu. Şimdi ise 10 tane bekçi var”

<sup>16</sup> “Şimdi kapı açılmadan önce İran kapısı vardı. Hopa’da bir sürü kamyon vardı, o zamanlar tır yoktu kamyon vardı. 6-7 tonluk kamyonlar vardı, onlarla millet İran’a çalışıyordu. Yalnız İran

As our respondent has indicated, Hopa has been a place with a very active economy between the coup-d'etat of 1960 and 1980. However, the fearful and distrustful context created by the 1980 military coup has also affected the economic life and the people of Hopa. This was followed by the privatizing logic of the neo-liberal policies implemented during the Ozal period. Consequentially, state enterprises were either shut down or rendered functionless by being sold out to private corporations. This process has caused a lot of people to migrate away from Hopa.

“Now he has one land slot, the land slot is tiny, what does the father do? When there are three, four children he divides the land. Than people cannot sustain on it, and when they cannot sustain themselves, they are leaning towards other directions. For example, his father was selling ten tones of tea and sustained himself. And he was working in the tea factory but the kids have grown up and they have also gotten married. The land slot has decreased, it decreased to 3 tones, a man cannot sustain himself on three tons. What is he going to do; he is going to transfer to another place, out of necessity. Or s/he will get education and work for the state that has also come to an end”<sup>17</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

The cultivation of tea has a primary place in Hopa's economic history after 1960. Hanns' book titled "Ikibucuk Yaprak Cay" (Two and a Half Leaf of Tea; 2003)

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bir anda kesildi. Yani yük gelmedi. Hopa limanına yük gelmeyince diğer taraflara kaydı. Tabii orda Hopa halkının da bayagı suçu var. Mesela limana traktör geliyor, traktörü yukluyo millet arabaya, getiriyo Kars'a, Ardahan'a tarla koşuyo, sonra İran'a götürüyor. Bunu tabii İran anladı, burdan yapmadi işi. O zaman gemi taşımacılığını diğer ülkelere yönlendirdi. Nereye mesela, Basra Körfezine, kendi şeyine. Gemiyle yapınca oraya gitti, direk kendi ülkesine gitti. Ondan sonra Hopa halkı biraz zorluk yaşadı. Şoför kısmı. Bu 5-10 sene sürdü. 70lerde, yani 12 Eylül ihtilaline kadar bayagı canlıydı. 12 Eylül'den sonra, 80'le 88 arası Hopa bayagı sıkıntı yaşadı. Ekonomik olarak”

<sup>17</sup> “Şimdi bir tane arazisi var arazisi ufak, baba ne yapıyor? Üç tane dört tane çocuk olunca araziyi bölüyor. İnsan geçinemiyor, insan geçinemeyince başka tarafa yöneliyor. Babası mesela on ton çay satıyordu geçiniyordu. Birde çay fabrikasında çalışıyordu ama çocuklar büyüdü, çocuklar da evlendi. Arazi düştü, oldu 3 ton, üç tona adam geçinemez. Ne yapacak başka bir tarafa geçecek mecbur. Ya okuyacak devlet işine girecek, o işte bitti”

elaborates on this process in detail. We are going to briefly handle here the conditions today through the anecdotes from our respondents.

### **3.4.1. The Cultivation of Tea in Hopa**

In 24-January-1980 a program called "January 24 Resolutions" was put into effect. The program was an expression of a structural transformation in the economic system of Turkey. The most important of the arrangements that are decided upon on January 24, has been the reduction of state's portion in economy, i.e. privatizations. Tea cultivation and the process of its marketing were also affected from these implementations. The tea cultivators lost their long-standing customer, subsidies from the state tea monopoly ÇAYKUR:

“The people who have retired from the tea factory which was here in the 1970s are holding the 30% of Hopa's economy. My late father was retired from there and my mother takes his pension. At least 30 people in our village have retired from there. Look what a good thing it is. But it is over too”<sup>18</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

“Now I am a worker in the factory and a cultivator at the same time, I collect tea from the branches, and of course there is the transportation business. The pulling of the tea to the factory from the locations of purchase is carried out by transportation. There is a transporter co-operative here. If you also have a car, I can also earn money with my care. This all means that tea is our backbone. But it has turned really bad with the privatization. Before hand, if somebody had no sources of income, they gave all of it to ÇAYKUR and he was really able to sustain throughout that

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<sup>18</sup> “1970'lerde olan çay fabrikasından emekli olan insanlar Hopa'nın ekonomisinin %30 unu ayakta tutuyor. Benim rahmetli babam oradan emekli annem onun maaşını alıyor. Bizim köyde en az 30 kişi çay fabrikasından emekli olmuştur. Bak ne kadar güzel bir şey. Ama bu daha bitti”

year with that, but now it is not like that”<sup>19</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

For the people who had both cultivated the tea and worked in tea factories, there were no factories to work in and no state organization that they can sell the product of their cultivation with trust were left after the privatizations.

"The private factories do not have a contract with the cultivators. The merchant comes and takes the tea and goes but within a year they either give money in exchange or there are some off the books corporations, they take them in exchange of food items. We are forced to give it to them because ÇAYKUR has implemented quotas on tea with this privatization.

L: When did it start?

H: It coincides with 87-88. As a result of the concentration of these private factories, in order for the producers to be able to give it to the privates, they have started implementing quotas and contingents. Similar to the sugar beet and cotton, together with the imposition of international corporations, following the quota and contingent process that was implemented on our tea, we are left in the hands of these privates”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> “şimdi ben hem işçiyim fabrikada çalışıyorum hem üreticiyim dalında çayını topluyorum hem de nakliye işi var tabi ki alım yerlerinden çayların fabrikaya çekilmesi nakliye ile oluyu burada taşıyıcılar kooperatifi, hem de birde araban varsa aynı zamanda arabamla da para kazanıyorum. Yani her anlamda da çay bizim bel kemiğimiz yani. Ama özelleşmesiyle çok kötü oldu. Yani önceden hiçbir geçim kaynağı olmayan bir insan, hepsini çay kura veriyordu yani gerçekten bir yılını geçirebilirdi ama şimdi öyle değil”

<sup>20</sup> “Özel fabrikaların üreticiyle aralarında akitleri falan yok. Tüccar geliyor çayı alıyor gidiyor ama bir sene içerisinde ya para olarak ya da küçük merdiven altı şirketler var onlar gıda karşılığında alıyorlar. Onlara vermek zorundayız, çünkü çaykur bu özelleştirmeye birlikte çaya kota uygulamaya başladı. L: Ne zaman başladı?

H: 87-88 e tekabül ediyor. Bu özel fabrikaların yoğunlaşmasından kaynaklı olarak üretici, özelleşme çay verebilsinler diye kota ve kontenjan uygulamaya başladı. Şeker pancarında, pamukta olduğu gibi, bu uluslararası şirketlerin dayatmasıyla bizim çayımızın başına gelen kota ve kontenjan sürecinden sonra biz de özellerin elinde kaldık”

(MH\_IW-1).

For tea, there is a three months cultivating process, which starts with the cleaning up of tea gardens and readying them with pruning and fertilizing in March-April and ends in September, in which you can harvest product for three times. The first harvest comes in the first half of May if the weather is warm enough; the second comes in the end of July and the final harvest is done during September. The harvested tea is taken to the "Place of Purchase" where following the control of the experts, it was sold to the state within the limits of a quota. The remaining harvest over the quota is sold to private companies.

The cultivator is required to sell his/her tea the day of its harvest or else the quality of the tea diminishes and it turns impossible for her/him to sell it again.

“Tea is not like nuts after all, and we do not have the opportunity to keep it on a side at our house and sell it later. In hot weathers, your tea when it is taken away from the branch, if you can not sell it that day, if it stays for the night, the next day the value of that tea diminishes in half. The tea dies, both its quality falls and the tea burns. There is no possibility for tea that is burnt to go into processing; you just destroy your tea that is burnt. Than what do the people do when they are unable to give their tea to ÇAYKUR? They just give it to whichever private tea factory's car comes and free themselves of it”<sup>21</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

“ÇAYKUR has a set quota. When you meet that quota, the rest of the tea is

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<sup>21</sup> “Çay, fındık gibi değil sonuçta evimde kalsın bir köşesinde sonra satarım olayımız yok sıcak havalarda senin çayının bir gün dalında koparıldıktan sonra hani o gün satamazsan çayın değeri, hani geceye kalırsa ertesi günü o çayın kilosu yarı yarıya düşüyor. Çay ölüyor. Hem kalitesi düşüyor hem yanıyor çay. Yanan çayın üretime girmesine imkan yok, döküyorsun. Yanan çayını o zaman millet ne yapıyor, çayını çay kura veremeyince hangi özel fabrikanın arabası gelirse ona veriyor gidiyor”

left in your hands. You are forced to sell it to the privates. You are forced to sell it off in one way or another. You cannot give anymore of it to the state. The state has issued a set quota for you. For example you have a quota like 2 tones in one harvest and after meeting it, let's say you have 5 tones of tea, you give the 3 tones that are left to the privates... you don't leave the tea on the top of the mountain. That becomes stiffened and impossible to pick up after a while. And if you do not collect it, the other harvest won't come good. That's why you have to harvest and sell it, to get rid of it in some manner”<sup>22</sup> (FH\_IW-4).

This necessity has benefited mostly the private companies. The producers who have to sell off their harvest are forced to accept the prices that the private companies offer.

"There is no quota in the private, but you cannot give to the private from the price that you give to ÇAYKUR. When the private comes, it tries to buy it with upfront payment, if you sell it to ÇAYKUR for 90 kuruş, you give it to the privates around 60 kuruş or so”<sup>23</sup> (MH\_IW-1).

In this process of selling to private companies where there is no supervision, the producers have experienced a lot of injustices. They have lost some part or the whole of their money to these companies, or instead of money, they had to accept food items most of whose expiration dates have already passed.

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<sup>22</sup> “Çaykur’un belli bir kotası var. Onu doldurduktan sonra diğer çay senin elinde kalıyor. Onu da özele satmak zorundasın. Bir şekilde elinden çıkarmak zorundasın. Devlete daha veremiyorsun. Devlet sana belli bir kota vermiş. Mesela bir sürümde 2 ton gibi bir kotan var onu doldurduktan sonra, diyelim senin 5 ton çayın var, geri kalan 3 tonu da özele veriyorsun... dağın üzerinde bırakamıyorsun çayı. O belli bir zaman sonra kartlaşıyor, toplanamaz hale geliyor. Toplamazsan da diğer sürüm iyi gelmez. O yüzden toplamak ve satmak, bir şekilde elinden çıkarmak zorundasın”

<sup>23</sup> “Özelde kota yok ama Çaykura verdiği fiyata veremiyorsun. Özel geldiği zaman peşin paraya almaya çalışıyor. Çaykur’a 90 kuruşa veriyorsan özelle 60 kuruşa falan veriyorsun”

“For one thing, they don't buy from the price that the state does, they buy it cheaper. It's like that, I mean, it can get lost sometimes. We give one or two tones of tea and cannot get it back. The company has gone bankrupt, this or that, and what not; it just disappears like that. It was lost a lot like that; our money was lost a lot”<sup>24</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

The tea which was the only source of income for many people for a long while; has turned into a provisional income rather than the main source of income, together with privatizations and the declines in the state subsidy. Today, almost everyone who lives in Hopa owns tea gardens, however the number of people who sustain themselves on the income obtained from tea is very few. The opening up of border has somehow affected this process too, the people who did not own tea gardens but obtained some income at least through sharecropping or in collecting tea until today have lost this income; because today Georgian men who come from the other side of the border and collect tea for lesser amounts of money are preferred.

For the people of Hopa who have started to experience economic difficulties after the privatization of Hopa port and Black Sea Coppers and the shutdown of the state owned tea factories and the starting of the implementation of quotas on tea; the opening up of the border in 1988 has become a new source of hope.

### **3.5. The History of the Sarp Border Gate**

The historical analysis of borders is especially important in the case of the modern

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<sup>24</sup> “Devletin aldığı fiyata almıyor bir kere, düşük alıyor. Öyle yani, bazen kaybolabiliyor, veriyoruz bir iki ton çay, geri alamıyoruz. Firma iflas etti falan filan bilmem ne öyle gidiyor. Çok gitti yani öyle, çok gitti paramız”

states from eighteenth to twentieth centuries. In this period, borders all over the world became crucial elements in a new, increasingly global system of states (Baud&Schendel, 1997:214).

Borders became markers in two ways. First, they revealed the territorial consolidation of states. Most states tried to curb regional autonomy and were no longer content with "rough edges"... Second, borders became markers of the actual power that states wielded over their own societies. Leaders of the new states adopted the ambitious goal of making the state the dominant force in their societies (Baud&Schendel, 1997:214).

In our case, this border is marked by the formation of two relatively new nation-states Turkey at the first, and Georgia at the last quarter of 20th century. This border which was set by the Kars Treaty between Turkey and the Soviet Union in 1921 has gained different statuses<sup>25</sup> at different times. Two important dates after 1921 treaty is 1937 and 1988. In 1937 the border was closed down in 1988 it was opened again. The 51 year period when the border was absolutely closed has ended in 1988, as a result of Gorbachev's reorganization (perestroika) and openness (glasnost) policies and Özal period's neo-liberal political ideology in Turkey.

Baud and Schendel (1997) formulates a life-cycle of the borderlands between their formation and dissolution. According to them, the first stage in the borderland life cycle is the infant borderland, which exists just after the border line has been drawn. Preexisting social and economic networks are still clearly visible, and people on both sides of the border are connected by close kinship links. The border is still a potentiality rather than a social reality. We can define the Sarp border region as an infant borderland from 1921 to 1937. According to Baud and

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<sup>25</sup> Here the concept of 'status' refers to the opening up or closing of the border to traffic either partially or wholly.

Schendel, the adolescent borderland is the next stage. The border has now become an undeniable reality, but its genesis is still recent, and many people remember the period before it existed. Although economic and social relations are already beginning to be confined by the existence of the new border, old networks have not yet disintegrated and still form powerful links across the border. In the third stage the border has become a firm social reality: this is the adult borderland. Social networks now implicitly accept and follow the contours of the border. Cross-border social and kin relations may continue to exist, but they become scarcer and are increasingly viewed as problematic. Even new cross-border networks, such as those involved in smuggling, are based on the acceptance of the border.

The declining borderland is the result of the border losing its political importance. New cross- or supra-border networks emerge, often initially economic in character, and these are no longer seen as a threat to the state. The decline of a borderland can be a fairly a peaceful process: the border gradually withers away, losing its importance for both neighboring states as well as for the population of the borderland.

Finally, they have used the term defunct borderland (or the relict boundary, as it is sometimes called) when a border is abolished and the physical barriers between the two sides of the border are removed. Border-induced networks gradually fall apart and are replaced by new ones that take no account of the old division (Baud&Schendel, 1997: 225).

The process following the reopening of Turkey-Georgia border can be defined as an adult borderland. It has become `a firm social reality`.

### 3.5.1. From 1921 to 1937: Transition Period

Turkey-Soviet Union Border has been defined with Treaty of Kars concluded on the date of 13<sup>th</sup> October of 1921. With this treaty, the creek flowing across Sarp village has been accepted as border line and Sarp village has been divided into two. But, as stated by the interviewers, the people living in the district of Hopa between the years 1921 and 1937 could drive across the border by means of a document called Transire ('Pasavan' in Turkish) and required the soldier's signature only and continue to cultivate their lands on the opposite side. Therefore, the people living in this region could carry out their agricultural activities by passing to the opposite side even if their lands had been divided.

“At the beginning, our Sarp village and the village that is called Sarpi on the other side were in fact one village. Of course, when the border was drawn at once, there was the "pasavan" crossing. Both the citizens who live there and the citizens who live in our place have lands on the other side. They go to work, they go to fish, go to work at Batum. What do they do, than Pasavan was given, Pasavan means border crossing. They have given a paper in the shape of an identity. When you are crossing the border defense officers sign it. They cross, work there and come back to their houses in the evening”<sup>26</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

The old man with whom I interviewed, has indicated that in Batumi side a land of 1400 dunams (346 acres) which belongs to the three families from Sarp Village has been left and they have harvested crop from this land by cultivating it from the

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<sup>26</sup> “Başlarda bizim Sarp köyüyle ‘karşiki Sarp’ denilen köy aslında bir köy. Tabii bir anda hudut çizilince "pasavan" geçiş varmış. Orda yaşayan vatandaşların da, bizde yaşayan vatandaşın da karşıda arazisi var. Çalışmaya gidiyor, balıkçılığa gidiyor, Batum’a çalışmaya gidiyor. Ne yapıyor, o zaman Pasavan verilmiş, pasavan demek gümrük geçişi demek. Kimlik şeklinde bir kağıt vermişler. Geçerken gümrük muhafaza memurları imza atıyor. Geçiyorlar, çalışıyorlar, akşam tekrar evine geliyorlar”

beginning of 1921 to the end of 1936.

When the border line was drawn, although the mosque is in Turkey's side and imam has stood in the "opposite Sarp", they could pass to this side in order to worship on Fridays till 1937. They could cultivate their lands and harvest their crops. But, the tension in Turkey-Soviet Union relationships happened during Stalin period in 1937 has caused the change and border gate has been crisply closed to all transitions in one night. The families separated by border's being drawn have not gotten the chance of making contact with the rest in no way following from this date, while they were keeping in touch with them up to the year of 1937. The ones who wanted to go across, with one of interviewee's expression, have been obliged to go for 1000 kilometers by passing Kars instead of going for the road which its length is only 200 meters. Up to 1937, they were meeting all their needs such as gas oil, vegetable oil, salt, sugar from Batumi. Again in these years, this is to say, between the years of 1921 and 1937, the obligation of issuing a document over someone living in Sarp village has been imposed for any exportation to be made by passing over Georgia and this situation has provided an important economic source for the people who have lived there.

“Before 1937, we have supplied our needs from Batumi. We have supplied all our needs from the opposite side. Gas oil was being attained from there. Salt was being attained from there. Vegetable oil (we have called it as sivicka) was supplied from there. Sugar has also been supplied from there, so much so that it weighs of 3-4 kilos. Like a stone, they were cutting, distributing it. Those days their way of live was much better than that of us”<sup>27</sup> (ML\_OH-1).

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<sup>27</sup> “37 den once biz ihtiyaçlarımızı Batumdan sağlıyorduk. Bütün ihtiyaçlarımızı karşı taraftan temin ediyorduk. Gazyagı ordan geliyordu. Tuz ordan geliyordu. Nebati yag (sivicka diyorduk) ordan geliyordu. Seker ordan geliyordu, şöyle 3-4 kiloluk. Taş gibi. Kesiyorlardı, Dağıtıyorlardı. Onların yaşama şekli bizden daha iyi idi o zamanlar”

Relations going on in a moderate way up to 1936 could not be maintained in the same way as the result of Montreux Straits Treaty which was concluded in 1936 and in which the rights Turkey had on the matter of straits were rearranged in terms of international law and also with Turkey's associating with England in the ongoing process.

### **3.5.2. From 1937 to 1988: The Impermeable Border**

As boundaries clearly divide neighboring regions and are designed to be the barrier separating inhabitants of the given territory from 'others', mass representations about them are of contrast ('either-or'). This was especially characteristic of totalitarian regimes. In the Stalin epoch, the outside world was pictured as a continuous 'territory of darkness', from whence originated the threat of war and of enslavement by imperialist countries (Kolossoff, 2005: 627)

Sarp border gate was closed to all trespassing in 1937 and this situation brought important changes and difficulties in terms of both economic and social lives. After 1937 all kinds of communication was banned with the relatives and acquaintances on the other side of the border.

“I know from what my grandmother told, my very own grandmother's consanguine sister was on the other side. (My grandmother) said that we went down to the border, and as if like singing a song in Lazuri, we told about our troubles. For example, today we have this in there, how are you, like don't throw this; they call it a *Türkü* (a traditional form of folkloric song), as if singing that we told of our own conditions. She has said that my sister has told me that every day when I drink coffee, I will put my cup in front of the window, and if you don't see my cup there one day, you

should understand that I have died then. And when my grandmother was telling this, she was telling it as she was crying. She said, whenever I first came to the village, the first thing I did was to look at my sister's window and when I saw the cup, I said, good, my sister is alive, she is still living. And she said one day I came and I looked from the window when I woke up in the morning, there was no cup or anything and I understood that day that my sister was dead”<sup>28</sup> (FL\_IW-29).

Serious security precautions were taken around the border checkpoint, the number of the watchtowers were increased and a field named "tracking field" was formed on Georgian side in order to determine whether illicit pass was taking place or not.

“In early days there were more towers. They had 3-4 towers and we had 3-4 towers. However their security was stricter. The creek formed the border. They installed wire fence right beyond the creek on their area. Height of the wire fence was 2.5 -3 meters. They established tracking field with the width of 4- 5 meters right behind the fence. Tracking field can be explained as the following; soil is totally scraped off, I mean there will not be footsteps or anything else. It is softened. When you step on it, footsteps are just visible; we could even know if a dog passes by... Once a month they scrape it off and smooth it over. They did not leave any footsteps in order to track each and every mark”<sup>29</sup> (FL\_OH-2).

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<sup>28</sup> “Anneannemin anlattığından bilirim; anneannemin öz kızkardeşi karşıdaydı. (Anneannem) derdi ki sınıra inerdik, Lazca şarkı söyler gibi kendi derdimizi anlatırdık. Yani bugün bizim burada şuyumuz var, siz nasılsınız, mesela, bunu atma Türkü denir onu söyler gibi kendi hallerimizi anlatırdık diyor. Kız kardeşim bana dedi ki diyor, her gün kahve içtiğimde fincanımı camının önüne koyacağım, bir gün görürsen orada fincanım yok anlaki ben o zaman ölmüşümdür diyordu. Ve anneannem bunu anlatırken ağlayarak anlatırdı. Köye geldiğimde ilk işim kardeşimin camına bakmak olurdu diyordu. Fincanı göürdüm oh bugünde kardeşim sağ, yaşıyor derdim diyordu. Bir gün diyor ki geldim, sabah kalktım, camdan baktım fincan yoktu ve oğün anladım ki kardeşim ölmüştü diyordu”

<sup>29</sup> “Eskiden daha çok kule vardı. 3-4 tane onların vardı. 3-4 tane bizim vardı. Yalnız onlarda daha sıkı güvenlik vardı. Dere sınır olmuştu. Derenin hemen arkasında kendi arazilerinde tel örgü çekmişler... Tel örgünün boyu 2,5-3 metre. Onun arkasına da 4-5 metre genişliğinde iz tarlası

The security measures and the restrictions in the other side of the border have been implemented at least as intensive as the ones that existed here. A great part of those who were left on the other side of the border were exiled and sent to regions that in the interior are far away from the border.

“During the World War 2, Stalin has put ours, and when I say ours, not only the Hemshini, Lazi, Savshati, whoever was there of Turkish origin, they all were sent to exile. They were exiled to Kyrgyzstan, to Kazakhstan; they have travelled 20 days with train as my grandmother told it. Of course, then there were many people who died, because of hunger, misery, and because it was a time of war, those who went to serve in the army. My father was 3 years old then when he was exiled from Batum, my grandmother gave birth to a baby, and the baby died of hunger in the train. The Russian soldiers were constantly checking out and they took the dead bodies without any questioning and threw them out of the railway car. And when I say railway car, it is not the normal car in a train, they were carried in freight carriages that are used to carry wood or coal”<sup>30</sup> (FH\_IW-16).

Our respondent with whom we have conducted an oral history interview and who

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yapmışlar... İz tarlası dediğin de şöyle bir şey. Toprak tamamen kazınıyor. Üstünde hiç ayak izi bir şey olmayacak. Yumuşatılmış. Üstüne bastığında ayak izi çıkıyor. Köpek geçse biliyorduk... Ayda bir kere onu kazır, üstünü düzeltirlerdi. Ayak izi bırakmazlardı. Biri geçerse belli olsun diye”.

<sup>30</sup> “2. Dünya savaşı sırasında Stalin bizimkileri, bizimkileri derken sadece Hemşinlileri değil, Laz, Şavşat her türlü Türk asıllı kim varsa Batum'da onların hepsi sürgüne düştü. Kırgızistan'a, Kazakistan'a sürüldü. 20 gün trende yolculuk yapmışlar. Babaannemin anlattıklarına göre öyle. Tabi ki o zaman çok ölmüş insanlar olmuş. Açlıktan, sefaletten işte, zaten savaş zamanıydı. Askere gidenler... Babam 3 yaşındaydı o zaman buradan, Batum'dan sürüldüğü zaman. Babaannemin bir tane bebeği oluyor işte, trende açlıktan bebek ölüyor. Rus askerleri sürekli kontrol ediyorlarmış, ölenleri direk sorgu sual etmeden vagondan atıyorlarmış. Vagonda dediğim normal trendeki vagonlar değil, kömür odun taşıyan yük trenleri içinde götürüyorlarmış”

was 12 during this exile and who came and settled in Hopa after the opening up of the border told about his days during the exile as such:

“During the exile, they gave us fortyfive minutes time and you took whatever you can during that time. You took whatever you could and if you couldn't take it, it would remain there just like that. There were cars and they gave a car for each house and we have loaded our belongings. They have taken us and put on freight train. They have put eleven houses, they have put twelve houses, however many houses that could fit into the train. There they have exiled us.

L: Was there many people who were exiled?

"Ooo how can I say it? How many trains went from here, 3-5 trains took off. However many Muslims were there, they exiled all of them from Gerogia, there were no Muslims left. Acur name is also Muslim, they have written that they were Georgians in their passaport, and they didn't exile them, but they exiled all the rest of them. Hemshins, Lazis, Rizeians, Kurdish they exiled them all, not even a single heart remained. The men had at least five hundred, six hundred sheep all of those sheep remained, they had cows and the cows were left behind too... They rode us in train for 18-19 days.

L: Where did they exile you to?

P: Central Asia.

L: Did they send everyone to same place?

P: Half of them to Kazakhstan, half to Uzbekistan, half to Kyrgyzstan...

There were such men that they haven't seen their siblings for 30 years.

There were times like that”<sup>31</sup> (MH\_OH-5).

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<sup>31</sup> “Sürgünde kırkbeş dakika bize süre verdiler o sürede ne aldıysan aldın evden. Ne aldıysan aldın, alamadın öyle kaldı gitti. Arabalar duruyordu her eve bir araba verdiler eşyaları yükledik. Götürdüler bizi mal trenine koydular. On bir ev bastılar, on iki ev bastılar. Ne kadar sığıdıysa o kadarını trene bastılar. Orada sürdüler bizi.

L: Çok insan sürgün edildi mi?

Çiğdem Şahin narrates the period for this side as the following in her article titled "Sarp: Destroyed Hidden Paradise" published in Bir Yaşam (One Life) Magazine:

...forbidden zone sign starts a few miles away from the village border, all trespassing activity is strictly controlled by the military. Except for the local people living in town, no one with the written permission to enter the village is allowed. No one could even drive a nail, take a picture or act freely without informing the soldiers. Especially it was strictly forbidden to make gestures or send some signs when Russian soldiers can see you clearly through the watchtowers. If you violate this law, Russian soldiers document this through the pictures taken from the watchtowers and send a note to Turkey. Even for a small gesture or sign, protocol meetings lasting for hours were held. Then you get your first penalty of noting that you would be delivered to Russia next time (2009: 21).

Similar stories were conveyed during our meetings. In accordance with their statements it was strictly forbidden to look back or point on the other side. When such situation occur, the soldiers take pictures of the person making gestures or pointing out and send it to the Turkish soldiers. Then Turkish soldiers pay a visit to the home of the abovementioned person to warn him/ her personally. During this period the folk song tradition in the Black Sea region had an important function. People who would like to send wedding or funeral news to the other side would pretend like they were working in an area close to the border and make up a folk song in order to inform the relatives and acquaintances living on the other side of the border.

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“Ooo buradan mesela nasıl diyeyim kaç tren gitti 3-5 tane tren gitti. Ne kadar Müslüman vardı hepsini sürdüler. Gürcistan'da Müslüman adı kalmadı. Acur adı da Müslümandır, onlar Gürcüyüz diye yazıldılar pasaportta. Onları sürmediler, öbürlerinin hepsini sürdüler. Hemşinlisidir, Laz'ıdır, Rizelidir, Kürt'üdür hepsini sürdüler, bir can kalmadı. En az beş yüz, altı yüz koyunları vardı adamların, o koyunların hepsi kaldı, inekler vardı inekler de kaldı...18-19 gün trende götürdüler bizi.

L: Nerelere sürdüler?

P: Orta Asya'ya.

L: Herkesi aynı yere mi gönderdiler?

P: Yarısı Kazakistan'da, yarısı Özbekistan'da, yarısı Kırgızistan da... Öyle adamlar vardı ki adam 30 sene kardeşini göremedi. Öyle zamanlar oldu.”

“For example we couldn't approach the border; we couldn't thrust out a hand to the other side. I don't know, when we were going to the fields, going to the gardens, we asked permission from the soldiers. In the border zone, there are areas of military prohibition of the first grade. It's state line; it's a necessity”<sup>32</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

“We never stop and stare... We never talk. We only said the name and cry; that was how we talked. They looked out of the window without going outside. We were freer. They crack the window and look out behind the curtains. It was forbidden to point out. There was a creek in between. They were on one side we were on the other. We dig out the fields on our side and sing our folk songs to them. They also speak Laz language... While weeding they were also listening to us. When someone dies, they close the curtains and look out the window. We could never see someone outside. No gestures were made. I have never seen any gestures until 1990. It was extremely hard for them; they had to keep the body in the house for a week”<sup>33</sup> (FL\_OH-2).

Those who married and moved to the other side lost their opportunity of seeing and talking to their relatives after 1937. Because in order to pass the border and go the other side you have to get a document from the governor, get a visa and cross the border over Kars and travel approximately 1000 km. For this reason passing

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<sup>32</sup> “Mesela huduta yanaşamazdık, karşıya el uzatamazdık. Ne bileyim, tarlaya falan giderken, bahçeye giderken çalışmaya, askerden izin alırdık. Hudut bölgesinde 1.askeri yasak bolge oldugu yerler var. Devlet hattı, mecburen”

<sup>33</sup> “Durup bakamazdık... Konuşamazdık. İsmi söyle ağlardık, böyle konuşurduk. Onlarda pencerelerden kafalarını çıkarır bakarlardı. Dışarı çıkmazlardı. Biz daha serbesttik, onlar hiç serbest değildi... Pencereyi açarlardı, tülbentin arkasından seyrederlerdi. El isareti yapmak yasak. Arada dere vardı. O tarafta onlar, bu tarafta biz. Biz bu tarafta tarlaları kazar, hem kazar hem onlara lazca türkü söylerdik. Onlar da lazca konuşuyor ya... Onlar hem ot koparırlardı hem bizi dinler, haber alırlardı. Biri öldüğü zaman, perdeyi kapatır pencereden bakarlardı. Hiç kimseyi göremezdik dışarda. Hiç el isareti yapılmazdı. Ben hayatımda görmedim 90 yılına kadar. Onlar için de çok zordu. Bir hafta ölü saklarlardı evde”

the border was almost none.

“Neighbor of my daughter got married and crossed to this side in 1916-17, before the border was formed. Once it was free. Our elderly people go to Batum in order to purchase salt. Then it was closed. Her mother, father and family was left on the other side. At least 30-40 relatives, brothers were on the other side and she was on this side. Her children were here as well. She could not go, by then you had to get a passport. They used to travel through Kars. You had to get a document from the governor, visa from the consulate. To be precise you have to travel 1000 km in order to reach a distance of 200 meters”<sup>34</sup> (FL-OH-2).

However despite all these prohibitions an active life continued in Sarp village. Guests of Sarp were always there; locals, foreigners, curious people, students, researchers, all kinds of tourist groups travel to the village via tours or their own vehicles. Especially on Saturdays and Sundays the village was crowded by the visitors. Especially people were curious about the wooden bridge over the creek separating USSR and Turkey, which represented which was white on one side and green on the other representing the flags the two countries. On one side of the bridge Turkish watchtowers and soldiers were located and on the other side there were Russian watchtowers and soldiers (Şahin, 2009: 22).

### **3.5.3. After Reopening in 1988**

In accordance with the "International Territorial Transportation Agreement" signed between Turkey and Soviet Union in 31.08.1988 Sarp Border Gate was

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<sup>34</sup> “Benim kızın köyden komşusu gelin olarak bu tarafa gelmiş 1916-17 de. Sınır çizilmeden önce. O zamanlar serbestmiş. Bizim yaşlılarımız tuz almaya gidermiş Batuma. Ondan sonra kapandı. Ama annesi, babası, ailesi karşıda kalmış. En az 30-40 tane hanesi, kaç tane kardeşi karşıda ama kadıncagız burda. Onun da çocukları burda. Gidip gelemiyor. O zaman pasaport çıkarıyordun. Kars üzerinden giderlerdi... Valilikten kagit çıkarıyorsun. Konsolosluktan vize alıyorsun. Şöyle diyeyim toplam 200 metrelik mesafeyi 1000 km yaparak gidebiliyorsun.”

opened to trespassing and business pick up in the town in terms of better economy and touristic purposes, especially transportation and accommodation facilities were affected positively.

“The day was August 31<sup>st</sup>, around 10 o'clock during the day. The Russian soldiers held the door, so did ours. But there were, as a guess, at least 15-20 thousand people. When people just mingled, there were no more soldiers or moldiers. And they allowed it too. Everyone has seen their relatives, their mates, their friends and siblings. In the evening everyone had again returned to their own place. After that, we have started to once again pass with passports”<sup>35</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

As Rautio and Tykkyläinen (2000; quoted from Dursun, 2007) express, the opening of borders has not always meant an increase in the cross-border economic activities in general. The adverse socio-economic development and unstable political geography of many new countries has pulled down the expectations of many neighbouring border areas. Nevertheless, some examples show that entrepreneurs can benefit from the opening of the borders. Many enterprises had found ways to benefit from these new markets in a changing geography, as it is for Turkey and Georgia. However opening of the border gate, which was a source hope in economical terms those days, has been started to be perceived identical with "hopelessness", "degeneration" and "inequality" due to social transformations caused accordingly.

Actually today Sarp village is crowded with people like it was in the past; even more people are coming and going; however this time these people

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<sup>35</sup> “31 Agustos günü saat 10 civarıydı, gündüz, Rus askerleri kapıyı tutmuş, bizimkiler öyle. Ama orda en az tahmini 15-20 bin kişi insan vardı. İnsanlar bi kaynaştı, tabii asker masker kalmadı. Onlar da serbest bıraktı. Herkes akrabasıyla görüştü, eşiyle, dostuyla, kardeşiyle görüştü. Akşamleyin gene tekrar herkes kendi yerine gitti. Ondan sonra pasaportlu geçmeye başladık”

are not the curious tourists trying to explore the village, this time thieves, corrupted people, smugglers, drug addicts are coming to our village. Truck drivers, van drivers, suitcase- trading women, white- slave traffic are all coming and going with all kinds of filth, dirt and degeneration. Local people are lost in this crowd. In the good old days everyone knew each other and had close neighborhood ties with one another. People gossip at the village square and news spread to the village from there. People used to listen to radio at the village square and these news spread through bush telegraph. Only the elderly sit on the square, young people play card games or backgammon at the coffee house. Women join the conversation while passing by the square if it was convenient or just kept going depending on the situation. Today... grotesque shops, restaurants and other places...our people lost their old values. They are all blinded by an itchy palm, just to become rich in the easiest way, most of the problems emerged during the expropriation process of the lands for the construction of the coastal road while brothers, sisters and relatives were sharing the money (Şahin, 2009:23).

Pelkmans (1999:49) mentions same feelings for the people living other side of the border.

After fifty years of rigid separation, in 1988 the border between Georgia and Turkey was opened for traffic. At the time, the opening was welcomed on both sides of the border. Many Georgians had relatives across the border with whom contact had been largely impossible since the late 1930s. Many of them took the chance to pay a visit into that other (mysterious) world. The opening of the border offered people in Georgia access to 'western' consumption goods and the possibility to sell their belongings for hard currency that was very valuable in their country at the time. Trade between the two countries quickly increased and is still very important for the region as a whole. Although these positive effects seem obvious, the inhabitants of Ajaria increasingly tend to describe the new contacts in negative terms.

My informants held the opening of the border responsible for the spread of diseases, for chaos on the markets and saw it as a threat to local values. There have been advantages and disadvantages that the reopening of the border brought about for the people who live on both sides of the border. While the men emphasized the advantages, women have told the disadvantages more. This

perspective is what summarizes the border understanding of a lot of our male respondents;

“Disadvantage means, taking yourself into a mistake knowingly. The gate is there and the state is saying I have opened the gate. Trade is free in Turkey, economy is free, you can do your trade, your whatever, however you like. This is what the state says. Once the state says this, there is nothing that hinders your actions. However, if by saying I am going to be involved in trade, you go to Batumi, and then in different hotels and clubs you spend your money with this and that. Coming here and to your family if you say, I went to Batumi and you know Georgian has bedazzled me, done this and done that to me, than this becomes a disadvantage. This is the disadvantage, there is nothing else. It is the humans who create the disadvantage. There is only one disadvantage, the nature gets polluted. And the reason for that is that with the exhaust gases of the trucks that pass by here pollutes our nature. For example, the fruits do not grow as before. There was an abundance of fruits and vegetables before. Now that does not happen. Well, that is a price to be paid. When there is industry, when there is commerce, they come to that city. That means however much the technology develops, human health gets that much affected, and the nature gets that much affected. This is the simple meaning of it”<sup>36</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

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<sup>36</sup> “Dezavantaj demek; bile bile kendini yanlışla sürüklemek demektir. Kapı orada, devlet diyor ki; kapıyı açtım. Türkiye’de ticaret serbest, ekonomi serbest, istediğin gibi alışverişini yap, bilmem neni yap. Devlet bunu diyor. Devlet bunu dedikten sonra seninde elini kolunu bağlayan bir şey de yok. Ama ben de ticaret yapacağım diye, Batum’a gidip de orada otel köşelerinde meyhanelerde şununla bununla parayı yersen. Gelip de burada Türkiye’de ailen; ben Batum’a gittim de beni gürcü çarptı, öyle yaptı böyle yaptı dersin de bu dezavantaj olur. Dezavantaj budur, başka bir şey yok. **Dezavantajı yaratan insanlardır.** Bir tek dezavantajı var; doğa kirleniyor. Onun sebebi de buradan geçen tırların egzoz dumanı ile doğamız kirleniyor. Mesela eskisi gibi meyve olmuyor. Eskiden sebze meyve çok olurdu. Şimdi olmuyor. Yani o kadar da olacak. Sanayinin olduğu yerde, ticaretin olduğu yerde o şehir gelirler. Yani teknoloji ne kadar gelişirse insan sağlığı o kadar etkilenir, doğa o kadar etkilenir. Basit anlamı budur”

However, as much as an emphasis was made on the economical advantages and the people who live here have benefitted from the new economic areas that the border creates, they were also forced to deal with the chaotic processes that being in a transition zone causes.

After the opening of the border in 1988, how people experienced or perceived the chaotic process within this border was studied. From the content of the interviews, it's evident that the experiences of interlocutors vary according to the age, ethnicity, gender, and the distance between their residences and border. Although age and distance are not considered among the variables, most interviewees have higher negative perceptions. The interviews indicate a wide range of variables that create such negative perceptions such as low literacy rates among the youth, environmental pollution caused by the border, the noise, and insecurity of living together with strangers.

According to one of my respondents while the almost all of the youth who lived in Sarp village during the period when the border was closed were university graduates, this rate has dropped considerably following the opening up of the border.

“Actually literacy rate is very high in our village. However youth of 1990 generally do not go to school. You know why, they did not need to learn how to read and write. They all think that they will make the best money because of the border; even their fathers did not encourage them to go to school. Money is flowing, why to go to the school. They make 1000 dollars per day, why to go to school at all?”<sup>37</sup> (ML\_OH-4)

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<sup>37</sup> “Valla bizim köyün genelde okuma oranı yüksek. Bu 90 sonrası gençler okula gitmiyor genelde. Neden biliyor musun? Okuma ihtiyacı duymadı. İşte her zaman, bu sınır sayesinde en iyi parayı kazanacağız diye düşünüyorlar. Babaları bile okumaya teşvik etmedi. Para geliyor ya niye okusun. İşte günde 1000 dolar kazanıyor ya, ne yapacak okumayı. O döneme kadar okuyanların çoğunu şimdi İstanbulda iş sahibi.”

The academician and journalist Çiğdem Şahin who was born in a border village Sarp narrates the feelings of the inhabitants of the village:

“The worst thing is the village people lost their feeling of living in peace and security in their own town. Villagers have the fear of alienation and become the minority in their own land. In the old days you would meet someone you know when you leave your house, now the village is crowded by the foreigners; villagers used to leave their keys on their doors now theft occurs on daytime now” (Şahin;2009:23).

However, it is useful to apply the proceeding separation. The perception regarding the border between the people who live exactly at the border and those who live a little further away from the border, at the hinterland of the border diverges slightly. The stress that results from the security measures, the commotion that is experienced at the border gate, the crowd that is a result of the people who are waiting to cross the border have caused the villagers of Sarp to regard the border more negatively.

“You would have seen the place where Customs is located. You would love the coast. Everywhere was just covered with linden trees as old as couple hundred years, they were all cut. Construction started in 1985; customs area became fully operational in 1989. It was by the end of 1988, early 1989. How did this happen? They had 3 or 5 personnel, and these people were not paid properly. We would bring food from our town and feed customs personnel with our own food”<sup>38</sup> (FL\_OH-2)

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<sup>38</sup> “Gümrüğün olduğu yeri sen önceden görecektin. O sahile bakmaya kıyamazdın. İhlamur ağaçları vardı her yerde. Bir iki asırlık ihlamur ağaçları, onlar hep kesildi. 85’de inşaat başladı, 89 da tam olarak açıldı gümrük sahası. 88 sonu işte 89 açıldı. O da nasıl açıldı. 3-5 tane eleman vardı. Onların da doğru dürüst maaşı verilmezdi. Köyden yiyecek içecek götürür, gümrükteki personeli evden götürdüğümüz yemeklerle yedirir içirdik.”

In the center of Hopa, which is located 18 km. away from the border, there is quite a warm perception, especially among the men, towards the border, because of its “economic returns”. In its very early days of reopening, living very close to the border has its own advantages such as getting the smuggled goods first hand and earlier than others for a better price. However, in time, as this exchange relation expands to the larger areas, this basic economic relation cannot be taken to be enough to analyze relations and dynamics created by the border. Therefore, the structure of this thesis is designed to look at these economical relations and social-cultural dynamics appeared after the reopening of the border in 1988, in their effects to diverse ethnic groups and gender relations vis-a-vis their understanding and experience of the border.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter explicated and analyzed the demographic, cultural and economic history of Hopa. The latter and its surroundings have always been situated on the borders of different states and empires hence, has always been a place where border disagreements and negotiations took place. Even though, we can no longer see a change in the border line after 1921, the dynamic relations that the existence of the border creates continued. The reopening of the border in 1988 created new dynamics, adding new dimensions to the social, cultural and economic lives of the people who live there.

The following chapters will explore in more detail the affective relations of the diversity of groups living in Hopa region vis-à-vis the dynamism of the border. Yet, in order to comprehend how this dynamism works in relation with the people living in the region, I will first give a theory of border phenomenon and border experience as my research methodology.



FIGURE 1: Map of HOPA

Source: [www.artvindernegei.com](http://www.artvindernegei.com)

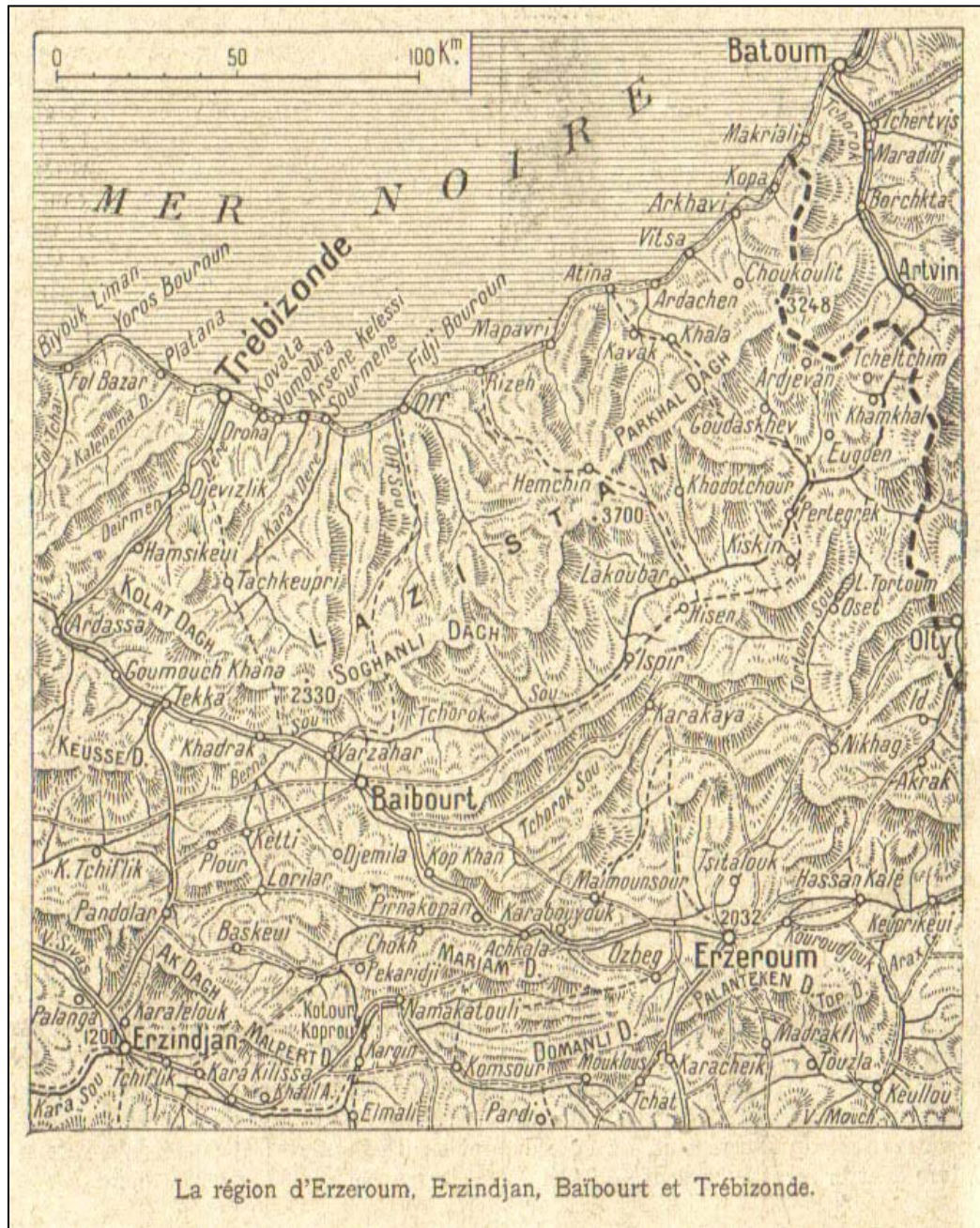


FIGURE 2: Map of LAZISTAN

Source: BirYaşam Dergi Arşivi

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **Border Studies in Social Science**

##### **4.1. Introduction**

Borders are “artificial” phenomena, created by humans, marking the domains of sovereignty of nation states in the international arena and drawn by wars and international agreements. For this reason, new circumstances that appear in the international arena or within the nation-state itself or changing policies cause the borders to change or treated differently. Especially, the new states that have appeared with the dissolution of Soviet Union, the borders that were opened and closed have necessitated a new and livelier discussion of the subject of border.

The fast and easy across the border/trans-border movement of money, knowledge and people that is experienced throughout the whole world has put the existence of nation-state up to debate. Especially the ‘borderless world’<sup>39</sup> discourse of Ohmae (1991) which is related to the globalization has provided the basis for the end of nation-state discussions. However O’Dowd (2010)’s ‘world of borders’ definition and discussion which can be counted as against this discourse of Ohmae can be accepted as a new period in border studies. For O’Dowd (2010: 1032) contemporary border, studies claims that “the ‘era of the nation-state’, the successor to ‘the age of empire’, has now given way to a ‘postnational’ world—

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<sup>39</sup> For Ohmae (1991:13), the nation-state is becoming obsolete because it is no longer the optimal unit for organizing economic activity.

‘beyond the nation-state’. While this literature usefully points to many of the ways in which contemporary state borders are being reconfigured, it tends to obscure and downgrade their multidimensionality, distinctiveness, and globality. According to Paasi (2012:15), “in spite of globalization and the apparent opening of borders, states still have a great interest in maintaining their relative power in the governance of space economy, the minds and well-being of citizens, and thereby social order and cohesion”.

This period has caused the borders to come forward in the agenda again and in a stronger form and new issues. “Border studies scholars enter into dialogue with all those who wish to understand new liberties, new movements, new mobilities, new identities, new citizenships and new forms of capital, labor and consumption” (Wilson&Donnan, 2012:1).

In this chapter, after laying down this development of border studies briefly, ‘border economy’ discussions which are the main focus of this study will be elaborated. The two bases which are ethnicity and gender that this economy reflects are going to be discussed through the focus of border regions and by the form that they exist in border studies. Even if it is possible to define these concepts in their own accord, when their relations is at stake , a different perspective is needed to comprehend them. Therefore. after the the discussions of border studies, I referred to the intersectionalist model to explain the crossings of gender, economy and ethnicity.

For Anthias (2005:32), ‘the matrix of gender, ethnicity and class’ occupies a central place in academic and political life since the early 1980`s. Since that time, feminists have tried to answer this question, “what are the links between gender, race and class?” Anthias (2005) says that, the ways in which the forms of social organization and identification intersect in specific sites to produce forms of social asymmetry is undoubtedly the most central development in the social theorization

of inequality and a central facet of the social system in the last twenty years. The idea of intersectionality can yield the types of analysis which can cover ‘new forms of inequality’ in the global world. Recent analysis on intersection of race, gender, and class ‘has posited the idea of interconnecting divisions: that each division involves an intersection with the others (Collins 1990; Anthias and Davis 1992; Crenshaw 1994; Brah 1996; Anthias 1998b; cited by Anthias 2005). In this way classes are always gendered and racialised and gender is always classed and racialised and so on.

In this study in which we faced with situations which we could not explain only with gender division or ethnic division, it has become necessary to evaluate the points that ethnicity and gender intersected with border economy and the new inequalities that have surfaced in these points with an intersectional perspective. Intersectionality model will be laid out in this chapter and the elaboration of the situations in which ethnicity and gender intersect with economy in the case of Hopa border region with this perspective will be presented in sixth and seventh chapters where the analysis of the interviews will be done.

#### **4.2. Theorizing Borders: General Overview to the Border Studies**

The necessity of determining new geographical borders after the First World War for Anderson, caused “a boom in border studies and empirical approaches focused on the new reality”. In the ‘dual world’ situation which has appeared after the Second World War on the other hand, the borders were the symbols of political and ideological power in the exact sense and the borders illustrated ‘cases of conflict among countries’ or ‘curtains’ among competitive ideological systems (Minghi, 1991).

The border studies have experienced the real explosion with the dissolution of Soviet Union, ending of the cold war period and the reorganization and expansion policies of European Union and has provided the field of interested of a lot of disciplines.

The expansion and the ongoing integration of the European Union have rapidly transformed Europe as the major context and laboratory for border studies (another major laboratory being the US-Mexico border). European integration was set in motion originally in order to maintain peace between the enemies of the World Wars, and the EU has invested a lot in promoting cross-border cooperation, regional economies and the development of infrastructures (Paasi, 2011:12).

While political and ideological meanings were attributed until that time, after that, identity, human trafficking, gender and border culture discussions have started in addition to these meanings.

Alvarez (1995:3) defines two types of 'literals' that work on borders. Some scholars feel that to take a metaphorical approach to borderlands distracts us from social and economic problems on the borders between the nation-states and shifts attention away from the communities and people who are the subject of our inquiry. These "literalists" have focused on the actual problems of the border, including migration, policy, settlement, environment, identity, labor, and health. The "a-literalists," on the other hand, focus on social boundaries on the geopolitical border and also on all behavior in general that involves contradictions, conflict, and the shifting of identity. Similar to this classification of Alvarez, Kamazima (2004) organizes border studies in two headings which are state-centered and border-centered.

When looking at the meaning of border for the nation state the state-centered approach, that is to say when looking at the border from the center of the state, as the borders of state's sovereignty, sees this as lines that are unchanging, without

the possibility of intervention and exact. This is more like the international relations, geopolitics etc.'s field of interest and type of studying borders. For Kamazima (2004), anthropologists, geographers, historians, political scientists, lawyers, and other scholars who study borders (and boundaries), from the longstanding perspective, conceptualize borders (and boundaries) as tools of separation and control, limiting people's movement within territories, and marking the point where the authority of one state ends and that of another state begins. Scholars in this camp view borders primarily as sources of political conflict, and conceptualize and label borderlanders as potential deviants conducting subversive cross-border activities, including smuggling, prostitution, and illegal immigration.

Border centered approach<sup>40</sup> on the other hand looks at the 'border' from within the border region and the border. According to this borders are not lines that are drawn sharply, unsurpassable, insurmountable. Scholars in this camp reject the idea that borders control, prevent, and regulate economic, political, and social interactions among the borderlanders. Instead borders are both sources of unity and identity, conflict and conflict resolution, and are important in defining and transforming national culture and identity (Donnan and Wilson, 1999). Borders and boundaries are both barriers and opportunities; they simultaneously unite and divide and include as well as exclude. With the similar approach, Alvarez (1995:16) suggests that;

[I]n addition to reevaluating the disciplinary concepts of community, culture, and social equilibrium, scholars need to examine paradox, conflict, contradiction, and contrasts. These concepts identify the multiplex and constantly hybridized behavior of people in the global political economy. These terms force us to look for the common irregularity expressed in daily life, the changes and differences of human existence and the hierarchical tendencies in daily power struggles.

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<sup>40</sup> For the studies which handle the border with this approach see, Asiwaju (1980), Martinez (1994), Flynn (1997), Donnan & Wilson (1999), and Papademetriou & Meyers (2001), Baud&Schendel (1997).

Kolossov (2005:612-613), realistic, the approach that is explained above as state-centered, liberal to the approach that is elaborated as the border-centered above adds a global paradigm and explains these paradigms as such;

In the 'realistic' paradigm, the states are perceived as the most important actors on the international scene, and boundaries between them are interpreted as strict dividing lines protecting state sovereignty and national security. According to 'liberal' views, states are not the only and sometimes not even the major political actors, and the principal function of state boundaries is to connect neighbors and to enable various international interactions. Therefore, it is necessary to eliminate territorial disputes and border conflict and to develop cross-boundary communications and infrastructure. Finally, the global paradigm pays special attention to international networks connecting all kinds of economic and political actors - state and non-state. Due to the development of networks, state boundaries are being gradually transformed into virtual lines and are being replaced by economic, cultural and other boundaries.

How the border is approached also determines what issues will be taken up and investigated in the border. While subjects like the regions of sovereignty of the nation-state, political borders, citizenship gain weight in the state centered approach, border-centered approach is interested more in subjects like culture and identity through the interaction that happens in border regions. "By focusing on migration and movement across the border, rather than on what the border contained and separated, a whole slew of hybrids, fluid identities and mixtures would be revealed" (Green, 2009: 3).

Rather than maintain a focus on the geographically and territorially bounded community and culture, the concepts inherent in the borders genre are alert to the shifting of behavior and identity and the reconfiguration of the social patterns at the dynamic interstices of cultural practices. ... we need to examine paradox, conflict, contradiction, and contrasts (Alvarez, 1995: 462).

The studies that are done on the US-Mexico border that are more through identity and culture, the dissolution of USSR that we have mentioned above, the coming down of Berlin wall which was the symbol of separation of East and West, the developments that create differences in world political map like European Union's expansion policy, the discussions of security problems on borders that has appeared with the 9/11 event has created an explosion in the border literature and theorizing borders<sup>41</sup> has become necessary for a more systematic discussion of border.

Jailly (2009:633) creates a model which can be applied in border studies by doing an elaboration of border literature. According to her border literature provides four fundamental analytical lenses. These are;; market forces and trade flows, policy activities of multiple levels of governments on adjacent borders, the particular clout of borderland communities and the specific culture of borderland communities. Jailly is creating a model and a border theory by using these four fundamental fields of discussion and by starting from the discussions in different disciplines. According to her; "these lenses should not only help our understanding of how structure and agency interact in the formulation of borders and borderlands, but also help guide our analysis of structure and agency" (2009: 634). She is saying that it will be possible to understand both the structure and agent and the border region that appears with the relation of these structure and agents thusly.

According to Konrad and Nicol, "the new relationships between nation-states and global processes are manifested extensively in the borderlands" (2011:70) in the process of globalization. For this reason, the necessity of describing and discussing this new process and new form of relationship with new concepts has appeared. A lot of borders have emerged as "third space" in between states, as

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<sup>41</sup> For the studies which do the theory of border see Paasi (2011), Newman (2006; 2011), Kolossov (2005), O'Dowd (2010)

spaces occupied by heterogeneous and hybrid culture, with re-imagined citizenship, and people who share new visions of community across borders, as geographical visions of transactional, socially constructed and formative space and distinctive place in this process (Bhabba, 1990; cited in Konrad & Nicol, 2011:71).

As we have mentioned above, since the First World War, borders have become subject to studies from several disciplines including anthropology, geography, history, political science and sociology. These disciplines have discussed the issue through their own theoretical and conceptual frameworks. According to Donnan & Wilson (1998:7) there are three main concerns in anthropological approach to the border issues. Social and symbolic boundaries, geopolitical and state boundaries and cultural and postmodern borderlands.

Some have looked at how international borders have influenced local culture (Douglass 1977, Heyman 1991, Kavanagh 1994) or have created the conditions which have shaped new rural and urban communities (Alvarez 1991, Price 1973 and 1974); others have examined nation- and state- building (Aronoff 1974, Kopytoff 1987, Pettigrew 1994); and yet others have focused on people who choose or are forced to move across borders (Alvarez 1994, Alvarez and Collier 1994, Hann and Hann 1992, Hansen 1994, Malkki 1992). Recent studies have concentrated on the symbols and meanings which encode border life (see, for example, Lask 1994, Lavie 1990, Shanks 1994, Stokes 1994). Political anthropology has increasingly turned to the analysis of the roles of state institutions at local levels, the impact of policies on localities, and the symbolic constructions of ethnicity and nation which are often treated as aspects of 'identity' (Wilson & Donnan; 1998:7).

Recent anthropological work on the borders has been marked by the discussions of "third space" that is shaped by the studies of US-Mexican border. Focus of geography on the other hand is the spatial dimension of the borders; where and how these imaginary lines are drawn. While geographers have wrangled with the spatial dimension to the definition of borders, and their roles in nation and state

relations, other disciplines have sought similar goals but have looked at borders from a different perspective (Wilson&Donnan; 1999:49).

Tagil (1983:21) claims that to understand changing relation patterns among borderlanders and “to understand the complex web of closure and contact, of independence and dependence in a border region, requires historical insight and an analysis of historical examples”. Borders involve not only the history of borderlanders but also the history of bordering states, their economic, political, social and cultural transformations. Baud&Schendel (1997:214) says that the historical analysis of borders is especially important in the case of the modern states in the eighteenth to twentieth centuries. In this period, borders all over the world became crucial elements in a new, increasingly global system of states.

Historians “seek to redress the imbalance of “state-centered” studies and to discover which social forces originate in borderlands along with the effects they have had both locally and beyond the borderlands” (Wilson&Donnan; 1999:50). These issues have also been studied by other disciplines. According to Alvarez (1995:16),

An irony of the new borderlands genre is the tendency on the part of anthropologists to neglect the social and historical continuity of border life. Much of our work has been ahistorical. History is more than context, yet we have not incorporated historical interpretation into our border studies. In our quest to expose and illustrate the importance of difference and contrasts, the role of the border in people's creation of bonds and social networks over time has been neglected. The specific permanence and longevity of border peoples in forming lasting social bonds and in political economic struggle is crucial.

According to Wilson&Donnan (1999:54) significant studies in political science, focusing on ‘the investigation of state and supranational policy and the role of local actors in national and international policy-making processes’ are: “Bath`s (1977) work on political culture, Tagil`s (1977) study on policy implications of

boundary making, and Anderson's (1982) works about political problems in frontier regions in Europe and transfrontier cooperation are the fundamental works".

Following section is devoted to a detailed discussion of how sociology approaches the question.

#### **4.2.1. Sociological Analysis of Borders**

While writing on border Strassoldo claimed in the year 1982 that "the boundary and related concepts (frontier, periphery, etc.) have attracted a certain attention by geographers, historians, planners, anthropologists, etc., they have still failed to become a focus for sociological discussion. The boundary has not yet been "problematized" and "thematized" in this discipline. The meager sociological research literature refers usually to national-geographical borders, with a special predilection for "minority" and ethnic problems. For Strassoldo, this is not enough. He contends that "the boundary and related concepts are fundamental terms in the social sciences, and that confusion on these issues is one of the main causes of the unsatisfactory state of sociology" (Strassoldo; 1982:246).

Sociologists very rarely study the issue of 'border' as a subject of its own. However, border areas are very fertile study fields that many sociological discussions could be pursued. Sociological studies are focus on how communities, workers and local institutions in border areas are caught between two often competing national societies and polities. For Donnan and Wilson (2001:60), sociologists have thus sought to understand how the actions of border people and their political and civic institutions reflect their perceptions of sovereignty, territory and identity. According to Strassoldo (1982:152) border people may demonstrate ambiguous identities because economic, cultural and linguistic

factors pull them in two directions. They are also pulled two ways politically, and may display only a weak identification with the nation-state in which they reside.

Sociologists followed the similar way of geographers, historians, and political scientists and they have concerned the relationship between territory, sovereignty, and identity. `But in last two decades the concept of border and related discussions has gained a momentum in sociology. Sociological analyses of borders, for Kolossov (2005:615), were influenced by three important theories and theorists;

... first, by the theory of world systems developed by I. Wallerstein, P. Taylor and others, and especially by the idea of the interdependence and the role of spatial scales. Second in importance for border studies were the ideas of the structuralist theory - in the interpretation of A. Giddens - proposing that societal and global structures leave a certain freedom of actions within a system to each of the economic and political agents. Third, border studies now widely use the notions of discourse and the social construction of space as defined by the postmodernist theory of M. Foucault and his followers.

The study of social groups, institutions, and movements has been the hallmark of international boundary studies in sociology. These studies are often framed as analyses of minority groups at and across state and sub-national borderlines. Earlier studies of assimilation, nation-building, ethnic conflict and accommodation, and migration have given way to studies of ethnic and national identity, the politics of identity, regionalism, the role of local social groups and institutions in cross-border cooperation, and border communities which straddle borderlines” (Wilson&Donnan, 1999:59-60).

Strassoldo (1982:260) claims that most sociological theories concentrate on the change processes that occur well inside the system (cultural dynamics, social differentiation, role of elites and leaders, etc.). Only a few cases the attention has been focused on boundary processes as a source of social change. By giving

attention on boundary process, he offers another analysis of the boundary concept in sociological theory. For him, the closed-system paradigm should be discarded drastically from the social sciences. This paradigm legitimizes the nation state as the ultimate form of societal organization". Instead he offers a system oriented sociology to understand boundary making process as a source of social change.

The interplay between territorial and symbolic delimitations, the various mechanisms by which human systems maintain their boundaries, search for optimal balance between the advantages of opening and closing the boundaries, the drive for ever-finer selecting and filtering power, the symbolization of spatial borders and the spatialization of symbolic boundaries, the criteria for optimal boundary-making between settlements and regions, the relationships between boundary and conflict, all these are just a few of the possible fields of inquiry of a systems-oriented sociology of boundaries (Strassoldo, 1982:265).

However this system oriented sociology that Strassoldo offers still remains within the state-centered analysis. Sociologists, Donnan and Wilson (1999:61), like other social scientists, have had to accommodate the fact that old definitions of sovereignty, which were dependent on the twin bases of `state and territory`, have given way to new ones of `culture and identity`.

None of these fields can be neglected in border and borderland studies. However the border regions are at the same time, are a social reality in which the cultures come across, the people mutually go and come back, cultural exchange and daily commercial activities are done, which 'lives' and hence that changes and causes change. How this social reality is constructed and reconstructed, how the groups who live in these regions participate and answer this process are among the subjects that should be elaborated by sociologists.

### **4.3. Economy on Borderlands**

Focusing on border economies marked by small scale cross-border trade and smuggling reflects a turn in geography and other disciplines within border studies, away from descriptive approaches to state boundaries and towards the analysis of agency and processes in borderlands. “State boundaries have always been, and often still are, shaped by trade and a range of illicit activities that constitute important livelihood strategies for the border populations who make use of the special opportunities the border creates, just as much as by geopolitics and processes of globalization and regional integration” (see Thuen 1999; Girtler 2006; Golub/Mbaye 2009; cited in Mwanabiningo & Doevenspeck, 2012: 85).

The main components of this economy are state institutions, borderlanders and traders. “Political negotiations and relations between border residents, traders, and customs guards revolve around the transborder exchange of commodities and determine the ever-changing values of such commodities” (Appadurai, 1986).

Baud and Schendel (1997:230) ask that “How border economy different from national economy?” For them, much like the economies of other regions, cross-border economic networks are influenced by macroeconomic forces. But, different from other regions, borderlands connect two economic systems. The economic policy of one state may create a scarcity or abundance of certain goods and services on one side of the border. Different national taxes may lead to sharply different prices and a reversal or intensification of existing commercial activity. In their example, the policy of successive Nigerian governments to subsidize the consumer price of gasoline led to the illegal drain of this commodity to neighboring Benin where it was sold for higher prices. Same situations happened in Turkey-Georgia border region between the years 2005-2006. For Baud & Schendel, such developments may motivate the state to impose strict border controls, making trade virtually impossible and provoking smuggling. Or the state

may condone such trade in order to defuse the tensions that its economic policy causes, at least in the borderland. Finally, state officials themselves may actively engage in border trade for public or private gain.

Polese (2012:22-23) also asks that “How border become a source of income?” For him, borders will be a major opportunity for two reasons. The first is that borders, being points of discontinuity, provide opportunities for mediators, people matching a demand and supply on the two sides of the same border and earning money out of it. The other is that restrictions and prohibitions generate new demands. What becomes forbidden sees its price increase and the more a state prohibits a good, the more a good will be in demand. This generates new tensions on the one side, and new opportunities on the other.

For Flynn, border residents draw their economic and political power from their positions in the interstices of the borderland. They bridge two national economies and two political systems and manipulate their marginal situation to their own economic advantage by wedging themselves between traders and the state. In his cases, by asserting their right to control all goods and movement through their territory, they construct their political power around their claim to be the "border." In other words, they emphasize their "deep placement" and "deep territorialization" in the border region as justification for their mandatory political and economic involvement in transborder trade (1997:320).

Like Heckmann also mentions, the economic activities that are continued by the border people in the border regions are, “articulations of as well as a consequence of the border dynamics and the actions of various local and supralocal actors and not simply actions and concepts imposed by state laws from above” (Heckman & Aivazishvili; 2012: 195).

Border economies are always strongly influenced by political measures, and political processes on either side of the border do not normally coincide. Border economies react instantly to short-term policy changes, and constant adaptation lends them a speculative, restive character. This is one reason why it is so important to treat the region on both sides of the border as a single unit: changing economic policies on one side of the border lead to immediate adaptations on the other side as well (Baud&Schendel; 1997:232).

Borders can become corridors of opportunity when border residents can maintain some freedom of movement across and around them. In Flynn's case,

Shabe border residents have embraced their interstitial position because they can control their own movement, as well as the movement of others, in their border region. Unlike U.S.-Mexico border residents, who are subject to intensifying, dangerous, and life-threatening state controls on their border crossings, Shabe have been able to appropriate the Benin-Nigeria border and emphasize their deep placement within the borderland (Flynn; 1997:313).

Flynn aims to make a clear distinction among Beninois border residents, Nigerian border residents, custom guards and nonlocal traders as he explains ““only by so doing we can understand how these groups draw boundaries around themselves and how they situate themselves in relation to the border” (Flynn; 1997:314). People living on both sides of the border as well as other agents such as traders, develop a set of rights based on the lacks and risks that the existence of the border creates. In this sense, smuggling can be seen as a reality taken as a right in all the borders by all the border actors and agents.

The border economy that is of regional scale is elaborated more through small scale trade and smuggling. This is an approach that is very accurate and that can

be applied to any border. However it is obligatory to include other fields of side economic activity inside the border economy. Like it is in our case, small scale trade and commissioning alongside smuggling, petty shop keeping and of course the entertainment sector are the components of the border economy. Local communities continue their cross-border economic links in this dimension that is local scale. “In many cases they do not really have a choice because the government fails to integrate the border economy into the larger national economy. Cross-border economic and commercial activities are often based on preexisting networks of kinship, friendship, and entrepreneurial partnership that now span both sides of the border” (Baud&Schendel; 1997:230).

It is characteristic that small scale traders operate with mostly limited economic resources and over relatively short distances. They rely on local knowledge and social networks in order to trade successfully. The same applies to smugglers. In theory smuggling and small-scale trade differ in accordance to their legal status. “Traditionally, ‘trade’ is the legal and ‘smuggling’ is the illegal means of moving items from one side of the border to the other” (Thuen 1999, cited in. Bruns & Miggelbrink, 2012:11).

Transborder small-scale trade and smuggling are an everyday border phenomenon which is part of the normal routine at many borders (Bruns & Miggelbrink, 2012:11). Whenever prosperity along the border differs leading to considerable price differences in the adjacent countries, the border may be used as an economic resource by inhabitants living nearby. Kraudzun (20012:172) also says that although the new boundaries now trench the spaces of the everyday activities of these people, constraining their mobility and resulting insecurities, many of them can use the economic differences that have emerged from the different policies in the post-Soviet republics. For example differing market prices between both sides of the border are used through trans-border petty trade as an economic resource.

Altvater (1986) describes transborder small-scale trade as a 'form of arbitrage'. He, understood as 'the exploitation of differences in prices and exchange rates over time and space via circulation activities'.

In the study of Heckmann & Aivazishvili (2012:195) in which they give the recount of two women who cross the Azerbaijan-Georgia border every day and try to sell the goods that they have at hand, what these women say "can be interpreted at the common sense level as petty-traders engaging in this trade because they lack other income and resources. Leila argues that she needs to earn her living in this way as she has to look after her children and make ends meet". For them (195) "Their economic activities are, therefore, articulations of as well as a consequence of the border dynamics and the actions of various local and supralocal actors and not simply actions and concepts imposed by state laws from above".

Donnan & Wilson (1999:88) gave attention to three main types of activity on borderlands: prostitution, the passage of undocumented migrant labor, and smuggling. For them, 'such activities can also make a recognizable and valued contribution to the wider economy', and, as our example, 'like other aspects of the 'informal' and 'black' economies located elsewhere in the state, may smooth the workings of the system by offering employment where otherwise there may be very little`.

#### **4.3.1. Legal/Illegal Trade**

Scholars have used a variety of definitions in their studies of the informal economy, alternatively called the "second," "black market," "unofficial," or "unrecorded" economy. "In a movement of goods and people between 'formal' and 'informal' domains, which is dual in its nature itself, we can find multiple argumentations at play. Traders' justification of their informal practices often

operates around and between dichotomies of trust – distrust, efficiency – legitimacy, risk – uncertainty, normal – abnormal. Dealing with these dualisms may cause the existence of different logics of evaluation of ‘grey’ activities” (Grossman, 2012:238).

Many transnational movements of people, commodities, and ideas are illegal because they defy the norms and rules of formal political authority“, as Abraham and van Schendel (2005:5) put it, “but they are quite acceptable, ‘licit’, in the eyes of participants in these transactions and flows”.

The relation between written rules and actual informal practices in petty trade is a mirror of society. Informality operated in this segment of the economy cannot only be limited to the legal shortcomings, high costs of legality or economic marginalization of the actors involved... The informal sector appears not only as a rational ‘device’ to increase economic rationality but as a phenomenon that acts under cultural and historical conditions. I argue that the informal activities are socially embedded transactions that permit a cultural moral logic of the society. (Grossman, 2012:251).

As van Schendel and Abraham (2005) points out illegal activities might very often be perceived as legitimate. He calls these illegal activities that are deemed legitimate ‘licit’. On the other extreme legal actions might not always be perceived as illegitimate and can be called illicit (cited by Weiss; 2012:223). Also in the Georgia-Abkhazia border in which Weiss has performed his study, “smuggling is one of the activities that the state regards and sanctions as a crime. At the same time smuggling and trade with smuggled goods is well accepted as a means of survival among the region’s population and therefore seen as perfectly licit” similar to all border regions.

In the studies that are made on border trade and in the fundamental discussions the main emphasis is on it being “legal” “illegal” or as with van Schendel and Abraham`s definition on it being “licit” “illicit”. Grossman (2012: 234) summarizes this approach in the article that he has written on the suitcase trade in the Finnish-Russian border, as such:

The definition of shuttle trade is often used interchangeably with a definition of informal activity, where the circumvention of legal regulations is viewed as part and parcel of entrepreneurs’ practices (see Hart 1970; Castells/Portes 1989; Williams 2005; Jones et al. 2006; Fernández-Kelly 2006). At the same time, this sector cannot be considered as inherently illegal. Indeed, as we can see it in the ‘types-for-a-flower bed’ case, the line between the articulations of ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ in the small-scale trade sector may be placed between ‘white’ and ‘grey’ with dots of ‘black’. The petty shuttle trade in Russia, started as a mass phenomenon in the early 1990s (see Yakovlev et al 2007; Klimova/Zhsherbakova 2008) has undergone several changes within the last two decades but little of it has resulted in decisive boundaries clearly separating ‘informal’ from ‘formal’.

As Grossman (2012:237) situated, anthropological case studies of shuttle trade in the post-socialist era have addressed the issue of informality in the context of challenges as well as opportunities. This approach has shown how different national borders may be negotiated by people of varying class, gender, and ethnicity (see Konstantinov 1996; Thuen 1999; Williams/Baláz 2005; Heintz 2007).

Every borderland context comprises potentials and restrictions to the local population. They are perceived as options that translate into concrete actions. The outcome of individuals’ activities in the borderland, for Kraudzan (2012:172) would deserve more attention in order to understand the effects of boundaries and bordering processes for the population. For him, “the way Giddens understood the mutual interdependencies of structure and agency in his structuration theory (1984) can be helpful” to understand socio-economic realities of the population

and the ongoing transition processes of the societies. “The agency is grasped as performed within the context of a pre-existing social structure governed by both informal and formal rules, such as norms and laws. However, these structures are not imperishable and external, but sustained and modified by actions of individuals”.

Traders may switch between the informal and formal sector during the same day of border crossing. The dynamics of trust and distrust is very much person- and content specific. The rules of the game are highly contextualized and may combine seemingly discrepant elements. In such a rapidly changing environment traders also face the problem that taken-for-granted can soon be out-of-date and have to move between the temporality of the customs rules and the stability of their income (Grossman: 2012:252). Smuggling is the most common and legalized illegal activity for borderlanders.

It won't be false to think of/define smuggling in three different densities. The first of which is the one done by the people who are living in the border and which they do more in order to satisfy their daily needs, the one that can be defined as contribution to home economy. The second one is again of the people who live in the border region, one that is again realized in small scales however the dimension that can be defined as small scale trade in order to sell the goods that they have at hand or selling the goods that they buy at higher prices by taking them to their own countries. The third is the one realized by organized groups done in large scales and is the dimension of it which especially includes smuggling of drugs and human trafficking.

Whenever a state applies restrictions on cross-border trade, it invites smuggling. Of course, smuggling is not confined to inhabitants of the borderland, nor does it involve all (or even most) of them. But it is most evident in the borderland, and this gives the entire border economy an air of stealth and subterfuge in the eyes of the state. Special economic policies

may be devised to curb smuggling, and these affect border economies in several ways. For example, markets near the border may be closed, or people may be forbidden to carry more than small quantities of certain commodities within a certain range of the border. Such restrictions may lead to adaptations in marketing and transport, as well as in smuggling practices (Baud&Schendel, 1997:231-232).

These types of economic activity which surface at the outskirts of the state, ‘strike at the center of political power, flouting state authority and even threatening to undermine it...Smuggling and other illicit practices may structure relationships between border people and the state in ways which impose practical limits on the exercise of power’ (Donnan&Wilson; 1999:88). For this reason the state is always cautious towards its citizens who lives at its borders and sees them as dangerous in most of the times.

#### **4.4. Ethnicity on Borders**

Ethnic boundaries are explained first and foremost as a product of social action. Cultural difference per se does not create ethnic collectivities: it is the social contact with others that leads to definition and categorization of an ‘us’ and a ‘them’ or in other words: ‘other’. Group identities must always be defined in relation to that which they are not — in other words, in relation to non-members of the group’ (Eriksen, 1993: 10). Because of multiethnic characteristic of border regions and being neighbor with ‘other’ group or groups, constructing group identities and categorization of “us” and “them” much more clear on these regions.

Borders are most often set without talking into account the ethnic structures of the regions resulting often in the separation of people from the same ethnic background. This phenomenon also causes the abundance of discussions on ethnic identity. Donnan and Wilson (1998:14) identify three main types of border people

in terms of their ethnic identity; (i) those who share ethnic ties across the border as well as with those residing at their own state's geographical core; (ii) those who are differentiated by cross border ethnic bonds from other residents of their state; (iii) those who are members of the national majority in their state and have no ethnic ties across the state's borders. All three types of community may be found at one border, but they need not be. For Tagil (1983:21) the origin of a regional identity, of a feeling of distinctive history is connected to feeling or understanding among the population that the region's problems are different from those of the state as a whole and that these problems can best be solved at the regional level. The feeling of regional identity is reinforced by such factors as a common language, religion or culture, but it is often complicated by the fact that the state's borders do not coincide with the wishes or needs of population of the region.

If the people of the region differ in ethnic terms from the majority population of state, this can lead to particular complications, in that disadvantage is perceived as ethnic, not primarily social and economic. It seems easier in contemporary circumstances to generate an ethnic conflict rather than a social one, easier to mobilize people by appeals to ethnicity and nation than to social class. Areas with their own historically developed identity have a stronger base for population mobilization than areas without such a previously established identity (Tagil, 1983:30). These people are directly affected by state policies. Likewise in Turkey-Georgia border, the Russian-Chinese border had been closed to all transpassing in 1930's. For the next fifty years all economic and cultural exchange between China and the Soviet Union could be implemented exclusively through official authorities, no informal relations on the border were possible. Militarization of the border and state propaganda transformed the image of Chinese people in the eyes of Russians from 'close strangers' to 'mysterious enemies', not real people from the neighboring country (Fedorov, 2012: 113)

Differentiation between the in-group and the other (side of the border) has been a traditional means of identity creation and central feature in the construction of ethnicity.

In border regions, neighboring states and the status of their inhabitants are perceived as asymmetrical, and this inequality is expressed in the way people formulate their attitudes towards their neighbors. This imagined hierarchy is not stable, though: stereotypical views of the 'Other' are often negotiated and conflicted, and expressed through various discursive strategies. At various times, under various conditions 'unequal' neighbors are seen differently (see Galasinska/Galasinski 2003; Meinhof/Galasinski 2002). Divergent economic circumstances, political affiliations and social conditions greatly contribute to how people in border areas refer to themselves, their neighbors, the border and their transborder experience (Archer & Rácz; 2012: 64). For example, in Beninois-Nigerian case, the common economic interests of border residents have emerged in the face of recent economic change as guidelines for constructing boundaries between themselves and the state, as well as between themselves and non-border residents. By emphasizing their shared dependence on the opportunities surrounding border trade and their interdependence as partners in trade across the border, Shabe border residents have forged a sense of border identity that defines, on the one hand, their roles in transborder exchanges and, on the other, their relations with both the state and non-border residents (Flynn, 1997:318).

Changes in established relations between social groups often catalyze identity formation. That is, when one group considers its interests to be threatened by another it moves to strengthen the divisions between the groups by reinforcing the perception of differences and by constructing boundaries to identify common interests with other groups (Barth 1969). Sameness and separateness are thus two sides of the same coin. People separated by the state borders usually see each other as totally different: they speak different languages, have different traditions

and practices, and collision of these differences influences habitual ways of living and thinking in various aspects. Mutual attitudes on the border are shaped by many factors, and state policy and propaganda can play a rather serious role (see Wilson/Donnan 1998). What is more, any serious changes in the state policy towards the border regulations can dramatically influence the socioeconomic situation in the border region and promote or put an end to the interethnic communication. Economic contacts therefore provoke linguistic and cultural contacts which may induce serious changes in local communities' social and verbal behavior due to the necessity of somehow adjusting to their 'neighbors' (Fedorovo, 2012:107).

Das Gupta (1997), in his article on feminist analysis of the ethnicity theories, argues that the question of identity has to be linked to what gets designated ethnic culture and tradition by immigrant communities. Das Gupta (1997:573) criticizes Third World feminists in their colonialist and nationalist standpoints and she knits together two often separate strands of critique – one emphasizing the importance of gender in shaping immigrant experiences and the other pointing to the transnational character of post-1965 immigration to the U.S. According to her, this gendered, transnational approach exposes three connected sets of problems of the ethnicity paradigm; “its inability to account for culture as power relations between genders, its preoccupation with loss or persistence of ethnicity, and its presumption that immigrant cultures in the United States are isolated from current and historical links between receiving and sending countries” ( Das Gupta, 1997:573) and she offers intersectional analyses of ethnicity and gender.

#### **4.5. Gender on Borders**

In border regions, the gender discussions have been carried out on entertainment sector and sex work. Because “border zones have been widely reported as

providing opportunities for illicit sex” (Donnan&Wilson; 1999:91). Özgen, talks about ‘the form of articulation to the global’ (2006:127) being different for the sex traffic that was experienced during the years that followed the dissolution of the Soviets. That means the truth of it being done in order to ‘stay alive, accumulate, get protected, manage their lives, with coercion’ is also relevant for the trans-border prostitution, too. However, different from all of these, it has become a part of the entertainment sector in parallel to the fact that the global has presented ‘pornography and prostitution as an industrial sector, rather than a moral problem’ (Altman; cited in Özgen 2003:13).

In her study on Chinese perception of Vietnamese women in Hekou, the small town at the Chinese border with Vietnam, Caroline Grillot (2012) examines how “the other” is constructed through the body of women in this border town, and the ways in which stereotypes and narratives continue. According to her (2012:144),

Vietnamese women who cross the border and now live in areas bordering China have quickly come to represent their country –in the eyes of Chinese people- as a figure of marginal femininity... Contradictory and accommodating images emerge and then expand in the discourses, portraying these women as submissive spouses, tireless workers, prostitutes, manipulators, heartless pragmatists, devoted companions, and ambiguous merchants.

Such perception on Vietnamese women is part of the dominant view that emerged after the opening of the borders in the post-Soviet period. Women who are an important aspect of small-scale border trade stimulated nationality discourses. Small-scale border trade's nationality is an important component of these women is that the rhetoric... The story of Leila and Guliko in Heckmann & Aivazishvili’s work (2012) on the Georgia-Azerbaijan border shows how the dominant discourse on the Azerbaijanis continue. According to them, “Azerbaijani traders were known during late socialism in the former Soviet Union as having a special inclination and even talent (if not disrepute) for engaging in petty trade and

informal economy and for travelling to many parts of the Soviet republics, from Moscow to Vladivostok” (2012:193). In this narrative, it is possible to read the underlying discrimination. Heckmann & Aivazishvili write that “Azerbaijani traders were specialized in trading certain agricultural products or sold illegal products such as alcohol” (?). This quotation solidly indicates how the discourse is grounded.

In relation to the small-scale trade within border regions, Archer & Racz’s recent study (2012:70) is a good example showing the ways in which gender is determinant of economic structures and how women play an important role in cross-border trade.

Smuggling as a social practice both supported and subverted traditional gender roles: During the bombing of Serbia in 1999, as men were prohibited from leaving the country, women would cross the borders in their place to buy goods and sell them back home. Yet, larger-scale illegal smuggling has remained reserved for men... Also, the type of items traded by women were characteristically associated with the domestic sphere assigned to women, taking for granted that they are better at choosing the type of food, clothes etc. that is most demanded and profitable in Serbia.

As the above cited examples demonstrate, gender issue is examined in terms of the ways in which women participate in border economy. In most studies, gender is not studied in itself but taken into account in relation with other social categories and their bifurcations as a result of intersectionality becoming a buzzword (Davis, 2009). Especially, due to their specific economic, social and cultural diversities, intersectionalist studies become inevitable among gender studies on the Mexican-American border.

Mendoza examines the temporary migration of Mexican women who reside in Mexican border cities and travel daily to American border cities to labor in domestic service and he observes that (2009:24)

[G]ender, race and ethnicity, class, and nationality work together in shaping the experiences and opportunities of women working in domestic service [or in entertainment sector] and the hierarchies between workers and employers. Because of the prevailing gender ideologies regarding domesticity, women have typically been the predominant workers in this sector.

Das Gupta (1997) works on immigrant women and in contrast to the `loss/persistence` or `melting pot/salad bowl` debate, she crafts `feminist analysis that draws on transnationalism to intervene in this knowledge production to ask how the construction of tradition across the borders of India and the United States affects immigrant women`s lives` and this analysis shows her that `the feminist scholarship about immigrant communities has the potential to pose a substantive alternative to the depoliticized version of multiculturalism advocated by cultural pluralists, because “it can identify and address the gendered and the gendered differentials in power within and between cultures`.

Also for Butler (1990:3) it is very problematic to talk about "women" in general, "because gender intersects with racial, class, ethnic, sexual, and regional modalities of discursively constituted identities. As a result, it becomes impossible to separate out 'gender' from the political and cultural intersections in which it is invariably produced and maintained.

#### **4.6. Intersection of Economy, Gender, and Ethnicity on Borderlands**

Shield (2008:303) explains the theoretical foundation for intersectionality and says that intersectionality “grew from study of the production and reproduction of inequalities, dominance, and oppression”. The evolution of intersectionality as a theoretical framework has been traced to Black feminist responses to the limitations of the accumulated disadvantage model (e.g., Mullings 1997; Nakano

Glenn 1999) and the recognition that the intersections of gender with other dimensions of social identity are the starting point of theory (Crenshaw 1994; 2005).

Border as a space of encounter of people from different culture, ethnicity and race and religion creates a dynamic milieu hence becomes a very fertile ground for the intersectionalist studies. Gloria Anzaldua (1987:19), in her book *Borderlands/La Frontera*, uses the concept of border to refer to the psychological, sexual, and spiritual spaces that are “present wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle, and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy”. These “border zones” are understood as areas that “become salient around such lines of sexual orientation, gender, class, race, ethnicity, nationality, age, politics, dress, food, and taste” (Rosaldo 1989, 207-8). The concept of borders has also been extended as a means to understand the formation of identities and the self (Mendoza, 2009:29).

Pablo Vila (2005) who works on narrative identity construction on U.S. Mexico border, indicates that when discussing the immigrants who live on this border it is not possible to talk about only one identity, it is necessary to think about different identities of these people like being a woman or a man, Catholic or Protestant, worker or entrepreneur besides being an immigrant. According to Vila (2005:4), “they behave in a particular way because they construct a particular ‘narrative identity’ about who they are along the axis of identity”, that is, their gender, religious, class, regional, ethnic, racial, class, age identities.

Intersectionality as a concept is premised upon the understanding that race, gender and class are actually closely intertwined and the studies of these can only be done through the relations among those concepts. Feminist scholars have thoroughly explored the importance of applying an intersectional perspective to

examine the experiences of women of color in the United States (Mendoza, 2009:21). They contend that race and gender are socially constructed categories which are fluid with multi-layered meanings and they consider them to be so interwoven that race and ethnicity are understood as always inflected by gender (Collins 1999, Glenn 1999). Theories on intersections emphasize the power dynamics that are embedded in these social categories and the interconnection between privilege and disadvantage that race and gender reveal (Baca Zinn & Thornton Dill 1996; Glenn 1999; Higginbotham 1997; cited in Mendoza, 2009:21). In the scholarship on women of color, such as on Latina domestic workers, who are typically from the working poor, women are understood as experiencing multiple disadvantages so that, along with race and gender, social class also functions as an intersecting axis of stratification (Segura 1989; Beal 1970).

According to Shields (2008:302) “intersectionality varies by research context, but a consistent thread across definitions is that social identities which serve as organizing features of social relations, mutually constitute, reinforce, and naturalize one another”. By mutually constitute, she means that one category of identity, such as gender, takes its meaning as a category in relation to another category. By reinforce she means that the formation and maintenance of identity categories is a dynamic process in which the individual herself or himself is actively engaged. We are not passive “recipients” of an identity position, but “practice” each aspect of identity as informed by other identities we claim. By naturalize she means that identities in one category come to be seen as self-evident or “basic” through the lens of another category. For example, in the contemporary U.S., racial categories are construed as containing two genders. This suggests that gender categories are always and everywhere similarly understood and employed, thus “natural” and without other possibilities.

Vila expresses the same understanding and claims that the identity construction process ‘formed partially through a complex intertwining over time of categories and identity narratives about ourselves and others...People also attribute meaning to these social relationship through the narratives, classification systems and metaphors they use in their daily life’ (Vila, 1999:77). He (2005:5), concentrates on two groups of female Mexican immigrants whose process of becoming Mexican Americans is very far from each other both in ethnic and gender terms. He says that “how important change Mexican immigrants have to undergo in their identity plots to become Mexican Americans is related to their gender identities, because American hegemonic gender discourse sometimes is at odds with their Mexican gender narratives”.

Das Gupta (1997) interprets what the women told her by employing Anzaldua’s “borderlands<sup>42</sup>” definition and Bhabba’s concept of “hybridizing the settled<sup>43</sup>” and offers a transnational alternative to the dominant paradigm by inquiring into givens like ‘culture’ and ‘tradition’. She explains her intersectional analysis as;

...the excitement of transgressing and transforming the conventional model lies in working out the connections between ethnicity and race – their discursive overlaps and divergences- and how the management of gender hierarchies and sexuality are central to these discourses within transnational frame (1997:592).

In transnational context, it is impossible to talk about neither only one central identity nor just one ‘other’. According to Vila (1999:77), we need to talk about

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<sup>42</sup> Gloria Anzaldua (1987:3) describes the borderlands as a place where the “Third World grates against the first and bleeds. And before a scab forms it hemorrhages again, the lifeblood of two worlds merging to form a third country –a border culture. Borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish us from them. A border is a dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge. A border line is a vague and undetermined place created by the residue of an unnatural boundary. It is a constant state of transition”.

<sup>43</sup> With this concept Bhabba (1992) directs us away from representation of the referent. “If the epistemological tends toward a ‘representation’ of its referent, prior to performativity, the enunciative attempts repeatedly to ‘reinscribe’ and relocate that claim to cultural and anthropological priority (High/Low; Ours/Theirs) in the act of revising and hybridizing the settled, sententious hierarchies, the locale and the locutions of the cultural.

`identities` rather than `identity`, since this new theoretical perspective implies that conceptualization of any type of unified or centered identity must be avoided. It also means paying a lot of attention to the various others involved in any process of identity construction.

In sum, the construct of intersectionality has assumed a significant position in thinking about gender. As the foundation for theory it promised a more accurate and tractable way of dealing with two issues. First, it promised a solution, or at least a language for the glaring fact that it is impossible to talk about gender without considering other dimensions of social structure/social identity that play a formative role in gender's operation and meaning. In the U.S., the most obvious, pervasive, and seemingly unalterable are race and social class. Second, intersectionality seemed a generally applicable descriptive solution to the multiplying features that create and define social identities. It is not race-class-gender, but also age, capability, sexual orientation, to name the most salient (Shields; 2008:303).

Intersectionality, for Shield (2008:305) first and foremost reflects the reality of lives. The facts of our lives reveal that there is no single identity category that satisfactorily describes how we respond to our social environment or are responded to by others. It is important to begin with this observation because concern about intersectionality from a theoretical or research perspective has grown directly out of the way in which multiple identities are experienced.

According to Choo & Ferree reception of intersectionality in sociology remained limited unlike feminist theory where it became a crucial concept. As a result, they consider "how intersectional analysis could be more widely used to inform understandings of core sociological issues, such as institutions, power relations, culture and interpersonal interaction" (2010:130). They defined three types of

intersectionality as a tool for sociologists concerned with multiple inequalities. They reviewed and categorized;

“[T]he styles of intersectional practices that exists as being group centered, process centered, and system centered. The first emphasizes including multiply-marginalized groups in the content of the research; the latter two focus on explaining intersectional dynamics through the way that the analysis of the data is done”

According to Choo & Ferree (2010:131) who focus on the three primary aspects of intersectionality, namely inclusion, analytical interactions and institutional primacy, ‘approaches that see intersectionality as segmented’ use intersectional analyses “to explain the ‘extra’ oppressions and ‘secondary’ contradictions for non-dominant groups”. Thus intersectionality has become a useful tool in analyzing the multi-layered inequalities not only in woman studies but also in sociology. Borders provide a fruitful field of research for such studies. As Vila states (1999:85);

Any border is an area where limits and differences are established, but it is also a place where different elements come together. Commercial, personal and cultural exchanges are continually taking place in border areas, where capital, people and culture are in constant movement, allowing the social actors to anchor their identities in the new entities which this process creates.

As Vila argues, these processes which engender multiple identities also create new inequalities and discriminations against and among the women. That’s why the intersectional perspective is the most appropriate one to understand construction of different social groups and their changing relation patterns in border areas.

#### **4.7. Border Studies in Turkey**

Turkey completed process of forming her national territories by the inclusion of Hatay in 1939. Today Turkey has 28 border gates, three of which is closed, with

eight neighboring countries.<sup>44</sup> Therefore Turkey offers a great potential for border studies.



FIGURE 3: Important Border Gates of Turkey

Source: Gümrük Müsteşarlığı

The first work that comes to mind on the border studies in Turkey is Neşe Özgen's 2001-3 study "*Sınır Kasabaları Sosyolojisi* [Sociology of Border Towns]" in the Iran Iraq and Syria border region. This is the first comprehensive study on the borders published in Turkey. The study focuses on the sense of border, perception

44 **Bulgaria;** Dereköy (Kırklareli), Hamzabeyli (Edirne), Kapıkule (Edirne), **Greece;**  
 Uzunköprü (Edirne), İpsala (Edirne), Pazarkule (Edirne), **Syria;**  
 Yayladağı (Hatay), Cilvegözü (Hatay), İslahiye (Gaziantep), Çobanbey (Gaziantep),  
 Karkamış (Gaziantep), Öncüpınar (Kilis), Akçakale (Şanlıurfa), Ceylanpınar (Şanlıurfa),  
 Mürşitpınar (Şanlıurfa), Şenyurt (Mardin), Girmeli (Mardin), Cizre (Şırnak), **Irak;**  
 Habur (Şırnak), **Iran;** Esendere (Hakkâri), Kapıköy (Van), Gürbulak (Ağrı), Borualan (İğdır/  
 Closed), **Azerbaijan;** Dilucu (İğdır), **Armenia;**  
 Akyaka (Kars) (Closed), Alican (İğdır) (Closed), **Georgia;** Türközü (Ardahan), Sarp (Artvin)

of border and socio cultural effects of border, around two major border gates, Nusaybin-Habur and Gürbulak; and districts and villages of İdil, Cizre, Silopi, Nusaybin and DoğuBeyazıt. (Özgen; 2004).

Certainly there are studies indirectly involve borders such as those on nation state, national sovereignty, and citizenship. As I have discussed early in this chapter, these studies follow a similar trend as the border studies. Border centered studies focusing on the culture, identity and space have been added to the state centered studies.

According to Özgen (2004:37) Mehmed Hurşid Paşa's work *Seyahatname-i Hudud* dated 1847, is one of the first examples of the anthropological studies on the border regions:

His study encompasses all of Syria, Iran and Iraq border starting from Bazeyid Sanjak of the province of Erzurum to the Persian Gulf, Basra, Baghdad, Mosul, and Van provinces. Khurshid Pasha not only drew the border physically, but also narrated detailed stories about all social structures (tribal assemblies, conflict and sharing relationships, population and structural problems, the specific customs, social structures on the basis of differences and similarities)... Today, milestones [accurate measurements between landmarks that define the borders] Pasha marked are still valid. Özgen (2004:37).

According to Cizre (2001) during the foundation of the republic and the formation of the nation state borders 'took precedence over other attributes of a nation-state in the creation of the Turkish Republic in 1923'. Cizre identifies two reasons for this:

The first is related to the memory of historical crises represented by the contractions of the Ottoman Empire preceding the setting up of the Republic. The other is grounded in the identity-driven preoccupation of the Republic that wishes to achieve a political personality distinct from the Ottoman past.

Two groups of studies addressing the issues related to the borders can be identified since the formation of the boundaries of nation-state to the present day: The first group is the state centered approach of political geographers, historians, and political scientists who studied territorial integrity, sovereignty, patriotism and citizenship.<sup>45</sup> The focus of these studies has not been the border itself but rather the role of border in analyzing other topics.

According to Özgen (2004:38), "as expected from the modernist state, these early studies were limited to the inward perception of border through the concepts of home and 'homeland'" This early period until the late 1980s, nearly 60 years since the establishment of the Republic, included many different disciplines -history, international relations, geography, economics, sociology, and includes many different approaches. Studies that follow the World system theory which had developed Dependency School's<sup>46</sup> paradigms of center-periphery must be considered as part of this first group.

Second group of studies started after the collapse of the eastern bloc by the late 1980s. Emergence of new states and new borders followed the dissolution of

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<sup>45</sup> Özgen enumerates this research subjects on border or related to the border as this following long list. We observe that they are categorized under key concepts such as minorities; nationality; country; National Pact; national geography; issues related to our neighbors and territorial integrity; war and peace; border violations; neighbors and foreign dangers; atrocity at Iron Curtain countries; Turks abroad, communism as a foreign thread; exogenous activities/supported by foreign powers, beliefs, ideologies and publications; economy and trade; smuggling and customs, national custom houses and gates, social security, free trade zones; ports and airports; transnational migration; out migration of workers; illegal emigration; bandits and rebels receiving training, safeguarding, good faith and advice, etc.; Turks abroad, cognate Turkic republics, free foreign trade, border trade, international transportation, trade and fairs; regular foreign trips like pilgrimage, passport and security; ASALA question, Armenian question, Armenian atrocity, Turkish image abroad; establishing of good relations with neighbours, ethnic groups, attitudes and stereotypes against various nations and people; military forces and arms in neighbouring countries; Eastern question; Southeastern question and Kurdish question.

<sup>46</sup> `Cadre Movement` and Şevket Süreyya Aydemir expressed similar theses in the 1930s to that of Dependency School. The circle of Yön Magazine supported the theses of this school in the 1960s.

Turkey's neighbor Soviet Union, brought up border as an issue for Turkey. Recent studies are marked by the developments such as international migration, immigration, asylum, border crossings, human trafficking, and the economic and social problems created by the transition of the new states in the region. 90s witnessed an increase in the studies on the immigrants from the former eastern bloc countries. Parla's (2003) ethnographic study on the immigrants from Bulgaria; Daniş & Parla's (2009) study on Turkey's immigration policies towards the immigrants from Bulgaria and Iraq are the major examples of this new trend.

Daniş & Parla (2009), in their studies where they analyzed the role of state in the changing meanings of having Turkic origins for the immigrants from Bulgaria and Iraq wrote: "national immigration and settlement policies that determine whom the borders will be opened for, under what conditions, in other words who will be included to the national body, are useful to understand the hierarchy of being acceptable and the variability of this hierarchy to which immigrants are subject to." According to Daniş and Parla (2009:136) 1990s was a period of irregularities in terms of immigration flow in two respects:

On the one hand, political and economic equilibrium that turned upside down after the Cold War by the dissolution of the bipolar world has led to migration movements beyond the control of nation-states. On the other hand, by the end of Europe's importation of contractual labor especially after the oil crisis those who wanted/were forced to migrate sought new ways other than legal channels. Therefore, many immigrants are stuck in an "illegal/irregular" status because of the negative attitude towards the border movements, the closure of borders, visas, and asylum procedures.

Corliss sees this lack of status as a consequence of the unique geography of Turkey as a transition country and the high numbers of immigrants entering and exiting the country.

During the 20 years period between 1980s and 2000s, Turkey had turned into both a destination and a transition country for hundreds of thousands

of people escaping from the turmoil in the neighboring countries. Major migration flows from Iran after the 1980 Islamic revolution, from Iraq after 1988 Halepçe massacre, from Bulgaria in 1989, from Iraq in 1991, from former Yugoslavia between 1992-2000, from Afghanistan after the U.S. attack in 2001, all of which increased the population of Turkey more than one million. (2003; cited in Daniş&Parla, 2009).

The migration flow that started with suitcase trade and continued with domestic laborers from post-soviet and African countries further increased the number of immigrants. (Daniş & Parla, 2009:141). These immigrants with respect to their political statuses, the way they use Turkey as a transition for other countries, and the socio-economic problems they experience have been subject to many studies. Yüksek (2007) defines the people visiting İstanbul Laleli for suitcase trade as 'active makers of global processes and meanings.' Yüksek who examines the international trade between Turkey and Post-Soviet countries, names the actors of this process as agents of signs and processes. She demonstrates (2007:60) that 'the mobility of 'ordinary' people across borders facilitates the flows of signs and images. These actors not only benefit from the opportunities created by the border economy but also turn into the agents of western culture. Moreover, Western images and fashions get remolded and acquired new meanings in the process of circulation'.

Another significant study is Kaşlı and Parla's (2009) analysis of the changing visa policies Turkey enforced to the Bulgarian immigrants of Turkic origin, which they claim to 'further entrench the sovereignty of the state through the "inclusive exclusion" of immigrants.' İçduygu & Kaygusuz (2004), in 'The Politics of Citizenship by Drawing Borders: Foreign Policy and the Construction of National Citizenship Identity in Turkey', has examined the relationship between the practices of foreign policy and the construction of national identity in Turkey in order to see how the politics of citizenship are related to, and have emerged from the process of nation-building. Studies that focus on the changing meanings of

citizenship with respect to the Kurdish question have increased after 2000s. According to Özgen (2004:39),

[T]hese studies from the beginning have been on those outside the borders rather the border itself. In both nationalist and recent studies on “otherness,” ethnicity has always been the major issue whereas border works as an essential component of this question.<sup>47</sup>

Another aspect of the studies that discuss border with respect to the Kurdish question is smuggling that is typically discussed in relation to border security around Iran, Iraq and Syria borders. Smuggling which is typically discussed as a legal issue in academic studies, attracted attention from cinema and literature as a form of life created by the border. Bekir Yıldız’s story ‘*Kaçakçı Şahan*’ as well as Şerif Gören’s 1987 film *Katırcılar* where he described the common destiny of the smugglers and gendarme struggling to survive a tough winter, may be seen as the predecessors of the sociological analysis of border. Uludere (Roboski) massacre of 2011 has redirected the attention to the question of borders with respect to smuggling and Kurdish question.

As I have mentioned earlier in this chapter, Özgen’s study is the first to analyze the changes in the social and class structures “because of the border, by means of the border, together with the border”(Özgen;2004). Özgen has continued her research in the same direction on the topics of border culture and the women of the border regions. Today many social scientists that are doing their postgraduate work abroad follow Özgen’s lead and focus on the border studies. It is possible to observe increasing number of dissertations on border studies in the universities of Turkey. Although most of these works are ongoing dissertation projects, it is a sign of the increasing trend into the topic.

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<sup>47</sup> See Aydın, 2002; Cizre, 2001; Kirişçi ve Winlow, 1997; cited in Özgen, 2004.

## CHAPTER V

### BORDER ECONOMY: NEW OPPORTUNITIES, NEW CONTESTATIONS

Do you know how the border is? For example, what does it tell you? It tells you that diesel is very economical and that you are free to pass the border. As it becomes so profitable to buy diesel across the border and sell it over here. The man sells everything he owns and goes under debt to buy a truck with a tank installed; after a month or so it all ends suddenly. Now the man is left indebted. After 3 to 5 months or a year, border presents another opportunity. Buying goods from one side and selling it on the other becomes affordable and profitable again. People invest their money to that job, go under debts again. Sooner or later that job ends too. And the man is left with debts. There is no certainty around the border; you should never start a business trusting it <sup>48</sup>(FL\_IW-31).

#### 5.1. Introduction

The existence of the border most profoundly affects economic activities. Economic activities of borders are defined by MacGoffey (1988, cited in Donnan & Wilson, 1999:88) as 'a highly organized system of income-generating activities

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48 Sınır nasıl biliyor musun? Mesela sana ne diyor mazot çok uygun ya giriş çıkış serbest diyor. Ondan sonra oradan mazot alıp burada satmak çok karlı oluyor ya işte varını yoğunu satıyor adam kamyon alıyor depo koyduruyor borçlanıyor harçlanıyor bir ay devam ediyor sonra pat bitiyor. Bu sefer adam borçlandığıyla kalıyor ondan sonra aradan 3-5 ay 1 sene geçiyor başka bir olanak tanıyor mesela oradan uygun olan bir şeyi getirip burada satıyor ya da buradan götürüp orada satma şansı veriyor borçlanıyorsun o işe yöneliyorsun bu sefer o işte bitiyor bu sefer borçlu kalıyoruz. İstikrarlı bir şey yok, kesinlikle orada güvenip iş yapmayacaksınız”

that deprive the state of taxation and foreign exchange... Some of these activities are illegal, others are legitimate in themselves but carried out in a manner that avoids taxation'. These changing types of economic activities and the forms of participating in them create a change in everyday life practices and forms of social relationships.

According to Donnan and Wilson (1999:88) the border trade includes three fundamental activities. These are prostitution, the passage of undocumented migrant labor, and smuggling. In addition to these, it is possible to consider two more income generating activities common in border regions, as in the case of Hopa where two unique occupations appear: mediator-commissioner and trans border driver.

Border economy depends merely on trade rather than a system of production. As a result, many people make their lives by mediating the process of exchange between suppliers and buyers. In other words, income of many families depend on bringing the supply and demand together and taking an extra amount of money according to the value of the goods they have sold, namely commissions. This form of trade is a system which is very much open to exploitation and misconduct. The people who have entered this system inevitably had to enter these types of relations. As Baud&Schendel states;

No matter how clearly borders are drawn on official maps, how many customs officials are appointed, or how many watchtowers are built, people will ignore borders whenever it suits them...local inhabitants cross them whenever services or products are cheaper or more attractive on the other side; and traders are quick to take advantage of price and tax differentials. Because of such unintended and often subversive consequences, border regions have their own social dynamics and historical development (1997:213).

The Sarp border has its own social and economic dynamics. It was not only drawn between two different countries, but it was also a border between two different economic systems. Sarp border gate has become an opening towards the West for Georgia which has abandoned socialist economy and turned her face towards capitalism just like many other post-Soviet countries. With the dissolution of Soviets, many countries who have declared independence, including Georgia have entered a period of economic hardships. The opening of Sarp border gate rendered visible many aspects of this transformation and its tragic results: the "Russian bazaars" that were established just after the opening of the gate; the "suitcase trade" and the entertainment sector which relies on gambling and prostitution. These examples can be seen as the symptoms of the emergence of new inequalities and chaos that was created by the transition to capitalism.

The trade that is done in the border regions has both legal and illegal dimensions such as smuggling and "billing forgery" that has made its mark in Turkey for a period of time. What has been bought and sold, what has been traded or what has been smuggled had varied according to the conditions in both sides of the border.

Our general purpose in this section will be to evaluate the types of economic activity involving the border, which gradually transformed the lives of the inhabitants of Hopa since the day border was opened.

## **5.2. The Experiences immediately Following the Opening of the Border**

Together with the opening up of Sarp border gate in August of 1988, thousands of people<sup>49</sup> have started to enter Turkey from the countries which have previously been affiliated with Soviet Union and have just started to declare their independence, starting with Turkey's bordering neighbor Georgia, followed by

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49 For some indicators of frequency of border activities see Appendix A and B

Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Russia. Some of these people crossed the border to find the relatives that they had been separated from, some of them in order to travel to other countries; yet majority crossed the border to sell everything they had ever possessed.

By the time border was first opened there were two types of exchange. On the one hand, there were those trying to sell whatever they had no matter what the prices were in order to buy as much merchandise as they could; on the other hand there was a group of people, whose activity involved regular visits and the search for the most profitable exchange in the market. At this early stage Street bazaars were the venue for this commercial activity.

These bazaars eventually turned into "Russian bazaars" that extended from Hopa to Trabzon. This trade has 'quickly developed as a form of small-scale and informal entrepreneurship in order to fulfill consumer demands' (Yükseker, 2007:64).

"During the time the border was opened my father was a shopkeeper here. We had a wooden three story building. My uncle was our business partner and we were running our house as a hotel. Upper floors were used as a lodge and ground floor was a tea house"<sup>50</sup> (MH\_IW-1).

The spaces in Hopa have been reorganized to answer the needs of this new phenomenon. The shops had been filled with merchandise that would answer the needs of those who came from the other side of the border. People have turned their houses into hotels to provide accommodation for the agents of this commercial activity.

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50 "Sınır açıldığı zaman babam o zaman esnaftı burada, ahşap üç katlı bir binamız vardı ortak işletiyorduk dayımla birlikte. Üstü konaklama yeri, oteldi altı kahveydi.

The progression and consequences of the process have been different for the countries on each side of the border. Georgia has tried to ameliorate the pains of transition to a new economic system by benefiting from the border gate and Turkey has sought to obtain profit by trading with not only Georgia but with other post-Soviet countries such as Kazakhstan, Armenia, Azerbaijan by providing direly needed consumption goods and services in a period of crisis. Shuttle trade and prostitution were related to each other in Turkey, especially in the port cities. When the border opened, the other side of the border was Georgia which has seceded from socialist regime, which has just recently declared independence and the economy of which was in ruins. Georgians whose basic needs were provided by the state, housing, employment, and health just to mention a few, until then lived without knowing what hunger or deprivation meant. After the opening up of the border, they came to Turkey to sell first what they have in their homes and then whatever they can find, which started the Russian bazaars.

#### **5.2.1. Russian Bazaars and Suitcase/ Shuttle Trade**

Chelnoki (shuttles), Russian name given to the traders, brought consumer goods such as apparel and household items in moderate quantities from other countries and sold them in marketplaces in their towns. These activities, also called suitcase trade (bavul ticareti in Turkish), are usually unrecorded and they escape legal regulation, evading taxation in both Turkey and Russia (Yükseker, 2007:61).

The first Russian bazaars were established in Hopa and Trabzon. Later on, small markets are established almost everywhere throughout the Black sea coast line. However, because Hopa is the first place to stop when crossing the border the biggest Russian market is here. In this market that is set up through the entirety of the Hopa coast line, the people who come from the other side of the border bring and sell whatever they can find from kitchen utilities to furniture, from antiques to

repair tools, lodge in Hopa and purchase their needs in here and return to their countries.

"Suitcase trade was very common in that period, it was like, as soon as the gate was opened the people who came set up a market from one end of the coastline till the pier with whatever they had in hand like cameras, dishes, bowls and pots. Women, girls and boys, the whole family with all the children would come and open up tables there, and these lodged at the hotels in the evening. And then, this has led us to seriously, I mean we have seen what dollar meant what Georgian currency meant there and suddenly people have started to talk dollar in that process.”<sup>51</sup> (MH\_IW-1).

Ascherson (1995:196) defines "The country of Lazi` and the Russian Bazaars as like; "in the opposite direction come caravans of old red Ikarusz buses. They list to port or starboard and gush black smoke, like paddle steamers...Their passengers – Russians, Ukrainians and people from every nationality in the Caucasus- bring with them anything they can pack and carry –tea-sets and busts of Stalin, toy tanks and lavatory seats, cutlery and clocks, garden furniture and surgical instruments- to sell in the new `Russian market`...many of the sellers have travelled for days and nights from as far as Kiev or St.Petersburg, paying bribes and protection money at one frontier after another, keeping a special wad of banknotes to sweeten the Caucasian mafiosi who allocate the stalls at Trabzon".

The entirety of Hopa has turned into a market in this period. In this market which many different products were sold from guns to small decorations, those who sold

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51 “O dönemde bavul ticareti çok yaygındı hani o kapı açılır açılmaz elinde fotoğraf makinesi tabak, çanak çömlek ne varsa bu sahilin bir başından ta limana kadar sergi açıyorlardı gelenler. Kadın, kız, erkek, çoluk çocuk ailece gelip orda sergi açıyorlardı. bunlar akşamleyin otellerde konaklıyorlardı. O zaman bu da bize ciddi anlamda hani doların ne olduğunu, gürcü parası larının ne olduğunu biz orda gördük ve birden dolar konuşmaya başladı o süreçte”

these goods were trying to satisfy their fundamental needs, those who bought them either because they were antiques or as decorations for their houses. In a sense, the histories of those who come from the other side of the border has become fodder for trade and turned into a commodity that is bought and sold. Chamber of Shopkeepers and Artisans narrated the process with these words;

"Under normal conditions Georgians were doing suitcase trade here in this coastline, it was the Georgians who have started the first suitcase trade. The daily potential of Hopa did not fall down to 5000. Even guns were sold, what are those missile things called and police was right besides us and even the police did not know the kalashnikovs than. The man has normally laid them down to a stall and nobody knows what it is, and nobody has a malevolent intent, he brought them there and is selling, such things as binoculars were very popular."

Trade is made from Sarp border gate to Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The trade with Armenia is made through Georgia. In the Sarp Border Gate, the trade is made with a document which is also used in the Türkgözü customs, called 'special invoice' which also stands for a declaration. This document ensures tax exemption, thus the commodities are bought for cheaper prices. This is not something that happens in every border gate. It is the ability to do trade with the special invoice that provides the opportunity for the suitcase trade in this region.

"Look, this was magnificent in the 80s and 90s. We for example had dealerships and we still have. For example I was the dealer of the region for Coca Cola, the Georgian would come with their car and would say to me, give me 1000 cases of coke they would say. In a single transaction a 1000 cases, 2000 cases I have sold like that a lot, and then there were border trade cards, special invoice for the border trade, this still exists in foreign countries. For example I went to Italy last year and bought a shoe

from there. When you declare its thing in the customs you get back the tax added to the price, the same deal used to exist here too. Coca Cola used to give it for a little bit cheaper, there was a scarcity because it went to foreign countries. Those do not exist anymore, factories are set up there"<sup>52</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

The suitcase trade has become more frequent when the dynamism in Russian markets have started to wane, that is to say when both those who came from the other side of the border did not have any stuff to sell left and when they have achieved a certain amount of capital accumulation that could enable doing trade on a small scale. In essence, mutual trade has also started in this period. This time Georgians have started not only to sell the personal belongings that they had at hand, but also selling the products that they have bought for cheap in Turkey both in their own countries and in the countries that are situated in the further interior. As a result the trade that is done thanks to this border, has not only the countries that have border with each other, it is having an influence on a broader region. This period was encouraged by the legal regulations of the two countries that made the trade easier (like the lowering of custom taxes).

Suitcase trade is a process done by the people who pass the border on foot and is the name given to the process of their passing the border with the amount of goods that they can carry by hand and selling them and buying especially textile goods from Turkey. However, after a while because of the troubles that were experienced during this period which originate from the style of trade of the

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<sup>52</sup>“Bakın bu 80-90 yılları arasında müthişti. Bizde mesela bayilikler vardı halende var mesela bende Coca Cola bölge bayisiydim, Gürcü geliyordu arabasıyla diyordu ki bana 1000 koli kola ver diyordu. Bir kalemde 1000 koli 2000 koli ben çok sattım o şekilde, bir de o zamanlar sınır ticaret kartları vardı sınır ticareti özel fatura, bu halen yurt dışında falan var. Mesela ben geçen sene İtalya'ya gittim oradan bir ayakkabı aldım onun şeyini gümrükte beyan ettiğin zaman KDV'sini geri alıyorsun, aynı olay burada da vardı. Coca Cola biraz ucuz veriyordu kısmen muaflık vardı yurt dışına gittiği için. Onlar şu anda yok, oralarda kuruldu fabrikalar”

shopkeepers in Hopa, Georgians start to buy goods from other cities instead of Hopa. With the goal of earning a lot of money in a short while, low quality goods are sold with high prices. Georgians who also go to other cities come to realize this and they stop to buy goods from Hopa. The trade in Istanbul Laleli has come about as a result of this process.

Even the kids had found ways to earn money in this dynamic period that had started with the Russian Bazaars.

"There had formed a source of income around the border without any cost. And what was that, they were bringing lots of furniture during those times from across and these were carrying them with hand wheels and with its worth at those times 5 dollars was a huge amount of money not a small amount of money. Each turn of the kid was 5 dollars they had at least 10 turns a day can you imagine? 50 dollars a day goes into the pocket of a kid and what could that kid not do with that 50 dollars"<sup>53</sup> (FL\_IW-29).

According to the data obtained from the Hopa customs accounting office in 1988 the total number of visitors entering and leaving Turkey from Hopa gate was 808 whereas this number in four years had increased to 1,400,120. No matter what the purpose of the trip Hopa became a beaten track. Various types of transportation, (such as international transportation, taxi driver, dolmuş driver) became a major source of income (even for the children).

"The people who only had a taxi under their command and carried people

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53 "Masrafsız bir gelir kaynağı oluştu gümrük civarında. O da neydi, o dönemler de çok eşya getiriyorlardı karşıdan bunlar da el arabalarıyla o eşyaları gümrükten taşıyorlardı ve o zamanın parası 5 dolar çok büyük bir paraydı, küçük bir para değildi. Bir seferi 5 dolardı bir tane çocuğun hiç yoktan günde 10 seferi vardı düşünebiliyor musun? Günde 50 dolar bir çocuğun cebine giriyor ve o çocuk o 50 dolarla ne yapamaz, aile bunu yönlendirmeyi bilmediği müddetçe"

during the period when the gate was first opened have today been able to start corporations and buy in to houses worth 300-400 billions without blinking an eye... Money was made; I mean really money was made quite nicely. But there was also this, they kicked their own bread, we would go down to street and saw more or less, saw the manner in which our people here would treat them. If a woman had a lot of bags, they would shout at her a lot and through repeatedly cursing her they would not take her to their car, because in any case there would come a person with lesser bags, after all the people were flooding, in the end with kicking and striking - with their words- they would reject them. Today they pray for those with lots of bags to come"<sup>54</sup> (FL\_IW-29).

In this system that is established in order to earn money, the thing that does not earn any money or that inhibits from earning more money is being tried to jet out of this system, like the women in the example above. To say it briefly, the wheels of capitalism has started to turn in parallel in both of the two countries.

For Ykseker (2007:61) more than state-level interactions or the activities of global capital, it is the movement of goods, money and images that creates social links between these disparate societies, which had minimal non-official contact with each other until about two decades ago. It is important to notice that the people involved in the shuttle trade are the 'socially and spatially situated subjects' of transnational interactions, rather than isolated units acted upon by an overarching process of globalization.

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54“Gmrğn ilk aıldıđı dnemlerde sadece altında bir taksisi olup yolcu taşıyan insanlar bugn řirketler kurabildi, 300-400 milyarlık eve gz kırpmadan para yatırabildi...Kazanılıyordu yani gerekten ok gzel kazanılıyordu. Ama řu da vardı kendi ekmeklerine kendileri de tekme attılar, kapıya iniyorduk iyi kt gryorduk bizim buradaki insanların onlara davranışını gryorduk. Kadının ok mu antası var bađıra ađıra ona hakaret ede ede onu arabasına almıyordu. nk nasıl olsa az antası olan insan gelecekti, akıyor insan sonuta tekmeleme tekmeleme -szle- geri eviriyorlardı. Ama bugn o ok antası olanın gelmesi iin dua ediyorlar”

This process which also meant entering the global economy has also been a process that has changed the structure of capital ownership on Hopa. People who had no capital, has earned money in a short time through easy means and a lot of these monies have been transferred to either the border trade or to the constriction sector. Hopa economy which was held up by those who were working in state owned corporations and tea cultivation until the end of 1980s, loses both its worker and peasant culture through time- at least a huge majority of it-.

### **5.2.2. Goods that were subject to Border Trade**

In that period, the Georgians have taken all of the goods for the basic needs and all consumer goods that were forbidden on the other side by their definition as luxurious consumption goods from Hopa and returned to their country.

"When saying trade in Hopa it was bubblegum which was sold the most, bubblegum and coke. Georgians have bought cases and cases of bubblegum here. The wholesalers could not match the demand. Not like just one piece or two pieces, not with boxes but with cases. What kind of lack that was I could not understand, this is bubblegum after all. It is not like a very important thing you see. Chocolates"<sup>55</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

Those who came from the other side of the border have taken goods as much as they can carry and in a very wide scale with them and made sales by entering and leaving on a daily basis. After selling the goods that are at their hands, they bought

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<sup>55</sup>"Hopa`da ticaret deyince en çok satılan ciklet oldu. ciklet kola. burda gürcistanlılar koli koli ciklet aldılar. toptancılar yetiştiremediler. öyle bir tane iki tane değil, kutu değil kolilerle. o nasıl bir eksiklikti ben anlayamadım ciklet bu ya. Çok da önemli bir şey değilki. Çikolatalar..."

both the goods for their own fundamental needs and the goods that were considered luxury products on the other side of the border as we have stated above and returned to their countries and earned money by selling these goods there.

"From here all kinds of products like onions, potatoes, from cloths to food were out for sale, from there came copper, came iron, came a large amount of gas within the context of border trade, and came timber... And in here shops were so advanced, clothing was so advanced because can you imagine it, 8 thousand people were coming from the other side to here, 8 thousand people was such a huge crowd, there were enormous lines at the borders, those people did not have a lot of money in their pockets after all. They did not know Turkey; they crossed the border, made their shopping here and then returned. They returned with great ease, so much so that sometimes they would return on the same day, came in the morning, do the shopping and return in the evening. However in that period I was a baker in the Sarp border gate and sold 3500 loafs of bread. I sold 3500 only on the border, you see, it is so interesting the sodas that were sold, Coca Colas and biscuits, those kinds of things, I had a market and we sold whole boxes filled with gums, 50-100 boxes of gums. They did not have bubblegum over there; they did not have any luxury consumption, any jeans, any gums, any leather, and absolutely not any fur"<sup>56</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

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56“Buradan, soğandı, patatesti giyiminden yiyeceğine kadar her türlü madde satışa çıktı, oradan bakır geldi, demir geldi, bol miktarda petrol geldi sınır ticareti kapsamında, kereste geldi... Burada bir de mağazalar almış yürümüş, konfeksiyonlar almış yürümüştü çünkü günde düşünebiliyor musun 8 bin insan karşıdan buraya geçiyordu. 8 bin insan çok kalabalık bir şeydi yani kapılarda muazzam kuyruklar vardı. O insan zaten fazla bir parası yok cebinde. Türkiye'yi bilmiyordu sınır kapısından geçiyordu buradan alışverişini yapıp geri dönüyordu. Çok rahat bir şekilde dönüyordu hatta yeri geliyordu günü birlik dönüyordu sabah geliyordu alışveriş yapıyordu akşam dönüyordu. Fakat o dönemde ben Sarp sınır kapısında ben aynı zamanda fırıncıyım 3500 tane ekmek satıyordum. 3500'ünü sadece kapıda satıyordum yani o kadar enteresan yani satılan meşrubatlar, Coca Colalar bisküviler o tür şeyler benim marketim vardı koli koli sakız satıyorduk. 50-100 koli sakız. Oralarda sakız yoktu, lüks tüketim yoktu, kot pantolonu yoktu, sakız yoktu, deri yoktu, avize yoktu, kürk hiç yoktu”

As the respondent above relays, trade of a broad variety of goods is being done. However while production, industrial goods were bought from the other side of the border, consumption goods were being sold to those who came from the other side of the border during the initial times. A similar unequal relation that exists between developed- underdeveloped countries is being constructed in a regional scale and goods of low value are being sold in high prices.

The discourse that those who came from the other side are poor people and victims in fact has been launched in opposition to the Socialist system and as disadvantages that it creates. However the goods that people on the other side were deprived of were consumption goods like gum and chocolate that capitalism has turned into needs.

Together with the opening up of border, everybody who lived in Hopa benefited from it either directly or indirectly. Those who did not do border trade or did not engage in transportation business have earned money from the side sectors. The bakery sold bread at the border, the market sold water or biscuits to those people crossing the border. It is easy to imagine the boom that eight thousand visitors per day could create especially in such a small scale economy such as that of Hopa. Those who had nothing to do with the trade benefited from the cheap products that were sold in Russian markets.

"For example when they arrived, when the border was first opened, there were no hotels in Hopa to stay. A large proportion of the houses have turned into hotels, there were no places to stay for the folk, the guy said so let me vacate my house and make a place for staying, he said. Here a lot of

the houses were hotels, the police force in order to arrange for places for them to stay made the tea houses, restaurants and the places like we call cafes stay open 24 hours out of necessity, I mean without forcing them."<sup>57</sup> (ML\_IW-24).

After a while traders, who had nothing left at their disposal, started to sell materials like iron, copper and aluminum coming from dismantled factories and workshops. In fact, majority of smuggling rested on these sorts of materials. Besides, legitimate corporations who were involved in this business surfaced in Hopa, albeit at a larger scale. Suddenly the number of corporations reached up to hundreds; which caused a scarcity of office space in Hopa.

This period in Hopa, is a period in which all of the locations were transformed in a form that would be suitable to trade. Not only the houses were turned into hotels, streets and offices have also been reorganized in accordance with this trade and a seriously dynamic commercial life has surfaced in this period. As it will be seen in the example below, they could have carried a good that they sold to the other side of the border in their own car as if they have sold it to a person in their own district, the two sides of the border has become “a single Market”.

"The Georgian gate was opened in the year eighty-nine. There was business to do, there was a lot of traffic. A market was established here by the Georgian side, there was a flashy trade and through repeated crossings the goods in Georgia exhausted. They couldn't bring anything new here

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57“Mesela onlar geldiği zaman ilk kapı açıldığında Hopa'da kalacak oteller yoktu. Evlerin çoğu otele döndü. Vatandaşa kalacak yer yoktu adam dedi ki ben evi boşaltayım kalacak yer yapayım dedi. Burada çoğu evler oteldi, emniyet onların kalacağı yerleri ayarlaması için sabaha kadar çay ocaklarını, lokantaları işte kahve dediğimiz yerleri mecburiyetten dolayı yani baskı yapmadan açık bıraktı 24 saat”

and when that happened they started to buy goods from Turkey, but we couldn't satisfy their demand for some goods, especially clothing. All of Hopa's shop windows, shops and markets were renovated, all the avenues and such were arranged accordingly and money was started to be made accordingly. The earnings were made through the scale with small amounts and a little bit of profit. We also sold electronic durables and junk from time to time. I even carried them with my own car to Batumi which means that there was a huge amount of trade. That trade faded away with time. It has diminished a lot especially in these last 5 years"<sup>58</sup> (ML\_IW-18).

The commerce that was going on in the widest of varieties from the most fundamental food items to luxurious consumption goods and on an increasing scale on an increasing scale has started to decrease after a while. Border trade in principle, includes the satisfaction of the regional needs of the people who reside in the two sides of the border. According to Öztürk (2006:109) the aim of this trade is aims like “ease in supplementation of the goods that people who live in the border regions need, contribution to increasing the context of mutual trust in the border regions, bringing dynamism to the regional economy, reduction to the minimum the smuggling of any kind of goods”. However for the reasons that we will be elaborating upon in detail under the subtitle of problems that are experienced in border trade, this trade has been interrupted from time to time. An interviewee who has been working in a bakery for many years have told the scale of the trade that was made with these words;

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58 “89 yılında Gürcistan kapısı açılmıştı, işler oluyordu, giriş çıkışı çoktu. Gürcistan tarafından buraya pazar kurulmuştu cafcacılı bir ticaret vardı, ondan sonra git gel Gürcistan'ın malları bitti. Onlar yeni bir şey getiremediler buraya bu seferde Türkiye'den mal almaya başladılar, biz burada onlara mal yetiştiremedik hele de giyim üzerine çok ticaret oluyordu Hopa halkı için. Bütün Hopa'nın vitrinleri dükkânları mağazaları yenilendi bütün caddeler maddeler ayarlanıp ona göre para kazanılmaya başlandı. Cüz'i miktarla, az bir karla ve süründen para kazanıldı. Biz de arada sırada beyaz eşya, hurda satıp ben kendi aracım ile bile götürüyordum Batum'a yani baya ticaret vardı o zaman gittikçe bu ticaret azaldı. Hele de bu son 5 yıldır iyice azaldı”

"See, the amount of bread that we make now is 2600. Back then we used to sell 12-13 thousand breads. I can say that out of these 12-13 thousand breads we gave out the 9 thousand to there... There was a stand on the other side...I mean, a person who buy bread would buy 1500-2000 breads...They took it further inside and sold. But of course this has diminished with time" (ML\_IW-8)<sup>59</sup>.

During 1990s, according to Dursun (2007:149) "Georgian new market area had began to be an answer to many of the structural problems –such as unemployment, lack of a market within easy reach, lack of investment and business innovation- especially in border areas, at least in the long run". As the economic and social problems in the other side of the border have started to be resolved on the other side of the border their expectations from the border trade have increased too and they have started to produce themselves the goods that they had to accept in any condition at the beginning.

"They built rock ovens there. The business people here set up bakeries there. Now it is over. See, we are making 2600 breads now. There was, for example, dynamism in that first time that it opened. There were even people who would come from the outside, I would say. When the Russian market was established here, it was terrifying; I mean you wouldn't understand how the time passed... There was a dynamism, a potential. People who came from Erzurum, Ardahan and even further, I mean there was everything that you can think of for cheap, from electronic durables to clothing everything was sold. Dishes and culinary, glasses, whatever you can think of. We even said if it kept on like this, there won't be anything

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<sup>59</sup>"Bak su anda çıkardığımız ekmek 2600 ekmek. O zaman biz 12-13 bin ekmek satıyoduk. Bu 12-13 bin ekmegin diyebilirim ki 9 binini oraya veriyorduk. Bir tane ekmek alan bir kişi 1500-2000 ekmek alirdi yani...İçeri götürüp satıyordu. Ama tabii bu zamanla azaldı".

left on the other side. But then it ended and there isn't anymore you see”<sup>60</sup>  
(ML\_IW-8).

This trade has turned from a commerce that individuals were conducting to a stage where corporate companies, capital owners invested and and started to control the market in time. It is possible to define the trade that was done during the first period as a trade that was aiming to profit from scale with “*small-scale- low profit- high sale*”. However as the potential of border trade started to be discovered, big companies originating especially from Ankara and Istanbul and international corporations have entered the market in Georgia and this trade had been acquired by big capital holders. People from Hopa who did not have the strength to enter this market, buy and sell goods and compete with big capital owners were left to mediate in this commerce and provide the transportation of these goods, that is to say do international transportation.

### **5.2.3. "International Transportation"**

With the opening up of the border earning huge sums of money has started in Hopa through smuggling, turning the business places to hotels, by selling the goods at the shops, through different means. The border has been seen as 'the gate of opportunities' during this period and people have inclined towards trans border trade with selling all their possessions, borrowing money from their relatives or

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60 “Orda taş fırınlar oldu. Burdaki iş adamları orda fırınlar açtı. Artık kesildi. Bak su anda 2600 ekmek yapıyoruz. O ilk açıldığı zamanda bi canlılık vardı mesela. Dışardan bile gelen oluyodu yani. Burda Rus pazarı kurulduğunda, çok korkunç yani zamanın nasıl geçtiğini anlamazdın. ..Bi canlılık vardı, potansiyel vardı. Erzurumdan, Ardahan dan, otelerden gelen insanlar ucuz aklına ne gelirse vardı yani. Beyaz eşyadan giyime kadar her sey satılıyodu. Tabaktı, canaktı, bardaktı, aklına ne gelirse yani. Hatta diyoduk ki bu boyle giderse o tarafta bir sey kalmayacak. Ama sonra bitti daha da yok yani”

bringing the material means of all the members in the family. While a lot of them were doing the business of mediating by opening up border commission companies, another segment of them, and especially the Hemshins have started the international transportation business.

"Do you know what the people of Hopa do? The people of Hopa know trade only as such, only as transportation. For example, a guy has a factory in Istanbul, he carries that guy's load. Does commission in the border gate. There is no self producing together with self marketing. Always looking for ready-made. Bought a truck with bank credit, established a business and put 7-8 trucks in that business. Together with that takes loads in Istanbul, takes them to Tbilisi, takes them to Batumi, takes them to Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan. Even, to Russia and to Ukraine with roll-on/roll-off ships from Zonguldak. They work towards that side from there. That is, we are good transporters, there is nothing else"<sup>61</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

Hemshins who have held almost the entirety of the international transportation sector, have been in a more advantageous position on the other side of the border in comparison to Lazis. The thing that has created this advantage has been both the fact that they have done this job while carrying goods to Iran and Iraq and also the network they had with the Hemshins and Armenians who were living on the other side of the border. The Hamshens who were doing trucking before the

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<sup>61</sup>"Biz ticareti bilmiyoruz. Hopa halkı ne yapıyor biliyor musun? Hopa halkı ticareti şöyle biliyo, sadece yalnız nakliye. Mesela adamın İstanbul'da fabrikası var, onun yükünü taşıyo. Gümrük komisyonculugunu yapıyo. Kendisi üretip, kendisi satayım hiç yok. Hep hazırıcı. Tır almış banka kredisiyle, şirket kurmuş, şirkete koymuş 7-8 tane tır. Onla beraber işte İstanbul'da yük alıyo, Tiflis'e götürüyo, Batum'a götürüyo. İşte Kazakistan'a götürüyo, Özbekistan, Turkmenistan. Hatta Zonguldak'tan roro gemilerle Rusya'ya, Ukrayna'ya. O tarafa ordan çalışıyolar. Ya biz iyi bir taşımacıyız, başka bir şey yok"

border was opened up, have put together the money in their families, turned the trucks into lorries by taking credit from the banks. Hemshini language being a slang of Armenian has provided another advantage in the cross border trade.

"We have started the lorry business after 1994. It is my elder brother who bought the first lorry in Hopa by selling the truck. Two months later he bought the second lorry too and the people were stunned like this and like that everybody had started to buy and that is the true form if you are going to do international transportation this business can't be done with trucks it can be done with lorries"<sup>62</sup> (MH\_IW-02).

Alvarez and Collier argue that Mexican truckers continually constitute and recreate ethnicity as part of an entrepreneurial process of successful penetration of foreign markets. They point out that "the ambiguities of identities in borderlands can also be strategically placed upon to forge, reformulate, and even mobilize ethnic identity to advantage" (1994:607).

"Being Hemshin has provided an advantage for us. We have in any case did commerce with the people who were speaking the same language with us on the other side, we have gone there with non-existing capital we could bring back goods just because we knew Hemshin language. There had been that kind of an advantage; we have never experienced a disadvantage because we have been Hemshins"<sup>63</sup> (MH\_IW-22).

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62 "94 den sonra tırcılığa başladık. Hopa da kamyonu satıp da ilk tırı alan abimdir. İki ay sonra ikinci bir tırı daha da aldı millet şaşırды böyle herkes almaya başladı.gerçeği de oydu uluslararası nakliyatçılık yapacaksın kamyonla olmaz bu iş tırla olur"

63 " Hemşinli olarak bize avantaj sağladı. Karşı tarafta zaten bizimle aynı dili konuşan insanlarla ticaret yaptık, yok sermayeyle biz oraya gittik sırf Hemşin dilini bildiğimiz için biz mal getirebildik. Öyle bir avantajı oldu, hiç bir zaman Hemşinli olduğumuzdan dolayı bir dezavantaj yaşamadık"

The economy in the border is a part of the global economy and the types of commerce that the globalization process has created. The people who enter this commerce are at the same time a part of the global economy. The transborder commerce of Lazi and Hemshins is at the same time the entrance of these people into the global relations. However even within the economies that are that big, the international trade has been continued through primary relationships; with the mate, friend, relative and family bonds and their material support.

During the period of no regulation that appeared at the initial times of border's opening a lot of people who did not have capital at hand had found to chance to accumulate capital through extra economic –for example the fact that they were living in Sarp, owning a land at the coast etc.- factors. Those who acquired capital through exploiting the opportunities like extracting tribute, aiding smugglers or smuggling themselves have caught the chance of buying a truck, doing international transportation or international trade.

"At least 80% of the Hemshins are not educated, driving; mechanic there is more employment through these. Naturally Hopa is a place of transit, like transportation, etc. When it is like this many of the employment, opportunities for jobs are created in these sectors. And naturally people earn a little bit of money. Again many companies are established on this subject, and it is again those companies which earn the most of that money. What I mean is for example a driver who works in a lorry can only take 10% of what he makes. That means if there was a driver we would have lorry, today a lorry is 200 billion. Especially among the Lazi there is the idea that "most among the Hemshins own a lorry" but they don't know that 80% of that lorry is under debt"<sup>64</sup> (MH\_IW-15).

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<sup>64</sup>"Hemşinlilerin en azından %80'i okumamış, şoförlük, tamircilik bunların üzerinde daha çok istihdam var. Doğal olarak Hopa bir geçiş yeri, nakliyecilik vb. gibi. Böyle olunca da bir çok

Living in the place of transit has created the most employment in the field of transportation. The means to earn money both as the owner of the job (the owner of the international transportation company) and as the worker (truck driver) were opened up. However it was again the capital owner who have gained in this job or have been those who have put together this capital with the help of their relatives and have become company owners.

### **5.3. Problems that Faced during the Cross-border Trade**

The head of the Chamber of the Trade and Commerce has summarized the period that was the reopening of the border as follows;

"The Sarp border gate has opened in 88, and with its opening mass waves of people have started to come to Turkey from Soviet Union and other countries that were connected to it in such a way that there were times that 8-9 thousand people passed the Sarp border gate. Of course, the region was not ready for tourism in such a scale. Everybody occupied themselves with turning their houses to motels, this has brought in a decent income, because Hopa was the closest district, the people who have come from there have known here, and returned after they have done their shopping in here... There weren't any in Russia; gum, nylon clothing items, lipstick, chandeliers, leather items none of these were present on the other side. There had been a tremendous potential, a great commercial boom. Our folks were surprised too, the things like biscuits were sold more. Then in

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istihdam, iş imkânları bu sektörler de oluşuyor. Doğal olarak da insanlar az buçuk para kazanıyorlar. Bu konuda da yine birçok şirketler kuruluyor, o paraların çoğunu da yine o şirketler kazanıyor. Yani mesela tır da çalışan şoför, çalıştığının ancak %10'unu alabiliyor. Yani bir şoför olsa bir tırımız olurdu, bugün bir tır da 200 milyar. Özellikle Lazlar arasında da "Hemşinlilerin çoğu tır sahibi" düşüncesi var ama bilmiyor ki o tırın %80'i borçlu"

Hopa, the total of hotels and motels were 64. Following this with the establishment of the border gate transportation with a large number of vehicles started, the mutual trades have started<sup>65</sup>”.

As indicated by Baud and Schendel (1997:220), ““people on either side of the border may live in vastly different social and economic circumstances. Where income, employment, and life expectancy vary sharply, a border can mean the difference between poverty and material well-being and occasionally between life and death.” In the case of Hopa though, the emphasis is more in on the new relations created by the inequality based on the difference between the poor and the wealthy. Indeed, these new relations are precisely the effects of the existence of vastly different social and economic circumstances. For the people of the other side of the border, there is no choice but the one that entails to buy and sell whatever it is open and offered to them, on the price that is offered By the same token, on this side of the border is an environment of using the available resources and circumstances to their limits to make as much profit as possible. Yet, this understanding of making the utmost profit using every mean possible, caused in the long run, a significant reduction on the profits in comparison with the time where the border was first opened.

Border trade has been preferred over import-export, because border trade requires much less capital and experience; included goods are duty free or have lower

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65 “88'de Sarp sınır kapısı açıldı, açılmasıyla Sovyetler birliği ve ona bağlı diğer devletlerden Türkiye'ye akınlarla insan gelmeye başladı öyle ki günde 8-9 bin kişinin Sarp sınır kapısından geçtiği oluyordu. Tabi bölge o denli bir turizme hazırlıklı değildi. Herkes evlerini motele çevirmekle meşgul oldular, iyi bir getirisi oldu oradan gelen insanlar en yakın ilçe Hopa olduğu için burayı tanıdılar, buradan alışveriş yapıp döndüler... Rusya'da yoktu; sakız, naylon giyim eşyaları, ruj, avizeler deri malzemeler bunların hiç biri yoktu diğer tarafta. Müthiş potansiyeli oldu müthiş bir ticaret patlaması oldu. Bizimkiler de şaşırdı yiyecek, bisküvi tarzı şeyler daha çok gitti. O zamanlar işte Hopa'da otellerin motellerin toplamı 64 tane mevcuttu. Bunun akabinde sınır kapısının açılmasıyla çok miktarda araçlarla taşımalar başladı karşılıklı alışverişler başladı.”

customs; working with neighboring country reduces transportation expenses; deals are done easier with people across the border. (Özçiloğlu & Sakar, 2011:23). Even though the potential of the border trade was realized, both because of the lack of social capital and because of the problems of infrastructure it was not possible to benefit from this trade enough. According to the president of the Chamber of Shopkeepers and Artisans;

"Our deficiency had been the fact that we did not know tourism well. We were not ready, how to treat a tourist how to speak with them. There is no language thing, and we don't know tourism and we looked down upon the people, if the object was 10 liras, we thought they are tourists anyway let it be 15 liras. They of course first came to Hopa and then slowly went to Rize and Trabzon and as they went to Istanbul they are a little bit knowledgeable for example when they are going to buy a pair of pants they look and see some have brands and labels, from there a lot of them went by learning the business like that. They don't come here anymore like the old times when they are going to buy something they go to Istanbul or Izmir or some other place"<sup>66</sup> (ML\_IW-24).

Rather than buying and selling products themselves, the people in Hopa take intermediary fees by making those who have products on the other side of the border and the companies that are in centers such as Istanbul and Ankara. Like Polese (2012:22) says, "people matching a demand and supply on the two sides of

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<sup>66</sup>"Bizim eksiğimiz turizmi iyi bilmememiz oldu. Hazırlıklı değildik, turiste karşı nasıl muamele yapılır nasıl konuşulur. Dil olayı yok, turizmi de bilmiyoruz insanlara da biraz hor baktık, 10 liraysa mal baktık nasıl olsa turisttir 15 lira olsun. Bunlarda tabi ilk önce Hopa'ya geldi yavaş yavaş Rize'ye, Trabzon'a, İstanbul'a derken bunlar biraz da kültürlü örneğin pantolon alacak, bakıyor bazılarında marka var veya etiketler var oradan işi bilerek öyle gittiler çoğu. Eskisi gibi de gelmiyorlar artık buraya öyle bir şey alacakları zaman İstanbul'a gidiyorlar veya İzmir'e veya başka tarafa gidiyor"

the same border and earning money out of it".

However there are a lot of problems that have been experienced in this process that is not subject to sufficient legal supervision. Dursun (2007:163) refers this situation as such;

The problem of a suitable politico-institutional environment for the economic environment in Georgia has impacts on the development of border areas. The development of economic co-operation is effected by the differences in formal institutions and socioeconomic structures. Today, all the entrepreneurs' complaint about lacking legislation and taxation rules in Georgia, and they still have no trust in legislation and its enforcement, or taxation. Although the Georgian human capital is well educated, the entire socio-economic system has only few suitable attributes fitting well to a market economy.

Ordinary citizens on both sides of the border turn into international traders in a short period of time. This encounter with a different culture and language, not only of the neighboring country but also of commercial activity, brought a lot of difficulties with it. The hardships and risks of this new economic environment have been furthered by the rise of illegal means, tempted many who sought shortcuts to higher profits.

"I was doing a cellulose business. From out of the country 6 m tall 80-90 cm thick as a log that was not cut through, I was doing those. And I was earning a good amount of money. This earthquake that hit Yalova and Duzce, hit me too. I gave ware to the other side without invoice and that person could not declare them... If I prepared an invoice, they would have declared that to the state, I would have taken my money... I made a big mistake and as a result went bankrupt. It did not go out of pocket, it went out of profit, I did not have that much money in any case. I have started

with 1050 dollars. 125 thousand dollars have gone in a day”<sup>67</sup> (ML\_IW-6)

Border trade unlike other commercial forms is regulated by the mutual agreements between two countries. Border trade has been an incentive to develop local economy for the cities and regions. In some cases border trade has been useful for the country's economy especially for the imported goods with low or no supply. For instance, in eastern and south eastern Turkey, diesel trade with a special license (Border Trade Document) given by the governors of the border towns, had been distributed in other regions of the country. Such activities have an impact on the national economy and display fluctuations depending on the condition of the national markets. Another sector developed in Hopa due to the opening of the border gate and have connections with other cities of Turkey is the so called entertainment sector.

#### **5.4. Entertainment Sector**

The processes that I have mentioned above were not experienced in the form of successive stages following the opening up of the Sarp border gate. They were woven together, and often fed each other. The appearance of the entertainment sector in Hopa was in a form parallel to the starting of the suitcase trade.

After the opening up of the borders in the countries that have declared their independence after the Soviets, things that were similar to what happened in Turkey-Georgia border were experienced and many people have searched means

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<sup>67</sup>“Sellüloz işi yapıyordum. Yurtdışından 6 m boyunda 80-90 cm kalınlığında biçilmemiş kütük halinde, onları yapıyordum. Çok ta iyi para kazanıyordum. Fakat bu 1998 yılında Türkiye’imiz de olan deprem, Yalova’yı, Düzce’yi vurdu, beni de vurdu. Faturasız mal vermişim karşı tarafa, o kişi de onu beyan edemedi... Faturamı kesseydim, onu beyan edecekti devlete, alacaktım paramı... Demek ki benimde yanlım vardı ki iflas ettim. Cepten gitmedi ki kârdan gitti, benim zaten o kadar param yoktu. Ben 1050 dolarla başladım. Bir günde 125 bin dolar gitti”

of earning money and continuing their lives by crossing these borders. This process in which these countries have attempted to adapt to the global economy in full speed have brought inequalities among the citizens of these countries too. Those who have come crossing the border have been people from the lower classes of these countries. What was experienced in Hopa has not been different from this. As Dursun (2007:1983) states;

In the first years of independence so many travelers had come on ships, not only from Georgia but also more from Russia and other post-Soviet Countries. All of the shuttle trade has run in these bazaars, and thus they had resided near the bazaar, and harbors. The number of the hotels in these areas had rapidly increased constituting a residential area for these shuttle traders and also for prostitution.

Entertainment sector includes restaurants, disco-bars, hotels and prostitution. This sector has three main economic agents: owners of the places, the women who come from outside for sex work and the men who demand this type of entertainment. This sector is believed to hold the economic life of Hopa on its feet today. This sector developed gradually following the time border was opened. At first, dilapidated or abandoned houses or the cottages in the tea fields were the loci of prostitution.

Like many of the interviewees have told, today what keeps the economy of Hopa alive is the entertainment sector. "...you see there are 6-7 4 starred 5 starred hotels in a town that has a population of 15 to 20 thousands. They have 70-80 employees working in each of them depending on the size, these are of economic value, but they are bad morally"<sup>68</sup> (ML\_IW-10). The economic benefit of the sector and the employment opportunities that it has created in the district has enabled both its legitimation and its spread. Nobody even knows the number of small hotels, bars

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<sup>68</sup>"...yani 15bin-20bin nüfuslu şehirde 6-7 tane 4 yıldızlı 5 yıldızlı oteller var. hepsinde 70 kişi 80 kişi çalışıyorlar büyüklüğüne göre. Bunlar ekonomik değer. Ama manen kötü"

and discos. This sector provides at the same time employment for the youth in Hopa and makes the enterprise owners earn money as well as letting the shopkeepers in the environment earn money from this business.

"They would need a hair dresser and they would go to the beauty salon, they would need cloths and they would go to the shop, their food, banks, hotels, discos, all of these have happened as links of a chain with them. You see with us nothing works if the foreign women are not here, restaurants don't happen, the hotels don't work, discos and the like for that reason this realm affects everyone too. I think there are 15-16 beauty shops"<sup>69</sup> (FL\_IW-25).

As the quotation above shows, the entertainment sector creates other job opportunities or feeds the sectors that exist. The shopkeepers who have started to earn money over the opportunities that the entertainment sector, he does both the trade he does, his location and also the goods that he has, they are being redesigned according to this.

Although many interviewees have admitted that this sector is the major source of income for many inhabitants of Hopa, especially our female interviewees have constantly voiced their disapproval of it. In the words of one of our female interviewees;

"We didn't know what a beauty shop was. There was only one beauty shop called "Muazzez". Now there are many beauty shops opened up only for Russians. Disco is Hopa, prostitution is Hopa, beauty shops are Hopa... Say, if you say, is there more of the other dining or useful shops, or more

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<sup>69</sup>"Kuaföre ihtiyaç duyuyorlar kuaföre gidiyorlar, giyime ihtiyaç duyuyorlar mağazaya gidiyorlar, yemeğidir, bankasıdır, otelidir, diskosudur bütün bunlar onlarda zincirleme oldu. Bizde işte yabancı bayanlar olmasa bir şey işlemiyor, lokantalar olmuyor, oteller işlemiyor diskolar falan o yüzden bu âlem herkesi de etkiliyor.. 15-16 kuaför var sanırım"

of these businesses, these outweigh. For example I am going to buy a dress suitable for me, there isn't you see... There are only ones suitable for them. If you go into a shop, go into a shoe store. There is never anything suitable for you, you see...”<sup>70</sup> (FL\_IW-5).

While the streets, shops and the goods that are sold are organized in order to satisfy the needs that the entertainment sector creates, the living spaces of those who live in Hopa are discounted, some streets have become unusable for the women. They had to fore go the right to life for the entertainment sector which is being legitimized on the one hand as the source of sustenance of the household, of the family. What almost every respondent stated has been the fact that the biggest problem in Hopa is 'unemployment'. For them, there is almost no other job opportunity for the young other than entertainment sector at hotels and disco/bars.

"This has to be accepted, there are things that have created a lot of employment as a result of this entertainment sector. There is no other employment for the young who work at the hotels anyways. There is nothing that is done. 550 people when I started working in the tea factory, now 250 diminishing, there is not an increase in there. The young work in the hotels that is not commerce they are working after all but this is a resource that is brought by the gate. And also the gambling, they gamble in the hotels there is also the opportunities that are brought by that that is there is also internal tourism you see, a lot of people come for entertainment from the outside, especially from Erzurum”<sup>71</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

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70“Kuaför nedir bilmezdik. Sadece bir kuaför vardı “Muazzez” diye. Şimdi sırf Ruslar için bir sürü kuaför açıldı. Disko Hopa, fuhuş Hopa, kuaför Hopa... De ki, diğer yeme içme ya da işe yarayacak dükkanlar mı çok, yoksa bu işler mi daha çok desen, bunlar ağır basar. Kendime göre kıyafet alacağım mesela, yok ki... Hep onlara göre var. Bir mağazaya gir, bir ayakkabıcıya gir. Hiç sana göre bir şey yok ki...”

71“Şunu kabul etmek lazım, işte bu eğlence sektöründen dolayı bayağı istihdam yaratmış şeyler var. otellerde çalışan gençler için başka iş yok zaten. Hiç bir şey yapıldığı yok. çay fabrikası ben çalışmaya başladığımda 550 kişi , şimdi 250 azalıyor, artış yok orda. Otellerde çalışıyor gençler o ticaret değil sonuçta çalışıyorlar ama kapının getirdiği bir imkan. Bir de kumar,

A major part of the demand for this sector that the border has created comes from those who come from the provinces who are in close proximity of Hopa. This sex tourism which the respondents call “internal tourism” also indicates that the zone of influence of the border has also expanded. It has a widening affect from the position that the gate has to outwards, even though its intensity decreases.

As an expected consequence of this entertainment sector based on sex industry came the formation of criminal organizations. Crimes committed by these mafia-like organizations are a major source of disturbance for the inhabitants of the city. According to our interviewees;

"A mafia has also been born here of course over this huge amount of money. What's more those who do it are locals, there have also been people who started to take tributes, when there was a lot of money made for nothing"<sup>72</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

It can be understood that the entertainment sector has been creating other sectors and led to the emergence of new power relations from the above quotation and the events of gun fight that were experienced in recent times.

"This unjustness of this sector, those people who have gained more money from the sector mafia-like or those who hold the power have come to places. Like from a hotel, restaurant or whatever these are not things that normal people can attain. They have accumulated that capital but that capital after all does not belong to Hopa. The extensions of bigger corporations or entertainment sector did not use it as a contribution to the

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otellerde kumar oynuyorlar onunda getirdiği fırsatta var yani iç turizmi de var yani. dışardan özellikle Erzurumdan çok geliyorlar eğlenceye”

72 “Burda bir mafya da doğdu tabi bu çok para üzerinden. Üstelik yapanlar yerli, haraç yiyen kişilerde doğdu. Çok beş para kazanılınca”

people or unemployment either"<sup>73</sup> (MH\_IW-15).

Not only the clients of the entertainment industry but also the employees, namely the sex workers from post-Soviet countries provided economic benefits and boost to the local economy, especially for the small business owners.

"They go to beauty parlors they go to other places they do decent shopping when they are going to their homes they do their wholesale and take off. They never bargain either, they do their shopping pretty decently and they provide a somewhat huge or small aid to all of the shopkeepers. In the smallest type of pressure for example it is heard immediately none of them gets out they become afraid because it is a small place, being deported is not a simple thing like that"<sup>74</sup> (The head of the Shopkeepers and Artisans Chamber).

As a result, a structure has emerged in which there exists a sector that capital owners keep operating with high profits and establish the rules for on the one hand and the small scale company owners who are trying to benefit from the dynamism that this sector creates on the other.

### **5.5. Uncertainties and Risks of Border Economy**

Border trade, as I have mentioned earlier, is a trade with risks primarily because it is connected with the practices and conditions of two different economies

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73"Bu sektörün de bu adaletsizliği, sektörden daha çok para kazanan insanlar mafyavari veya gücü elinde tutanlar belli bir yere geldi. İşte otelinden tut, restoran bilmem ne bunlar normal insanların ulaşacağı bir şey değil. Onlar o sermayeyi biriktirdi ama o sermaye sonuçta Hopa'nın değil. Daha büyük şirketlerin veya eğlence sektörlerinin uzantıları onu da halka, üretime, işsizliğe yönelik bir katkı olarak kullanmadılar"

74"Bunlar kuaförlere giderler, bir yerlere giderler güzel de alışveriş yaparlar, evine giderken toptan alışverişini yapar çeker giderler. Hiç pazarlığı da olmaz, güzel güzel alışverişini yaparlar her esnafa iyi kötü yardımları oluyor. En küçük baskıda mesela hemen duyuluyor hiçbirisi sokağa çıkamıyor ufak yer ya korkuyorlar, sınırdışı edilmek öyle basit bir şey değil"

regulated by two different states. Besides, border trade means a meeting point for two different cultures that further increases the uncertainties. Illegitimate business transactions and other illegal formations also create not only a lack of stability in economic terms but also lack of security that threaten lives.

Those who were trying to do trade through the border between Turkey and Georgia have faced very serious problems when the border trade had first started. Both the people and the legal regulations were caught unprepared to this new phenomenon of border trade. The losses were also huge because of this. The border was a new border, on the other side there was a new country which had just declared its independence, everything was new and nothing had set into place. Despite above mentioned high risk factors, border trade offered many otherwise unimaginable opportunities for the locals. Within the lack of legal regulations many risked their possessions and even their lives to enter into the border trade.

Traders involved in trans-border trading practices may take a double risk regarding the ways they challenge the state or rather state authorities compared to those who take part into illegal markets within only one state: One source of risk derives from the illegality of markets. At the same time risk derives from the practice of trans-border transactions: People who in order to bring goods from one side of the border to the other hide goods, declare them incorrectly or use unofficial routes have to face the risk of being detected by border authorities. With regard to the specifics of trans-border small-scale trade in the broad field of informal economic activities, the risk of being detected by border officials always has to be weighed up against the potential profit (Bruns&Miggelbrink, 2012:13).

#### **5.5.1. Legislations**

The uncertainties and risks that were created by an economic context where rules were not set during the time when the border was first opened, were affected by

border policies of the two states which kept on changing incessantly. Like Baud & Schendel (1997) explains, 'unlike other regions, borderlands connect two economic systems. The economic policy of one state may create a scarcity or abundance of certain goods and services on one side of the border. Different national taxes may lead to sharply different prices and a reversal or intensification of existing commercial activity'.

Three agreements signed between turkey and Georgia in 1992, Trade and economic cooperation, *Investment Incentive, international highway transportation agreements had started the commercial ties between these two countries followed by several other agreements.* Some of these agreements were abandoned either before or after taking effect. Free trade agreement dated 2007, took effect in 2008 but it was revoked for the reasons explained below. The things that are experienced during the Kemalpaşa incident and after is a bitter example of the precariousness of the lives of the border people and their dependency on the economic policies of both countries.

#### **5.5.1.1. The Kemalpaşa Incident: 'That was an Adventure that Happened and Ended'**

Kemalpaşa is a small town (bucak)<sup>75</sup> that is linked to Hopa between the central Hopa and Sarp border village with a population of approximately 4500. Despite its being 10 minutes away from the center of Hopa, it is a comparatively calm place that the entertainment sector has not entered. However, shortly after Georgia and Turkey declared a tax treaty Kemalpaşa became a center of border trade. Hundreds of shops, generally of textiles, had opened. Thousands of people started to come from the other side of the border every day, buying merchandise to be sold back in their country. The head of the Shopkeepers and Artisans Chamber describes the

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<sup>75</sup>Bucak is a term unique to Turkish provincial administration, between village and town.

Kemalpasa Incident as such;

"It was during the period in 2009 when exactly the crisis took place. The crisis had started in the second half of 2008. You know what, let me tell you: we once again have entered the market late, believe it or not, there were not many local shopkeepers. They were from Denizli, Gaziantep, Rize and Trabzon, wherever you can think of from Anatolia. Many big companies started business. It increased from once a week to two, when they first came it was on Fridays and Tuesdays and the people who came weekly there were at least 6-7 thousand people who came every week. This commerce had started in 8-9 in the evening and would end at 3-4 the next day"<sup>76</sup>.

Kemalpasa with its population of 4500 has turned into a trade center to which investors from all around the country come to sell their goods and thousands of people from the other side of the border come to shop. The people of Kemalpasa had benefited from this potential that had appeared suddenly by renting out their houses and barns; opening up places for the food and beverage needs of the visitors.

"The people of there came here and like on textiles or on different jobs, like house or kitchen gadgets... It had gone on dynamic like this for a 5-6 months, like they opened up shops I would say even in the barns for their kids. They rented out the places that they would use as woodshed and that is for a lot of money too but whatever was played they ended here... The

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<sup>76</sup>"2009'da tam krizin olduđu dönemdeydi. Kriz 2008 in ikinci yarısında başlamıştı. Ben size anlatayım inanır mısınız var ya o zamanlar bizde yine geç geldik pazara ve fazla yerli esnaf yoktu. Denizlilisi, Gazianteplisi, Anadolu'dan Rize, Trabzon, aklına neresi gelirse bütün illerden vardı burada. Büyük firmaların hepsi buraya gelmiş iş yapıyorlardı. Haftada birken ikiye çıktı cuma günü ve salı günleriydi ilk geldiklerinde ve haftada gelen en az 6 -7 bin kişi gelirdi bir anda. Bu ticaret akşam 8-9'da başlar öbür günü saat 3-4'te biterdi"

Turkish Republic was here textile shops from all around like how should I say there was almost 500-600 shops that were opened. There are still ones that are open but now it is in a worn out condition... They have put a tax an ordinary citizen would come and for example could leave by doing 50-100 dollars worth of shopping that is they could take 5-10 pieces. This time when it became dense, 2000 people have started to come daily if I have to make up a number a thousand 1500 people would do their daily shopping and leave"<sup>77</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

This trade which has started with the removal of the customs tax has caused, similar to what was experienced in Hopa during the time when the border was first opened, the rearrangement of space in Kemalpasa too in accordance to this commerce. The locations have changed, the daily life has been organized according to this and Kemalpasa has turned in to a huge 'Market' in which those who come from the other side of the border came with ease as if 'the border did not exist' and satisfied their daily needs and returned. This event essentially shows how the borders which are set for political reasons and are used as a 'barrier' can be discarded first by the states and than by the people when the economic interests are at hand.

This exchange created new opportunities as well as aggravations on the other side of the border. Georgians were making profit by selling the merchandise they brought from Turkey at lower prices than the local markets, which eventually

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77 "Oranın halkı buraya gelip işte tekstil üzerine ya da farklı işlerde, ev mutfak malzemeleri falan... İşte böyle bir yaklaşık 5-6 ay hareketli geçti yani burada atıyorum ahırları bile dükkân yaptılar evlatlarına. Odunluk olarak kullandıkları yerleri yani baya da bir paraya verdiler kiraya ama ne oynandıysa bitirdiler burayı... Türkiye Cumhuriyeti buradaydı bütün her taraftan tekstilci yani nasıl diyim yaklaşık 500-600 tane dükkân açıldı. Var hala şu anda açık olanlar ama şuan bitik durumda...Vergi koydular normal bir vatandaş gelip buradan mesela 50-100 dolarlık alışveriş yapıp gidebiliyordu yani 5-10 parça eşya alabiliyordu. Bu sefer yoğun olunca, atıyorum günde 2000 kişi gelmeye başladı bin kişi 1500 kişi günlük alışveriş yapıp gidiyordular"

created local shopkeepers' legitimate grievance. In the words of one of our Georgian respondents;

"This Georgia's economic condition had deteriorated a lot. Very cheap goods came to this Kemalpaşa. Because it was sold cheap they also sold cheap to the other side. Goods that came from other places, from Iran, from Iraq did not sell (in Georgia). A lot went from here, now because the economy had deteriorated a lot there the cheaper of goods sold more. The goods that went from Turkey were sold. But whomever it was that came there earlier and set up a business, whether it be Italy, or France, there are a lot of goods that come from Iran in Georgia, their economies deteriorated. They closed it because of that, you see"<sup>78</sup> (FL\_IW-9).

In the article of the Milliyet Newspaper titled "Laleli Dream of Sarp has Ended Early"<sup>79</sup> from April 20<sup>th</sup> 2011 words of one of the shopkeepers of Kemalpaşa were quoted. "There were certain agreements between two countries based on the suitcase trade that were valid until the year 2017. We have come here trusting that. But Georgia has unilaterally declared this agreement null". Another shopkeeper's elaboration in another news article is as such: "Those who come from Georgia cannot pass the goods that they bought from the gate. A high tax is asked of them. For this reason 70 percent of the shops are closed. We had two shops and we had also closed one of them, and will be closing the other one too".<sup>80</sup>. Like the

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78"Bu Gurcistan'ın ekonomik durumu çok düştü. Bu kemalpaşaya çok ucuz bir mal geldi. Ucuz satıldığı için karşı tarafa da ucuz sattı. Başka bir yandan İran'dan Irak'tan, başka yerlerden gelen mallar satılmadı (Gurcistan'da). Burdan çok gitti, şimdi orda da ekonomi düştüğü için ucuzu daha çok satıldı. Türkiye'den giden mal satıldı. Ama daha önce kim ki oraya gelmiş, iş kurmuş İtalya olsun, Fransa olsun, İran'dan gelen mal çok var Gurcistan'da, onların ekonomisi düştü. Ondan kapattılar yani"

79<http://gundem.milliyet.com.tr/sarp-in-laleli-ruyasi-erken-bitti/gundem/gundemdetay/20.04.2011/1380208/default.htm>

80For similar news;

<http://www.haberkeyfim.com/Default.asp?I=Haber&ID=4944>,

<http://www.olay53.com/haber/artvinin-lalelisi-iki-darbe-ile-hayalet-sehire-dondu--32591.htm>

<http://www.lazhaber.com/artvin/hopa-kemalpasada-hayat-durdu-h11680.html>

president of the Shopkeepers and Artisans Chamber asserts,

"This time the shopkeepers from there had risen up now logically I as the head of chamber of shopkeepers would stand up too if something like that happened what you are doing we are paying taxes to you here. It was exactly as they say, it was itself exactly a factory without chimneys. I mean that business was suddenly cut off. However there was another side to this business; when this new border gate building was built when the presidents of the two sides, the president of our side and their president said "5 years without interruptions and these businesses will again continue with certain subsidies after 5 years" with saying "what are these gates?, lets open these gates lets make trade with pedestrians on the seashore with a walking system lets make this lets make that" these people weighed these businesses too but of course these promises were not kept".<sup>81</sup>

An event which appeared with an agreement that was signed by the political authorities of two countries and created a source of income for the citizens, suddenly, has caused the citizens to turn into a victim of these political decisions by disregarding the potential losses that they will have. It can be seen here that not only the economic interests of the two countries are at hand but regional and even global economic interest relations have come into play. Because Georgia has not only been for Turkey, but it has to Middle Eastern countries like Iran and Iraq,

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81"Bu sefer oranın esnafı ayaklanmış şimdi ben mantıken esnaflar odası başkanı olarak öyle bir şey olsa bende ayağa kalkarım siz ne yapıyorsunuz biz burada vergi veriyoruz size. Tam derler ya bacasız fabrikaydı tam kendisiydi. Yani bu iş birden kesildi. Yanlış işin içinde şu vardı; bu yeni gümrük binası yapıldığında iki tarafın başbakanı, bizim tarafın başbakanla onların başbakanı işte "bu kapılar nedir?, bu kapıları açalım yürüyen sistemle deniz kenarında yayalarla ticareti yapalım öyle yapalım böyle yapalım" diyerek "5 sene kesintisiz 5 sene sonrada belirli aktarımlarla bu işler devam edecek" deyince bu insanlar da bu işlere ağırlık verdiler ama tabi bu sözlerde durulmadı"

European countries such as France and Italy and it has been a market for America too. As a result it was not possible for the two countries to enact the rules of this global market on their own and the agreement that they have signed has been rendered void.

One of our interviewees who identify himself as a 'Border Victim' remembers his experience of running a shop in Kemalpaşa during the border trade boom:

"People from all around the Turkey were coming, opening up shops and earning money. We already knew about the textile business, we had pondered on it and thought 'the guy comes from such a long distance and makes money by opening up a shop so why shouldn't we?'. This was already our job... We opened up the shops and there was an enormous amount of business we were earning like 4 thousand dollars 5 thousand dollars a night, when he earned 3 thousand dollars I was saying is it that low. The business was that much my husband couldn't find enough bags. He hired two Georgian workers: the woman used to be a doctor, but she was working with us. She said "I make better wages here." This lasted for 3-5 months, ... there was no tax, the Georgians were not paying tax for the goods that they bought. Then they started to apply taxes at the border like a bang... you must pay taxes according to the weight of the goods you bought. You would pay at least 600 liras even if you did shopping worth of 300 liras. The business ended with a bang... everyone crashed and burned, as we bought the goods with credit, you know, we had given checks for 3 to 5 months... the business ended before the due dates and we were stuck with the goods at hand"<sup>82</sup> (FL\_IW-31).

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82“Türkiye'nin her yerinden insanlar geliyor dükkân açıp para kazanıyorlardı. Bizde zaten tekstil işini biliyoruz, biz de düşündük taşındık dedik yani adam ta nereden kalkıp geliyor dükkân açıp para kazanıyor biz neden açmayalım dedik...Dükkânları açtık acayip iş oluyordu bir gecede 4 bin dolar 5 bin dolar falan kazanıyorduk, 3 bin dolar kazandığında ben bu kadar az mı diyordum. O derece iş oluyordu poşet yetiştiremiyordum eşim. İki tane Gürcü eleman almıştı

As Kolossov (2005:632) asserts "for large enterprises and especially for transnational companies, customs formalities and taxes rarely play a significant role, while for small and medium enterprises located in border areas, they become a serious obstacle stimulating them to re-orient their activity to the domestic or local market", these economic disturbances have affected the small and medium scale enterprise owners the most.

Today, a citizen who crosses to the other side has to pay a tax even for something they bought as a gift. "In Georgia, nobody comes anymore because nothing passes the border. Now I can transport the stuff that belongs to me when I am going to my mother. If I buy a gift for my mother they have put a restriction in place. You cannot buy anything"<sup>83</sup> (FL\_IW-9).

This dynamism in trade that has lasted around 6 months, ended with Georgia starting to excise duties on border trade. Today in Kemalpaşa, it is possible to see hundreds of shops whose shutters are closed. In similar situation, in Benin-Nigerian case, as Flynn (1997:312) explains, border residents,

[H]ave responded to the decreased trade traffic, omnipresent custom guards, and plunging economic opportunities is by forging a collective 'border identity' based on their territorial claims to the region and their perceived right to participate in, and profit from, transborder trade.

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Eşim kadın da doktordu, kadın doktorluğu bırakmış gelmiş bizim burada çalışıyordu. Burada daha iyi yevmiye alıyorum diyordu. Bu böyle 3-5 ay devam etti mi ondan sonra orada istediğin kadar alışveriş yap o tarafa bedava geçiyorsun. Yani vergi yok, aldığı malzemeye vergi vermiyordu Gürcüler. Ondan sonra pat bir vergi koydular sınıra yani aldığın malın ağırlığı kadar vergi ödüyorsun o da 300 liralık alışveriş yaptıysan en az 600 lira ödeyeceksin de öyle geçeceksin. Böylece pat işler bitti mi millet patır patır döküldü, biz de malı vadeyle alıyoruz ya 3 ay 5 ay çek vermişiz ödemeler gelmeden iş bitti mallar kaldı elimizde"

83"Gurcistan'da, kimse gelmiyo şimdi çünkü gümrükten hiçbir şey geçmiyo. Simdi bana ait esyaları geçirebiliyorum anneme giderken. Anneme hediye alsam onlar yasak koydular. Hiçbir şey alamazsın"

But in our case this kind of collective identity is not emerged most probably because of the existence of different ethnic groups and of people from other regions of the country.

These closed shops and desolated streets of Kemalpaşa are remained as the signs of aggrieved shop owners whose business venture tumbled by a decision making mechanism beyond their reach. A decision taken by Georgia directly effected the lives of the people on the other side of the border. According to Baud & Schendel (1997: 220);

Border economies are always strongly influenced by political measures, and political processes on either side of the border do not normally coincide. Border economies react instantly to short-term policy changes, and constant adaptation lends them a speculative, restive character. This is one reason why it is so important to treat the region on both sides of the border as a single unit: changing economic policies on one side of the border lead to immediate adaptations on the other side as well.

### **5.5.2. The Financial Risks that are Created by the Trans-border Trade**

On top of the risks that appear as a result of legal regulations, inadequacies that result from local authorities or people in the trade that is conducted on this side of the border, similar risks that exist on the other side of the border are added in the trans-border trade which require a larger capital and especially the financial risks are doubled.

Financial risks are not unique to border trade. Many economic activities expose people and businesses to serious financial risks. However our case include a unique type of risk factor that could be identified by the lack of regulations. As the President of Chamber of Commerce who himself is a commission merchant tells:

"The firm has sent the goods but how is it going to send the earnings from them, how is it going to collect the earnings they make. They will send the money up front and then think whether the Turkish firm will send me my goods, when you send goods is the company in Georgia going to pay me for these and if so how ill it be. You get your money... there were people who would intercede with you on the street who are dressed up as police who would search you and would take your money that you carried with you. That is to say the commerce was done in great conditions but as I said in the period that is close to the last 10 years these do not take place anymore"<sup>84</sup> (President of the Chamber of Commerce).

Both the fact that the potentials of the trade not being understood and the fact that the rules of trade not being established on either side and the human factor has caused the financial risks and losses to increase. According to Dursun (2007:177) the economic relation between Turkey and Georgia is an “asymmetric” one.

Turkey constitutes a model for Georgia, which is undeveloped in respect of Turkey. Especially in the first years of independence, Turkey was the only door for Georgia to reach the whole world. Georgia gained importance within the system of global relations due to its strategic location. The Rose Revolution in 2004 clearly puts forward this significance as Georgia has become a good market both for many European countries and America, just after this revolution. However, Turkey could not be prepared for such a development, and could not realize necessary legal and infrastructural projects”.

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84“Firma mal göndermiş ama parasını nasıl gönderecek parasını nasıl tahsil edecek. Önden parasını yollayacak bu seferde düşünecek acaba Türk firması bana malımı gönderecek mi, siz mal veriyorsunuz acaba Gürcistan'daki firma bana bunun ödemesini yapar mı yaparsa nasıl olur. Paranızı aldınız...yolda yolunuzu kesmiş polis kılıklı insanlar üzerinizi arayıp paranızı üzerinizden alabiliyordu. Yani çok büyük şartlarda ticaret yapıldı ama dediğim gibi son 10 yıla yakın bir dönemde bunlar artık yok”

As a result of Turkey's belated move to use the potential of Georgia and increasing competition in the Georgian markets, Turkey lost her market. The irregularities between two states effected trade relations at various levels, companies even persons started to lose their commercial ties with Georgia. Lower quality goods that bring large profits started to lose their place in the markets.

"Now what was done in Turkey they have started producing cheaper and lower quality goods. They have lowered the prices each time but they have lowered the quality too. My brother; don't lower the price but don't lower the quality either. After all the people on the other side are cultured, they know this, they are aware of this what happened after a while? Our products have started to be disliked they thought that we produced lower quality and that is what happened as a matter of fact"<sup>85</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

This lack of regulation was not only experienced in Turkey but on the other side too and it has affected the trade that was done during the initial period a lot. While a factor in the emergence and increase of these risks is the non settled condition of the system, another had been the irregularities that people have created.

"We couldn't make communication, we did trade but we have slipped up, we paid in exchange for goods, we couldn't get our money back. We couldn't find the guy, even... we couldn't go there once around 95 or so, there was civil war. In Georgia we couldn't go in those periods we have come face to face with police, the people, mafia if I have to make up an example, we could hardly pass a distance of 500 km in 3 days, and that

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<sup>85</sup>"Şimdi bu sefer Türkiye'de ne yapıldı daha ucuz ama daha kalitesiz ürünler çıkarmaya başladılar. Her seferinde fiyatı düşürdüler ama kaliteyi de düşürdüler. Kardeşim; fiyatı düşürme kaliteyi de düşürme. Netice olarak karşı taraftaki insanlar kültürlü insanlar, bunu biliyor, bunun bilincinde bir dönem sonra ne oldu? Bizim ürünler beğenilmez oldu bizim kalitesiz yaptığımızı düşündüler ve nitekim öyle oldu"

was as a group and with great fear, whether it be transportation or another job we couldn't stay or spend the night without a reference. Now, however it is better..."<sup>86</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

The attitudes of people in constituting cross-border relations –both economically and socially- attach so much importance, and constituted by not only the historical commonness, but also by the existing socio-economic structure (Dursun, 2007:161). Even despite the fact that there are people who have the same ethnic identity who live on both sides, they have faced cultural differences and the difficulties that this has created.

"They seemed were alien to us. That is, we couldn't get along with the Georgians, there were problems. Those who did trade were in trouble, that is they have started to pursue the taking 5 liras when you gave them 3 liras. I'm saying it just like that what they did was stealing and cheating. In a sense there wasn't commerce... You cannot trust, you see they don't think in long term. In fact when you reconsider we are neighbors, our cultural qualities are also almost close to each other, they think in short terms I mean let me con this person in a month for five ten thousand dollars"<sup>87</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

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86“İletişim kuramadık, ticaret yaptık sakata düştük, mal karşılığında paramızı verdik, paramızı alamadık. Adamı bulamadık hatta...bir 95te falan gidemedik, iç savaş vardı. Gürcistan’da o dönemlerde gidemedik yolda polislerle, halkla, mafyayla, karşılaştık atıyorum 500 km’lik yolu 3 günde zor gittik, oda korka korka toplu halde gittik, nakliyecilik olsun başka bir iş olsun referans olmadan kalamadık, yatamadık. Şimdi iyi ama..”

87“Çok yabancı geldi onlar bize. Yani Gürcülerle anlaşılamadık, sorun yaşandı. Ticaret yapanların çoğu sıkıntılı yani onlar, 3 lirayı verdiği zaman 5 lirayı almanın peşine düştü. Atıyorum onların yaptığı hırsızlık, dolandırıcılıktı. Bir anlamda ticaret olmadı...Güvenemiyorsun yani onlar uzun vadeli düşünmüyorlar. Aslında dönüp baktığın zaman burada komşuyuz, hemen hemen kültürel özelliklerimizde çok yakın birbirine, kısa vadeli düşünüyorlar yani bir ayda beş on bin dolara bunu çarpıyım”

This new chaotic setting made the people of both countries who lived side by side but did not have any relation for many years vulnerable to various types of abuses and exploitation. People from Hopa who have sold the bad goods at their hands at high prices; have experienced similar incidents when they crossed to the other side. Such cases must be seen as a consequence of the precarious economic conditions pushing individuals into illegitimate and often unethical means of earning money. It is a context where people struggle to survive and reach a level of economic security in the middle of transition to a new system. It is said that there are close to 800 lorries that are registered today at Hopa. However the people who have sold their trucks and bought lorries to do international trade say that they have in fact lost money because of the credits that they have taken from the bank and interests.

"What contribution did it have to Hopa? I don't think so. It does not have any contribution to Hopa. let me say something like this. Perhaps we earn 2000 3000 dollars as the lorry however you buy a lorry for 240 billion aged 0 while doing that you are going to sell it 10 years later you will sell it for 100 billion... it is the banks who are the real winners here. it is the banks who earn the most money who don't take any of the risks either. the banks earn good secondly the company Mercedes and that is currency earns good finally if something is left for us, if a bone is left for us we are make do with that bone. Because the system is as such you see"<sup>88</sup>  
(MH\_IW-2)

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<sup>88</sup>"Hopa'ya ne katkısı oldu? Ben düşünüyorum. Hopaya hiç bir katkısı olmaz. Şöyle bir şey söyleyeyim. 2000 3000 dolar belki biz kazanırız tır olarak ama bunu yaparken 0 yaşında 240 milyarlık bir tır alırsın 10 yıl sonra satacaksın 100 milyara satarsın. Esas kazanan burada bankalardır. En büyük para kazanan hiç bir risk de almayan bankalardır. Bankalar iyi kazanıyor ikinci olarak firma Mercedes ve o kur iyi kazanıyor en son bize de bir şey bir kemik düşerse biz de o kemikle idare ediyoruz.çünkü sistem böyle yani"

Alongside these material risks and conditions which is more important has been the nonexistence of security of life. People who disappeared or were incarcerated were frequently mentioned in the interviews.

### **5.5.3. Security of Life**

People's expectations had been very high when the border was opened. The people were occupied with the goal of earning a lot of money in a short period of time. Same expectations were cited by Dursun (2007:162) for the other side of the border.

People had expected the transition would increase affluence, they also believed state to provide full employment, free education, and health care; and prevent the emergence of huge economic inequalities. But, there was a remarkable decline in the status of professional, scientific and technical occupations. Access to wealth depended rather on contacts with western capital, connections with officials and elites, involvement in criminal activities involving extortion, drug trafficking, prostitution, etc. (Dudwick et. al, 2002; and Dunford, 1998).

The irregularity in this side of the border is more intense than the other side, in a country who has recently declared its independence and who is still struggling to become economically viable. On top of these there also appears to be a problem of security. The people who take goods to the other side or bring them back try to move as a convoy without breaking up from each other however this cannot prevent robberies or swindle. This situation creates an obstacle for the commerce to be done within rules and causes many people to lose money. However even more important than money is that people fear for their lives because the cases of robbery and assault are frequently experienced.

"Like most trade routes, it is dangerous. The danger is worst on the journey home, as the merchants return across the frontier with bales of Turkish leather jackets

and cheap computers and bundles of greasy Western banknotes. Near Kabuleti, a few miles into Georgia bands of armed robbers in military uniform ambush the bus convoys and strips the passengers of their treasure" (Ascherson; 1995:196).

"We went in fear. What will happen to us or when even the smallest thing happens to you they say jail or 50 thousand dollars or 100 thousand dollars, these are experienced even today"<sup>89</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

The things that one of our interviewees tells whose father was lost in the year 1994 on the other side and who couldn't ever learn what happened to him display the hardships of doing cross border trade in that period.

"He was driver and we had bus in the past. When this border gate was opened trans-border trade started. It was around 89 when it opened and we have lost our father in the year 94 on that side. In Georgia... That is he is still lost through these 17 years. We have investigated a lot for 5-6 years, in that side and in this side. We didn't reach any conclusions we are waiting just like this... He was going to go to Ukraine with plane in the morning, beside the other products. It is since that day that we didn't hear any news. That means we have lost contact one day"<sup>90</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

In her unpublished thesis about Cross-border cooperation between Turkey and Georgia, Dursun (2007:182) analyses the experiences of Turkish enterprises in Georgian market. She states that "to cope with the turmoil in Georgian markets has turned out to be extremely challenging for Turkish entrepreneurs. They have

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89"Korkarak giderdik. Başımıza ne gelecek ya da en ufak bir şey geldiği zaman başına cezaevi ya da 50 bin dolar 100 bin dolar paradan bahsediyorlar, halen bugün bile yaşıyor"

90 "Şofördü, geçmişte otobüs falan vardı bizde. Bu sınır kapısı açıldığı zaman sınır ticaretine başladı. Yaklaşık işte 89'da falan açıldı, 94 yılında biz babamızı kaybettik o tarafta. Gürcistan'da...17 senedir halen kayıp yani. 5-6 yıl bayağı bir araştırma yaptık, o tarafta bu tarafta. Bir sonuç elde edemedik öyle bekliyoruz... Uçakla sabah Ukrayna'ya gidecekti, diğer malın yanına. İşte o gün bugündür haber alamadık. Yani bir günde irtibatı kaybettik"

complaints about the issues as legislation, unstable taxation, corruption, barter trade, and lack of reliable partners in Georgia”.

"When they caught you alone inside they would pile up on you and beat you to a pulp on order to take the money you had. They were that heartless than Saakashvili came the laws and regulations have changed and there was a little bit authority inside, he increased the security of life and after that comings and goings I don't know business construction and the like started to happen"<sup>91</sup> (MH\_IW-27).

## **5.6. Illegal Trade**

Smuggling is only unique to the border regions and is one of the fundamental bases of the economic life in these regions. Smuggling is the indispensable truth of these regions, whether it be done by organized crime groups or by the ordinary citizens living in the border region.

"One of the most interesting forms of creativity on the border involves smuggling, an illegal activity that borderlanders easily rationalize. To be sure, that is dishonor in smuggling strictly forbidden and harmful substances such as drugs, but not in smuggling ordinary consumer goods (Martinez, 1998: 313)." This situation, which one of our respondents rationalize by saying "if the the locals go and buy a box of cigarettes or buy a couple of bottles of alcohol, or else buy meat, of course it is only a natural thing that the people who live in the border region benefit from

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91 "İçeride seni yalnız yakaladıkları zaman elindeki parayı almak için başına çökerlerdi ölesiye döverlerdi. Öyle acımasızlardı. sonra Saakashvili geldi yasalar kanunlar değişti içeride biraz otorite oldu, can güvenliğini arttırdı oradan sonra gidiş gelişler ne bilim iş inşaat falan olmaya başladı."

this"<sup>92</sup> (ML\_IW-19) is the commonly held belief of almost everyone who live in Hopa.

The initial period of border's establishment is a period when smuggling, especially the smuggling of radioactive junk, drug trafficking and prostitution suddenly became abundant and the economic activity in this period have developed in a manner more reliant on informal, friendship and buddy relations rather than relying on the force of capital and hence in a manner in which the extra legalism was dominant.

What was to be smuggled was generally determined by the difference in prices or a decision made by someone in the state. For example: the diesel trade was let free with a decision taken by Turkey and the people have found ways to benefit from it more. Because one needed a border trade document in order to be able to do diesel trade, many people have filed for this document in their friends and acquaintances' name and did diesel trade.

"It was during the years 95-96... During that diesel period we had many things. We did our permits in the streets, like 200-300 dollars for everyone, we gave to our friends and made them liable and got border trade documents. They would reap at least 500 liras each for themselves from us... This was allowed for a year"<sup>93</sup> (Chamber of Shopkeepers and Artisans ).

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92“Yöresel insanlar hafta sonu gidip bir karton sigara almış, bir kaç şişe içki almış veyahutsa et almış, tabii ki bu sınır bölgesinde yaşayan insanların bundan faydalanması gayet doğal bir şeydir”

93“95-96 yıllarındaydı...o mazot zamanında çok şeylerimiz oldu. Karnelerimizi yaptık sokakta, işte herkese 200-300 dolar, arkadaşlarımıza veriyorduk, mükellef yapıyorduk, sınır ticaret belgesi alıyorduk. Onlar ayda bizden en azından 500'er lira kendilerine sağlıyorlardı... Bir senelik serbest bırakılmıştı”

According to the increasing the tax losses of Turkey from petroleum trade and also the increasing pressures of businessmen related to liquid oil trade; government had limited the range of goods that are subjects of border trades with a decision of Council of ministers on 22 June 1998 (Dursun,2007: 134). The diesel smuggling starts after that.

"First, from here things like these companies were established pulling diesel was official but now through smuggling, how so through smuggling? Let's say we have a car, you go and extend its tank you go and fill it up come back and empty it and sell. You go and come back again but they don't say they don't have the chance to measure the diesel in your tank or you use that if they control, that has developed a lot there have been people who bought a car just to do this smuggling, but there were a few people who were caught too, however I think it was a little bit to show off because everybody knows this in here even the police knows it and the major knows it too because there is no way something this common can be hidden, you know"<sup>94</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

A lot of the people who live in the region have also crossed the border, bought diesel and returned in order to satisfy their own diesel needs.

"That is also a source of income in a way, lets say the guy departs from here to there empty when they get their own diesel for example a taxi driver uses that gasoline for 15 days in here. Let's say the guy has a pickup there is a person who commutes from their home they have a private car

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94"İlk buradan bu şirketler falan kuruldu hani bu mazot çekme olayı resmiydi ama şimdi kaçak yollardan, nasıl kaçak yollardan? bizim bir arabamız var diyelim deposunu gidip büyütüyorsun gidiyorsun geçiyorsun dolduruyorsun geliyorsun burada boşaltıyorsun satıyorsun. Tekrar gidiyorsun geliyorsun ama demiyor ki depondaki mazotu ölçme şansı yok yada onu kullanıyorsun kontrol ederlerse. o bayağı bir gelişti sırf bu kaçakçılığı yapmak için araba alanlar oldu. ama bir iki yakalanan da oldu. birazda göstermelikti bence bunu herkes biliyor burada polisi de biliyor kaymakamı da biliyor çünkü bu kadar yoğun olan bir şeyin gizlenmesine imkan yok hani"

when they nicely fill up the tank it would last for 1 moth. That is, you see, a contribution to their own budget"<sup>95</sup> (ML\_IW-24).

Any tax regulation in both countries and especially the price differences between the goods immediately affects the trade in these regions and smuggling activities. The goods that are smuggled the most in recent times in Hopa are cigarettes, diesel, meat, honey, alcohol. Most of the people perceive this as an income that contributes to the family budget and an income that is the right of the people who live around the borders.

"For example our friends have certain cars and they at least go to buy diesel, go to buy sugar. They can bring a couple of items when they are returning. I have a niece and he also had a taxi, and like he crossed once a week and bought his gas, bought his diesel. Surely there is not like a great differential but you see if he saves 100 liras from gas, if he brought five kilos of sugar and he saves 20 liras from that, for each tour of going in there and returning he benefits by saving 120-130, however you may look at it"<sup>96</sup> (ML\_IW-8).

However there are shop owners who are not pleased with this business. Especially the shop owners who sell the commonly smuggled commodities express their grievance that their business is hurt because of smuggling. A shop owner who runs a cigarette distribution agent complains from the lack of controls and the implicit consent given to these activities: "...what is it? It is below the counter, they cannot

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95"O da bir yerde gelir kaynağı, vatandaş diyelim ki burada boş gidiyor oraya kendi mazotunu aldığı zaman örneğin bir taksici o mazotu 15 gün kullanıyor burada. Diyelim Pikap'ı var adamın eve gidip gelen vatandaş var özel arabası var mazotu güzelce doldurdu mu 1 ay yetiyor. O da kendi bütçesine bir katkı yani"

96"Mesela arkadaşların bazı arabaları var en azından mazot almaya gidiyorlar, şeker almaya gidiyorlar. Gelirken bikaç parça bir şey getirebiliyorlar. Benim yegenim var, onda da vardı bi taksi , iste haftada bir geçiyordu benzinini alıyordu, gazini alıyordu. E tabii büyük bir rant olmuyor ama işte 100 lira benzinden kalsa, beş kilo şeker getirse 20 lira ordan kalsa, oraya bir giriş çıkışta nereden baksan 120-130 kari oluyor"

open up that counter, the police or the official from tax bureau only looks at here and asks if there is any that are smuggled you see of course they will say there aren't any. Would they say there are some that are smuggled? This is the system of control you see, for example they get caught at the gate and you say why did you let him? He says come on I can't check all the cars you know, I can't check 2 out of 15, I check randomly. However, they know their man, that man makes an express transit. They ask why you not checked them, he says I couldn't check all of them, he just happened to be among those who I couldn't check"<sup>97</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

"A sector has started to be established in smuggling, especially diesel and cigarettes. They come from Istanbul and buy fish in Georgia, can you imagine that? Let it be both us fish or red mullet fish, they buy them, the expensive fishes, they are the ones that are sold in all of the hotels in Istanbul, all of the hotels in Trabzon, in restaurants you see"<sup>98</sup> (ML\_IW-19). As Martinez argues, the types of smuggling that are small scale, unorganized and done especially in order to satisfy daily needs are seen as a right of the people who are living around the border and are not thought of as an illegal activity and are not even labeled as smuggling (Martinez, 1998: 313). The case when they are generally labeled as smuggling and not approved of in any way is the smuggling of narcotic materials such as marijuana, heroin and pills. The people who are engaged in drug trafficking are generally blamed as being amoral and earning unjust income.

"30% of the marijuana and heroin that enters Turkey enters from this gate.

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97 "...nedir tezgâh altındadır, bu tezgâhı açamıyor polis veya vergi dairesi görevlisi sadece buraya bakıyor ve soruyor kaçığı var mı diye eee yok diyecek tabi ki. Der mi kaçığı var diye? Kontrol sistemi bu yani, gümrükte yakalanıyor mesela neden ona göz yumdun diyorsun? Eee ben bütün arabalara bakamıyorum ki 15 taneden 2 sine bakamıyorum diyor rastgele bakıyorum diyor. Oysa o adamını biliyor, o adam transit geçiyor. Niye bakmadın ona diyor, hepsine bakamadım bakamadığım bölüme rastladı diyor"

98 "Bu kaçakçılıkta bir sektör oluşmaya başladı bilhassa akaryakıt ve sigara. İstanbul'dan gelip Gürcistan'dan balık alıyorlar düşünebiliyor musun? Kalkan balığıydı, barbun balığıydı onları alıyorlar pahalı balıkları İstanbul'daki bütün otellerde Trabzon'da ki bütün otellerde restoranlar da onlar satılıyor yani"

While entering from here there are some spill overs. That means this business takes of from here, it is directed from here"<sup>99</sup> (MH\_IW-15).

"I have even seen kids who smoke weed they pick up the pots that are discarded by men and smoke them. it is everywhere but kids can access it more easily here"<sup>100</sup> (FL\_IW-21).

However as the head of the public security office recounts it there is no trouble related with narcotics in Hopa. Marijuana, heroin and pills are more expensive on the other side of the border and that's why there is nothing that is coming from the other side. He has said "It must go from here but there are no large scale busts here either" and he has added that transporting through this route to Istanbul was attempted last year and it was busted. In the following minutes of the interview he has expressed that cases related with narcotics was inevitable where there is an entertainment sector but there is not a huge problem in this sense in Hopa.

The head of the public security office who has said inter country smuggling cases which result from price differences between countries can be solved through precautions and not through apprehensions, has mentioned that there is a smuggling done in Sarp border gate of a wide variety of things like cigarettes, diesel, watches, walnuts and honey. Smuggling in any case, whether it is the smuggling on a large scale done by organized crime groups or the small scale which can be considered as subsistence level done by the people living near the border on a day-to-day basis, is a situation that threatens the safety of the lives of the people who do it. Beyond smuggling, the border trade which is done legally

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99“Türkiye'ye giren esrar, eroinin %30'u bu kapıdan giriyor. Buradan girerken de birazda **serpintiler** oluyor. Yani bu tezgah buradan gidiyor, götürülüyor”

100“ben esrar için çocuklar bile gördüm insanların attıkları izmariti alıp içiyorlar . Her yerde var ama burda daha kolay ulaşabiliyor çocuklar”

also contains within itself the risks unique to the border.

## Conclusion

In the 24 year time period since the opening up of border till today an economic life which is connected to the border in its entirety has been established in Hopa.

"the income besides the tea is connected to there in its entirety, that is to say all the shops, service sector, hotels, restaurants, transportation sector in Hopa" (MH\_IW-22)... "When the import and export stops the businesses of the shopkeepers is done for. After all, in the import export the guy will carry his goods with his truck unload there, get money and come to have me sew draperies, come and buy a sweater from Meryem and the money will circulate... If it (the border) is closed, than it means we are bankrupt"<sup>101</sup> (FL\_IW-31).

During the time that has passed, rules were determined in both of the sides, the people have gotten to know each other and the 'economic limitations' and/or 'unlimitedness' of this border has come to be realized. For this reason there is a commerce that is more stable and that is done by people who know what they are doing and what they will encounter.

"After all on average 400 trucks pass through here every day. Multiply 400 trucks with 25 tonnes and that is the amount of goods that go. That means, this snack also goes there, feta cheese, olive goes. There are Turkish shops there, restaurants. And also as our trucks pursue a road, that has also created a Turkish culture; gas stations, restaurants. You can go all the way to

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<sup>101</sup>"Çayın dışındaki geliri bütünüyle oraya bağlı yani Hopa'daki bütün mağazalar, hizmet sektörü, oteller, restoranlar, nakliye sektörü" (GR-22)... "ithalat ihracat durduğu zaman esnafın işi biter. Sonuçta ithalat ihracatta adam tırıyla götürececek malını boşaltacak, para alacak gelip bana perde diktirecek, gelip Meryem'den kazak alacak para dönecek...*Orası (sınır) kapandı mı biz battık demektir*"

Azerbaijan speaking Turkish, from there you can go to the centers of Erivan and Tbilisi speaking with Turks and eating Turkish food along the way. Such a culture has come about throughout the years in there, for example there is a street in Tbilisi it is among the more luxurious streets I can say that there are almost more Turkish businesses than the Georgian ones. Shop, restaurant and coffee houses"<sup>102</sup> (MH\_IW-22).

As Donnan & Wilson (1999:107) stated; when people cross state borders, whether it be political or economic refugees, or as tourists, or to purchase or trade goods, they become part of new systems of value. These new value systems are simultaneously materialist and idealist. Migrant workers, cultural tourist, borderland entrepreneurs and shoppers are adding or diminishing economic value".

While it was a market that only the traders from Turkey was entering when the border was first opened, because of the obstacles and the ineptitudes that we have also accounted above, it is now a market in which the competitiveness have increased a lot and the volume of commerce and the amount of money that is gained has fallen. However as the president of the chamber of commerce says, "the companies who play by the rules of the market and are patient maintain their existence and continue doing trade and earning income in a stable fashion".

The income of those who live in Hopa but do not do international trade or

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102"Sonuçta her gün ortalama 400 tır geçiyor buradan. 400 tır 25 tonla çarp işte o kadar çok malzeme gidiyor. Yani şu çerezde gidiyor oraya, beyaz peynir, zeytin gidiyor. Türk marketleri var o tarafta, lokantalar var. Birde şimdi bizim tırlar yol takip ediyor ya o da bir Türk kültürü oluşturmuş; benzinlikler, lokantalar. Yol boyu Türkçe konuşarak ta Azerbaycan'a gidebilirsiniz bu yol boyu Türklerle konuşarak Türk yemekleri yiyerek, oradan Erivan ve Tiflis'in merkezlerine gidebilirsiniz. Yıllardır böyle bir kültür oluştu orada, Tiflis'te bir cadde var mesela lüks caddelerden biri hemen hemen Gürcülerden daha fazla Türk iş yeri var diyebilirim. Market, lokanta kahvehaneler"

transportation, that is to say, the small shopkeepers now depend on the entertainment sector. Those who continue to earn money have been those who have entered the entertainment sector. Hotels, restaurants or bar-pubs. Smuggling, at least in the form that is told about and that affects the lives of the ordinary citizens of Hopa is continuing in the form that it has small contributions to the family budget.

In this part we have elaborated on how the activities that we generally define as border economy work in our own case and the process since the opening up of Sarp border gate till today. We have evaluated the experiences of the agents who have participated in the process. We have found it necessary to focus the ways in which two important ethnic groups in Hopa border area participate in this process as a separate chapter before advancing to the affects that the process has on social life and the changes that it had created. Because the ways in which the Lazi and Hemshins participate in the border economy and its consequences enable us to discuss ethnicized division of work life and social life, we have deemed it appropriate to make these evaluations in the sixth chapter and examine the social conditions that the existence of the border and the border economy creates.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **OLD BOUNDARIES NEW SITUATIONS**

#### **Border Experiences of the Ethnic Groups**

##### **6.1. Introduction**

One of the fundamental arguments of this dissertation is that the dynamics that the border economy creates reflects itself in intra and inter-group ethnic relations. The forms in which the ethnic groups participate in the economic life that appears in the border regions and the way in which they experience that life, and the new dynamics that these relations creates within the groups and the relations between the groups presents us the points in which the economy and ethnicity intersects on the border. This corresponds to a mutual, dialectic and dynamic relation. In the same way these intra and inter-group relations that we are talking about are fed by this economy, how and in what scale these economic activities continue is also fed by these forms of relationships.

From this point of view, in this chapter how the two main ethnic groups (Lazis and Hemshins) who live in the Hopa border region and who are determinant in socio-demographic and political sense experienced the process following border's opening and how the new economic life and access of these two groups to this life have created new dynamics in their relationships both within the group and with each other will be elaborated.

## **6.2. Boundaries from the Past**

Lazis and Hemshins who have been living together for almost three hundred years, "have a number of features in common. After a long history of Christianity, both were converted to Islam during Ottoman times. In modern Turkey, both constitute minorities, albeit unrecognized. They are well integrated into the modern Turkish state and identify readily with Islam. They share many cultural traits with each other, as well as with other groups with which they interact... Members of both groups claim complete ignorance of their Christian past, although indications of such knowledge about the other group are embedded in occasional mocking references such as the Hemshinli calling the Lazi converted Mingrelians (dönmüş Megrel), to which the Lazi may retort that the Hemshinli are converted Armenians (dönmüş Ermeni) " (Hann, 2007:339-340).

Even though both groups are trying to marginalize and in a sense humiliate each other by emphasizing their Christian pasts, the truth in today's conditions is that both of these groups are Islamicized and have constructed their lives accordingly. The thing that determines their existence together, today, is the form of their participation in the economic life and the dynamics that this process creates. In the words of an Hemshins interviewee;

"Hemshins have descended to the seashore during the past 20-30 years, Hemshins are people who live in high altitudes, semi-nomad people that we can call mountain dwellers. Lazis are people who are closer to the sea culture, people who have lived in the shores more. Now this is the concrete situation, Hemshins have left the places that they lived in the last 20-30 years, and came to enter the living spaces of Lazis. The Lazis whose economic conditions were good have already left these places sold their lands and went to big places like Istanbul. There is something in that sense between other Lazis who stayed and Hemshins, Lazis don't want to lose

the rule they have over where they have it. Hemshins are in a condition that they have to live here, there is no life in the villages anymore no one is cultivating their lands. They go for 3 days collect their tea and come back, the life style before is abandoned no one goes to high meadows, there is no more doing the high meadow activity. The economic situation has differentiated completely, the life style has differentiated. We are going to live here from now on, it is both the Hemshins and Lazis have to live here too. But Lazis were living here before, Hemshins on the other hand, like Batumis would do their shopping and then would return to their homes again. Maybe friendships at that time were stronger and more naïve now however we won't stop coming and coming"<sup>103</sup> (MH\_IW-22).

The two groups are still clearly demarcated. In districts that have both a Hemshins and a Lazi population, it is common knowledge which villages are Hemshins and which are Lazi (Hann, 2007:341). While they had started to live together in the Hopa center after the opening up of the border they have preserved and carried on their boundaries this time by separating their quarters, tea houses, restaurants.

In the past, it is known that there had been close friendships between the Lazis and Hemshins who were living in close villages. However there are also incidents that

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103 “Hemşinliler son 20-30 yıldır sahile inmişler, Hemşinliler yükseklerde yaşayan yarı göçebe yaşayan dağlı diyebileceğimiz insanlardır. Lazlar da daha deniz kültürüne yakın daha sahillerde yaşamış olan insanlardır. Şimdi somut durum bu. Son 20-30 yıldır Hemşinliler yaşadıkları alanları terk etmişler, hem gelmişler Lazların yaşama alanlarına girmişler. Ekonomik durumları iyi olan Lazlar buraları terk etmişler zaten yerlerini satmışlar İstanbul gibi büyük yerlere gitmişler. Diğer kalan Lazlarla Hemşinliler arasında da o anlamda bir şey var. Lazlar hâkim oldukları yerin hâkimiyetini kaybetmek istemiyorlar. Hemşinliler de burada yaşamak durumundalar, Oralarda artık yaşam yok kimse tarlasını ekip biçmiyor. 3 gün gidiyor çayını toplayıp geliyor. Daha önceki yaşam biçimi terk edildi yaylaya kimse gitmiyor yaylacılık yok. Ekonomik durum tamamen farklılaştı, yaşama biçimi farklılaştı. Burada yaşayacağız artık, Hopa'da hem Hemşinliler hem Lazlar yaşamak zorundalar. Ama daha önceden Lazlar yaşıyordu, Hemşinliler ise Batumlular gibi alışveriş yapıp gene kendi evlerine gidiyorlardı. O zamanki dostluklar belki daha sağlamdı daha saftı şimdi ama biz geldikçe geliyoruz”

the old people tell about Lazi landlords treating Hemshins badly and enforcing tributes on them. Despite their sharing the same lands and being neighbors for hundreds of years the cultural interaction between them is still at a minimum level today. Despite their being next door neighbors for years a person who can speak both languages is almost non-existent.

It is possible to talk about a duality that strikes the eye in every dimension of life in Hopa. This is to say the public locations, commercial life and political spaces is divided between Lazis and Hemshins, even though sometimes these boundaries are surpassed and they trespass into each other's spaces.

As we have indicated in third chapter, the most fundamental othering discourses of these two groups is that "Lazis are pretentious and arrogant", "whereas Hemshins are coarse, from the mountains, swearing". In our every interview the subject inevitably comes to Hemshini-lazi separation and the affects that this has on their daily lives. Hemshins emphasize that Lazis are 'city dwellers', 'full of themselves', 'arrogant' and say that they treat them as second class citizens. Lazis on the other hand emphasize that Hemshins are rude, descended from the mountains and talk about them swearing while they speak. The othering which is expressed in words like this shows itself in the forms of not going to the same places, not doing any work together or not belonging in the same political formation in their daily lives.

### **6.2.1. From Past till Today: Spatial Differentiations**

We see the separation in the social life initially in the space. The spatial differentiation is a consequence of the forms of relationships that these two groups have developed throughout their history. The center has been held at the hands of the Lazi who have existed there for a long while, who maintained the economic

and political power at their hands, who have been land owners. The central Hopa, Middle Hopa district is in Lazis' hands. This region is at the same time the center of all the state institutions and shopping places which means it is the "center" of the city in every sense.

Hopa is not a district that is suitable for habitation because of the geographical conditions, similar to how it is in Black Sea in general. It has turned its face to the sea and back to the mountains on which settlement is not possible. For this reason the only suitable place for the Hemshins who have settled in Hopa later had been a dried river bed. The first Hemshins who have come and settled at the center has settled in a river bed which the Lazis wouldn't care as much to even look at. The later arrivals have not broken this tradition either and settled in the Sundura district. Today the Sundura district is like a symbol of Hemshins' economic and political power. It seems that Hemshins are also present at the Hopa center with its multistorey buildings, shops and paved roads.

"The shore regions belong to Lazis, the hills belong to Hemshins, in Hopa, Ortahopa belongs to Lazis Sundura belongs to Hemshins. Ortahopa like we say amongst ourselves the high society segment is at Ortahopa but the 'varoş'les are at Sundura... Laz Heshini separation also exists among the people who live here the thing about Lazi Hemshini also exists on the side of the administrative folk. Now because that place is generally owned by Hemshins whatever that is going to be done is for that side, that is, for Ortahopa"<sup>104</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

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104 "Sahil kesimi Lazlarındır, tepeler Hemşinliler'indir, hopa da Orta hopa Lazlarındır. Sundura Hemşinlilerindir. Ortahopa bizim aramızda dediğimiz gibi sosyetik kesimi Ortahopa'dadır ama varoşlar Sundura'dadır... burada yaşayan insanlar arasında da Laz Hemşin ayrımı var buradaki mülki erkan tarafında da Laz Hemşin olayı var. Şimdi orası genelde Hemşinlilere ait olduğu için her ne yapılacaksa o tarafın Ortahopa'nındır yani"

The spatial differentiation reflects the inequalities that exist between these two identities too. The Sundura district which one Hemshini describes as ‘varoş’ (*shantytown*) and in which the Hemshinis are settled is a district which was built upon a swamp and which still has streets that are not paved even today. Middle Hopa on the other hand in which there are shops and state offices and in which the Lazi are settled, has been the symbol of political and economic power. Even though Hopa has a small settlement space, it has been possible to observe the ethnic and class differentiation over space.

"All of the Hopa used to belong to Lazis in the past. Like three to five who are shopkeepers for example my father-in-law is a shopkeeper he has a place at Hopa's seashore for example the place that we have our hotel. And that is he earned his money and then bought it that means just like that he is here because he is a shopkeeper but both Hopa and Sundura and Ortahopa all these places used to belong to Lazis. It is after a while when Hemshins discovered the city that is to say when they started to return to the city slowly they generally settled down in Sundura... Now you see the Hemshins who have been in Sundura till five six seven years ago have started to buy houses in Ortahopa. and this time there have been those who have left Ortahopa, deserted Hopa and who have gone away among the Lazis"<sup>105</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

The Lazis, who had been settled down at the seashore even before the drawing of the border, had to share these places with Hemshins after the reopening of the

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105 “Önceden Hopa hep Lazlarındı. Böyle üç beş tane esnaf olan mesela benim kayınpederim esnaftır Hopa’nın sahilinde yeri var mesela otelimizin olduğu yer. O da kazanmıştır parasını almıştır yani öylelikle esnaf olduğu için buradadır ama Hopa da, Sundura da, Ortahopa da buraların hepsi Lazlarındı. Daha sonra Hemşinliler şehri keşfedince yani yavaş yavaş şehre dönmeye başlayınca genelde Sundura ya yerleştiler... Simdi işte son beş altı yedi yıl önceye kadar Sundura da olan Hemşinliler Ortahopa da ev almaya başladı.bu seferde Ortahopa’yı da terk edip Hopa’yı terkedip gidenler oldu Lazlardan”

border at 1988. Spatial separation is still very visible between the districts inhabited by Lazis and Hemshins. Lazis live in Orta Hopa and Hemshins live at Sundura district. It is nonetheless possible, albeit undesirable, for these two groups to blend in certain areas of the town. Both groups prefer living their lives with the minimum communication possible:

"...my building neighbors are Hemshins for example I don't make a problem out of it, we haven't experienced any problems either but it does become evident when you enter that society. For example when you enter the society of my Hemshins friends you realize the difference at that instance"<sup>106</sup> (FL\_IW-20).

It is possible to understand the inter-relationships that ethnic groups have with each other as a field that the border trade has disturbed the balances and the balances that have changed in these relations by looking at the locations of settlements. Hemshins who have gained power in the economic and political life of Hopa with the earnings that they have obtained from border trade, are trying to move in to the Middle Hopa which has become a symbol of this power and wealth. Lazis whose economic and political power have weakened are trying to keep their own existence by either migrating out of Hopa or othering the Hemshins with whom they are forced to live together with discourses that are appropriate to the context.

"Now if I want to rent a house at Ortahopa... If I want to rent the house of a Lazi person they ask beforehand you see, For example I went there and my ethnic identity is not known at all. You are the landlord I came and want to rent your house, the first thing that they ask is not like what job you work

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<sup>106</sup>"Hayır benim mesela apartman komşularım Hemşinli ben sorun etmiyorum, sorunda yaşamadık ama belli oluyor o topluma girdiğinde. Mesela Hemşinli arkadaşlarımın toplumuna girdiğinde o anda anlıyorsun farkı"

or the like, are you Hemshins or Lazi, we don't rent to a Hemshins. This exists a lot here in Hopa"<sup>107</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

There hasn't been a relationship based on violence in Hopa's social, economic, cultural and political life between these two groups who have lived in places close to each other in Hopa but generally without having any communication throughout their history. A life the rules of which are determined –like who will live where, how much they will be able to enter their own spaces-, in which both sides follow the rules has gone on in general. As a result, a situation of conflict has not surfaced. However, the process after the opening up of the border has disturbed these balances and these rules which were followed even though they were not written.

"The place that they hang out most; the play house the tea house as we call it you go there to play gamble you go to a Lazi tea house you cannot find a single Hemshin. However a lot of them 90% know each other. They are much closer friends outside of Hopa but when they come here they go to their own tea house, the other one goes to their own tea house"<sup>108</sup> (MH\_IW-15).

Despite the fact that the relationships they have with each other seem to have increased after the opening up of the border, they have always continued to be the "other" for each other. They have continued to live in different districts, to go to different tea houses, restaurants and not going into each others' houses.

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107“Simdi ben Ortahopa da ev tutmak istesem...Laz birinin evini tutmak istesem önceden sorarlar yani. Mesela ben gittim hiç etnik kimliğim bilinmiyor. Siz ev sahibisiniz geldim evinizi kiralamak istiyorum, ilk sorduğu hani ne işte çalıştığınız falan değil, Hemşinli misiniz Laz mısınız, Hemşinliye vermeyiz. Bu çok var burada Hopa da”

108 “En çok takıldıkları yer; kiraathane bizim değimimizle kahve gidersen kumar oynamaya gidersen bir Laz kahvesine bir Hemşinli bulamazsın. Oysa birçoğu %90ı birbirini tanıyor. Hopa'nın dışında çok daha samimi arkadaşlar ama buraya gelince o kendi kahvesine gider, diğeri kendi kahvesine gider”

"As far as I know I don't know one single Lazi who has shot a Hemshin I don't know of the existence of any blood feuds I have never heard of it at all till today but in social life tea houses are separate, restaurants are separate"<sup>109</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

'Social contact' with the 'other' (Yükseker, 1993:10) is an important determinant in the construction of the ethnic identity and continuation of the group identity. Ethnic groups define themselves by looking at the other. Lazis and Hemshins have also looked at each other for centuries, although their social contact with each other has been very low. These groups, who have been forced to establish more contact (among themselves – translator's note) with the border even though they did not want to, have this time attempted to preserve their group identities by separating their social locations and developing new othering discourses about the other group.

### **6.3. Ethnic Groups in Work Life**

These two groups who live in the same geographical region did not have an egalitarian relationship because where they lived determined what jobs they did and what jobs they did their social lives, relationships and identities. Lazis lived in the sea shore and did fishing, Hemshins lived in the mountain villages and high altitudes and did husbandry. Lazis who owned land at the central districts and who were closely integrated with the state, which means with the government agencies, have established an oppressive/marginalizing and domineering relationship over the Hemshins who lived in the villages and did not get into contact with the

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109 "Benim bildiğim kadarıyla bir tane Laz Hemşinli vurduğunu bilmiyorum kan davası olduğunu bilmiyorum bir tane Hemşinli de Laz'ı vurduğunu bilmiyorum bugüne kadar ben hiç duymadım ama sosyal yaşamda kahveler ayrı lokantalar ayrı"

government agencies unless they had to.

[Hemshins] "Those who own a herd slash a lamb, plant their corn or buy their corn and wheat while they are passing through a village and say aha here are two lambs for you, they sustain their livelihood and go on and they had no relationship with the state either, neither on the basis of taxes nor by the laws. They have given one identity and said take we are going they said and by parting from Hopa we are climbing up the Georgian mountain we come down from Georgian mountain and climb up to the Bilbilan"<sup>110111</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

For Hemshins, a situation of oppression had existed for many years. Interestingly, this oppression came from another ethnic group by which they shared the same destiny of being subject to the hegemonic culture of Turkish nation state. In terms of local dynamics, Lazis who held the political and economic power have continued this situation for many years as such.

The reopening of the border have disturbed the longstanding status quo that had been in effect since the border was set, and since Hemshins deprived of their access to the fertile meadows of Batumi.

Hemshins have started to migrate towards the center as the herding business started to diminish and were forced to find new types of jobs in order to survive. Transportation and freight is the end result of this process. Even though the Lazis have tried to expel the Hemshins with rocks and stick and by seizing the goods

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110 A higher plateau meadow that the Hemshins use which is found in the Ardanuc district of Artvin and is a border with Ardahan.

111 (Hemşinliler) "Sürü sahibiler koyunu kesiyor mısırmı ekiyor ya da o köyden geçerken mısırmı buğdayını alıyor aha sana iki tane koyun diyor, geçimini sağlamış gitmiş. Devletle de hiç bir ilişkisi olmamış. Ne vergi bazında ne yasa olarak .bir tane kimlik vermişler al demişler biz gidiyoruz. Hopa'dan çıkıp gürcü dağına çıkıyoruz gürcü dağından inip Bilbilan'a çıkıyoruz".

that they have brought; they couldn't overcome the Hemshins whose economic powers have increased. This process which had operated more slowly and more calmly while the border was closed have gained new dimensions as the new economic conditions which appeared after border's opening created more opportunities for the Hemshins. Hemshins whose economic power has increased have started to make themselves present in the political arena too.

### **6.3.1. New Dynamics that Reveal with the Reopening of the Border**

The Lazi who live at the center of the district have benefited more from the modernizing processes like education and have advanced in jobs like civil service, trade, the Hemshins who were living in the villages could not take their share of these a lot.

"There is discrimination and the like in general in here. They have sent all the Hemshin girls to scholar places and we have kept on going like the sheep without realizing it you see. We have entered a new job. They have settled here (in the factory) as office workers in the desk jobs. We came and of course were left out. They have given the cleaning job at the production. It is generally them who do the jobs like office work"<sup>112</sup> (FH\_IW-14).

Expectations and demands from the urban life of Hemshins who have become an affective figure in the economic and social life with the opening up of the border, have increased in trade and every institution of the administration. However, Lazis

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<sup>112</sup>"Burada ayrımcılık falan oluyor genelde. Bütün hemşinli kızları göndermişler zamanında alım yerlerine biz de koyun gibi gitmişiz farkında değiliz ya. Yeni işe girmişiz. Onlar burada (fabrikada) yerleşmişler memur olarak. Masa başı işlerinde. Biz geldik açıkta kaldık tabii. İmalata temizlik işçisi olarak verdiler. Memuriyet gibi işleri onlar yapıyor genelde"

who have held these positions at their hands, have tried to continue this power that they had by favoring their own relatives and people they knew.

"Hemshins are very few in state bureaus in civil servant positions... for example if there is a new hiring if there is going to be 10 people that is going to be hired, 8 of them will be lazi because the higher ups are lazi and they hire those who are of their own"<sup>113</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

For these reasons -both the low level of education possibilities and Lazis being employed in state institutions – Hemshins have inclined towards occupations like transportation and driving.

"We have left herding in 1976 we haven't leave all of it slowly since 1976 we were carrying loads to Iran from the dock of Hopa we were going to Tehran my uncle for example have left herding at 78 and bought a lorry and we have started transporting like that that comes from the family we are still going on"<sup>114</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

The reopening of the border, have increased the opportunities for Hemshins to continue the businesses that they already had and for being able to earn more money out of it.

"The totality of the transportation business belongs to Hemshins, that is the 99 percent of it. It is occupational that is to say it has become something that passes from father to son. We have started this business working with

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113“Devlet dairesinde memur pozisyonunda çok az hemşinliler... mesela yeni bir işe alım olsa 10 kişi mi alınacak 8'i laz olur çünkü üstekiler lazdır ve onlar kendilerinden olanı alırlar.

114 “Çobanlığı 1976 da bıraktık hepsini bırakmadık yavaş yavaş 1976'dan beri Hopa limanından İran'a yük taşıyorduk tahrana gidiyorduk benim amcam mesela 78 de bıraktı çobanlığı ve kamyon aldı öyle başladık o aileden geliyor hala devam ediyoruz”

mules. It is the Hemshins who had carried the goods in Hopa to Artvin to Ardahan with mules. You can go till 1930s till the Ottomans. With mules we have carried loads, carried goods carried this carried that all with mules. We have left the donkeys and bought mules left horses and came this is just how we are going”<sup>115</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

Another situation that has provided an advantage for the Hemshins after the opening up of the border has been their language. They have especially used the advantages of speaking the same language in the trade that is being done with Armenia and earned bigger profits from both transportation and trans-border trade.

"It has provided an advantage to us as Hemshins. We have made commerce with people who are in any case talking the same language with us, we have gone there with non-existent capital, and we were able to bring back goods just because we knew Hemshini language. There was an advantage like that, we have never experienced a disadvantage because of our being Hemshins”<sup>116</sup> (MH\_IW-22).

A huge majority of Hemshins are denying the fact that they are Islamized Armenians. Even though this topic is not the subject of this thesis, it is possible to say that this has several reasons. The first is that, they have been islamized a long time ago with the Islamization policy that the Ottoman Empire has carried out and a part of them have forgotten about their roots. This situation is more accurate for the BasHemshins who live in Çamlıhemşin and Rize-Pazar (Athena), whom we

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115“Nakliye işinin tamamı Hemşinlilerde, yani yüzde 99’u. Meslekidir yani babadan oğula geçen bir şey oldu bu. Biz bu işe katırcılıkla başladık. Hopa’daki malları Artvin’e Ardahan’a katır sırtında taşıyanlar Hemşinlilerdir. 1930’lara kadar Osmanlıya kadar gidebilirsin. Katırla yük taşımışız, malzeme taşımışız, onu taşımışız bunu taşımışız hep katırla. Eşği bırakmışız katır almışız, atı bırakmışız gelmişız böyle gidiyoruz işte”

116“Hemşinli olarak bize avantaj sağladı. Karşı tarafta zaten bizimle aynı dili konuşan insanlarla ticaret yaptık. Yok sermayeyle biz oraya gittik sırf Hemşin dilini bildiğimiz için biz mal getirebildik. Öyle bir avantajı oldu, hiç bir zaman Hemşinli olduğumuzdan dolayı bir dezavantaj yaşamadık”

have dealt with in third chapter under the title of Hemshins. Another and a more important reason is the issue of Armenian genocide and the political problems with Armenia. The official ideology of Turkish Republic which can be expressed as 'one language-one nation', has caused for Hemshins to deny this origin of theirs in order to avoid being subject to cruelty. The reopening of the border and the non-official trade that is done with Armenia over Georgia, has turned into an advantage for Hemshins.

"Of course it is not only Georgia there are also other borders beyond that Hemshins do a lot more business in Armenian region originating from being Hemshins related with the language, there are also those who say they are Armenians after all there is also an advantage that it brings they use that. They go and are more comfortable there, I say this because they are comfortable Hemshins do more trade there"<sup>117</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

Lazis on the other hand of their being settled in the seashore for centuries and have benefited from their holding the land ownership. Only one of the big, starred hotels belong to Hemshins, all of the others belong to Lazis.

"...now the Hemshin people know commerce, know transportation very well. Now everybody has a quality. The business of those people has been working cars since old times. They used to work towards Iran beforehand too. They carried loads with trucks and the like. They have the first place in transporting. The job for Lazis is generally fishing, the commerce of Lazis is a little bit of everything, not transportation but, like shopkeeping,

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<sup>117</sup>"Tabii sadece Gürcistan değil öteki kapılarda var ondan öteye hemşinliler ermeni bölgesinde daha çok işler yapıyorlar. Hemşinlilikten kaynaklı dille ilgili, ermeni olduğunu söyleyenlerde var sonuçta, onun getirdiği bir avantajda var onu kullanıyorlar. Gidiyorlar orda daha rahat ediyorlar, rahat ettikleri için diyorum orda daha çok ticaret yapıyorlar hemşinliler. Sınır ticaretini de daha çok hemşinliler yapıyor.. büyük otel sahiplerinden bir tane hemşinli var gerisi laz... Meyhane türünde içkili restoran bölümlerini laz otellerininki de dahil, eğlence kısmının yöneticiliğini de idareciliğini de hep onlar yapıyor"

operating markets, things like that”<sup>118</sup> (ML\_IW-13).

Despite our interviewees claim that there is no discrimination in business, official business partnerships of the two ethnic groups exist in only 2 or 3 companies. They generally prefer entering into an official partnership with their siblings or friends. They do business together in only short term, and for temporary jobs.

"I have done partnerships with Lazi friends who are not Hemshins, we have done partnership in goods of lots, we have done travels together, there have been friends with whom we have gone for a long while...Of course there is shutting each other out, we cannot say that there is not. Like if we say I now have relationships with 100 people there would be at most 5 Lazi among them. And this is a good ratio too”<sup>119</sup> (MH\_IW-22).

Economic and political dominance of Lazis which has lasted many years seems to have come to a halt, by the balancing of power thanks to the border economy. Oppressor/oppressed relationship between two ethnic groups gained new dimensions with the equalization of economic and political powers. However, the duality, if not segregation, in the lives of the townspeople seems to have continued despite the balance in their competition for economic and political power. In other words, balanced power relations between these two groups has not provided a fully integrated community life.

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118“...şimdi Hemşinli milleti ticareti onlar, nakliyeciliği çok iyi bilir. Şimdi herkesin bi özelliği vardır. O insanların işi eskiden beridir arabacılık. Onlar daha önce İran’a da çalışırlardı. Kamyonlarla yük taşırlardı falan. Birinci sıra onlar taşımada. Lazların işi genelde balıkçılık, Lazların ticareti biraz daha şey, nakliye değil de, işte esnaf, marketçilik, o tip şeyler”

119“Ben Hemşinli olmayan Laz arkadaşlarla da ortaklık yaptım, parti mallarında ortaklık yaptık, beraber yolculuklar yaptık, uzun süre beraber gittiğimiz arkadaşlar oldu... Tabi birbirini dışlama var, yok diyemeyiz. Yani benim şimdi diyelim 100 kişiyle ilişkim varsa bunun en fazla 5 tanesi Laz’dır. Bu da iyi bir orandır.”

These new forms of living and forms of establishing relationships that the border brought have engendered new exclusionary discourses in both groups towards each other. The othering has continued by emphasizing the occupation or the family life of the other party. The example of Texas Avenue illustrates the new divisions that appear in the ways in which members of each group enter into the new economic life of the town.

### **6.3.2. Teksas Avenue: the ‘Outlet’ of Border Economy**

Teksas is the micro-sized case for ethnicized life and space in Hopa, which we discussed in this chapter. It will be appropriate to describe Teksas Avenue as "outlet". "Outlet", at least in its widespread usage in Turkish, is the name given to the stores which sell goods (usually clothing) that could not be sold at regular prices, export leftovers, clothing from previous season, or goods with defects. Border region exhibits a similar quality of being an outlet for the border economy. Transit role of the town makes it an outlet for the large scale commerce and smuggling. Profits is lower for the middlemen and commission merchants, consumption on the other hand is of the leftovers of the large scale circulation of merchandise.

Dumlupınar Street acquired the nickname Teksas Avenue after the opening up of the border gate. Bars and hotels of this street are the venues for prostitution of the women from various former Soviet Union countries. Clients who make a deal at the bars continue the night in the hotels. These bars are at the basement floors below the lobbies. Bargaining is made in the lobbies. Occasionally disagreements in bargaining end up with fights involving guns and knives.

"There are 7-8 bars on this avenue... In the middle of the market. But there of course can be we are not backwards minded. Let there be everything but

it goes a little bit absurd within the market place. Where can they be, like a little bit at side space of the city for example. I think, according to my idea it would be better I mean. I don't let my wife pass this street. For example I have also told my children not to use this avenue. Oh this place is just like the Teksas Street that you talk about. In that regard that is I tell my family and children to not pass from here. Because there are drunk people who come out from here. Oh of these let them be at a side space instead of inside this market place. Let them be 10 let them be 20. But let them be a little bit away from the market place"<sup>120</sup> (ML\_IW-8).

Those who run businesses on this street are mostly Hemshins, there is no Lazi shop owner to be found. Based on the claims of my interviewees, one reason for this might be that the mayor who himself was a Hemshin, had been backing other Hemshins, by renting out these shops to them. Another reason on the other hand, is that Lazis are the ones who are doing the first class businesses of the border economy in Hopa. The big starred hotels belong to Lazis. Because Lazis are the ones who own the land at the center of Hopa and who are settled in for a long time.

"Again as a result of the gate one of our avenues the Dumlupınar avenue it is more Georgians' in the position of dumps not starred hotels but hotels in that position they hang out in beer houses the women cheaper and in more trashy conditions there are worse that is to say the ones in the hotels do not seem to the eye very ugly but those places that avenue seems very ugly...

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120“Bu cadde üzerinde 7-8 tane bar var... Çarşının ortasında. Ama olabilir tabii biz geri kafalı değiliz. Her şey olsun ama biraz çarşının içinde abes kaçıyor. Onlar nerde olabilir, böyle biraz şehrin kenar yerlerinde mesela. Bence, benim fikrimce daha iyi olur yani. Ben eşimi bu caddeden geçirmiyorum. Mesela ben çocuklarıma da demişim bu caddeyi kullanmayın. E burası aynı dediğin Teksas sokağı gibi bi yer. O açıdan yani aileme ve çocuklarıma derim ki burdan geçmeyin. Çünkü sarhoşu var burdan çıkar. Ha bunların bu çarşının içinde değil de kenar yerde olsun. 10 tane olsun 20 tane olsun. Ama biraz daha çarşının dışında olsun.”

Because in there those kinds of people hang out a lot but then again we are speaking if it is making a statement let's say it the shopkeepers in that street are too those in the front the people who live on the right and left those among who inhibit the passing 9 out of 10 are unfortunately Hemshins. Let's say it is 9 of them it would be an exaggeration to say 100%, there is a truth like this. The businesses there are theirs more or less. These are in the form of beer houses but they have surpassed beer house thing you see in certain parts of them in their sections like rooms how should I say from time to time I have gone there for certain reasons; there are sections they sit there to market themselves the women sit there although that place is a beer house. Those places are forbidden places actually but these places are places that the police force overlooks, there shouldn't be those kinds of people in that form in those places, there are people who go who are old, without money with little money. It is a dumpster exactly like those in the movies”<sup>121</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

The fact that all the business places in Texas Avenue are owned by Hemshinis has deepened the Lazis' othering discourses which had historical roots and which were based on the occupation and life style. The new sex industry created a new discursive degradation of Hemshins, based on the amoral quality of the jobs

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121“Yine kapıdan kaynaklı bir caddemizi inönü caddesini daha çok gürcülerin batakhane pozisyonunda yıldızlı değilde oteller o pozisyonda birahanelerde takılıyor kadınlar daha ucuz ve daha adi pozisyonrakiler daha kötü ordaki durumlar yani yine oteldeki çok çirkin gelmiyor göze ama oralar o cadde çok çirkin geliyor. Simdiki belediye başkanı kaldırmayı düşünüyor bir tarafa toplamayı. Kesinlikle yapacaklar ve yapması lazım o caddeden geçmek zor. Bazı yerlerden de kimse geçmiyor bayanlar. Çünkü orda o tür insanlar çok takılıyor yinede konuşuyoruz tespit midir söyleyelim o caddedeki esnafta önünde sağında solunda oturan insanların geçişi de engelleyen 10 taneden 9 u maalesef hemşinlidir. 9 u diyelim %100 demek biraz abartı olur böyle bir gerçek var. Ordaki işletmelerde onların aşağı yukarı. Bunlar birahane türünde ama birahane şeyini geçmiş işte belli bir kısımlarında oda gibi bölümlerinde nasıl desem zaman zaman gittim bazı sebeplerden dolayı; bölümler var orda oturuyorlar kendilerini pazarlamak için kadınlar oturuyorlar halbuki birahane orası. Oralarda yasak yerler aslında ama emniyetin göz yumduğu yerler buralar , oralarda öyle insanların olmaması lazım o şekilde , yaşlı parasız az paralı giden insanlar var. Tam filmlerdeki gibi batakhane”

undertaken in this industry. These discourses are also connected to the life styles and family relations of the Hemshinis.

#### **6.4. Changes in Group Relations**

Within the modernization processes, together with urbanization a transition from primary relationships to secondary relationships had been experienced in here too. While the Lazis have experienced this process earlier, the process has sped up a lot with the Hemshins following the opening up of the border.

"It wasn't like that before that is to say I remember now from my mother for example there were corn planted in places where the tea did not come out very densely, in the gardens, there were processes of collecting the corncobs at one place and separating them from their cobs, in that process from the villages across even from Kemalpaşa there were people who came there in solidarity there were common things like that. In there it was both girls and boys one across the other songs and ballads etc. there were situations like these. Now there aren't because that production has ceased to exist. They have become tea gardens instead of corn"<sup>122</sup> (MH\_IW-1).

One of the important dynamics that the opening up of the border has created in the daily life is the disintegration in the social solidarity that has been created with cheap labor. While collecting tea, harvesting corn or similar duties were done

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<sup>122</sup>"Eskiden öyle değildi hani ben şimdi annemden hatırlıyorum örneğin çayın o kadar yoğun olmadığı yerlerde bahçelerde mısır ekiliyormuş, mısır koçanlarını bir yerde toplayıp onların koçanından ayrılma süreçleri varmış o süreçte karşı köylerden Kemalpaşa'dan bile oraya yardımlaşmaya gelip gidenler oluyormuş öyle ortaklaşa şeyler varmış. Orada kızlı erkekli karşılıklı şarkılar türküler vs böyle ortamlar oluşuyormuş. Şimdi yok çünkü o üretim ortadan kalktı. Çay bahçeleri oldu mısır yerine"

through collective work, with the solidarity of neighbors and relatives, a majority of these jobs are now done by Georgians. Georgian men start waiting in the center which is called 'Georgian Market' from the early hours of the morning and those who need workers come and make agreements in this market.

"We used to have our old collective labor system with collaboration that has finished completely now when Harun is sick and there is tea he is sick or is going to build a house build a road go and help him out it is not possible, Harun will go and hire the Georgian citizen as worker and deal with that job. The collaborative labor system that is to say producing collectively, you see the corn fields were harvested all together you see 13 people entered a field a field was finished three days later another field was being gone to he would go to him help him out that is to say when building a house they would never pay a worker's salary they would only pay the salary for the journeyman carrying and load carrying jobs people would carry rocks on their backs and build houses"<sup>123</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

The opening up of the border has changed the way in which people form economic and social relationships within group and inter group relations. The respect and trust that they have for each other has diminished within these new forms of relationships that the border has created. "The economic relationship at the border is a commission economy. And this is the most lowly form of the capital with the least character. Everyone who has entered these relationships has become characterless"<sup>124</sup> (MH\_IW-39). The people who would give their lives for

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123"Eski imece sistemimiz vardı yardımlaşmacı o tamamen bitti şimdi Harun hastadır çay var hastadır yada bir ev yapacaktır bir yol yapılacaktır git yardım et mümkün değil, Harun gidecek gürcü vatandaşı işçi tutacak o işi halledecek. Imece sistemi yani topluca üretmek, işte mısır tarlaları üretiliyordu hep birlikte işte 13 kişi bir tarlaya gidiyordu bir tarla bitiyordu üç gün sonra öteki tarlaya gidiliyordu o ona giderdi ona yardım ederdi yani ev yaparken hiç bir zaman işçi parası ödemezdi sadece usta parası öderdi taşıma ve amele işlerini sırtlarla taş taşırlardı insanlar ev yaparlardı".

124"Sınırdaki ilişki bir komisyonculuk ilişkisidir. Komisyonculukta, bir sermayenin en karakersizi en şerefsizi. Dolayısıyla bu sermaye işine giren herkes şerefsiz oldu".

each other under many conditions, were not able to keep the words that they have given to each other under these economic relationships. As a result the relationship of "trust" between them has been disrupted. When the border was first opened there was not an economic relation that was professionalized, that left out the humanly relationships outside and as a result in this unregulated and unstable environment everybody ends up in a place where they seem like they are scamming each other. The people warn each other by saying "don't do partnerships or commerce with anyone" (MH\_IW-39).

#### **6.4.1. New Conflicts within Group Relations**

As we have mentioned above the forms in which Lazis and Hemshins participated in the economic life has exhibited differences. While Lazis owned hotels or big companies or at least doing shop keeping by using the advantage of their higher ownership of lands, Hemshins have continued what they have been doing for a long time and did transportation (either by being a driver or opening up a transportation company and buying lorries). While Lazis were utilizing the resources that already existed, Hemshins have participated in border trade by the material support that they have received from their families, by collecting their resources together with their relatives.

"Look and see this building, I am saying this by a person who is 60 years old, these places that we are sitting were swamp. There was only (.....) market. These buildings over here were made by that money. There are 300 business men in Hopa, but I can only see 10 of them. There were not 5-10 lorries in 74. But now there are over 1000 lorries. I am asking you sir. Where did these 1000 lorries came? They were bought from some people's

accumulations or with the help of friends and acquaintances"<sup>125</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

The effects of this process to the relations within the group have come about in various ways. The uncertainties and risks that were experienced during the initial period, which I have explained in detail in the border economy chapter, have caused the money that was invested to be lost and the relationships with the relatives to be worn out.

The things that one of our respondents whose father has disappeared on the other side of the border told displays both the hardships and risks of the border trade and the trade that is always done with acquaintances and relatives. The thing that this respondent of ours told is at the same time an example of how those from one's own group are preferred while trade is being done on the other side of the border and that the partnerships are established with family or relatives.

"There was an Armenian who was living in Georgia. He first worked with us for a year or so. Then he said there is pure copper in Armenia. They have established an office and stuff in Georgia. We have given that guy a hundred thousand dollars or so or to be exact, my father gave. He was bringing the commodity and selling here, he was working regularly, I mean. Later on I wonder how it happened but we have given those people a hundred thousand dollar of money. Fifteen days later or so he said like it was caught in the border while it was coming, like there is a missing document. This guy in a month or two said that the commodities were

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125“Görün bakın şu binaya, 60 yaşında bir insan olarak söylüyorum, şu oturduğumuz yerler bataklıktı. Sadece (.....) market vardı. İşte bu binalar o parayla yapılmıştır. Hopa’da 300 tane iş adamı var, ama ben sadece 10 tanesini görebiliyorum. 74’de 5-10 tır yoktu. Ama şimdi 1000’nin üzerinde tır var. Size soruyorum efendim. Bu 1000 tane tır nerden geldi? Birilerinin birikiminden veya eş dost yardımıyla alındı”

caught and I couldn't do anything. That Money went away like that. After a while my father has started a company again through his own struggle... Then he said, seen that I am earning money, let me do business with my relatives he said...they lost that money too...I mean we have experienced a lot of hardships in the economic sense"<sup>126</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

What one of our interviewees, who was born on the other side of the border and settled in Hopa after the opening up of the border, have experienced shows the disintegration of the relationships within the ethnic groups themselves especially because of the uncertainties that the economic conditions create.

“We had a relative here I don't want to tell his name, it was him you see he had companies we later found out that his company went bankrupt at that time ofcourse we did not know about it. He has a house at Sundura district in Hopa 5 stories not completed its bricks are laid it turns out that it was under mortgage. We did not know about this either, that night that we came, that relative to my father in law said "uncle you give me the money on you I have houses at Hopa at least in 6 months I will give you 2 apartments. I will stand as I have given you your money back you will have a house for yourself and one for your child"<sup>127</sup> (FH\_IW-16).

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126“Gürcistan'da yaşayan bir Ermeni vardı. İlk bizle çalıştı bir sene falan. Sonra dedi ki Ermenistan 'da saf bakır var. Ofis falan kurmuşlar Gürcistan'da. İşte yüz bin dolar falan para verdik buna verdi daha doğrusu babam. Malı getirip burada satıyordu, düzenli çalışıyordu yani. Sonradan nasıl olduysa işte yüz bin lira bunlara para verdik. On beş gün falan sonra dedi ki işte gelirken sınırda yakalandı dedi işte bir evrak eksikliği var. Falan filan derken bu bir iki ay içinde tamamen malın yakalandığını ve bir şey yapamadım dedi. O Para öyle gitti. Daha sonra babam kendi mücadelesiyle şirket kurdu tekrar...Sonra dedi ki madem para kazanıyorum, akrabalarım ile iş yapayım dedi... O parayı da kaybettiler...Yani maddi anlamda bayağı bir sıkıntıya girdik”

127 “Bizim burada bir tane akrabamız vardı ismini söylemek istemiyorum, o işte şirketleri vardı meğerse o zamanlar adamın şirketi batmış tabi ki bizim bundan haberimiz yok Hopa'da Sundura mahallesinde evi var 5 katlı yapılmamış tuğlası falan örülmüş meğersem ipotek altındaymış. Bundan haberimiz bizim yine yok, geldiğimiz o gece, o akraba kayınpedere "amca sen senin üstündeki parayı bana ver benim Hopa'da evlerim var en az 6 ay içerisinde sana 2 tane daire...senin parayı da ben geri vermiş olurum bir kendine bir çocuğuna evin olur, dedi”

The interviewee from whom we made the above quotation in the end neither did have a house nor could take his money back. The relatives that he talks about went bankrupt and could not pay his money back. Today, he says, he and his relatives avoid each other because of that incident. This process cannot be named as a conflict, but rather a disintegration of the relations within the group. Certainly, this process is also a result of migration from village to the city. However the opening up of the border, has brought a rapid integration to the economic life and accelerated this process.

"I don't remember now I haven't gone to any of my relatives' houses in the last one or two years. It is not like my paternal aunt is going to come to me, it is me who has to go. We used to go in the feast times, we would travel around, see. There was a coming together, cohesiveness. Now people even in the streets we cannot say hello to each other sometimes. It is as if when you say hello somebody will ask for something. Because there are economic hardships, something happens to everyone"<sup>128</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

The process has operated differently for Lazis. Lazis who have been working as civil servants in governmental offices or been shop keepers for long years in general have stayed away from jobs like transportation and driving, and as a result have been less affected by the risks that the border economy created. During the period when the entertainment sector boomed number of Lazi families have migrated from Hopa. That's not to say that Lazis were immune from the drastic

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<sup>128</sup>"Hatırlamıyorum şimdi son bir iki yıldır hiçbir akrabamın evine gittiğim yok. Halamın kalkıp bana gelecek hali yok, benim gitmem lazım. Bayramlarda giderdik, gezerdik, görürdük. Bir kaynaşma vardı, birliktelik vardı. Şimdi insanlar sokakta bile bazen birbirimize merhaba diyemiyoruz. Sanki merhaba dediğinde biri bir şey isteyecekmiş gibi. Çünkü ekonomik sıkıntılar var, herkesin başına bir şey geliyor"

transformations brought by the opening up of the border. Rather lazis as the dominant economic group of the town, in a way had experienced a similar disintegration caused by urbanization and modernization at an earlier stage than the Hemshinis. Thus Lazis whose extended family ties had long been dissolved, experienced the impact at the level of nuclear family. Whereas the moneys Hemshinis lost in the business ventures involved their extended families with all the siblings and relatives. The relation of trust has been worn out with commercial failures. This situation has been aggravated by new problems in family life, namely the role of entertainment sector in spoiling marriages, increasing cases of infidelity, divorces or double marriages. This situation will be detailed in the chapter that follows.

#### **6.4.2. New Otherizations: Intergroup Conflicts**

Turkish–Georgian border can be considered politically stable primarily because of the stable territorial boundaries of the Turkish republic accompanied by the construction of the political identity and unity. There is no problem at the level of integration of these two ethnic groups into the state. Both groups perceive themselves as parts of this political unity. Despite lack of identity claims at a larger political level, there is a hierarchical structure that has survived from the past, between these two groups that shape their relationships with each other.

Two groups perceive each other based on the historical factors that created differences. Lazis see Hemshins as "coarse, uneducated" and Hemshins perception of Lazis is "snob/pompous". The words of our interviewees given below are a clear expression of the discourses that enables these boundaries to continue.

"I mean the Lazis regard themselves as a little bit on a higher ground on this matter. They say we are more cultured, I mean I know it. Hemshins

used to be a little bit more something in the past, foulmouthed and the like. That's why they didn't like them much. They are coarse people, herding people, those I call Hemshins. The majority of them were herders in the past, you see. They used to stay in the mountains. A man can be coarse when they descend from the village, you know. Their manner of speech and other stuff. They used to regard them as coarse. It doesn't work without the Hemshins either, they also know themselves too that it doesn't work"<sup>129</sup> (FH\_IW-7).

As it can be seen in both the quotation above and the emphasis in our Lazi respondent that is given below, an exclusion has become a case over 'being cultured' and 'not being cultured'. Here 'being cultured' means being from the city, having an education. In the subtext of this emphasis of Lazis, the anger from the economic and political power that has been lost and the desire to continue the Lazi identity by underlining the differences can be read.

"The culture of Hemshin is a little bit broke compared to the lazi, I mean weak... All of the cultures of the Hemshin; economic, familial, social are all weak... Take 10 Lazi and speak with them and there won't be 3 with mistakes, but take the Hemshins 9 of them, 8 of them will be with mistakes. They would use 20-25 curse words even when making this conversation here. Without regarding your being a lady..."<sup>130</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

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129“Yani Lazlar kendini biraz yüksekte görüyorlar bu konuda. Daha kültürlüyüz diyorlar yani bilmiyorum. Hemşinliler eskiden biraz daha şeylermiş, küfürbaz falan. O yüzden pek sevmiyorlarmış. Kaba insanlar, çoban insanlar Hemşinler dedim. Eskiden çobanmışlar çoğu yani. Dağlarda kalıyorlarmış. Adam köyden inince kaba olabiliyor yani. Konuşma şekli, şeyi. Kaba olarak görüyorlarmış. Hemşinli olmadımı da yürümüyö, yürümediğini de biliyorlar kendileri”

130“Hemşinlinin kültürü laza göre biraz bozuk, yani zayıf... Hemşinlinin ekonomik, aile, sosyal kültürlerinin hepsi zayıf... 10 tane Laz'ı alın konuşun 3 tane çıkmaz hatalı, ama Hemşinlilerin alın 9 tanesini, 8 tanesi hatalı çıkar. Burada bu sohbeti yaparken bile 20-25 tane kötü kelime kullanır. Sizin bayan oluşunuza bakmadan...”

As we have mentioned above, these boundaries, especially visiting each other's houses is as low as non-existent. Even friends from two groups do not visit each others' houses, although they mention that they meet outside and "hang out." The reason for this is that the house, as in many other cultures of that geography, is seen as the most private place, as the sanctuary of family life. These boundaries have become unbreakable/unassailable and are internalized to such an extent that there had been almost no change in the thoughts of Lazis and Hemshins who live in the same apartment building next to each other.

"I am saying you can have two cars, a 100 lambs. You have sold them, if you are going to live in a building. Learn how you are supposed to live there before living there. You say that but they enter from here and exist from there. Laundries are done in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and hanged up. But there are laundries that are hung beforehand. You are going to warn them as a woman, you should say "My friend I am going to hang my laundry up if your laundries are dry"<sup>131</sup> (ML\_IW-24).

Lazis who had to live in the same place with the Hemshinis whom they have seen as villagers, uneducated and rude have deepened this discourse which they have carried over from the past by emphasizing the weakness of the family relations of Hemshins. The interviewee's saying "they won", whose words we quote below, is exemplary of both the anger of having lost the places that once belonged to them and an envy to the improvement in the economic power of the Hemshins that they have seen as below themselves until this day.

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131 "İki tane araban olabilir, 100 tane koyunun olabilir diyorum. Sattınız, apartmanda oturacaksanız eğer. Oturmadan önce, nasıl oturulması gerektiğini öğrenin. Diyorsun, ama buradan giriyor, buradan çıkıyor. 3. katta çamaşır yıkanmış, asılmış. Ama altta önceden asılmış çamaşırlar var. Sen onu uyaracaksın kadın olarak, "Arkadaşım çamaşırın kurduysa ben çamaşır asacağım" demelisin.."

"[By giving the name of one Hemshini] "He is going to say the things that I talk about with curses...Why? It comes from the family. When I came here during the 50s Hemshins had a bakery. Lazis wouldn't do it because it was hard work. There is a district called Kuledibi, they would come with donkeys from there to here. There was no cars, you see... They would sell wood. The only thing they bought was sugar and salt. All was in the garden. There was nothing else. Now the owner of the house that I live in is a Hemshin. He is a restaurant owner. He is a man worth a trillion. They won"<sup>132</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

A Lazi woman whose daughter is married with a Hemshini and who tells that her daughter is experiencing problems with her husband because of the 'Russian events' says "What can we say, we can't say anything. My daughter is 29 years old has a son. If she comes leaving there is the kid, she can't leave the kid. The husband is not worth it either" and when she is asked "Doesn't her mother-in-law say anything?" emphasizes that in fact the family is corrupted by saying "No, they are the same, all of them are same" and adds "The bride of the brother-in-law of my this daughter is also Russian. He has 3 children" (FL\_IW-5).

"Sarp gate had a huge contribution to Hopa in economic sense. It has disturbed the family adjective. It is correct, but which one was disrupted. It has hit the ones whose family structure was already disrupted since yesterday. They have found money a little bit. Sundura district is the biggest district of Hopa. A guy in here had a secondary marriage, the one who is giving and the one who is taking are all okay with it, those whose

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132 “[Bir Hemsinlinin ismini vererek] “Benim konustugum seyleri o küfürlü söyleyecek...Neden? Aileden geliyor. 50’li yıllarda buraya geldiğimde Hemşinlilerin fırını vardı. Ağır iş olduğundan Lazlar yapmazdı. Kule dibi mahallesi var, oradan buraya eşekle gelirlerdi. Araba yoktu ki... Odun satarlardı. Aldıkları sadece şeker ve tuzdu. Hepsi bahçede vardı. Başka bir şey yoktu. Şimdi ise benim oturduğum evin sahibi, Hemşinlidir. Lokanta sahibidir. Trilyonluk adamdır. Kazandılar”

family culture is weak, those who do not look at their families in a healthy regard, I can never project the mistakes that people do in to Hopa"<sup>133</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

The necessity of these two groups to live together who have continued their existence by having the minimum relations with each other while living in places close to each other for many years has brought about new boundaries. In order to continue their group identity Lazis have created new labels for family lives of Hemshins. According to Lazis, Hemshins whose family lives were already spoiled have entered into "amoral" relations that the entertainment sector created, double marriages, divorces; infidelity became common amongst the Hemshins.

"Hemshins are a little bit relaxed on this subject, they have more of the secondary marriages with the Georgians but the social impact the psychological impact is not as much as the Lazis, and they are a little bit relaxed more at ease... For example those who have like had their psychologies disrupted, who have left have always unfortunately been the Lazis I am saying because of this kind of relationship. They are a little bit relaxed, they have thick ribs"<sup>134" 135</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

The words that one of our Lazi woman interviewees used for her gender-mates is an example of ethnic identity surpassing gender identity and includes a very harsh scorn done over womanhood.

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133“Sarp kapısının Hopa’ya ekonomik anlamda büyük katkısı olmuştur. Aile sıfatını bozmuştur. Doğrudur, ama hangisi bozulmuştur. Aile düzeni dünden bozuk olana isabet etmiştir. Birazda parayı bulmuştur. Sundura mahallesi Hopa’nın en büyük mahallesidir. Burada bir adam ikinciye nikah kıymış, alan razı veren razı, aile kültürü zayıf olan, ailesine sağlıklı gözle bakmayan, insanların yaptığı yanlış asla Hopa’ya mal edemem”.

134 'Thick ribbed' a word that is used for Armenians and more in order to insult.

135“Hemşinliler bu konuda biraz genişler, onlarda daha çok var gürcülerle ikinci evlilik ama sosyal etkisi psikolojik etkisi lazlar kadar değil, birazda rahatlar genişler öyle psikolojisi bozulanlar, terk edenler maalesef hep laz oldu bu tür ilişkilerden dolayı diyorum. Onlar biraz rahatlar , kalın kaburgalılar”

"Hemshini women do not interfere a lot with their men they say it is ok as long as he brings me money but there is no such thing at lazis they never accept, lazi women say there can be no one other than me but I see the mother of my friend her husband's whereabouts is not known but she says it is good as long as he brings me money"<sup>136</sup> (FL\_IW-21).

Hemshins are trying to develop a counter discourse to all these new forms of othering discourses that come from Lazis by claiming that they are warmer blooded in nature and that they give more importance to family relations.

"No one in Hemshins expresses themselves as individuals within the family. Expressing is thought of as a little bit of weird socializing within the family is more on the forefront. Even if it in your spouse going out together is not something a lot, with your mates and friends all together, even if they are going to stroll, they are going to stroll together. The nuclear family stays together all the time with kids and such, mother father in here those people's individual behavior is like not caring for the family a little bit"<sup>137</sup> (MH\_IW-15).

Despite Hemshins are gaining more economic power and their presence in the political and social life of the town can be felt, hierarchical structure that exists

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136 "Hemşinli kadınlar erkeklerine çok karışmıyorlar yeterki bana para getirsin diyorlar ama lazlarda böyle bir şey yok onlar kesinlikle kabul etmiyorlar, laz kadınlar benden başkası olmaz diyorlar ama görüyorum arkadaşımın annesi kocasının nerde olduğu belli değil ama yeterki bana para getirsin diyor"

137 "Hemşinlilerde hiç kimse aile içerisinde kendini bireysel olarak ifade etmez. İfade etmek biraz garipsenir aile içindeki sosyallik daha ön plandadır. Eşinde bile olsa beraber çıkmak pek şey değildir, eşinle dostunla hep beraber, gezecekler de birlikte gezecekler. Çekirdek aile hep bir arada kalıyor çoluk çocuk, anne baba burada o insanların bireysel davranışı biraz daha aileyi takmamak gibi oluyor"

between them and Lazis for hundreds of years has not completely broken down. Economic and political empowerment of Hemshins, contrary to expectations, has created new discourses of disdain and scorn.

These two groups which had to reside together in many locations as a result of the new dynamics that the opening up of the border has created, has developed new othering discourses that are in line with these new dynamics in order to continue their group identities. Lazis have developed these discourses over the 'defunct' family lives of Hemshins whereas Hemshins have developed them over Lazis being 'haughty' and 'cocky'.

#### **6.4.3. Marriage Patterns of Ethnic Groups**

According to the primordialists, the fundamental basis for ethnic identities is the blood relation and the survival of this identity is connected to the survival of blood relation. For this reason the group identity is attempted to be continued and preserved by always making marriages within their own groups. This situation is also valid between Lazis and Hemshins. These two groups have severely refrained from exchanging brides, which is to mean establishing blood relationships in order to continue their existence in the face of the other group which they live together in the same lands, to keep the boundaries in place.

"...the best way to break this is the marriage exchange with each other. It has come to a situation as they are Hemshins, I won't take their daughter, they are Lazis I won't take their daughter. If not family ties had to generate there is a lack in that sense. If it was like that there would have been so many better things"<sup>138</sup> (ML\_IW-17).

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138“...bunu kırmanın en iyi yolu birbiriyle evlilik alışverişi. O Hemşinlidir onun kızını almam o Laz'dır onun kızını almam diye diye bu duruma gelmiştir. Yoksa aile bağlarının oluşması lazımdı o anlamda eksiklik var. O şekilde olsa çok daha güzel şeyler olacaktı”

Today the number of marriages between the two groups is still so small in number. And they continue to legitimize this with the cultural differences with each other. Hemshins claim that they do not discriminate Lazis, and say that Lazis are the ones who will not give their daughters to them. Lazis consent to this situation too. According to one of our Hemshin respondents:

"[Lazis] see Hemshins as backwards. Uncultured. They regard them as they are in a level below themselves. They see them as people who have worked in the villages, who worked in houses, who are oppressed. Lazi daughter is a lady. She doesn't work in the fields or gardens. Working in the fields and gardens is not something bad, after all. They regard Hemshin daughters like that. Their own daughters will go to civil service workers, will be comfortable, will be a lady, won't be oppressed, just like that I mean"<sup>139</sup> (FH\_IW-14).

Hann (2007:343) in his article titled "Hemshinli-Lazi Relations in Northeast Turkey" states: "Most informants, both Hemshin and Lazi, insist that intermarriage took a one-sided form; Hemshin brides were taken by Lazi men, but no Lazi girls married up to Hemshin villages". This is a situation that is also voiced by our interviewees:

"Lazis would not give their daughters to us Hemshins with any ease. Of course there are those who are married around us but most of them are runaways... and those are like when Hemshin men's occupational situation is like really good his income etc like money you know how money is a

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139“Hemşinlileri geri olarak görüyorlar. Kültürsüz. Kendilerinden düşük seviyede görüyorlar. Köylerde çalışmış, evlerde çalışmış, ezilmiş görüyorlar. Laz kızı da hanımefendi. Bağ bahçe yapmıyor. Bağ bahçe yapmak kötü bir şey değil sonuçta. Hemşinli kızlarını öyle görüyorlar. Kendi kızları da memura gidecek, rahat olacak, hanım olacak, ezilmeyecek öyle yani”

little bit at the heart of this deal but other than that there is no such problem with the Hemshins"<sup>140</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

"Lazi bride is not a problem in hemshin however giving a hemshin daughter to a lazi is very hard. A hemshin taking a girl from lazi is another kind of difficult. I mean, lazis are a little bit more despotic on this subject. I am saying this as a Lazi you see"<sup>141</sup> (FH\_IW-4).

The most fundamental reason for not taking or giving girls and for the within group marriages to continue is the pressure of the group on this subject. "Of course for example in here Lazis don't give their girls to Hemshins but a Hemshin's daughter comes with two arms opened comes as if Lazis are superior. But Lazis certainly don't give girls but girls come from there... But now for example if I give the girl they will say 'Why did you gave the girl?' just because of that meaning out of pride" <sup>142</sup>(FL\_IW-20).

Similar to those in the interviews that Hann (2007:343) made, Hemshin girls being stronger and more studious is also given as a reason in our interviews for Lazis taking girls from Hemshins but not giving away their daughter. "Their daughters used to be better nourished, and their healthy lifestyle in the high pastures made them sturdy and strong, and therefore desirable as wives for the Lazi. Both groups stress that Hemshin women have always been hard-working".

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140“Lazlar biz hemşinilere öyle pek kolay kolay kız vermezler. Etrafımızda vardır tabi evli olanlar ama bunun çoğu kaçmıştır...olanlarda hani Hemşin erkeğinin mesleki durumu böyle çok iyidir geliri vs öyle hani para biraz işin özünde para ama onun dışında Hemşinlilerde böyle bir sorun olmaz” (GR-3).

141“Laz gelini problem olmaz hemşinlide ama bir laza hemşinli kızını vermek çok zordur. Lazdan da hemşinlinin kız alması da ayrı zordur. Lazlar biraz daha despottur yani bu konuda. Ben bir laz olarak diyorum yani bunu”

142“Tabi mesela bizde Lazlar Hemşinliye kız vermezler ama Hemşinlinin kızı gelir bayıla bayıla gelir Lazlar üstünmüş gibi. Ama Lazlar kesinlikle kız vermezler ama oradan kız gelir... Ama şimdi mesela versem kızı diyecekler ki ‘Hanife kızını neye verdi?’ sırf o yüzden yani gururdan”

Majority of the marriages could only become possible not by the consent of the families but rather through the insistence of young couples. One of our Lazi interviewees underlined that a Lazi girl in their right mind would not want to marry a Hemshin anyway by saying "I wouldn't give her but I wouldn't interfere either but I don't think she would marry she has passed that age I think she would not love but I am again strongly emphasizing every hemshin is not the same. There were no marriages at all before now the girl can go herself too if she loves, we can give her. But we don't give daughters through arranged marriage. If my daughter loves a lot than out of necessity we would give her"<sup>143</sup> (FL\_IW-21) when we asked the question, "would you allow it if your daughter wanted to marry a hemshin person?" A Hemshin interviewee who emphasizes that they are regarded as 'inferior' by the Lazis and for that reason they don't want to give their daughters; adds that it is not possible to create marriages through "normal" means.

"...Lazis don't want it a lot for us to visit each other. Hemshins don't have such a thing. Hemshins don't make any discrimination. Lazis don't want it much. You know how they say second class person all the time, they see themselves as superior. Even in woman to man relationships, they don't take a Hemshin girl as a bride or they don't give their girls to Hemshins. It happens once in a thousand, and that is either if the girls runaway or if they insist a lot, "meaning I will take him in any case" if it is up to that degree. Otherwise, if she goes to a normal family ok they she loves him let's ask for her and they'll give her there is no such thing"<sup>144</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

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143“ben vermem de kendi giderse karışmam ama evlenmez herhalde o yaşı atlattı bence sevmez ama yine üstüne basa basa söylüyorum her hemşinli bir değil. Eskiden evlenme hiç yoktu şimdi severse kızda gidebiliyor, verebiliyoruz. Ama görücü usulle kız vermeyiz. Benim kızım çok severse mecbur veririz”

144“...Lazlar gidip gelmeyi çok istemiyorlar. Hemşinliler de öyle bir şey yok. Hemşinliler ayırım yapmazlar. Lazlar pek istemiyorlar...Ya hep ikinci sınıf insan derler ya, kendilerini daha üstün görüyorlar. Kız erkek ilişkilerinde bile, Hemşinli kızı gelin etmezler veya Hemşinlilere kız vermezler. Binde bir olur, o da ya kızlar kaçarsa ya da çok diretirlerse, "yani ille de alacağım" o derecede olursa. Yoksa normal bir aileye giderse seviyor tamam isteyelim versinler öyle bir şeyi yok.”

Even though some of the boundaries between these two groups have eroded after the opening up of the border, behaviors and attitudes towards inter group marriage have not changed at all.

Pre-modern patterns of marriage yield intra-group and sometimes village endogamy, an extreme form of which was close-kin marriage. In practice, out-marriage has probably always been an option (Hann; 2007:345). Today, although Lazi-Hemshin relationships increased in many areas of the town's life, neither group affirms Lazi-Hemshin marriage. Even though they establish certain relationships, marriage is not one of them.

## **Conclusion**

In Hopa, the division between Hemshins and Lazis seems to have originated from the historical conditions that identify these groups in geographical and occupational terms. Hemshins are identified with agriculture and country life, whereas Lazis with the city life and commerce. While Hemshins were dealing with agriculture and herding in the villages, Lazis have hold the commerce in their hands at the center of the town. As a result of the rural-to-urban migration, stimulated by the disintegration of agriculture and herding as well as nationwide modernization practices pursued by the central political authority such as compulsory education, spatial division between these two ethnic groups became less viable. Movement of Hemshins to the center created economic and social tensions which would yield new stereotypes and practices of segregation between these two groups. This process that can be evaluated as an inevitable consequence of the modernization process has gained an extraordinary pace after the opening up of border.

The most significant consequences of the reopening of the border at 1988 can be summarized as follows: firstly, the ethnic composition of the population at the center of Hopa has changed, the economic ascendance of Hemshins, has also caused material problems in their relations with the Lazis who are the "host". Hemshins who have become distanced from agriculture advanced rapidly in the field of commerce, have migrated to the city center in order to also benefit more from education and social opportunities, the villages have become places which are visited in summers for the tea and doing work.

The changes that have happened in the participation of Hemshins and Lazis to the economic life, the changes in their social lives and the shift in the hierarchical relationship that they have with each other, allows for a materialist analysis of their relationships. The land ownership is a material historical condition that rendered Lazis the dominant group especially around the seashore. Their long standing superiority in the social and political life of the town left its traces over the discourses of segregation, namely the subjective realm. However, as Hemshins started to acquire lands in the seashore or exercised other means of upward social mobility, hegemonic relationship between these two groups started to change. Hemshins and Lazis have been equalized in terms of social and political power. Increasing role of Hemshins in the town's economic life has changed the capital structure of both groups. However this situation has not removed the boundaries between Lazis and Hemshinis that has come from history, it has deepened those that existed and created new discourses of othering.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **DYNAMICS OF GENDER RELATIONS**

#### **7.1. Introduction**

In this chapter the place of both the local women and the women who come from the other side of the border in the border economy and how they experience the effects of this economy will be elaborated. While I evaluate the experiences of local women through their own accounts, I will handle the women who are coming from the other side through the recounts of the locals. Of course it was required to listen to the experiences of these women from themselves but both its being a thesis subject all on its own and the necessity of having another network in order to reach these women the majority of whom labor as sex workers necessitated the limitation of this study in this manner.

During the period I was in the field doing interviews there had been an operation and a majority of these women were deported. The others were hiding in their houses. Even though I have tried to reach them through one of the beauty shops that they frequented I was not successful. However the existence of these women was admitted both by the local authorities and everyone else I interviewed. A clear statistical data on the number of these women or the frequency of their entrance and leaving cannot be obtained. This is because these women work illegally and their visa status forces them to leave the country periodically and come back. In

fact, these women who “are not seen/ invisible” are the backbone of the economic life in Hopa. We will elaborate their position in this life in detail in this chapter.

The point of intersection between border economy and gender is not the same for local women and women who come from outside. While the relation of local women with the border economy is established in a mediated form through their spouses' relationship with this economy, the women who come from outside are an important component of this economy as suitcase traders, sex workers or domestic workers. However each local woman experiences its effect intensely in her own life in her relations with her husband, with her family and with her children. These processes have been evaluated in this chapter over local women's family relationships and the forms of her participation in the work life.

## **7.2. Everyday Experiences of Local Women**

At first sight, everyday life of Hopa is no different from a similar sized town in Turkey. The men work, the women do the housework, concern themselves with taking care of the children, prepare house gatherings with tea-gold and the life seems to continue with all its normalcy and patriarchy. A closer look reveals the unique situation of a border town: quite vivid and dynamic life. The lorry trucks are lined up one after another along the shore; hotels, restaurants, small casinos follow each other; foreigners can be spotted by their looks, especially women who are comfortably and well dressed; visitors from other parts of Turkey can be identified with their license plates. The real effect of the border on the lives of the local people however requires research beyond observation. First problem that comes up is the shattered family life. These families located in a town, men who go out to their jobs but do not come back or come back with another woman, the women who do not know how to hold their families together, who are lost in the

middle of all this rumble, children who grow up in a family environment where their father is mostly not at home.

“The events of prostitution had been a lot. A lot of families have naturally been affected by this. There had been a lot of men who went. Those who have taken and put the money of the tea there, those who have sold, forgive me for saying this, the cattle in their barns and gone there. The woman you see collects the tea, struggles and works but I mean the man has turned out to be more dominant in the affair of prostitution. There had been cases of divorce of course. Those who married with other Georgians, those who had kids, those who had left their spouses. There had been those who went to Batumi and had secondary wives there I mean. Those who had kids there. Their spouses did not hear about that at first of course, they did later on”<sup>145</sup> (FH\_IW-4).

This form of life which has started with the opening up of the border and has taken a more tragic form with the increase of the entertainment sector has displayed itself more in women's relationships with their spouses, relatives and kids.

The account of a lawyer that Can Dünder has interviewed in the article series in which he published his travel notes from a journey he made to the Black sea in the year 2005 summarizes this situation;

A sociological event with 4 dimensions has happened. With respect to man, 2 women and the kids. This was another Chernobyl. The women have experienced psychological trauma. They still use medication but they

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<sup>145</sup> “Fuhuş olayları çok oldu. Birçok aile etkilendi tabii bundan. Çok giden erkekler oldu. Çay parasını götürüp oraya yatıran, afedersin ahırdaki ineğini satıp oraya gidenler oldu. Kadın işte çay topluyo, bocalıyo ediyo ama erkek fuhuş olayında daha baskın çıktı yani. Boşanma olayları oldu tabii. Diğer gürcülerle evlenen, çocuk sahibi olanlar, eşlerini bırakanlar. Batum’a gidip orada ikinci karısı olanlar oldu yani. Orada çocuk sahibi olanlar. İlk başlarda eşlerinin haberleri olmadı tabii, sonradan oldu”

don't speak out. In any case many of their men were abroad, they did not see each other much. There was a secret acceptance but they had to face the reality of the 2<sup>nd</sup> woman for the first time. Some men have taken the foreign woman and brought her home, made her sleep in their bed. His wife was forced to listen to it from the next room with the kids. What could she have done anyway?.. Most of them have accepted. They come saying “what can I do?”. They cannot criticize man. Some of them chose the wrong target and engage in a struggle with the women. Some of them, by saying “Probably there was something lacking with us so that the men went” try to look like them. All the women in Trabzon have become blond. The woman who worked at the field all day long has tried to smell wonderful and serve her husband who sits down all day. Everybody was interested with the supply side of the case. Those who were demanding, the men have gotten free again.

#### **7.2.1. Scattered Lives of Women of Hopa**

Ayşenur Kolivar's (2000) book *Who is Fadime?* uses the stereotypical name Fadime in the title, female counterpart of Temel in typical Black Sea region jokes. She says that the Black Sea woman “is stereotyped as gun holding, man like, getting whatever she wants strong woman on the one hand, an oppressed woman who has to work all day in the place of her husband who kills his time at the tea house, with loads on her back, a kid on her hands on the other hand” and in it there is “some truth like there is in all stereotypes”. The difficult geographical conditions of Black Sea, the placement of the tea cultivated lands at the foots of the mountain and the definition of the job of collecting the tea as a job of women are among the fundamental qualities of the life of the traditional Black Sea woman's life. This situation is not any different for the rural women who live in Hopa. It is the women who collect the tea, carry it to the collection places, and bring the wood from the forest on their backs. Even for those who have moved to the cities the women besides the daily “womanhood responsibilities” the tea collection job has continued its existence as a woman assignment. There is the affect of Black Sea man's having to work away from the city in the experience of

agricultural production based on woman's labor being experienced more condensely compared to other agricultural regions. Even though the conditions are equalized and men have returned to their homes these jobs are left to the women. One of my interviewees has expressed this with these words:

“Woman's word is the rule in the production. The tea is supposed to be collected... it will be harvested today planted today moved away today. The man does not interfere with that at all woman's word is the rule in these fields that is true because it is going to be the woman who will do the carrying but when you cross to the other side of the job man's word is the rule. The woman collects her tea spreads her manure does her clean up does everything and suffers for it but the right to use the money of the tea is man's”<sup>146</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

The experience of one male interviewee, who was born and raised in Kazakhstan and who has settled in Hopa with his father moving back to Turkey with the “longing for the country of origin”, is telling about this normalizing and acceptance:

“In here the women work and the men eat. The woman carries the wood too, cuts the wood too, carries the tea in 50 kilo sack of tea in her back too, and her husband takes the money and goes plays gamble and drinks his alcohol and his own kids and kin eat the kale... Now when we were at the village I said let me do a couple bullocks and I bought them. Like that 3-4 of them, I have harvested grass I will carry grass to the cattle in the evening but the green grass weighs heavy you know that, right? I am going

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<sup>146</sup> “Üretimde kadının sözü geçer. Çay toplanacaktır bugün toplanacak bugün ekilecek bugün kaldırılacak. Ona erkek hiç karışmaz bu alanlarda kadının sözü geçer doğrudur çünkü hamallığı kadın yapacaktır ama işin diğer tarafına geçince erkeğin sözü geçer. Kadın çayını toplar gübresini döker temizliğini yapar her şeyini yapar çilesini kadın çeker ama çay parasını kullanma hakkı erkeğindir”

too and my head cannot be seen and this one here (referring to his wife) has the sickle in a plastic bag and she is coming by waving it around the women have seen it and said “uuu what are you doing”. She said what's happened she said “are you crazy she said why are you carrying the load you should give it to your wife” she said. *Is it me who is crazy or is it you I cannot understand it*<sup>147</sup> (MH\_IW-30).

These women who has a say in the life of the village and who play an important role in the family economy lose their rights of participation in the family life to a great extend after moving to the city center. According to what Kandiyoti (2011:7) relates in the International Woman Conference that was done in the year 1975 modernization has further deepened the cliff between the genders as contrary to the expectations and furthermore that women were deprived of some power and privileges that they had in the agrarian societies. The logic that lies behind is that as the forms of production geared towards market economy, the necessary skills and by extension money gets transferred to the men and that the value of women's contribution declines. A similar process can be observed in Hopa: after the opening up of the border, border economy became a source of sustenance for the families, families migrated to the city center; their economic power increased and they became more involved in the modernization processes. What had followed was the similar deprivations in the lives of the women to what has been asserted. While the tea that she has collected and the goods that she has acquired from the land had value before hand, these goods have stopped being the source of

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<sup>147</sup> “Burada kadınlar çalışır erkekler yer. Kadın odunu da taşır, odunu da yarar, 50 kilo çuval çayı da sırtında taşır, kocası da paraları alır gider kumar oynar içkisini içer kendi çocuk da karalâhanayı yer... Şimdi biz köydeyken bir iki tane tosun yapayım dedim aldım. öyle 3-4 tane, ot biçmişim akşam danalara ot götüreceğim ama yeşil ot ağır olur biliyordur. Bende gidiyorum benim kafam gözükmüyor bununda (eşini kastederek) elinde poşetle orak var geliyor sallaya sallaya kadınlar gördü "uuu sen ne yapıyorsun" dediler. Noldu dedi "deli misin dedi sen neden yükü götürüyorsun karına versene" dedi. *Sen mi delisin ben mi deliyim anlamadım*”

economic income for the family now and as a result the status of woman in the family has changed.

The women who are rendered obsolete in economic relations come into a position within the household where they only do housework, look after the children and wait for their husbands to bring home money. The family economy which relied on the cultivation of tea and other sorts of production in the village, lost this quality with the opening up of the border and has become connected to the border economy. Consequently, the labor of women in the cultivation of tea has become free but not internalized within the border economy.

With quoting from a study that Özgen made in Igdir on sex workers (2006:131), an NGO has done a call which declared “there is a congestion in Igdir as a result of trans border sex traffic in this city, *the traditional roles of local women have become a lot harder with this new situation with the density of the traditional structure*”. This situation shows us that the new forms of economic life that the border creates produce similar experiences for the local women in the border regions, at least in the example of Turkey.

While talking about the example of Hopa it is also necessary to touch upon the differences between the forms of Hemshin women's and Lazi women's experiences of the process. Because the condition of moving from the village to the city together with the border has been the case for Hemshin women. In the center, the Hemshin women who did not have any education and have only worked in tea and field work throughout their whole lives came face to face with the Lazi women who were more educated compared to themselves, 'more from the city', “socialites” as they call them. What is more when the women who come from the other side of the border were added to these Hemshin women was left at the bottom of this hierarchy. Their spouses' earning more money from the border

commerce, family economy's being improved did not change this condition of their a lot.

A reality which has appeared with the border and can be generalized to Hopa, or more truthfully to the Black Sea shore, is the fact that this condition that the women find themselves in has the Black Sea women who can have what she wants, who is strong and has a say stereotype is broken down.

“You know if the women were really able to make everyone do what she says and had a say in the family, could this prostitution come this much till the insides of our families? The man you know should either respect or love or fear his spouse that he would not do this thing”<sup>148</sup> (WH\_IW-3).

#### **7.2.1.1. Relations with Spouses**

While being a woman in Black Sea is a situation full of hardships by itself, with the opening of the border, a new period has started for the woman from Hopa where they have to compete against the women who came from the other side of the border who are “educated”, “groomed”, “flirtatious” and “accessible by their husbands at all time”. In this regard the women are among the most affected by the chaotic processes that the border has created in Hopa.

“Belive that these Hopa women of ours are very unlucky, say I am among the lucky ones but some are very unlucky. They especially do not come out of the tea houses they don't help their women at their houses our women look after everything. Forgive me but they work like donkeys but there is still no return for it. I have heard from some of my friends for example

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<sup>148</sup> “Hani kadın eğer gerçekten dediğini yaptıran ailede söz sahibi olsaydı bu kadar bu fuhuş ailelerimizin içine kadar girer miydi? Adam eşinden hani ya sayacaktır ya sevecektir ya da korkacaktır ki hani bu işi yapmayacak”

they even threaten by saying 'it doesn't if you give it or not there is a Russian in any case'. The woman works, what will she do if she does not work, the woman is working for her children"<sup>149</sup> (FL\_IW-20).

Differences between the perceptions of the border by male and female subjects are striking. Unlike female interviewees several of whom expressed their wish for the closing of the border not even a single male interviewee expressed that. For the women; the border is a thing that disrupts the family structure and causes their husbands to leave their homes, spend time with well dressed women with whom they cannot compete; for men, it is a thing that disrupts the family structure but provides a very important economic income.

"I have never said yeah it has been good that the Sarp border gate has opened, it is a new life. It is correct that a new life has started for us but it has been very terrible for women you see. Of the women and married couples that is to say the shattering of this family that is to say even those families that did not shatter have stood out of necessity. After all the woman does not have any economic security she cannot leave and go anywhere, there is a feeling of motherhood she cannot leave her child and go"<sup>150</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

They were obliged to do both the house work, look after the kids, harvest tea etc. continue the ordinary "womanhood duties" that have stuck on them for centuries

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<sup>149</sup> "Bizim bu Hopa kadınları inan çok şanssız, hani ben şanslıların içindeyim ama bazıları çok şanssız. Özellikle kahvelerden çıkmıyorlar evlerinde hanımlarına yardım etmiyorlar her şeye kadınlarımız bakıyor...Affedersin eşek gibi çalışıyorlar ama karşılıkları yine yok. Benim bazı arkadaşlarımdan duydum mesela "sen vermezsen verme nasılsa Rus var" deyip tehdit bile ediyorlarmış. Çalışır kadın çalışmasa ne yapacak, kadın çocukları için çalışıyor"

<sup>150</sup> "Ben hiçbir zaman aman iyi oldu sarp sınır kapısı açıldı yeni bir hayat demedim. Ha doğru yeni bir hayat başladı bizim için ama kadınlar için çok berbat oldu yani. Kadınlar ve evli çiftlerin hani bu yuvanın dağılması hani dağılmayan yuvalarda zoraki ayaktaadır. Sonuçta kadının ekonomik güvencesi yoktur bırakıp bir yere gidemez, bir annelik duygusu vardır çocuğunu bırakıp ta gidemez"

and also become prettier, look after themselves and try to keep their husbands at home by satisfying them. What is more the necessity of “keeping her man in her grasp” is normalized by both men and the women. The statements of some of my women interviewees are as such:

“Now our women are used to it, they have become accustomed to the sight of it. Another thing, they can't raise any protest either, they can't do anything, and what can they even do, anyways? *After all, we are also saying to them, claim your own spouses, after all nobody is forcing anyone to go to anywhere. Isn't that true, though, nobody forces anyone to go to anywhere, you should claim your spouses yourselves.* You should also groom yourselves. For example, before the Georgians arrived, our women were not conscious a lot, now they are a lot more conscious, they groom themselves more”<sup>151</sup> (FH\_IW-26).

“Like it has changed the women but the women have guilt too. For example as a married lady I dress up as my husband wants or does my brain not work it does, why would I work at the field till the night. If he is not working why I am working, I could work but I also know how to walk around, sitting down standing up you have to learn everything you have to know these, tying your husband to home is also a little bit up to you”<sup>152</sup> (FL\_IW-25).

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<sup>151</sup> “Artık bizim kadınlar alıştı, artık göz aşinalığı oldu. Bir de tepki koyamıyorlar bir şey yapamıyorlar ki ne yapabilirler? *Sonuçta bizde onlara diyoruz ki eşlerinize siz sahip çıkın, sonuçta kimse kimseyi zorla götürmüyor. Öyle değil mi ama zorla kimse kimseyi götürmez eşlerinize siz sahip çıkın.* Siz de bakımlı olun. Mesela Gürcüler gelmeden önce kadınlarımız çok bilinçli değildi, şimdi daha çok bilinçliler, daha çok kendilerine bakıyorlar”

<sup>152</sup> “İşte kadınları değiştirdi ama kadınlarda da suç var. Mesela ben evli bir bayan olarak kocamın istediği gibi giyinirim veyahutsa benim kafam çalışmıyor mu çalışıyor, neden ben akşama kadar tarlada çalışayım. O çalışmıyorsa ben neden çalışıyorum, çalışırım ama bende gezmesini biliyorum, oturmasını kalkmasını her şeyini öğrenmek zorundasın bunları bilmelisin, kocanı eve bağlamakta biraz da sana kalmış”

In almost all the interviews that I have conducted women who were cheated by their husbands with the Russian women, who were dumped for them were mentioned. However I was only able to make an interview with one of these women. What was told in other interviews was always either a neighbor's or a relative's story. Both with a feeling of shame and as a result of expressing it's bringing the necessity of doing something, the women are telling the “stories of others”.

“My you see downstairs neighbor is like that, she is a hair dresser, her husband lives with a Russian for how many years the woman is not very much beautiful either, neither the man is with height and figure owns a night disco the man has found the Russian in just the place. However these are a group 10 people or so they always come and have their hair done to this hair dresser you this Russian who her husband dates comes and makes her hair done by her”<sup>153</sup> (FL\_IW-20).

“She has started to tidy herself up she too looks after herself now, she has started to dye her hair and like cares about her dresses and what she wears. Why? She is trying to pull her husband back to his home. Things like these have happened but it does not affect me much”<sup>154</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

The opening up of the Sarp border gate deteriorates at first the relationship of trust between women and men. The women do not know whether their husbands are going to come home or go to another house or a hotel room with another woman.

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<sup>153</sup> “Benim işte alt komşum öyle, kuaför kendisi, kocası Rus’la kaç senedir yaşıyor kadın pek de güzel değil, adam da öyle boylu poslu gece disko sahibi tam yerinde adam Rus’u bulmuş. Ama bunlar bir ekipmiş 10 kişilik falan gelip saçlarını hep bu kuaföre yaptırmış sen bu kocasının çıktığı Rus geliyor saçını buna yaptırıyor”

<sup>154</sup> “Kendine çeki düzen vermeye başladı o da kendine bakıyor artık, saçını boyatmaya başlamış işte elbiselerine üst başına önem veriyor.niye? Eşini geri çekmeye çalışıyor yuvasına. Bu tarz şeyler oldu ama beni pek etkilemez”

“Like let’s say my spouse has cheated on me, we have experienced the Russian event this is not only one person cheating in this the economy of the household has collapse what should I know there is no union left in the family. In a material sense too with this prostitution it has also affected the material dimension within the family that is to say because the money that comes, for example the woman is collecting her tea, if it is the man who takes the money in any case that money would go that night. The woman cannot even ask and when she asks she takes a beating and sits down to her place”<sup>155</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

Before the border, the women did not have an equal relationship with their husbands. However these women's being in the production process has provided them with a say in certain situations. The opening up of the border has taken away this, no matter how small it was, relatively equal space from them. Today, the lack of opportunities to work, and the fact that the tea do not retain any value in economic sense has imprisoned these women to houses.

“What could woman do, the man say “Am I going to answer to you”. But this was not like this 18-20 years ago. If you were going to the garden the husband would be beside you. Is the tea going to be collected, she would go with her husband again. But now the guy say “Don't do it if you cannot do it” (FL\_IW-5). The husbands of everybody was at home. Now the woman waits for her husband so that he would come, the time is 1-2-3-5 and that is he comes drunk. The woman says “Where were you?” and he

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<sup>155</sup> “Hadi ben diyelim ki eşim beni aldattı. Rus olayını yaşadık bu sadece birinin aldatması değil ki bizim burada evin ekonomisi de çökmüştür ne biliyim ailede birlik kalmamıştır. Maddi olarak da bu fuhuşla birlikte ailedeki maddi yönü de etkiledi yani çünkü gelen para, hani kadın çayını topluyordur, parayı erkek alıyorsa nasıl olsa o para o gece gider. Kadın hiç soramaz bile sorduğunda da yer dayacağı oturur yerine”

says “I had business to take care of”. And then he says “Am I going to answer to you”. But he answers to the other one”<sup>156</sup> (FL\_IW-5).

#### **7.2.1.2. Relations with Extended Family**

I have elaborated on the participation of ethnic identities in the commercial life and the conflicts that these relations have created within the extended family in the sixth chapter. Even though they had participated in this commerce with the support of the extended family, many families have fractured while migrating to the city center and turned into nuclear families. As a result the solidarity and control mechanisms that continued over the primary relationships in the village have been broken down too. If it is needed to be reiterated, this situation was experienced in Hemshini families inevitably more intensely because the process of migrating to the center is relevant for them. As this process has started earlier in Lazis families and the decision making processes operate within the nuclear family its affects have also remained at the level of nuclear family.

According to Kandiyoti (2011:30) the induction of villages into the national market economy has destroyed the traditional household economy. The wide family structures were exited and everybody has established their own household. Whether it be the result of mechanization in agriculture or as a result of inclination towards market goods a structural transformation was experienced in rural production and this situation had a direct affect to the form of the household and its operation. The integration to the national economy which has started with the cultivation of tea in the Black Sea region has also been the beginning of the

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<sup>156</sup> “Kadın ne yapsın, adam “Sana mı hesap vereceğim” diyor. Ama bu 18-20 sene önce böyle değildi. Bahçeye gidiyorsan kocan yanında olurdu. Çay mı toplayacak, yine kocası ile giderdi. Şimdi ise adam” Yapamıyorsan yapma” diyor (FL\_IW-5). Herkesin kocası evdeydi. Şimdi kadın bekliyor ki kocam gelecek, saat 1-2-3-5 o da içmiş gelir. “Nerdeydin?” der kadın“İşim vardı” der o da. Sonra da “Ben sana hesap mı vereceğim” diyor. Ama hesabını diğerine verir”

transformation in the rural structure of the region. Even though the cultivation of tea was done in rural regions, the fact that more money was brought into the household has brought about the inclination towards market goods and the tendency to participate in the modernization processes. The tea cultivation which has become the most important source of income in the totality of the region has been the primary push factor for the rural to urban migration, especially for the Hemshins, however the forsaking of the extended family structures did not happen immediately, the process has accelerated with entering to the border economy. These new forms of relationships that were shaped with money 'has teared up and done away with the emotional veil in the family relationship and has reduced it solely to a relation of money' (Marx & Engels; 1998:119-120).

While it was the eldest member of the family in the Hemshin families who was the decision maker before, this right has transferred to the man in the nuclear family. In many families especially during the initial period of border's opening a male figure who is present at home very sparsely but still is an authority is said to appear. According to Kandiyoti (2011:31) the rural transformation that has caused the economic basis in the traditional families to unravel, has also caused a great dissolution within the relations of authority inside the world of men by diminishing the respect to the elders and causing the young married men to take the leadership role. According to her, the rural transformation has not changed the inequality that has already existed between genders, but it has changed the social stratification between men. The changes related to women were on the other hand were only the supplementary to the changes that were taking place in the relationships in the world of men. The elder members in the household losing their right of say has made the situation for the women in these families a little bit harder.

“You see before, in our place here your hair had to be braided, like you were to wear a skirt if you were a bride. If you are with your spouse and if

you were in the presence of a family elder you were not to speak with your spouse. It was not to be, you see it was considered as disrespectful. My grandmother from my father's side says, she has you know lived with the great grandfather she has left without saying one single word in the presence of her father-in-law for four years. They have moved to a separate house with my grandfather. And that was not because you see let our kid live in a different house you see they were seven siblings when there are other brides who were coming it was out of necessity. My grandmother from my father's side has left the house without speaking to my great granddad ”<sup>157</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

“Back than it was always under cover, it was secretive the engaged came in the night and entered the barn they waited there they would have conversations there everybody went their home. The contemporaries are arm to arm going to patisseries and some places. They would either come in from windows or meet at the gate of the barn”<sup>158</sup> (FH\_FG-1).

This dissolution that migration from village to the city has created, especially the situation that the husband has the say as the leader of the household and not the father-in-law or the father has caused new conditions of victimization for the women.

“There are those who are subject to violence at their homes, there is our neighbor for example we know that her spouse goes and beats her up.

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<sup>157</sup> “Hani bizim burada eskiden saçın örtülü olacaktı, işte etek giyecektin gelin isen. Eşinle birlikteysen aile büyüğünün yanındaysan eşinle konuşmayacaksın. Olmazdı yani saygısızlık olarak nitelendirilirdi. Babaannem diyor, dört yıl işte büyük dedeyle birlikte kalmış dört yıl boyunca kayınpederinin yanında bir tek kelime etmeden ayrılmış. Dedemle ayrı eve çıkmışlar. O da hani çocuğumuz ayrı evde otursun diye değil yedi kardeşler hani gelen başka gelinler olunca mecburen. Babaannem büyükdademle konuşmadan ayrılmış evden”

<sup>158</sup> “O zamanlar hep kapalıydı gizliydi nişanlılar gece gelirlerdi ahıra girer orada beklerlerdi orada sohbet ederlerdi herkes evine giderdi. Şimdiler kol kola pastanelere bir yerlere gidiyorlar. Ya pencereden gelirlerdi ya ahır kapısında buluşurlardı”

Why? Because she criticizes or because her kids are under hardship she says you are not bringing home money...As I am saying if the man has three cents of money in his pocket he does not plan anything related to his kids but he eats and drinks handsomely that night and experiences his relationship with his woman at the hotel too and he can come home like nothing has happened I mean”<sup>159</sup> (FH\_IW-3) .

The women are stuck between a family which says you can come with a divorce if you don't take your kids with you on the one side and a husband who cheats, uses violence, their lack of any kind of power in the economic sense did not give them any means to create solutions.

“There are still those who live because there are kids that is to say for their children for example, for the family to not get disrupted because she does not have any place to hold on to where will she go if she lets go”<sup>160</sup> (FL\_IW-20).

The family of a man who had an affair with a woman who came from the other side wanted to prohibit this situation but, the 'he is a guy, he will cheat' logic of the families have not changed what was experienced a lot ;

“We had a neighbor... he was married with his uncle's daughter...this family put some pressure his older brother stopped seeing them his mom rugged him away his brother did like this but no the guy does not come to the house does not care for his kid does not care about his spouse. This time he slits the relationships in totality. He doesn't come home at all

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<sup>159</sup> “Evde dayak yiyenler var komşumuz var mesela biliyoruz eşi gidip dövüyor. Niye? Eleştirdiği için ya da çocukları zor durumda hani para getirmiyorsun dediği için.. Diyorum ya adam üç kuruş para olsun cebinde çocuklarıyla ilgili bir şey planlamaz ama o gece bir güzel yer içer otelde kadınıyla da ilişkisini yaşar hiç bir şey olmamış gibi evine de gelebilir yani”

<sup>160</sup> “Hala daha çocuk var diye yaşayanlar var yani çocukları için mesela, aile bozulmasın diye tutunacak yeri olmadığı için bıraksa nereye gidecek”

either. But the family does not have anything that they can do after all. After all what did this is a man is a man he can cheat logic. In the end he accepted or they accepted to be more truthful and after he came the woman could not take it because of her pride the woman has taken off and went leaving her kid at three years old”<sup>161</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

But does the family of who does it not know? When it is asked do they not intervene another interviewee “They know but they think like “he is a man he does it” and you see “everyone who goes inside does it what is there to it”<sup>162</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

Man's being seen as an authority in the family and acceptance of what he does as “man's right” because of that has deepened the desperation of women within these relationships.

“It is bad you see, she cannot leave she has three children, how should she leave them and go. In our place here you see there is the thing of 'if you leave them and go we won't give your kids, you won't be able to see your kids'. She cannot leave and go, bears it out of necessity... His family also knows but they think like 'he is a man and he does that' and you see 'everyone who goes to the insides does that what is wrong with that’”<sup>163</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

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<sup>161</sup> “Bizim burada bir komşumuz vardı...dayısının kızıyla evliydi... bu aile baskı yaptı abisi görüşmedi annesi öteledi kardeşleri işte böyle yaptılar ama yok adam eve gelmiyor çocuğuyla ilgilenmiyor eşiyle ilgilenmiyor.Bu sefer tamamen ilişkileri koparıyor.eve de hiç gelmiyor.ama ailenin de sonuçta yapabileceği bir şey yok.sonuçta bunu yapan bir erkek erkektir aldatabilir mantığı.sonunda kabul etti ettiler daha doğrusu ve geldikten sonrada kadın gururuna yediremedi kadın çekti gitti üç yaşında çocuğunu bırakıp

<sup>162</sup> Biliyorlar ama "o erkektir yapar" işte "içeri giden herkes yapar ne var ki bunda" diye düşünüyorlar

<sup>163</sup> “Kötü işte, bırakamıyor üç tane çocuğu var, nasıl bırakıp gitsin. Bizim burada işte "sen bırakıp gidersen çocuklarını vermeyiz, çocuklarını göremezsin" şeyi var. Bırakıp gidemiyor, mecbur katlanıyor... Ailesi de biliyor ama "o erkektir yapar" işte "içeri giden herkes yapar ne var ki bunda" diye düşünüyorlar”

The existence of prostitution has brought extra pressures on the life of the local woman. The women are squeezed between “not looking like” the migrant sex worker and “not letting their husbands taken” by them. How they are going to dress, how they are going to dye their hair, they were obliged to do it in a form exactly opposite of the woman coming from outside -the sex worker-. They have felt the pressure of being groomed and pretty like that too at the same time.

“Even the fathers are doing a thing like this to their daughters. They are establishing pressure to say don't do those don't wear these don't do those. And for what but I know there is a life like this on the outside, you see when you dress up like this understand that it will immediately be perceived like this. He pressures more. Why because he knows of that disgusting filth he both experiences it inside and is aware of it but when you change a little bit it could be your dress that you wear or let's say it could be your hair or how you look even to that oh you do it like that be careful you will draw attention don't dye your hair blond. But why? Those who dye are the Russian women the street walkers see are you going to look like them”<sup>164</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

According to Kandiyoti (1997:7) arguing that the status of the women changes through their contribution to the production is a simple economic approach and the fundamental factors that determine the position of women within the family in Turkey are extra economic factors such as fertility, age, the immediacy of her position as a bride or being a mother-in-law. This does not mean that family

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<sup>164</sup> “Babalar bile kızlarına şöyle bir şey yapıyor. Onları yapma bunları giyme şunları yapma diye baskı kuruyor. E niye ama ben biliyorum dışarıda böyle bir hayat var, İşte sen böyle giydiğinde bak hemen böyle algılanacak. Daha fazla bastırıyor. Niye çünkü biliyor o dışarıdaki iğrenç çirkeflüğün hem kendi içinde yaşıyor hem de farkında bunun ama sen biraz değiştiğinde hani giyindiğin elbisendir saçındır başındır diyelim onu bile ha öyle yapıyorsun dikkat çekersin saçlarını sarıya boyama. E niye? Boyayanlar Rus kadınıdır hayat kadınıdır işte onlara mı benzeyeceksin diye”

relations are independent from economy according to her but this economy's interaction with the local structures should not be disregarded. However this 'simple economic' approach has been the fundamental factor in determining the position of woman within the family in our case. The women from Hopa has lost her right to say that she had, both in her relationship with her spouse and her continued relationship with the extended family because she could not join the economic activities that the border economy has created and the small amount of tea that she collects do not have an economic value. While these women, who harvest the tea, do the work in the field and garden, take on all the household chores while looking after the kids, were respected more still in the family, today the labor that they spend has turned into an 'invisible' state. What is more the fact that Georgian women are worked in the families the economic conditions of which are good in the jobs like taking care of the elderly and the children and cleaning of the house -and in addition, if the husband gets together with other women outside- has caused the woman to turn into a meaningless object inside the home. Because these women have made themselves with their 'duties and responsibilities' within the household. The lack of any economic or social mean to change this situation has imprisoned the woman inside the home, rendered her bound to her husband. According to Engels (1998:88) the women have become the number one servant with the transformation of the patriarchal family. The modern family of wife-husband is, overtly or covertly, built up on the universal slavery of women; in our day, within the family, men are bourgeois, women play the role of the proletariat.

#### **7.2.1.3. Divorce, Double Marriages, or Marriage with the `Other` Women**

The situation that has appeared immediately after the opening up of the border and that has affected the women and the family life the most has been the setting up of the men a new life with a woman who comes from the other side of the border in this side of the border or on the other side of the border. This has caused the

increase in divorce rate however a lot of women still felt that they had to accept this situation because of the reasons of multilayer gendered division.

“We have experienced periods with a lot of shake ups, it is not that we haven't experienced them but I would have been forced to take them all in and the only reason for this is never and ever because I will forgive my spouse in order to spare my child from having any stain on his name, for that I am a mother.. Oh would I have gotten divorced if I did not have a child, I would never and ever stay for another second I would have still gotten divorced even if I knew I would go hungry I would not stay but if I did not have a child”<sup>165</sup> (FL\_IW-29).

“A lot of families' order got disrupted after the opening up of the border. There had been divorces. As a result of affairs with the Russian women. There had been those who got divorced and married them or continuing a life of a lover with them. It has of course been bad in that regard. It has been the women who were oppressed here most of the times. It hasn't been good with regards to women. Many families got disrupted because of them. There had been ones who sold their cars, houses. Whatever was there that did not happen. Those who lost their jobs, those who went bankrupt”<sup>166</sup> (FH\_IW-14).

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<sup>165</sup> “Çok dalgalı dönemler yaşadık, yaşamadık değil ama sineye çekmek zorunda kalırdım bunun da tek sebebi asla ve asla eşimi affedeceğimden değil çocuğumun adına bir leke gelmemesinden, anne olduğum için... Ha çocuğum olmasa boşanırmıydım, asla ve asla bir saniye durmazdım aç kalacağımı bilsem yine boşanırdım kalmazdım ama çocuğum olmasaydı”

<sup>166</sup> “Sınır açıldıktan sonra birçok ailenin düzeni bozuldu. Boşanmalar oldu. Bunlarla ilişkileri yüzünden. Boşanıp onlarla evlenenler oldu veya dost hayatı sürdürenler oldu. O açıdan kötü oldu tabii. Burda ezilenlerde kadınlar oldu çoğu zaman. İyi olmadı kadınlar açısından. Birçok aile onlar yüzünden bozuldu. Arabasını, evini satanlar oldu. Neler olmadı ki. İşini kaybedenler, iflas edenler”

The phenomenon of double marriages is one of the most shaking examples that characterize the fractured family relationships. One of interviewee explain this situation very clearly with these words;

*“At a higher level than a Lazi lady marrying a Hemshin man the affair of marrying with the Russians have surfaced I mean. A guy from our spouse's village has a daughter which is the cutest thing in the world and his wife is a very beautiful woman, he got separated from his spouse and married with a Russian woman and came now he has kids and a family... There are also those who are there for example the guy got married already has a home here has a family there are also people who has a family who has kids on that side of the border that is to say there are people who have spouses on both of the sides too”* <sup>167</sup>(FH\_IW-3).

#### **7.2.1.4. Children**

The dynamics that have surfaced with the opening up of the border, have changed life and relationship perception of the youth, the generation that is recently growing up. At first because the money that was being earned was glimmering their sights this situation was not noticed at all, first the prostitution sector, the families who were shattered, double marriages and now the drug problem that is being spread out among the youth has brought the problem forward.

“Now the kids are experiencing so many problems that are so much more than what exist in other regions. There are things that they learn before

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<sup>167</sup> “Laz bir bayanın Hemşinli bir erkekle evlenmesinden daha yüksek bu oranda Ruslarla evlilik olayı çıktı yani. Bizim eşimin köyünden adamın dünyalar tatlısı bir kızı var eşi de çok güzel bir kadın ,eşinden ayrıldı ve Rus kadınıyla evlendi geldi şimdi çoluk çocuğu var... Orada olanlar da var mesela adam evlenmiş burada zaten bir yuvası var ailesi var sınırın o tarafında da ailesi olan orda çocukları olan insanlarda var hani her iki tarafta da eşi olan insanlarda var”

their time. They have seen the things that they should not have seen before their time. A generation we have said are not educated like that and this ones are getting educated way too fast. They meet with certain things very fast... The drugs come in from the border very easily, our friends the kids of our friends who we are close with have gone under treatment. The kids of our friends who have political culture were left without controls and went under treatment. They have used pills. These have been things that the border has brought. Those who were caught from the biggest drugs were from here from this gate. It is still going on too”<sup>168</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

The kids and the youth experience the deformation that the woman experiences in her relationships with her spouse and social environment both in their relationships with their parents and in their social environment.

“...you see if there is a person who is inclined towards a Georgian, and the environment knows about it they ask that kid like 'did your father come tonight, did he become whatever should I know?'. The kids act nervous like that either they want it or not, I wonder if our father is going to leave us? When he comes back to home one night the kid gets happy you know, by saying “my father has returned home he did not leave us”<sup>169</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

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<sup>168</sup> “Şimdi burda diğer bölgelerde olmadığı kadar sorun yaşıyor çocuklar. Zamansız öğrendikleri şeyler var. zamansız görmemeleri gereken şeyleri gördüler. bir kuşak bu şekilde eğitimsiz dedik bunlarda fazla hızlı eğitiliyorlar. Çok çabuk bazı şeylerle tanışıyorlar... uyuşturucu çok kolay sınırdan gidiyor, arkadaşlarımız samimi olduğumuz arkadaşlarımızın çocukları tedavi gördü. Siyasi kültüre sahip arkadaşlarımızın çocukları kontrolsüz kaldı ve tedavi gördüler. Hap kullandılar . Bunlar sınırın getirdiği şeyler oldu. En büyük uyuşturucudan yakalananlar burdan bu kapıdan oldu. Hala da devam ediyor”

<sup>169</sup> “...işte Gürcü'ye yönelik bir insan oldu mu, etrafta bildi mi o çocuğa soruyorlar işte "senin baban bu akşam geldi mi, yine bilmem ne mi oldu?". Çocuklar ister istemez böyle tedirgin davranıyor, acaba babam bizi bırakacak mı? Bir akşam eve geldi mi seviniyor yani çocuk, "babam eve geldi bizi bırakmadı" diye”

“Now you are weary to a kid who measures as much as a leg, I am making this up now when he disturbed an individual or the society in the street you were able to get scold at no matter whose kid it was. After all the people of this region know each other. You could send them home by pulling their ear. Now at twelve and one at night, beer bottles in their hands shouting and screaming in the streets, when you say something they answer you with either a knife or a gun. This time the balances are upset I say. There is a mafiatic air in the young who do not pursue an education. And this is something that the money brings you see”<sup>170</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

Especially during the initial times that the border was first opened the economical conditions create opportunities for the youth to earn money. These youth who have started earning money by carrying stuff with handbarrows, are participating in someway to this economic life today by waiting the tables in the entertainment sector.

“When we were kids we climbed on top of the cars and took copper there was a Kurdish Aleaddin here we used to go and sell it to him, we were doing this when we were kids look at the relation that we engaged I know that I have jumped to the other side of the bridge because I was going to get beaten up by someone I mean I was a kid of 11-12 years old after all. We have climbed up on top of the car there the drivers and such have seen they said “halt what are you doing” we have sled from there and went, we felt the need to hide think about it suddenly a criminal you enter a relation of crime I mean how could this perception not change you. For example in the most recent times it is said that if the kid cannot follow an education let

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<sup>170</sup> “Şimdi çekiniyorsun bacak kadar çocuğa, atıyorum şimdi sokakta bireyi veya toplumu rahatsız ettiği zaman eskiden kızabiliyordun kimin oğlu olursa olsun. Sonuçta bu yörenin insanı birbirini tanıyor. Kulağını çekip evine gönderebiliyordun. Şimdi gece on ikilerde birlerde, bira şişeleri ellerinde sokaklarda bağırımlar çağırımlar, bir şey dediğin zaman ya bıçakla ya silahla karşılık veriyor. Bu sefer dengeler bozuldu yani. Okumayan gençlerde bir mafya havası var. Bu da paranın getirdiği şeyler işte”

him do waiting at a restaurant and earn money, it is not important what they do there. The spreading of the abuse of drugs is being fed from there”<sup>171</sup> (MH\_IW-39).

The recently increasing smuggling of diesel, cigarettes and especially marijuana-heroin smuggling, increase in crime as a result of this bringing a mafiaization and the spread of usage of these material among the school kids come up as important problems. The fact that the young get inclined towards this type of smuggling business in order to earn money or set becoming a taxi cab or being a driver as an enviable goal and not pursuing university level education are mentioned as the disadvantages of the economic life created by the border.

“In the end we are not happy with this gate, we as the people of the region. Marijuana, heroin all the filth has entered. Our youth has lost their boundaries that is to say we thought of it in big cities. Even I have seen around our place here in the cars that were parking on the side of the streets. Marijuana has started to be smoked like cigarettes”<sup>172</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

The feelings of trust of the youth and children in these families who are shattered and their nervousness are rising. With the summary of one of our interviewees;

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<sup>171</sup> “Mesela biz çocukken arabaların üstüne çıkar bakır alırdık burada Kürt Alaeddin vardı gider ona satardık, çocukken yapıyorduk biz bunu girdiğimiz ilişkiye bak ben birilerinden dayak yiyeceğim diye derenin karşısına atladığımı bilirdim yani sonuçta 11-12 yaşında velettim. Arabanın üzerine çıktık orada şoförler falan gördüler "hoop ne yapıyorsunuz" dediler oradan kaydık gittik, saklanma ihtiyacı hissettik düşünsene bir anda suçlu suç ilişkisine giriyorsunuz yani bu algı seni nasıl değiştirmesin. Mesela son dönemlerde çocuk okuyamıyorsa garsonluk yapsın para kazansın deniyor, orada ne yaptığının önemi yok. Uyuşturucu kullanımının yaygınlaşması da oradan besleniyor.”

<sup>172</sup> “Sonuç itibariyle çok memnun değiliz bu kapıdan, yöre halkı olarak biz. Esrar, eroin bütün pislikler girdi. Gençlerimiz çığırından çıktı yani biz büyük şehirlerde düşünüyorduk. Bizim burada yol kenarlarında park halindeki arabalarda ben bile gördüm. Esrar, sigara gibi içilmeye başlandı”

“How should I say? The concept of family has ended, not taking responsibility had started in the families I mean let’s say in the household leaders in fathers, you see when one father does not come home, when he comes at one o'clock two o'clock you think about the condition of that kid. The kid gets affected either he wants to or not. I am making this up he took the money of tea and spent it in a night at Hopa. In restaurants discos and then with a woman... It hasn't been good that is to say our village life has ended”<sup>173</sup> (MH\_IW-11).

### 7.2.2. Women Imprisoned at Home

The prostitution which intensified with the opening up of the border has taken the social spaces that women used outside of the house from their hands. It is to such extend that the women have been rendered to a condition where they can't even satisfy their most fundamental social necessities outside of the house. The women have either lost the use of spaces including first of all the streets and places like movie theaters and cafes or had to limit the use of them within certain time frames.

“The women wary of being seen on the street now. By saying, who will see, what will they say. In fact the problem is their own if they realized it. Their husband gets involved in every sort of affair; they themselves still

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<sup>173</sup> “Nasıl diyim aile kavramı bitti, sorumsuzluk başladı ailelerde yani aile reislerinde diyelim babalarda, işte bir baba eve gelmediğinde, gece birde ikide geldiğini o çocuğun halini siz düşünün. Çocuk ta etkileniyor ister istemez. Babalar sorun yaşadı aileden koptu. Atıyorum çay parasını aldı bir gece yedi Hopa’da. Restoranlarda diskolarda sonra kadınla... İyi olmadı yani köy hayatımız bitti. Tamamen şey olduk yani nasıl diyim hani yazın köye gidip çay toplama, ineğimiz var tavuğumuz var orada ekonomik olarak kötü değildik yani çok rahattık. Şimdi her şeyi tükettiğimiz bütün gıdaları dışarıdan alıyoruz. Yani ben şöyle diyeyim yaklaşık 15 yıldır ticaret yapıyorum sanki her sene batıyormuşum gibi geliyor. Hani bir türlü borcumu bitiremiyorum”

get wary, fearful. It is to say there is the fear of what will they say”<sup>174</sup> (FH\_IW-14).

“There is no place for entertainment, and the ones that there are the places for Russians. We cannot go out in the evening and walk around in anywhere. you cannot tour around outside with ease. Because there are Russian affairs if there weren't. There was no such thing before them... You can go down there up until a certain hour but you cannot go down after a certain hour. For example let me walk with my daughter at a late hour let us go to the market place things like that do not happen. It is for sure that something will be stuck; they will say something, they will think that you are Russians. The life is hard in that regard, it is hard for the women”<sup>175</sup> (FL\_IW-21).

Like one of the interviewees have said, her older brother, father did not let her go out before, and then her husband, now she has no streets that she wants to go out left for her. And in the manner that it was expressed by someone else “Hopa is a small place, there are 3 streets you cannot use one of them during the day time too, and none of them after 8 in the evening” (FL\_IW-29). She cannot enter the Texas Avenue including the day time. Her getting out of the house after eight in the evening is both not appreciated and she really is disturbed. She cannot even get out with her spouse. She cannot stroll around the seashore all by herself if she does there happens to be talks, conversations about her.

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<sup>174</sup> “Kadınlar çekiniyo artık sokakta görünmekten. Kim görür, ne der, diye. Aslında sorun kendi sorunu bunun farkında olsa. Kocasını her halı yiyi, kendisi gene çekiniyo, korkuyo. Ne der korkusu var yani”

<sup>175</sup> “bir eğlence yeri yok, olanlarda rus ortamları. Akşam çıkıp bir yere yürüyemiyoruz. dışarda rahat dolaşamıyorsun. Rus olayları olduğu için olmasaydı. onlardan önce öyle bir şey yoktu... belli bir saate kadar inebiliyorsun ama belirli bir saatden sonra inemiyorsun. Mesela ben kızımınla beraber geç saatde yürüyeyim çarşıya gideyim gibi şeyler olmuyor. illa ki bir şey takılır , bir şey söylerler rus zannederler. yaşam o bakımdan zor , kadınlar için zor”

“This place has seemed like it was good with the opening up of the border but I think that it was good. We normally used to go out more comfortably before, now we can't. If you get your hair dyed differently or wear black immediately people look at you with the eyes of are you a Russian or Georgian”<sup>176</sup> (FH\_IW-12).

As such, the public life of women which was already restricted has been put under some sort of siege in practicality. In addition to all these the almost non existence of job opportunities for women has imprisoned them at their houses more.

“Women have it more difficult in small places. In here there is both the pressure of the social environment and the family pressure and the number of women working here in the economic sense is small. How should I say, when I say the number is small in here I mean for the women who live here, for example the guy is a civil servant and his spouse is a teacher I don't count them, the number of those working from the local women is small”<sup>177</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

“Living in Hopa as a woman that is to say it is difficult after 8 o'clock. It is not such a huge problem during the day time however we do not have a probability of going out and strolling around at the seashore. What is it you see at that hour the people on that subject are a little bit something they are not above that. Does a person go out at that hour? It is like because there are Russians, people who drink alcohol and the like. Going out an evening and sitting at a park with tea service, strolling around at the seashore with

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<sup>176</sup> “Burası sınırın açılmasıyla iyi gibi göründü ama bence iyi değildi. Biz normalde önceleri daha rahat sokağa çıkardık, şimdi çıkamıyoruz. Saçını değişik boyatsan ya da siyah giysen, hemen Rus musun Gürcü müsün, insanlar o gözle bakıyorlar”

<sup>177</sup> “küçük yerlerde kadınların işi daha zor. Hem çevre baskısı var burada hem ailevi baskılar var. Hem ekonomik olarak burada çalışan kadın sayısı az. nasıl diyim burada az derken hani burada yaşayan kadınlar için, mesela adam memurdur eşi de öğretmendir onları saymıyorum, yerli kadının çalışan sayısı azdır”

the family. There is no situation like this I mean, you go back to your house after 8, it is as if after 8 is an hour that the prostitution takes place”<sup>178</sup> (FH\_IW-4).

The women of towns live a more closed life than the women of rural regions, but behind this closedness there exists a richer social life according to Kandiyoti (2011:35). While this condition holds true for a woman who has spent whole or a large part of her life in the town, it remains inadequate to explain the condition of the women who had to migrate from a village to the town. At least the discourses of the women who moved from a village to the center that we have interviewed in this study was in the direction of how their social lives were restricted in the town. Here it is also necessary to consider the extra restrictions that having to live in a border town has created- like the use of space-. As one of the most simple points, the women who could have used all the spaces in the village, are in a condition where they can not use one avenue -the Texas avenue- at all. Other places and streets on the other hand could not be used after 8 o'clock.

As a result the life of the woman from Hopa is in a condition where it is squeezed more into the household with the opening up of the border. There is almost nothing else that they can do besides organizing house gatherings (*gün*) and visiting each others' houses. What is more, the connection of the many women who live in the urban center of Hopa with the village has been severed besides going for a week or two during the summer times. As a result, Hopa which was a place that the social life is more active and where the women used to be freer in the social activities compared to many places of settlement in Turkey as a result of its political history, has turned into a place where it is “not possible to have fun”

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<sup>178</sup> “Hopa’da yaşamak kadın olarak yani saat 8 den sonra zordur. Gündüz o kadar problem değil de gece bizim çıkipta sahilde gezmek gibi bir olasılığımız yok. Nedir işte o saatte insanlar da bu konuda biraz şey aşmış değiller. O saatte insan sokağa çıkar mı?, iste ruslar var, içki içen insanlar var falan diye. Bir akşam çıkipta ailece çay bahçesine oturma, sahilde gezme. Böyle bir durum yok yani. 8 den sonra evine çekiliyorsun. 8 den sonra fuhuşun olduğu bir saatmiş gibi”

especially for the young and middle aged women. To say it otherwise, a problem of “inactivity” among the women in Hopa has been formed.

“You clean the house, prepare the food. Than it is already 12. Between 12 and 3 I like hang out at some place, at a neighbor, or at a friend and come back. I sit at home, the kids arrive... We also do home gatherings (*gün*). That is to say there is nothing to do at Hopa. You are either going to work in the fields or you will stay at home and cook for your husband. That is all there is nothing else to it. Like you go and do a little bit of gossip from time to time, you can unload there a little bit and that is all there is you see”<sup>179</sup> (FH\_IW-7).

“What are they (the women who do not work) going to do, they prepare home gatherings for each other all the time. Home gatherings for breakfast, or else home gatherings for money. Although they have certain classes at public education you see, hand crafts, computer and the like. They go to those. What do many of them do you see they go to the home gatherings, they prepare home gatherings, they go to breakfast. It is like that I mean. They go to tea when it is the time for the tea. When the tea is finished they go and stay at the high meadows for a period. When they come back it is the same again”<sup>180</sup> (FH\_IW-4)

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<sup>179</sup> “Ev temizliyorsun, yemek yapıyorsun. Ondan sonra zaten 12 oluyo. 12’yle 3 arası bir yere böyle komşuya, arkadaşta takılıyorum geliyorum. Evde oturuyorum, çocuklar geliyor... Gün de yapıyoruz. Yani Hopa’da yapacak bir şey yok. Ya tarlada çalışacaksın ya da evinde oturup kocana yemek yapacaksın. Bu kadar başka da bir şey yok. İşte arada gidip biraz dedikodu yapıyorsun, orada biraz boşaltıyorsun iste o kadar”

<sup>180</sup> “Onlar (çalışmayan kadınlar) ne yapacaklar, gün düzenliyorlar habire birbirlerine. Kahvaltı günleri, yok para günü. Gerçi halk eğitiminde bazı kursları var işte, eliş, bilgisayar falan. Onlara gidiyorlar. Birçoğu ne yapıyo işte günlere gidiyorlar, gün düzenliyorlar, kahvaltıya gidiyorlar. O şekilde yani. Çay zamanı gelince çaya gidiyorlar. Çay bittikten sonra bir dönem yaylaya gidip kalıyorlar. Döndükten sonra gene aynı”

### 7.3. Victim or Beneficiary: The Complexity of Winning and Loosing

In order to understand the ways in which the women are adapting to the new dynamics that have surfaced following the opening up of the border in Hopa and elaborate upon the new vulnerabilities that have appeared, it is useful to look at Kandiyoti's concept of 'patriarchal bargain'. According to Kandiyoti (1988:285),

Like in all systems of hegemony, the systems of male hegemony have both protective and repressive elements and in every system women also have their own sources of power and autonomy. As a result women can be as attached to the systems that seem like they are oppressing them as much as men. However the "patriarchal bargain"s depend on the assumption that certain mutual expectations will be satisfied and the quality of these expectations may change from society to society.

Kandiyoti (2011:126) has 'suggested that in any given society that can display varieties related with class, cast and ethnic origin, the woman build their life strategies within the framework of a series of concrete necessities that originate from the system that they exist within and' has deemed 'the concept of *patriarchal bargain*' appropriate 'for these'. According to her patriarchal bargain;

Points out to the existence of a series of rules that regulate the gender relations which both genders agree and consent to but nonetheless one that can be resisted, redefined and reviewed. These patriarchal bargains, make a strong affect in determining both the subjectivities of women and the quality of the gender ideology in different contexts. At the same time they affect both the actual and potential forms of active or passive resistance of women. Most importantly, patriarchal bargains are not ahistorical or fixed; they are open for the renegotiation of gender relations or to the historical transformations that open up new spaces for struggle.

'The passive resistance' of women in these patriarchal relations that are changing 'takes the form of demanding their own share within the framework of this patriarchal bargain: in exchange for protection and security; obedience,

compliance and acceptance that the honor of men is in fact related to her own respectable behavior' (Kandiyoti; 2011:139).

The bargain of the woman from Hopa who are imprisoned within their houses has been in exchange of their husband's earning enough money to sustain the house, consenting his entrance to any form of trade that the border economy creates and accepting the results of this.

The rural transformation in the Black Sea Region which was mentioned before has deepened the stratification among men like Kandiyoti has said, this process of transition which has gained another dimension with the opening up of the border has at the same time deepened the inequalities that have existed between women and men. The existence of woman has started to shape according to the form of man's participation in the conditions that the border trade has created. If this woman is also a Hemshin woman these inequalities have deepened even more in this point where economy, gender and ethnicity intersect. She is deprived off the right to say that she obtained by participating in the production process or taking on the totality of this process in her rural life by being imprisoned within the houses in the city.

Even though the dissolution of the traditional patriarchal system based on the land has a potential for emancipating women according to Kandiyoti (2011:50), this remains as only a potential, "when women get separated from their traditional duties and start to have free time, rather than entering the society as productive members" they turn into "a symbol of prestige for men through conspicuous consumption". What is more' when women who are 'well groomed, well dressed, young' who come from the other side of the border are present in the location as sex workers like in our case the situation gets more difficult and a context of unequal competition appears. In this context it is almost impossible to become a 'symbol of prestige' for their men. She is required to redefine her own womanhood

in accordance with these migrant women and reconstruct it according to that. She is forced to either keep her husband by getting dressed more beautifully, looking more beautiful, responding more to her husbands sexual needs or to consent to sharing her husband with other women.

In their research on the women who work in house work Kalaycıoğlu ve Tılıç (1998:235), say that when handling the condition of woman in the work life evaluating it only within hegemonic relations of capitalism or patriarchy generally leads to discounting woman as an individual. According to Kalaycıoğlu and Tılıç woman as an individual is,

[I]t is the fact that the events, relationships and the context, she determines strategies that are appropriate for her own condition and that will make herself happier by remolding all the ideological affects in her own pot. What is more, this is a legitimation process that the individual experiences continuously, every day, every moment. This legitimation process, is the major factor in determining the position of woman in family and the society.

In order to live with the knowledge that her husband gets together with another woman everyday and to accept this, the woman from Hopa also needs a legitimation. While she is doing this sometimes by turning a blind eye, sometimes she legitimizes it by saying that she stays for her kids even despite knowing it. These discourses are the coping mechanism of the women with the conditions that the economic life in the border creates, a bargain that she makes with the patriarchy. On the one hand by migrating from the village to the city she has gotten rid of a lot of the hard work in the village, started living in better economic conditions however for this she has given up on her womanhood, a lot of the times she legitimate her existence in the household by sanctifying motherhood.

As Erman (1998:211) also states the rural to urban migration, is a phenomenon that is desired by the rural woman and which carries great expectations, a promise of a better, more comfortable life for them. The city for these women is;

[A] place where she can get away from the repression of her husband's family and relatives, establish her own family comprised of her children and husband, get rid of the hard work of the village, working like a 'slave' both in the house and on the fields, her husbands 'machismo' can soften up, what's more where her children will find the opportunity for education, the family can benefit from the health and other services of the city.

The Hemshin women who migrated from village to district center have also got free of a village life where they had to live together with their mother and father-in-laws, to both work in the tea gardens and the fields and do the household chores.

Back than we would get up when the call for prayer was sang and prepared [breakfast]. Do you what we used to have than? There was a headscarf like this we used to cover it like that, they have cautioned me when I got married my aunt and the wife of my uncle have tied a headscarf on my head. I didn't use to cover my head they said lets cover your head that morning it was almost like I became a bride that morning. If you worked until the evening you weren't able to speak, you weren't able to drink water in their presence, you would work and work but will not be able to drink water... It was like that you see. The girls today live very good and it is very good of them, they don't get oppressed but we were oppressed a lot”<sup>181</sup> (FH\_FG-1).

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<sup>181</sup> “Biz o zamanlar ezan okundu mu kalkardık [kahvaltı] hazırlardık. Eskiden bizde ne vardı biliyor musun? Böyle bir baş örtüsü vardı böyle örterdik, evlendiğimde bana tembih ettiler teyzemle amcamın karısı başıma tülbent bağladılar. Ben başımı örtmüyordum o sabah başımı örtelim dediler o sabah gelin olmuşum sanki. Akşama kadar çalışsan konuşamazdın, yanlarında su içemezdin, çalışacaksın çalışacaksın da su içmeyeceksin... Öyleydi işte. Şimdiki kızlar çok iyi yaşıyor çok da iyi yapıyor, ezilmiyorlar ama biz çok ezildik”

However the fact that they did not migrate to the big city, but to the district center has restricted their use of space, on top of that they had to deal with the problems that are created by being in the border district which we have mentioned above. Perhaps because of these problems that they have faced in the center they have frequently voiced the longing they had for the village life.

“The old was more beautiful, there was festivities there were girls, there were brides. Now brides have all gone to where their husband is, the kids have gone after them too now if there is a house here it is always wife and husband. There is no more bride or such anymore everybody has gone. The villages have become vacant. There used to be old ladies, brides, grandchildren”<sup>182</sup> (FH\_IW-28).

While the process of rural to urban migration contained positive and negative sides within itself and while those who have migrated experienced this process in its normal course, the existence of the border and the new conditions that it has created has intervened in this normal course, it has added new dimensions to the positive and negative aspects. This has created new experiences in the lives of both the Hemshin woman who has migrated to city from the village, the Lazi woman who was settled in the central Hopa and the migrant woman who comes from the other side of the border. No one has completely lost or won. The woman have especially obtained material gains that would especially ease up their lives, women have also benefited from the economic opportunities that the border created, even if it is through their spouses, in exchange for those things that she has sacrificed for her children or in order to continue the unity of her family. On the other hand they have been subject to new restrictions and status losses in their

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<sup>182</sup> “Eski daha güzeldi, şenlik vardı kızlar vardı, gelinler vardı. Şimdi gelinler hep kocası neredeyse oraya gittiler, çocuklarda peşine gitmişler şimdi burada varsa ev hep karı koca. Daha kimse gelin melin yok herkes gitti. İssız kaldı köyler. Eskiden kocakarılar vardı gelinler vardı torunlar vardı”

social lives. On the subject of these losses and the inequalities that they are facing there is no search for a solution other than certain individual interventions.

To sum up, as discussed above, with the border, women subjected to new victimhood have 'bargained with the patriarchy', shut their eyes to their husbands' affairs with another woman in return of livelihood and opportunities provided by the city and 'justified' this situation by the blessing of motherhood.

#### **7.4. The `Otherness` of the Migrant Women**

As we have mentioned above, while talking about the women who come from the other side of the border we have started from the perceptions of the men and women in the local space. It is necessary to give general information about these women before advancing to these perceptions. The reopening of Turkey-Georgia border is caused much more problems for the Georgians especially for women. Dudwick (2002; cited in Dursun, 2007) states that;

[W]ith the beginning of 1990s, the drop in family incomes, together with reduction of state-support and the introduction of fees, with the breakdown of health services means that poor children and youth are systematically excluded from opportunities that will allow them to compete on an equal basis with others. As the outcome of these, an increasing number of poor children had stopped going to school; many worked informally with their parents, while others worked independently as traders, goods handlers, or assistants, some doing heavy manual labour at young ages.

It is possible to talk about four different types of women who has come by crossing the border and participated in the economic life during the time that has passed since the opening of the border till today.

#### **7.4.1. Shuttle Traders**

The women who came as shuttle traders during the initial period, who passed the border with the amount of goods that they could carry, selling them and buying goods from Hopa, entered the economic life of the town both as 'sellers' and 'buyers'. These women have started to come with their families to sell the goods that they had in their houses. Eventually this turned into a part of suitcase trade which has started from the Black Sea shore and slipped towards Istanbul Laleli.

For the women at both sides of the border the opening up of the Sarp border gate has caused a serious change in their lives. The women at the other side of the border come to Hopa to sell whatever they had at their possession in the Russian markets, during the time when the border was first opened. These have consisted more of daily crossings. According to Dudwick (2002; cited in Dursun, 2007)

People tended to sell possessions in three stages; beginning with personal property such as jewellery received as wedding gifts, linen, clothing, or fine crystal; then furniture, appliances, and cars; and finally their homes. Sometimes Tbilisi women exchanged used clothing, costume jewellery, or perfume. For respondents with nothing left to sell, their own blood provided the final source of income.

In that process, women had become an important figure of the cross-border trade. They make themselves available at any time and in most places in the city center. As Dudwick states;

Although women have been harder hit by unemployment than men, their secondary position in the labour market has paradoxically made them more flexible and adaptable. Women, perhaps because they had multiple identities as workers, wives, and mothers, were able to adapt more successfully to the loss of formal employment than did men, whose social identity was more tightly bound to their role as breadwinner. They sought service sector jobs locally and abroad as housekeepers, nannies, and waitresses. Women had come to play an important role in trade, even

travelling abroad without their husbands and absenting themselves from their families, behaviour once considered unseemly.

On both sides of the Turkish - Georgian border, the victims of the chaos created by the border are women. On the Georgian side of the border, women, who choose to leave home and cross the borders to go in other countries, especially Turkey, for financial reasons are exposed to countless humiliations and dangers which they have to deal with on their own.

Some women travelled in small groups by bus, train, or air to the Russian Federation, Turkey, Hungary, Poland, and other Eastern European countries as often as once a month. Others traded inside Georgia. The wives of unemployed miners in Tkibuli came to Tbilisi, where they shared small rented rooms, to trade in produce. Their concern for the daily welfare of their children and family was a strong incentive to move into such unprestigious activities as street trade. The practice of returning from organized tourist trips abroad with suitcases full of scarce, foreign-produced commodities to sell expanded rapidly into an international "shuttle trade." Women, in particular, moved into this arena, ignoring the low social estimation of commerce as "speculation." Some engaged in prostitution locally, in new urban brothels, or abroad. Female traders had to overcome problems with police and organised crime (Dudwick,2002: cited by Dursun,2007).

After a while when they had nothing left and the Russian markets were closed the entertainment sector have surpassed all commercial activities. Thus, a lot of women have started to come to Hopa as sex workers.

#### **7.4.2. Those who have settled Through Marriage**

It is necessary to include both those who have received citizenship by arranging fake marriages and those who come with really marrying. Many of those who had fake marriages and received Turkish citizenship in Hopa could not stay at Hopa and settled in big cities in order to work.

According to the information that the population administer has given the number of those who came through marriage has started to decline after 2004. Because until 2004 those who married could become citizens in a day. For this reason during that period there was a lot of fake marriages according to the census bureau representative. He said that after 3 year residency requirement was put in place the ratio of marriages with women who come from the other side of the border has declined.

The women who have had a real marriage, had children and settled down experienced a lot of hardships because of the legal procedures or cultural differences. A Georgian female interviewee complained that she could not get her ID card even after fifteen years of marriage. These words of a Georgian woman who has married and settled down in Hopa shows the difficulties that she has faced:

I had a lot of difficulties for a two-three years. I was of course comparing. I was living this and it happened different here. But I still got used to it. The difference is very huge indeed. Now how should I tell I can't remember exactly but I have experienced difficulties. I have told myself but I did not make it evident to anyone. Now there is something for example, if it is not a very close relative I don't go to weddings. I cannot adapt now. There is Horon (the rhythmic, folkloric dance -translator's note), there is something, you sit down, how should I know. I stay away a little because of that”<sup>183</sup> (FG\_IW-9).

There are also various cultural difficulties in the process of getting married. The members, especially the older ones, in the families in which they come into through marriage try to claim them or try to have the society accept them by

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<sup>183</sup> “ Bi iki-üç sene çok zorlandım. Karşılaştırıyordum tabii. Ben bunu yaşıyodum burada farklı oldu. Ama gene de alıştım. Fark bayağı büyüktür. Şimdi nasıl anlatsam tam hatırlayamıyorum ama sıkıntılar çektim. Kendi kendime atlattım ama kimseye belli etmedim. Simdi bişey var mesela, çok yakın akraba olmasa ben düğünlere gitmiyorum. Ayak uyduramıyorum şimdi. Horon var, şey var, oturuyosun, ne bileyim. Ondan uzak duruyorum biraz”

giving them Turkish names. “My mother-in-law wanted Inci for example, I did not want it”. What is more a lot of them had to change their religions -become muslims- in order for the family to accept them.

What is more these women are experiencing difficulties similar to those experienced by the local women of Hopa, and in general continue a life that is imprisoned within the households, devoid of opportunities for work.

Experiences of those women who have settled through marriage can be defined as structural intersectionality. Crenshaw (1991; cited in Acar et., 2008:3) defines two different type of intersectionality namely political<sup>184</sup> and structural. Structural intersectionality occurs when inequalities and their intersections are directly relevant to experiences of people in society.

Accordingly, an immigrant woman’s experiences of domestic violence might differ from a native woman, in the sense that the former might face multiple oppressive mechanisms or discriminatory practices which hardens her experience and capacity to deal with the experience of domestic violence.

#### **7.4.3. Sex Workers**

A large amount of gender discussions in border studies are carried out over entertainment sector and women who are included in this sector as sex workers. Because “border zones have been widely reported as providing opportunities for illicit sex” (Donnan & Wilson, 1999:91). This situation is also relevant for our example too.

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<sup>184</sup> According to Crenshaw political intersectionality indicates how inequalities and their intersections are relevant at the level of political strategies. Political differences are most relevant here, as strategies on one axis of inequality are mostly not neutral towards other axes (1991; cited in Acar,et., 2008)

At the beginning, like all other sectors which have not settled/institutionalized an environment of chaos has reigned in sex industry. Negotiations were made on the street, abandoned houses and even cabins near the tea fields were used for prostitution. Women did not have security of life and they were subjected to widespread violence. There have been many cases of violence against these women such as abduction, rape and beating up.

“There were those who died. And there were also suicides that we could not guess what it was about. They have thrown out from the hotel balconies for 2-3 times I mean what kind of thing they had experienced we cannot know that either but after all these are the things that actually happened. There have also been ones who were murder through violence and most of the times they are unresolved cases”<sup>185</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

With the drawback of the prostitution from the streets during the day time and establishment of certain rules, albeit informal, for its operation it has become easier for it to be normalized and accepted.

“If it is a lady who comes from there they had an image like this: it is certain that she was seen as a street walker in this way of life they were looked at like that at the very first in the streets everyone and I looked like that too. Now these businesses have changed compared to the older times now no body cares about it. It seems to me like they have gotten accustomed to it or that initial hunger has ran out. Now that kind of life start after 11 12 of the night”<sup>186</sup> (MH\_IW-1).

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<sup>185</sup> “Ölenler oldu. bir de ne olduğunu tahmin edemediğimiz intaharlar oldu. Otel balkonlarından atılar 2-3- defa yani nasıl bişey yaşadılar onuda bilemeyiz ama sonuçta fiili olan şeyler bunlar. şiddetle öldürülenlerde oldu çoğu zamanda kim vurduya gidiyor üstelik”

<sup>186</sup> “Oradan gelen bir bayansa şöyle bir imaj vardı: kesin bu hayat içerisinde bir hayat kadını olarak görülüyordu ilk başta böyle bakılıyordu sokakta herkes bende bakardım. şimdi bu işler eskiye nazaran değişti şimdi kimsenin umurunda değil. Alıştılar gibi geliyor bana ya da tükendi o ilk açlıklar. Şimdi o yaşam tarzları gecenin 11inden 12sinden sonra yaşanıyor”

Today the entertainment sector which is said to keep Hopa on its feet continues thanks to these women. As we have mentioned before, even though we could not obtain any information about their numbers or in which ways they come into the country and what kind of network they have here, it is possible to reach some evaluations from what some of our interviewees told.

“Now I can't have much interaction with the women who work at the hotel anyways because they don't have much business with me in any case either. In general, they have a leader two ladies she comes for example buys and goes that's it. When I say leader; the women who bring them here you see the women who market them... I don't know if this exists in every hotel but I know one two people they work under their orders. There is one for example she rented a house with 3-5 rooms, she feeds and looks after the girls there too she found clients for herself and takes money from them”<sup>187</sup> (FH\_IW-31).

These women have a strategic partnership with the owners of places - owners of hotels, restaurants or bars- no matter if they have come and worked on their own or if they come through the mediation of a network. It is such that these women need a place in order to earn money, meet their clients and work in an environment which is relatively safer. The owners of places on the other hand are earning money over these women who work illegally.

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<sup>187</sup> “Şimdi zaten otellerde çalışan kadınlarla öyle ben çok fazla muhatap olamıyorum çünkü onların da zaten benimle çok fazla işi olmuyor. Genelde onların bir başı var iki tane bayan o mesela gelir alır gider o kadar. Başı dediğim; onları buraya getiren işte pazarlayan kadınlar... Her otelde var mıdır bilmiyorum ama ben bir iki kişi tanıyorum onların emri altında çalışıyorlar. Biri var mesela ev tutmuş 3-5 odalı, kızları da orada besliyor bakıyor müşteri bulmuş kendide onlardan para alıyor”

“Now the pimp of Hopa, the first pimp is .... but they have not done pimping in the sense of pimping. They have done it in the sense of space it is a cleaner thing. They have opened the hotel and said come and do your business and give me your money. They have said take a clean shower, have a drink pay for the money of the drink use my bed do your business and go”<sup>188</sup> (MH\_IW-39).

“The guy brings it himself for example I am a hotel owner or whatever else I am in that hotel now I go and bring the women. The women stay at this hotel. After all the guy earns money over that”<sup>189</sup> (MH\_IW-3).

The situation of “outlet” that appears in the ethnicized division of work life is also related to the sex industry in Hopa. The women who are younger and more beautiful and will have others earn a lot of money are sent/taken to big cities when they cross the border. The women who stay in Hopa are on the other hand those who are older, who have families/kids in their own country that they have to look after, those who are cheaper. That is to say “with defects”, “left on hand”. With the description of a shopkeeper in this street;

“Among the old people those who are 45-50 years old come too, the young segments comes too, there are also those who are 70. And that is because everybody has their client according to their own level that is the reason for it... There are generally Azerbaijanis and Georgians here we do not

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<sup>188</sup> “Şimdi Hopa'nın pezevengi, ilk pezevengi .....dir ama onlar pezevenklik anlamında pezevenklik yapmadı. Mekân anlamında yaptı daha temiz bir şey. Oteli açtı gel işini gör dedi bana paramı ver dedi. Temiz banyonu yap, içkini iç içtiğin içkinin parasını öde yatağımı kullan işini gör ve git dedi”

<sup>189</sup> “ Adam kendisi getiriyor mesela ben otel sahibiyim yada o otelde başka neysem artık gidiyorum kadınları getiriyorum. Bu otelde kalıyor kadınlar. Sonuçta onun üzerinden para kazanıyor adam”

come across Russian much. Here is like the first stop in any case”<sup>190</sup>  
(FH\_IW-26).

There are no problems as long as the shopkeepers are benefiting from the border; just as it is like with the shopkeepers on this street. They are earning money from the business that is worked around here and are happy with the existence of the border.

“There are beauty shops in Hopa in a serious sense, now the women are groomed it is marketing after all she will market herself that is to say after all these women go to the beauty shops everyday that is to say this is their income. They do shopping cloths dresses hair and the looks etc.”<sup>191</sup>  
(FH\_IW-3).

#### **7.4.4. Domestic Workers**

Recently a new phenomenon appeared, that of women crossing the border for domestic labor i.e. cleaning, elderly and child care. The number of women working in the houses of Hopa is more than a few. While some are hired as tutors for music classes for the children, many are employed in cleaning and elderly care and many of them are living within these houses. This has been a situation that has enabled for the softening of the perceptions of these women. Those who come from the other side of the border are not that much of an “alien” for the people of Hopa anymore.

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<sup>190</sup> “Yaşlılardan 45-50 yaşında olanlarda geliyor, genç kesimde geliyor, 70 olanda var. O da herkesin kendi seviyesine göre müşterisi var bundan kaynaklanıyor... burada genellikle Azeriler ve Gürcüler var Ruslarla pek karşılaşmıyoruz.. Zaten ilk durak burası gibi”

<sup>191</sup> “Hopa’da ciddi anlamda kuaför var artık, şimdi bakımlı kadınlar pazarlama sonuçta kendini pazarlayacak yani sonuçta bu kadınlar her gün kuaföre gidiyor yani getirisi budur. alış veriş yapıyorlar üst baş giyim kuşam saç başı vs”

“There are a lot of those who come as care workers for the elderly. There was one in our district too my aunt was ill she was coming and looking after her, and she was such a good person too. The way she spoke, the way she would sit down, they were more different in a cultural sense”<sup>192</sup> (FL\_IW-25).

The changing global economy has created what Maria de la Luz Ibarra (2000, cited in Mendoza, 2009) has termed the “new domestic labor” in which the structure of social reproduction has been transformed. In the past, employing a paid household worker was a luxury afforded by solely the upper-class. However, due to the availability of low-waged immigrant labor, many middle class households can now afford housecleaning, full-time nannies, or elderly care workers. Women working in this occupation are also more diverse than in the past, with many educated women fleeing countries with few employment opportunities to work in domestic service.

“There are also ladies who do dish washing at the restaurants cleaning at the hotels here but generally you know let me say ninety percent of them come for prostitution. My spouse also has an hotel but my spouse does not operate it he has rented it out there are cleaning ladies there they do the cleaning up of the hotel but after all they stay at that hotel but they prostitute themselves on the one hand. Those who come let’s say there are ten ladies two out of that are clean they have really come here to look after their own families but eight of them came here both to look after their family you know as I said she seems like a cleaning worker but also does prostitution too the rest is like that I mean”<sup>193</sup> (FH\_IW-3).

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<sup>192</sup> “yaşlılara bakıcı olarak gelenler çok var. Bizim mahallede de vardı teyzem rahatsızdı gelip ona bakıyordu, çok da iyi bir insandı. Konuşması oturması, kültürel olarak daha farklılardı”

<sup>193</sup> “Burada lokantalarda bulaşıkçılık otellerde temizlikçilik yapan bayanlarda var ama genelde hani yüzde doksanı diyim fuhuş için geliyorlar. Eşimin de oteli var ama eşim çalıştırmıyor kiraya vermiş orda temizlikçi bayanlar var otelin temizliğini yapıyorlar ama sonuçta o otelde

The way in which a man from Hopa praises the border is in fact an affirmation of the women's social status and men's expectations, double burden of women.

“However today everybody in every household who has an elderly a Russian lady and a Georgian lady works. I mean it is our ladies who had taken this till their own houses. They take in until their own houses in order to look after the elderly and than they have them sleep in the night. There is one even in my home, than why are they complaining than let them sort those jobs themselves and let Russians not come. It is our ladies who work the Russians because they have them work at home they make them look after their mothers and fathers, they work them at the tea work them in cleaning duties. In these house duties you know that it is the ladies who take care of that in Turkey, it is also the ladies who take her in in this house than why are they complaining? You are both inviting, and make them work, and complain about it. The one that you have working in the house is good and is the one that strolls around on the street that is bad?”<sup>194</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

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kalıyorlar ama bir taraftan da fuhuşta yapıyorlar. Gelenler on bayan var diyelim bunun ikisi temizdir gerçekten kendi ailesini geçindirmek için gelmiştir buraya ama sekizi hem ailesini geçindirmek için gelmiştir buraya hani dediğim gibi temizlikçi olarak görünüyordur ama fuhuşu da yapar gerisi öyledir yani”

<sup>194</sup> “oysa bugün herkes her yaşlısı olan ev de bir Rus bayan bir Gürcü bayan çalışıyor. Yani kendi evlerine kadar bunu sokaclar bayanlarımız. Evdeki yaşlılara bakmak için kendileri sokuyorlar akşamda yatırıyorlar. Benim evimde bile var, o zaman neden şikâyet ediyorlar ki madem o işleri kendileri çözsün Ruslar gelmesin. Rusları çalıştıran bizim bayanlar çünkü evde çalıştırıyorlar annelerine babalarına baktırıyorlar, çayda çalıştırıyorlar temizlik işlerinde çalıştırıyorlar. Bu ev işlerinde biliyorsunuz Türkiye'de bayanlar ilgilenir, bu eve de onu sokaclar bayanlar e niye şikâyet ediyorlar? Hem davet ediyorsun, hem çalıştırıyorsun, hem şikâyet ediyorsun. Evinde çalıştırdığın düzgün de sokakta gezen mi kötü?”

## **7.5. Locals` Perceptions of Migrant Women**

### **7.5.1. Men`s Perceptions**

Özgen (2006) in her article where she focuses on the sex workers in Igdir names this phenomenon 'trans border Prostitution'. In Ozgen's interviews men and women who come from across the border described this situation "with words filled with a bitter mockery, disdain and scorn" which is "towards ownership of the women". The women who are involved in prostitution are always "the women of the other" (2006:126). For the Kurds these women are Turkish, for Turkomans and Azerbaijanis they have been Russian or Dersimite that is to say these women have been scorn by referencing their nationality. In Hopa however, even though some similar emphases were made in some of our interviewees, many interviewees especially our male interviewees' reference point has not been nationality. What is more it is very clear that the men from Hopa, in contrast to those in Igdir respect these women and see them as superior from their own women with their education, looks and how they dress.

"Their women are much more cultured than our women. Let me say that from the beginning. They buy bread from here and I still don't know one of them who leaves without thanking. "Thank you". All of them. And ours are 'give the bread', 'fill it in the bag'. What I mean is their level of culture is higher than ours'. Oh okay maybe they have fallen into that business but we don't know how they have fallen. Most of them are highly educated I mean. Don't regard that they are that thing I mean. Maybe they are doing this business but most of them are cultured people they are. What do I say they buy bread I have still not know a single one of them of my clients leaving without thanking. In general it is always the lady clients who come here for example they buy bread, they always speak very kindly I mean.

'Thank you', 'we are glad'. For example there are ladies who stay in the above floor, they sell goods. We are like friends I mean. There is nothing that says they should always be looked at in that regard I mean. And she I don't know much earns her keep that way I mean"<sup>195</sup> (ML\_IW-8).

The approach towards these people generally provides a mixture of a feeling of uneasiness and admiration.

“With the border a Natasha phenomenon have entered into Turkey, if you ask me culture wise Black Sea's culture has changed. They were kinder people even though they are called Natasha all of them consisted of people who are educated, culture wise they were more cultured than us. I don't talk these about the Georgians I talk these about white Russians. You see with their clothing, the way they stroll, the way they sit down and stand up there had been issues that they had constituted an example... “There is no such thing as no, you see the Natasha came and disrupted the culture. The people who come here are people who are cultured a lot, even the people who come to work are cultured they all know a foreign language besides their own language. On the other hand knowledge of foreign language in Turkey is almost nonexistent”<sup>196</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

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<sup>195</sup> “Onların kadınları bizim kadınlardan çok kültürlü. Onu söyliyim baştan. Buradan ekmek aırlar daha bir tanesinin teşekkür etmeden gittiğini bilmem. "Teşekkür ederiz"..Hepsi. Bizimkilerde " ver ekmegi", "doldur torbaya" . Yani onların kültür seviyeleri bizimkilerden yüksek. E tamam belki o yola düştüler ama ne şekilde düştüklerini bilemiyoruz. Çoğu da tahsilli yani. Bakma şey olduklarına yani. Belki bu işi yapıyorlar ama çoğu kültürlü kişiler onlar. Ne diyorum ekmek alırlar teşekkür etmeden daha bitanesi müşterimin gittiğini bilmem. Genelde hep bayan müşteriler gelir buraya mesela ekmek alırlar, hep kibarca konuşurlar yani. "Teşekkür ederiz", "memnun olduk". Mesela üstte kalan bayanlar var, onlar mal satıyorlar. Biz arkadaş gibiyiz yani. İlla o gözle bakılacak diye bişey yok yani. O da artık bilemiyorum ekmeğini o şekilde kazanıyor yani”

<sup>196</sup>“Sınırla birlikte bir de Nataşa olayı girmiş oldu Türkiye'ye, bana soracak olursanız kültür olarak Karadeniz'in kültürü değişti. Onlar daha kibar insanlardı her ne kadar da Nataşa dense bile hepsi okumuş insanlardan oluşuyordu, kültürel açıdan bizden kültürlüydüler. Bunları Gürcüler için bahsetmiyorum beyaz Ruslar için bahsediyorum. İşte giyimiyle, gezişiyle, oturuş kalkışıyla örnek oldukları konular olmuştur...“Yok, işte Nataşa gelmiş kültürü bozmuş diye bir

“Many of those ladies are university graduates, with their culture and the way they dress up... But how was it especially our ladies who were living at Black Sea in the past our ladies do all the work of the house, including me, my preparing the food, my harvesting the tea -though we do not have tea however- the ladies harvest the tea, ladies fire the stove ladies excuse me for saying look after the cattle, ladies are tired ladies there is no time for make up or dressing up putting on a perfume. He has seen a pretty lady a lady with perfume he has went after her...”<sup>197</sup> (ML\_IW-19).

The discourse that the women of Black Sea region used to not care for themselves, gain weight by indulging themselves with food, bearing children and then becoming uglier, but after seeing the women who came from outside they had started to care more for their appearance in order to draw their husbands back home is expressed by everyone. A male interviewee has summarized this cruel point of view as such;

“Our spouses have changed too it does not work with only eating and eating and getting bigger at home. Our spouses have become more caring towards their husbands they have started to become more beautiful in order not to let them get taken away. Of course there is also this you see this has become a kind of competition. That is to say there is no one eating the kale and sitting in the corner let me plant two corns and collect tea, there is no

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şey yok. Buraya gelen insanlar gayet kültürlü insanlar, çalışmaya gelen insanlar bile kültürlü hepsinin bir yabancı lisanları var kendi lisanlarının haricinde. Oysaki Türkiye’de yabancı lisan yok denecek kadar az”

<sup>197</sup> “O bayanların çoğu üniversite mezunu, kültürlü giyimiyle kuşamıyla... Ama neydi geçmişte Karadeniz’de yaşayan bilhassa bayanlarımız bütün evin işlerini bayanlarımız yapar, bende dâhil olmak üzere yemek yapmam çay toplamam -bizde çay yok gerçi de- çayı bayan toplar, sobayı bayan yakar affedersiniz ineğe bayan bakar, bayan yorgun olur bayan makyaj veya giyinmeye parfüm sıkmaya zamanı yok. Gördü güzel bayanı parfümlü bayanı gitti peşine...”

life like that, I have a kid my husband would not throw me out that does not exist either that has also finished”<sup>198</sup> (MH\_IW-2).

A critical approach towards the economic conditions that force these women to prostitution can be felt in the interviews, which does not necessarily correspond to a formation of political consciousness. These women commonly are not perceived as that “bad”. The common discourse of almost everybody is in the form of “They are human too”, “There is so much poverty on the other side, and they are doing this job out of necessity”. This pseudo humanist discourse on the other hand is no different from naming the prostitutes in brothels “kader kurbanları [victims of ill fortune].”

“I have seen people who were crying, well educated, selling their bodies for money. She said it herself I felt so torn apart she is very cultured educated there is no money in the country she lives in. I have witnessed a lot that they had cried to anyone who treated them with a little bit care. They don't do it because they want to”<sup>199</sup> (ML\_IW-10).

Despite male interviewees acknowledge economic difficulties that force these women to prostitution, they stress neither labor nor class but “civilization.” This perhaps is no surprise for Turkey where throughout the republican history modernization and westernization had been the dominant discourse. An age old clash between modernization and tradition in the minds of the locals create this awkward desire for the Western culture.

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<sup>198</sup> “Eşimizde değişti sade yiyip yiyip evde şişmeyle de olmuyor. Eşlerimiz kocalarına karşı daha ilgili oldu güzelleşmeye başladılar kaptırmamak için. Tabii bu da var yani bu da bir rekabet oldu. Yani kara lahanayı yiyip kenarda oturan iki tane mısır ekiyim çay toplayayım öyle o hayat yok çocuğum var benim kocam atmaz o da yok o da bitti”

<sup>199</sup> “Ağlayan, eğitilmiş, para için bedenini satan insanlar gördüm. Kendisi söyledi içim parçalandı kültürlü okumuş yaşadığı ülkede para yok . Biraz şefkatli davranan herkese de ağladıklarına çok şahit oldum. İsteyerek yapmıyorlar”

“Now we here they are called Russian ladies but go and interview them once, some say that I am a doctor, a teacher. For example there was a lady at my house my father is ill so that she was looking after him she said I am a language teacher there. They don't have anyone who did not have an education, not like ours”<sup>200</sup> (ML\_IW-24).

In most of the cases this “civilization” emphasis in the male approach can enter into an ugly articulation with sexism. By emphasizing that the women are educated and cultured, the men say that they are superior to their own women.

“When you look at it as a man, when you interact with a Georgian lady, you see that there are mountains of differences with the lady at home. Actually they are the same but she seduces you with her lipstick, makeup, clothing and such. He could not find what he wanted as a guy, from their spouses, mates... When he sees it on her, this seduces him. For example a woman from Hopa and a woman from Istanbul will get married with an arranged marriage, but they want the same guy. Now when the guy goes to a bakeshop, he will first look at the way the girl from Istanbul eats the cake, the way she holds the fork... Than he will look at our girl from Hopa, the girl will immediately take the cake in her hand, or she will salivate I don't know what...”<sup>201</sup> (ML\_IW-6).

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<sup>200</sup> “Şimdi biz burada Rus bayanları diyorlar ama git onlarla bir röportaj yap, bazısı diyor ki ben doktorum, öğretmenim. Mesela benim evde bir bayan vardı babam rahatsız da ona bakıyordu ben orada dil öğretmeniym dedim. Bunların okumayanı yok, bizimki gibi değil”

<sup>201</sup> “Bir erkek olarak baktığında, gürcü bayanla muhatap olduğun zaman, evdeki bayanla dağlar kadar fark olduğunu görüyorsun. Aslında aynılar ama rujuyla, makyajıyla, giyimiyle falan o sizi cezp ediyor. Erkek olarak istediği şeyi bulamamış, eşinden, dostundan... Onda görünce, bu da onu cezp ediyor. Mesela bir Hopalı birde İstanbullu iki genç kız görücü usulü ile evlenecekler, ama aynı erkeğe talipler. Şimdi erkek bir pastaneye gittiğinde, önce İstanbullu kızın pastayı yiyişine, çatalı tutuşuna bakacak... Birde Hopalı kızımıza bakacak, kız hemen pastayı alacak eline, ya da salyası akacak bilmem ne...”

In a country where women die every day in honor killings, and sex work is honorless, almost all of the men interviewed in Hopa speak very highly of the immigrant women who work as sex workers. There are a couple of reasons for that: perhaps they felt that they have to speak more carefully since a female interviewer speaks to them. But, beyond this, none of the male interlocutors say a bad word about these women; instead they define them “who extend human’s life” (ML\_IW-24). One does need to look for other reasons underlying such perception. These men could ask from the immigrant sex workers things they do not want their women do. Also, they refer to these women well-educated saying that these women are university graduates or from prestigious professions in their home countries. In that respect, it is plausible to say that having women do things they want, these men perhaps display their manhood. The male interviewees do not even try to hide that they have relationships with these women, often mentioning that their ‘education’, ‘beauty’ and ‘manners’ are indisputable. To get such a woman might have made them to feel a ‘state of superiority’. Of course, their admiration of these women is a positive thing, but the same men speak of their women thoroughly insulting. They describe their wives that “they eat a lot, gain weight and do not take care of themselves”.

### **7.5.2. Women`s Perceptions**

The probability of these women to come across each other in a public space is very low as a result of the local women being imprisoned in the house and the women who come from outside imprisoned in the hotels. However the local women see the affect of the relationships that the men in her family (her spouse, father or son) establish with these women in every field of their daily lives.

The situation of local women within the family is being reshaped over the relationships that are established with these women, as we have mentioned above.

Even despite this, a large majority of the women from Hopa say that they do this job “because they have to” by emphasizing the desperateness of these women.

“I mean the people who came from there were not welcomed kindly at first because of that prostitution business. A person not even without wanting to you can protest I mean. Because they were not nice things many families have shattered, there were many situations. But I mean their too, who would want to do this job anyway, it is because they really need it that they come here. Sometimes a person thinks about it, that she was forced to it. That the economic situation there is very bad”<sup>202</sup> (FH\_IW-4).

It can be said that among the most important tool for the woman who came from the other side of the border to integrate into the life in Hopa has been marriage. Marriage of a migrant woman with a local Muslim man is perceived as a kind of purification among the women even if she had done prostitution before. Relationships are established with them and they act as neighbors.

“...if they were my neighbors I would act as neighbors but there are none in this environment. Why wouldn't I do anyway they are also a human beings after all not all Russians are in a bad course there are also ones who are good”<sup>203</sup> (FL\_IW-21).

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<sup>202</sup> “Ya ordan gelen insanlar ilk şu fuhuş olayları yüzünden çok hoşta karşılanmadı. İnsan ister istemez tepki de gösterebiliyorsun yani. Çünkü hoş şeyler değildi çok yuva yıkıldı, çok olaylar yaşandı. Ama yani onların bu işi yapmayı kim ister ki, onların gerçekten ihtiyacı var ki buraya geliyor. Bazen insanın aklına geliyor, mecbur kalmış diye. Oranın ekonomik durumu kötü diye”

<sup>203</sup> “...komşum olsa ben yaparım komşuluk ama bu çevrede yok. Neden yapmayayım ki oda sonuçta bir insan bütün ruslar kötü yolda değil iyi olanlarda var.”

## **Conclusion**

As Polese (2012:26) situates, “more than their role, it may be interesting to concentrate on the function of borders, and living in borderlands, and do this in a given context, rather than globally.

This would mean concentrating on their narratives rather than their real function and how people perceive and report them. It is of course not possible to handle the border economy over the relationships of two countries. As we see in the example of Hopa, this economy appears as a part of a wider network of relationships, global economy and the transformations in the political arena of world. However what we have focused on has been the perception and experiences of the people who have participated in this economy.

We have elaborated how the inter group relations of gender identities have been reshaped around border economy over their accounts and discussed the gendered structure of border regions. In the point where the border economy has intersected with gender in Hopa new inequalities for women have surfaced. The Lazi and Hemshin women who have been subject to a common scorn and disdain vis-a-vis the women who come from outside even though they have different ethnic identities, has not approached each other even despite this. It continued to be the “other” of each other and even continued to develop new othering discourses that suits this new context. While the local women is imprisoned in the context that the entertainment sector has created, the women who come from outside have turned into subjects of the same sector, a commodity of it over which bargains are attempted and they is imprisoned with the hotels.

## **CHAPTER VIII**

### **CONCLUSION**

This study is designed to understand the daily life practices of the people living in border regions and their new dynamic economic relations due to the existence of such a border. The main focus of this thesis is how different ethnic groups and gender have experienced this process and how intra and inter-group relations are reshaped around border economy. The case of Hopa, located on the Turkey-Georgia border is explored and the economic and social dynamics of this region are analyzed.

In this thesis, the research is based on interviews which are conducted in different times in central Hopa, and in Sarp border town. In the first stage of the field study, in the Sarp border town, interviews with five inhabitants of the region who are above 80 years old and who know about changes of the legal status of Sarp border gate are conducted. The history of Sarp border gate is defined according to these oral history interviews. In the main field work, 32 interviews with women and men from different ethnic groups are conducted in central Hopa. These interviews indicate that the new dynamics that have emerged with the border economy intersect with ethnicity and gender and have created new inequalities in these intersection points or deepened the existing inequalities. For this reason intersectionality perspective is used in the analysis and evaluation of the interviews.

Border economy is theorized in this study as including types of economic activity unique to itself and as a phenomenon which does not only affect the economic life in the regions where it exists but also affects the social and cultural life of those regions. The accounts of how the phenomenon of the border economy has appeared in Hopa and what kind of a developmental trajectory it followed along with its condition today is mostly accomplished by the interviews conducted with the locals. The effects of this economy can be most apparently seen in the daily practices of the ethnic groups and gender groups. These new dynamics within these groups as well as their inter group relations, their family relations and the process of their participation in the work life are analyzed from within the literature on ethnicity and gender intersecting with border studies.

As discussed in the background of this study, with the `postmodern approach` to the border, the border regions are defined as “third space” and those living in this spatiality are viewed through identity construction processes with their specific cultures. Thus, concepts such as gender ethnicity, race and sexual identities become more salient in the social sciences. Also, during this period, the concept of intersectionality introduced by the famous feminist scholar Crenshaw (1991) has come to find a place in border studies and the inequalities appearing in the intersections of different identities become a significant analytical tool. In this study, this analytical tool is used to understand the changes in and intra group relations of ethnics and gender.

In Hopa, Lazis and Hemshins are the two most dominant and populated ethnic groups in the economic, social and cultural life of Hopa. Despite the fact that they have lived together for hundreds of years, there have always been boundaries between them. This separation has penetrated in every aspect of their lives, they have not lived in the same places, they have not done the same jobs and they have refrained from cultural interaction as much as possible. For this reason marriage between two groups has been almost nonexistent. However, trade became one of

the main forms of interaction, both in positive and negative manner between these two groups from past to the present. Hemshins migrated to central Hopa in 1960s for economic reasons from the villages in the mountain regions. Even though they were shooed away by the Lazis, as declared in the interviews, they had built economic relations with Lazis through commercial buying and selling activities. After the opening up of the border, Lazis began opening luxury hotels whereas Hemshins turned out to be the managers of the discos in those hotels. Even though they were doing business in different fields, these fields had somehow completed each other. However, this was not enough to abolish social and cultural boundaries.

Despite the fact that border economy created economic relations between different ethnic groups, who are living in close proximity to each other, one of the main findings of this study indicates that, stereotypes are not eliminated. Indeed, some old prejudices are confirmed and new ones are formed among these groups. The forms in which Hemshins and Lazis have participated in the business life with the border economy, has caused an unequal and hierarchical structure which continues from the past to the present and deepen in different forms. The economic activities that Hemshins are engaged in are mainly in the entertainment sector, like management of hotels, cafes and discos. Such jobs on the other hand, are labeled as 'second class' and 'inferior' in Hopa, mainly by the Lazis due to the cultural understanding. Therefore, even though Hemshins have become more powerful economically and have started to have a say in the political life of Hopa, they have lost prestige because of their engagement in such jobs. Such low prestige is also attributed to the families of Hemshins. Actually, their success in business life creates further stigmatization of the Hemshins. This is a new exclusionary and scorning discourse which is mainly produced by the Lazis against the Hemshins which appeared with the border economy after the opening up of the border. Hence, new discriminatory process is deepening the social inequalities between the Lazis and Hemshins.

The other important finding which is exposed by this study in terms of ethnic relations in border regions is that, these ethnic groups have different experiences of discrimination and exclusion. After the opening of the Sarp border gate, Lazis have lost their economic power which they have for long years in Hopa. In the case of Hemshins, however, they have gained economic power but lost their prestige because of their participation in low prestige jobs, more specifically the business that they carry out in `Teksas Street`, which is created by the border economy. Thus, in the case of Hopa, we cannot claim that a single group has experienced exclusion and / or discrimination. Also economic success does not always bring prestige or eliminate discriminatory processes. Or economic disadvantage does not bring low prestige. This finding can be evaluated within the intersectionalist perspective.

Parallel with the above mentioned new discriminatory ethnic discourses, gender discrimination also became deeper after 1988, opening of the Sarp border gate. In the case of Hopa gender relations have displayed a multilayered, hierarchical and intertwined structure which can be also analyzed within the intersectional perspective. The relations between `local women`, that is, between Lazi and Hemshini women, relations between `local women` and `immigrant women` and relations between women and men separately are analysed in the thesis.

In terms of the relations between local women, there is a process of `othering` which has been constructed on the basis of being a Hemshin or a Lazi woman. Hemshin women who recently moved to the city and remained uneducated could not find a place in the work life, and there is no opportunity except for sitting at the house and `waiting for their husbands`, organizing home gatherings (*gün*) and doing the routine house chores. For Lazi women an advantage has emerged

because of living in the city since the beginning, being educated and as a result having more chances at the work life.

Furthermore, the discriminatory processes against Hemshin men through their business activities, also effect their family relations, and Lazi women, blame the Hemshin women for accepting the 'disgusting' business of their husbands in the entertainment sector. Since they rely on their husbands' earnings, Hemshin women are accused of sharing the economic benefits of the 'dirty' sector by Lazi women. For example a Lazi woman whose husband is a shop owner remained more prestigious against a Hemshini woman whose husband works in a nightclub. In addition, from Lazis perspective, Hemshin women do not leave their husbands even if the latter cheat on them. Another point that Lazi women utter when they justify their perception of their own superiority over Hemshins, is based on the life in the city. Accordingly, Hemshin women, having moved to the city could not act in accordance with the city rules and could not adapt to city life. In daily life, this prejudice manifests itself as not going to each other's house even though they know each other, or not renting their house to the Hemshins. Such a hierarchy between Lazi and Hemshin women has a historical background and which has deepened with the opening of the border and economic activities. Until the opening of the border Lazi women is perceived as economically, socially and culturally superior to Hemshin women. The hierarchy among these women began to change in certain points with the opening up of the border. While the Hemshin women whose economic conditions have improved with the income their spouses earn from the border trade and who has started to display themselves in the city life and have climbed up in the social structure, this does not break down the social and cultural boundaries and improve their status. Even though they share the same urban space, Lazi women still are 'from the city' and Hemshin women are 'from the village'.

On the other hand, Lazi and Hemshin women together share higher status when they are compared to the immigrant woman. Both local women need to compete with this “other woman” who effected their familial relations. Even though Lazi women argue that husbands of Hemshin women are involved with these immigrant sex workers, the uneasiness that it creates within the family and the probability of disloyalty of husbands exists for women of both groups. This condition of being in the same situation is also reflected in their attitudes towards the immigrant women. On one hand, Lazi and Hemshin women are angry against these immigrant women since they are forced to become part of an unfair competition. The women who come from the other side of the border become the common “other” for both groups of local women. Even though they do not meet in the public space with the ‘well groomed’, ‘beautiful’ other women, a confrontation happens over the relationship their husbands can possibly establish with these women and the discourses that men have about this women For both Hemshin and Lazi men, the arrival of these women who are educated, cultured, who knows how to talk, and as described by one interviewee ‘those who can improve the quality of a person's life’, forces their own women to change. According to these men the Black Sea women who were ‘eating, drinking, giving birth and gaining weight’ had to ‘put themselves in shape’ in order not to lose their men. On the other hand, this ‘other’ is constantly belittled by the local women of both ethnic groups, emphasizing the ‘poverty’ and ‘lack of economic priviledges’ of the immigrant women. Hence they perceive themselves in much higher status than their immigrant rivals due to their economic positions.

In terms of gender relations which change in relation to Sarp border gate, the story of the immigrant women as a case of victimization and deprivation, but at the same time of economic benefits is also significant. The immigrant women have been one of the most prominent factors of the economic context that the border creates. They have first been suitcase traders. When this period has ended and there is nothing to sell they have started working as sex workers as a way of

escaping poverty in their own countries. Also some have entered into fake marriages to cross the border legally and some have entered into the care work. Almost all of them come from families of lowest socio-economic rank in their own countries. However working as sex workers they are seen at the lowest rank in the social hierarchy.

Nevertheless, those women from the other side of the border are a source of sustenance for both the enterprise owners who operate the hotels and restaurants and for the shopkeepers. No matter if they came with a network connection or by themselves, these women had to make a commercial agreement, establish a strategic relationship with the men in Hopa to be able to work in more 'secure' environments since this secure condition reduces the probability of getting deported. The owners of the enterprises take their share from the earnings of these immigrant women by providing their logistic needs such as lodging and foods and drinks that customers demand. Hence, these women although economically earning good income from sex work, they are labeled with lowest prestige and also exploited by the hotel owners. As one major conclusion of this thesis is that the entertainment sector which is brought into being by the border has created a context where the local women are imprisoned in their houses and migrant women are imprisoned in the hotels, as both sides are dependent on men. It is argued in this thesis that patriarchal relations create hierarchy between women and men as well as among women at different levels and forms. The 'aggrieved' immigrant women have created new losses for the local women. On the other hand, discrimination is also experienced among local women of different ethnic groups. As a major conclusion in this thesis it can be claimed that a patriarchal, multilayered, and dynamic hierarchical structure in Hopa emerges both among the local women and immigrant women as well as among different ethnic groups based on the economic relations. A difficult form of life and patriarchal oppression for women exists in Hopa with the border economy where new types of victimhood and deprivations are multiplying in daily experiences despite the

economic opportunities. As one major conclusion of this thesis in terms of gender relations in Hopa case, border economy has created much more oppressions for all women but they are oppressed differently and these differences are based on the participation of women to border economy and their ethnicity.

As another result, this study has shown that, the border creates advantages and disadvantages for the people who live around it who are neither merely victims nor glorious beneficiaries. The same border gate can create opportunities from time to time, whereas it can also cause discriminations and impossibilities. To have the advantages or suffer from the disadvantages is depending upon a person's gender or ethnic identity. These gendered and ethnicized structure of daily life allowed to intersectionalist analysis. Crenshaw (1991:1295) argues that “the location of women of colour at the intersection of race and gender makes their experiences structurally and qualitatively different from that of white women”. In Hopa cases the border experiences of the Lazi, the Hemshin or the immigrant women are different from each others. At the intersections of gender, ethnicity and economy identifying winners and losers in local settings have become more difficult and multi-dimensional. As a result, border created an environment where winners and losers are changing all the time.

This study, focusing on a town near Turkey-Georgia border through ethnicity and gender perspectives contributes to the border literature. Intersectionality approach which dominated the border studies for US-Mexican border unfortunately had not been a part of discussions and literature in Turkey. This study is the first attempt to incorporate intersectionality into the border literature in Turkey. Originality of this dissertation is accompanied with several problems in method which appeared only after the fieldwork during the writing process. During the writing of this dissertation I realized that age and class are the two crucial variables that must have been included in my study. It is possible to formulate future studies incorporating these two variables and forming a more detailed analysis.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### SOME INDICATORS of FREQUENCY of BORDER ACTIVITIES

##### Passanger Rates

YE AR	ARRIVED PASSANGER			OUTBOUND PASSANGER			T O	I n
	TUR	FOR	TO	TURK	FOR	T	T	
2001	40.8	143	184.	41.001	141.0	1	3	-
2002	38.6	140	178.	37.716	140.2	1	3	-
2003	44.6	147	192.	44.035	152.6	1	3	9
2004	49.5	200	250.	50.941	214.9	2	5	3
2005	85.0	344	429.	86.724	356.9	4	8	6
2006	107.	519	627.	107.03	539.8	6	1	4
2007	1	606	786.	181.06	614.6	7	1	2
2008	2	812	1.08	27	820.7	1	2	3
2009	3	997	1.30	30	1.002.	1	2	2
2010	4	1.147	1.57	42	1.140.	1	3	2
2011	118.	212	331.	117.43	200.4	3	6	

### TRUCK-LORRY RATES

YEARS	ARRIVED	OUTBOUND	TOTAL	Increase
			L	Rate
2001	13.723	14.456	28.179	-8
2002	14.420	13.333	27.753	-2
2003	14.717	15.077	29.794	7
2004	17.575	19.347	36.922	24
2005	27.878	30.292	58.170	58
2006	38.870	40.015	78.885	36
2007	68.794	69.802	138.596	76
2008	105.369	105.105	210.474	52
2009	103.725	100.344	204.069	-3
2010	92.776	87.815	180.591	-12
2011 (3 months)	24.190	24.547	48.737	

### BUS-CAR RATES

YEARS	ARRIVED	OUTBOUND	TOTAL	Increase Rate
2001	15.350	26.351	41.701	-16
2002	10.613	25.307	35.920	-14
2003	11.193	26.808	38.001	6
2004	13.348	38.084	51.432	35
2005	28.066	59.408	87.474	70
2006	32.919	65.600	98.519	13
2007	51.189	81.028	132.217	34
2008	70.700	95.384	166.084	26
2009	105.279	121.597	226.876	37
2010	228.781	247.175	475.956	110
2011	59.180	62.424	121.604	

## APPENDIX B

### IMPORT EXPORT RATES

YEAR	IMPORT( US \$)	EXPORT( US \$)
2001	58.946.990	12.429.095
2002	112.149.782	20.015.253
2003	99.615.072	22.924.734
2004	150.343.403	41.415.049
2005	66.962.424	48.888.309
2006	77.465.957	81.613.051
2007	98.706.429	169.427.675
2008	112.557.059	316.197.771
2009	85.901.738	289.962.179
2010	109.039.917	325.112.686
2011 2	15.293.612	57.403.152

## **APPENDIX C**

### **ORAL HISTORY GUIDE FORM**

#### **Interviewer Card**

##### **Interviewee's:**

Name: (First, Last)

Age:

Gender:

Marital Status:

Educational Status (Highest level of education completed):

Occupation:

Ethnicity:

##### **Interview's:**

Date:

Place:

Time Beginning:

Time Ending:

#### **The Work's Objective/Introduction**

My goal in this study, which I am conducting for my current doctoral dissertation in the ODTU Sociology department, is to examine the impressions that the periods of opening and closing of the Sarp border gate had on the people's lives that lived in the region, by referring to your experiences and impressions. As a result of my research, I learned of three important periods after the borders drawn in 1921. By

recalling old memories, I want to talk about your life experiences, impressions and feelings in these three periods.

### **Interview Form**

**Period One:** The border with Georgia was drawn in 1921 but passing through the Sarp gate until 1937 was not difficult. However, between 1936-1988, there is a period when the two countries' borders were closed. This was a period when it was illegal to leave home after dark and there was no communication with the other side of the border.

Do you remember this period?

How old were you?

Were you a student?

Were you employed? How did you earn a living?

Did you own land?

1. Did you know about the border closing? Did you hear about it? How did you hear about it?
2. How did the border closing affect you and your family?

Did you have relatives on the other side? Were you able to meet with them?

Did you own land on the other side of the border?

How did it affect your work and your livelihood?

How did it affect children's education and their education opportunities?

How did it affect health opportunities?

How did it affect women's lives (work, relationships with neighbors)?

How did it affect men's lives?

How did it affect your religious practices?

4. What changes occurred with the border's closing of the official establishment, in administration, in district government, or in the office of the neighborhood government? What were the new applications, new laws? How and where did you settle official matters?

3. How did this period affect Hopa?

Regarding livelihood, how were landowners affected?

Did many families remain on the other side of the border? Were people able to meet with their relatives?

How were lives affected economically?

Education and Health opportunities?

Relations with neighbors (Were they just as close? Were relations close between people? Were they distant?)

5. Different societies/different identities live here. In this period, what did Georgians, Lazs and Hemsins experience?

**Period Two:** In 1988 the Sarp border was reopened. Now I want to talk about the period following 1989.

1. "Were you doing \_\_\_\_\_job in 1988?"

2. How did the border's reopening affect you and your family?

How did it affect your work and your livelihood?

How did it affect children's education and their education opportunities?

How did it affect health opportunities?

How did it affect women's lives (work, relationships with neighbors)?

How did it affect men's lives?

(You mentioned your family over there) Were you able to meet with them? In order to meet them, what were you required to do? From where did you receive permission? How did you cross the border? Now did you feel?

3. What changes occurred with the border's reopening of the official establishment, in administration, in district government, or in the office of the neighborhood government? What were the new applications, new laws?

4. How did this period affect Hopa?

Regarding livelihood, how were landowners affected?

Did many families remain on the other side of the border? Were people able to meet with their relatives?

How were lives affected economically?

Education and Health opportunities?

Relations with neighbors (Were they just as close? Were relations close between people? Were they distant?)

3. In this period, what did Georgians, Lazs and people from Hemsin experience?

\*\*\* In this period, as an addition to the above set of questions;

How were your relations with the ones that came from the other side of the border?

How did the Russian markets affect the life there?

## **APPENDIX D**

### **SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FORM**

**GÖRÜŞME NO:**

**BAŞLAMA SAATİ:**

**BİTİŞ SAATİ:**

### **GÖRÜŞMECİ KARTI**

Görüşmenin Yapıldığı Yer:

Cinsiyeti:

Yaşı:

Doğum Yeri ve Tarihi:

Eğitim Durumu:

Mesleği:

Çocuk Sayısı: (Yaşları/ Eğitim durumları/ Çalışıyorlarsa Ne İş Yaptıkları)

Etnik Kimliği:

## **GÖRÜŞME FORMU**

### **1- GÖRÜŞMECİYE VE HANEYE DAİR GENEL BİLGİLER**

Kaç yıldır Hopa'da yaşıyorsunuz? (Göç ettiyse; Nereden? Ne zaman? Niçin?)

Aileniz kaç kişi? Kimlerle birlikte yaşıyorsunuz?

Hopa dışında yaşayan aile üyeniz var mı? (VARSA- Nerede? Ne için şehir dışına/yurtdışına çıktı?)

Eviniz kendinizin mi?

Arabanız var mı?

Evinizde Türkçe dışında konuşulan bir dil var mı? /Kimler konuşuyor?

### **2- EKONOMİK DURUM**

Siz ve aileniz geçiminizi ne ile sağlıyorsunuz?

Aylık geliriniz ortalama ne kadardır?

Sizce geliriniz yeterli mi?

Toprağınız var mı?

Tarım yapıyor musunuz? (YAPIYORSA)

Ne yetiştiriyorsunuz?

Ürünlerinizi satıyor musunuz? Nereye? Nasıl?

Toprağınızı işlemek için yardımcı çalıştırıyor musunuz? Bu yardımcılarını nereden buluyorsunuz?

Ticarette uğraşıyor musunuz? (EVET ise)

Ne iş yapıyorsunuz?

İşyerinizde kaç kişi çalışıyor?

Ortağınız var mı? (VARSA- Akrabanız mı?)

Kimlerle ticaret yapıyorsunuz?

Yurtdışıyla/sınırın diğer tarafıyla ticaret yapıyor musunuz?

(YAPIYORSA) Herhangi bir zorlukla karşılaşıyor musunuz? Ne gibi zorluklarla karşılaşıyorsunuz?

Sınırın açılması ailenizin ekonomik yaşamını nasıl etkiledi?

### **3- SOSYAL DURUM**

#### **-AİLE /AKRABALIK/KOMŞULUK**

Eşinizi nasıl seçtiniz? Akrabalığınız var mı? Aynı etnik kimlikten mi?

Düğünlerinizde kendinize özgü gelenekleriniz var mıdır? Nelerdir? Bu geleneklerinizi sürdürüyor musunuz?

Cenazelerinizde kendinize özgü gelenekleriniz var mıdır? Nelerdir? Bu gelenekleri sürdürüyor musunuz?

Akrabalarınızla ilişkileriniz nasıldır? Hangi konularda birbirinize yardım edersiniz? En çok hangi konularda/ durumlarda bir araya gelirsiniz?

Komşularınızla ilişkileriniz nasıldır? Hangi konularda birbirinize yardım edersiniz? En çok hangi konularda/durumlarda bir araya gelirsiniz?

Komşularınız da sizin gibi Hemşinli/Laz/Gürcü müdür?

Farklı etnik kimlikler arasında evlilikler yaşıyor mu? Bu evliliklerin sayısı zaman içinde değişti mi? (Değiştiyse- Sizce nedeni nedir?)

Sınırın varlığı aile/ komşuluk/ akrabalık ilişkilerinizi nasıl etkiledi?

Boş zamanlarınızı nasıl geçirirsiniz? Kimlerle birlikte geçirmeyi tercih edersiniz?

### **4- POLİTİK DURUM**

Hopa'nın politik yapısı nasıldır?

1988'de sınırın açılmasında sonra bu yapıda dönüşümler oldu mu?

Belediye Başkanını seçerken hangi kriterlere önem verirsiniz?

Belediye hizmetlerinden memnun musunuz?

Resmi sorunlarınız olduğunda nasıl çözüyorsunuz? Kolay ulaşabiliyor musunuz?

Sorunlarınızı kolay çözebiliyor musunuz? Karşılaştığınız zorluklar nelerdir?

## 5- SINIR ALGISI VE HOPA'YA DAİR GENEL BİLGİLER

Hopa'yı nasıl tanıtırsınız? (Ekonomik/Sosyal/Kültürel özellikleri? Olumlu ve olumsuz yönleri?)

Hopa'nın sorunları sizce nedir? Sizce bu sorunlar nasıl çözülebilir?

Siz sınırı hiç geçtiniz mi? (GEÇTİYSE, Ne için? Ne sıklıkla?)

Sınırın diğer tarafında yaşayan akrabalarınız var mı? (Varsa) Onlarla görüşüyor musunuz? Nasıl iletişim kuruyorsunuz? Hangi sıklıkla?

Sınırın ilk açıldığı zamanlarda insanlar bundan nasıl etkilendi? Zaman içinde nasıl bir dönüşüm oldu?

Sınırın diğer tarafından gelenlerle ilişkileriniz nasıl? Onlar hakkında neler düşünüyorsunuz? Onları nasıl tanımlarsınız? Sizden farklı olan yönleri nelerdir?

Benzerlikleriniz nelerdir?

Sınırın diğer tarafından gelen insanlar burada ne tür işler yapıyorlar?

Sınırın öbür tarafından gelenlerle evlilikler oluyor mu?

Sizce sınırın diğer tarafıyla sosyal- ekonomik ilişkiler geliştirilmeli mi? Nasıl?

Sizce sınır, insanları ve devletleri bölen bir şey midir? Neden?

Sınırdaki yaşamın avantajları/ dezavantajları nelerdir?

## APPENDIX E

### CIRRICULUM VITAE

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Akyüz, Latife

Nationality: Turkish (TC)

Date and Place of Birth: 10 April 1975 , Tercan

Marital Status: Single

Mobile: +90 531 790 95 29

Office: +90 312 210 31 36

Fax: +90 312 210 79 72

email: [latife@metu.edu.tr](mailto:latife@metu.edu.tr)

#### EDUCATION

Degree	Area	University	Date
Bachelor of Science	Sociology	Ankara University	2000
M.A. Ph.D. (Integrated Programme)	Sociology	Middle East Technical University	2003-2013

## **VISITING RESEARCHER**

<b>Name of Professor</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Year</b>
Prof. Thomas M.WILSON	SUNY- Binghamton University	2011-2012
Dr. Cigdem Balim HARDING	NELC- Indiana University	2010

## **FIELD OF ACADEMIC INTERESTS**

Border Studies, Identity, Ethnic Groups, Gender

## **LANGUAGE SKILLS**

- Turkish (native)
- English (fluent)

## **WORK EXPERIENCE**

- Currently: Research Assistant in the Department of Sociology, METU,  
(Since 2002)

## **PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCES**

### **Publications**

Akyüz, Latife (2012) Bir Sınır Kasabası Olarak Hopa, iç. Karardı Karadeniz, Derleyen Ugur Biryol, ed. Tanil Bora, IST: İletişim Yay.

Akyüz, Latife (2012), Pasavan, iç. Kaos GL Dergisi ‘Sınır’ Özel Dosyası, Sayı 124, Mayıs-Haziran

### **Conferences**

Cultural Difference and Social Solidarity: Dividing and Uniting Communities Beyond Multiculturalism, July 2011, METU, Northern Cyprus Campus

Borders and Borderlands: Today`s Challenges and Tomorrow`s Prospects, September 2012, Lisbon, Portugal

Relocating Borders: A Comparative Approach, January 2013, Berlin, Germany

### **RESEARCH SKILLS**

- Utilized SPSS statistical programs extensively
- Microsoft Office, especially Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- **ASA-** American Sociological Association
- **ABS-** American Borderland Studies
- **EastBordNet** – Action Member

### **RESEARCH PROJECTS**

#### **Research Funded by International Organizations**

**Project Name:** WOMEN IN BUSINESS within “Promoting Women’s Employment (PWE) Grant Scheme” supported by European Union

Duration: July 2010-July 2011

Position Held: Project Assistant

Funding Agency: CFCU and Turkish Republic Government

**Project Name:** Ilisu Barajı Yeniden Yerleşim Eylem Planı (Ilisu Dam and HEPP Project Resettlement Action Plan)

Duration: 2009

Position Held: Technical Coordinator

Funding Agency: DSI (Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources), ILISU Consortium, ENCON (Environment Consultancy Co)

**Project Name:** Türkiye Gençlerde Cinsel Sağlık ve Üreme Sağlığı Araştırması (Turkey Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health Survey)

Duration: 2007

Position Held: Province Coordinator

Funding Agency: Population Association and UNFPA

**Project Name:** Haydi Kızlar Okula Kampanyası Değerlendirme Araştırması (External Evaluation of Girls Education Programme)

Duration: 2006

Position Held: Province Coordinator

Funding Agency: UNICEF- MoNE

### **Research Funded by National Organizations**

**Project Name:** Türkiye Sağlıkta Dönüşüm Programı Sağlık Personeli Memnuniyeti Araştırması (Turkey Health Transformation Program Healthcare Employee Satisfaction Survey)

Duration: 2008

Position Held: Project Assistant, Province Coordinator

Funding Agency: Ministry of Health, G& G Consulting

**Project Name:** “Bir Sınır İlçesi olan Hopa’da Sosyal ve Ekonomik Değişim”

Duration: 2007

Position Held: Project Assistant

Funding Agency: BAP-YUUP Institution, METU

**Project Name:** “Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesinin Ulusal ve Uluslararası Etkilerinin Değerlendirilmesi” (Social Assessment of International and National Level Impacts and Relations of South East Anatolian Project (GAP) )

Duration: 2007

Position Held: Project Assistant

Funding Agency: BAP-YUUP Institution, METU

**Project Name:** "Anakent ve Anadolu Kenti Yoksulluğu: Ankara ve Isparta Örnekleri"

Duration: 2003-2005

Position Held: Project Assistant

Funding Agency: Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Bilimsel Araştırma Fonu

## **APPENDIX F**

### **TURKISH SUMMARY**

#### **ÖZET**

Bu çalışma, sınır ekonomisinin, bu bölgelerde yaşayan etnik grupların ve toplumsal cinsiyet gruplarının grup içindeki ve gruplararası ilişkilerini nasıl şekillendirdiğini anlamayı amaç edinmiştir.

Türkiye-Gürcistan sınır bölgesinde Hopa ilçesinde yapılan niteliksel araştırmaya dayanan bu çalışmada farklı sosyal grupların sınır deneyimleri onların kendi anlatıları üzerinden ele alınmış, sınırdaki ekonomik yaşama katılımın bu grupların aile ve iş ilişkilerini ve birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerini nasıl yeniden şekillendirdiğine bakılmıştır. Çalışmanın en temel argumanı sınır bölgelerinin, bu bölgelere özgü ekonomik faaliyet biçimlerine sahip olduğu ve bu faaliyetlere katılım biçimlerinin sosyal, ve kültürel yaşam dinamiklerini şekillendirdiği ve sınır ekonomisinin bu etkilerinin en açık biçimde etnik grupların ve toplumsal cinsiyet gruplarının ilişkilerinde izlenebileceği olmuştur. Alan çalışması bu arguman üzerine kurulmuş ve Hopa’da yaşayan farklı etnik gruplardan kadınlar ve erkeklere ekonomik ve sosyal ilişkilerine, aile ve akrabalık ilişkilerine dair sorular sorulmuştur. Alan çalışmasının ilk aşamasında sözlü tarih görüşmeleri yapılmış ve 80 yaş üzeri 5 kişiyle sınırın tarihi üzerine görüşülmüştür. Alan çalışmasının büyük bölümünü ise farklı etnik gruplardan aynı ailedeki kadın ve erkeklerle yapılan derinlemesine görüşmeler, yerel otoritelerle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler ve Laz ve Hemşinli kadınlarla odak grup görüşmeleri oluşturmuştur.

Sınırlar, ulus devletlerin uluslararası arenadaki egemenlik alanlarını belirleyen, savaşlarla ve uluslararası anlaşmalarla çizilen, insanlar tarafından yaratılmış “yapay” olgulardır. Bu nedenle uluslararası arenada ya da ulus-devletin kendi içinde ortaya çıkan yeni durumlar, değişen politikalar sınırların da değişmesine ya da farklı bir biçimde ele alınmasına neden olmaktadır. Özellikle Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla birlikte ortaya çıkan yeni devletler, açılan ya da kapanan sınırlar, sınır konusunun yeniden ve daha canlı bir biçimde tartışılmasını zorunlu kılmıştır. Tüm dünyada yaşanan paranın, bilginin ve insanların sınırlararası/sınırlarötesi hızlı ve kolay hareketi ulus-devletin varlığını tartışmalı hale getirmiştir. Kimi sosyal bilimciler ulus-devletin sonunun geldiğini iddia ederken, bazıları ise tam tersine bu süreçte ulus-devletin etkisinin daha da arttığını savunmaktadır. Bu tartışmalar bu çalışmanın konusu olmamakla birlikte, dünyanın politik haritasında meydana gelen bu gelişmeler ve değişimler sınır bölgelerini yeniden ele almayı gerekli kılmıştır.

Sınırların bir akademik disiplin içerisinde tartışılmaya başlanması Birinci Dünya Savaşı’nı izleyen yıllara denk gelmektedir. Genellikle politik coğrafyacılar tarafından ve ulus-devlet tartışmaları ve egemenlik, ulusal kimlik, vatandaşlık gibi kavramlar üzerinden devam eden tartışmalar son 30 yılda yeni boyutlar kazanmıştır. Sovyetler Birliği’nin dağılıp, ikili dünya düzeninin sona ermesiyle ortaya çıkan yeni devletler sınırların ideolojik ve kültürel boyutlarını tartışmaya açmıştır. Avrupa Birliği’nin genişleme politikaları ve yeni devletlerin vatandaşlarının kültürel entegrasyonu gibi konular gündeme oturmuştur. Sınır bölgeleri artık sadece ulus-devletlerin egemenlik alanlarını belirleyen çizgiler değil, kültürlerin karşılaştığı, çatıştığı, sosyal ve kültürel kimliklerin yeniden kurulduğu yaşayan mekanlar olarak ele alınmaya başlanmış ve kültür, kimlik, yer/me kan gibi kavramlar sınırdaki görünüşleriyle tartışmaya açılmıştır.

Sınır bölgeleri ulus-devletlerin egemenlik alanlarının başlangıcı ve sonudur. Bu nedenle ülkenin herhangi bir yerinden daha fazla güvenlik duvarlarına ihtiyaç duyulur. Bu bölgelerde yaşayan insanlar her daim dikenli teller, gözetleme kuleleri ve devriyelerle birarada yaşamak zorundadır. Onlar için karşı taraftakiler, “ötekiler” yanibaşlarındadır. Her an “düşmanla” karşı karşıya olunan bir yerde devlete ve onun silahlı güçlerine daha fazla ihtiyaç duyulacaktır tabii ki. Ancak bu bölgeler aynı zamanda ulus-devletin egemenlik alanlarının sonudur dolayısıyla merkezde yaşanan herşey, yapılan her değişiklik en son bu bölgelere ulaşır. Bu “içleme” ve “dışlama” süreçlerinin birarada bulunuşu, sınır bölgelerinin kendine haslığını ve sınıra özgü yaşamı yaratan temel durumdur. Türkiye-Gürcistan sınırı da hem politik arenadaki bu gelişmelerin hem de sınır bölgelerinin bu kendine özgü yaşamının izlenebileceği bir yer olmuş ve 1921 yılında sınırın çizilmesinden günümüze kadar olan süreçteki politik ve sosyal gelişmeleri ve değişimleri yansıtmıştır.

1921 yılında Kars Antlaşmasıyla çizilen bu sınır yeni kurulmuş olan Türkiye Cumhuriyeti ile Sovyet Sosyalist Cumhuriyetler Birliği (SSCB)’ni birbirinden ayıran sınırdır. Hemen her sınırın çizilmesinde izlenene benzer bir yol izlenmiş ve kültürel ya da kimliksel benzerlikler gözardı edilip, coğrafi olanaklara bakılarak sınır çizgisi belirlenmiştir. Sarp köyü içinden geçen dere sınır kabul edilip, köy ikiye bölünmüştür. Türkiye tarafındaki bölüm ‘Sarp’, karşı taraftaki yerler ise ‘Sarpi’ olarak adlandırılmıştır. Ancak görüşmecilerin de belirttiği üzere 1921–1937 yılları arasında Hopa ilçesinde yaşayan kişiler “Pasavan” adı verilen ve sadece askerin imzasını gerektiren bir evrakla sınırı geçip, karşı taraftaki topraklarını işlemeye devam edebilmişlerdir. Dolayısıyla bölgede yaşayan insanlar toprakları bölünse bile karşı tarafa geçip tarımsal faaliyetlerini yapabilmış, karşı tarafta kalan insanlar bu tarafa geçip ibadetlerini yapmaya devam edebilmişlerdir.

Sınır çekildiğinde cami Türkiye tarafında, imam ise “karşiki Sarp” ta kalmış ancak 1937 yılına kadar Cuma günleri ibadetlerini yapabilmek için bu tarafa

geçebilmişlerdir. Topraklarını işleyebilmiş, ürünlerini kaldırabilmişlerdir. 1937 yılında Stalin döneminde yaşanan Türkiye-Sovyetler Birliği ilişkilerindeki gerginlik sınırın statüsünde değişikliğe neden olmuş ve bir gecede sınır tüm geçişlere keskin bir biçimde kapatılmıştır. Sınırın çekilmesiyle bölünen aileler, 1937 yılına kadar görüşebiliyorken, bu tarihten sonra hiçbir şekilde iletişim kurma şansları olmamıştır. Karşıya geçmek isteyenler, 200 metrelik yol yerine Kars üzerinden 1000 km lik yol yapmak zorunda kalmışlardır.

1936 yılına kadar ılımlı bir biçimde devam eden ilişkiler, 1936 yılında imzalanan ve Türkiye'nin boğazlar üzerindeki haklarının uluslararası hukuk açısından yeniden düzenlendiği Montreux Boğazlar Sözleşmesi ile ve takip eden zamanda Türkiye'nin İngiltere ile işbirliği yapması üzerine aynı biçimde devam ettirilememiş ve sınır 1937 yılında bir gecede tüm geçişlere kapatılmıştır.

1937 yılından sonra karşı tarafta kalan akrabalarla, tanıdıklarla her türlü iletişim kurma biçimi yasaklanmış, sınır kapısının etrafında çok ciddi güvenlik önlemleri alınmıştır. Gözetleme kulelerinin sayısı arttırılmış, Gürcistan tarafında “iz tarlası” adı verilen ve kaçak geçişlerin olup olmadığını denetleyebilecekleri bir tarla yapılmıştır.

“Eskiden daha çok kule vardı. 3-4 tane onların vardı. 3-4 tane bizim vardı. Yalnız onlarda daha sıkı güvenlik vardı. Dere sınır olmuştu. Derenin hemen arkasında kendi arazilerinde tel örgü çekmişler... Tel örgünün boyu 2.5-3 metre. Onun arkasına da 4-5 metre genişliğinde iz tarlası yapmışlar... İz tarlası dediğinde şöyle bişey. Toprak tamamen kaziniyor. Üstünde hiç ayak izi bişey olmayacak. Yumuşatılmış. Üstüne bastığında ayak izi çıkıyor. Köpek geçse biliyorduk... Ayda bir kere onu kazır, üstünü düzeltirlerdi. Ayak izi bırakmazlardı. Biri geçerse belli olsun diye” (FL\_OH-2).

Gelin olup bu tarafa gelenler ya da karşı tarafa gelin gidenler 1937 yılından sonra akrabalarıyla görüşebilme, haberleşme olanaklarını kaybetmişlerdir. Çünkü karşı tarafa geçebilmek için önce valilikten kağıt çıkarıp, sonra vize alıp Kars üzerinden ve yaklaşık 1000 km'lik yol yapmaları gerekmiş, bu nedenle de geçişler yok denecek kadar azalmıştır.

“Benim kızın köyden komşusu gelin olarak bu tarafa gelmiş 1916-17 de. Sınır çizilmeden önce. O zamanlar serbestmiş. Bizim yaşlılarımız tuz almaya gidermiş Batuma. Ondan sonra kapandı. Ama anne babası, ailesi karşıda kalmış. En az 30-40 tane hanesi, kaç tane kardeşi karşıda ama kadıncağız burda. Onunda çocukları burda. Gidip gelemiyor. O zaman pasaport çıkariyordun. Kars üzerinden giderlerdi... Valilikten kağıt çıkarıyorsun. Konsolosluktan vize aliyosun. Şöyle diyeyim toplam 200 metrelik mesafeyi 1000 km yaparak gidebiliyosun” (FL\_OH-2).

1937 den 1988 yılına kadar olan 51 yıllık dönem sınırın tüm geçişlere kapalı olduğu ve güvenlik tedbirlerinin katı biçimde uygulandığı bir dönem olmuştur. Bu dönemin ilk 20 yılında sınırda yaşayanlar balıkçılık, sebzecilik ve geçimlik narenciye ve fındık üreterek hayatlarına devam etmişlerdir. 1950'li yıllarda çay üretimine başlanması ve çay fabrikalarının kurulmasıyla birlikte bölgede yaşayanların hemen hepsi çay üretmeye ve geçimini bu yolla kazanmaya başlamıştır. Sınırın tamamen kapalı olduğu bu 51 yıllık dönem, Gorbaçov'un yeniden yapılanma (perestroika) ve açıklık (glasnost) politikalarının ve Türkiye'de Özal döneminin neo-liberal politik anlayışının bir sonucu olarak, 1988 yılında sona ermiştir.

Sarp Sınır Kapısı Türkiye ile Sovyetler Birliği arasında imzalanan "Uluslararası Kara Taşımacılığı Anlaşması" gereğince 31.08.1988 tarihinde trafiğe açılmış, Sarp Sınır Kapısı'nın açılışı bölgede ekonomik olanakları artırmış, özellikle taşımacılık ve hizmet (otel, restoran, bar vb.) sektörünü olumlu yönde etkilemiştir. Ancak

ekonomik anlamda bir umut kapısı olarak görülen sınır, zaman içerisinde yarattığı özellikle sosyal dönüşümler nedeniyle bugün bir “umutsuzluk”, “yozlaşmışlık” ve “eşitsizlik” kapısı olarak algılanmaya başlanmıştır.

Bu sınır sadece iki ülke arasına çizilmiş bir sınır değil, aynı zamanda iki farklı ekonomik ve ideolojik düzen arasına çizilmiş bir sınırdır. Sınırın diğer tarafında yaşanan dönüşümün de bir göstergesi olarak açılan bu kapı onlar için aynı zamanda kapitalizme açılan kapı olmuştur. Bağımsızlığını yeni ilan etmiş yoksul bir ülkenin vatandaşları, altüst olmuş bir ekonomik ortamın neden olduğu yoksulluktan kurtulma yolunu sınırın bu tarafına geçip, elinde ne var ne yoksa satmakta bulmuş ve Hopa’dan Trabzon’a uzanan Rus pazarları böylece ortaya çıkmıştır.

Bu çalışmanın en temel argümanı sınır bölgelerinin kendine özgü bir ekonomik yaşam ortaya çıkardığı ve bu ekonomik yaşamın bu bölgelerdeki günlük yaşam dinamiklerini etkilediğidir. Bu ekonominin en başat ögesi ‘kaçakçılıktır’. Sadece sınır bölgelerinde görülebilen bu ekonomik kazanç yolu sınır bölgelerinde yaşayanlar tarafından yasadışı bir aktiviteden çok aile ekonomisine katkı sağlayan ve sınırda yaşamaktan dolayı elde edilen bir ‘hak’ olarak görülmektedir.

Bu çalışmada sınır ekonomisi derken sınır bölgelerini doğrudan etkileyen, sınır ticaretini yani bavul ticaretini de kapsayan, uluslararası nakliyat, fuhuş ve özellikle kaçakçılıkla beslenen ekonomiden bahsediyoruz. Ayrıca bu sektörlerin yarattığı otel, restoran, kuaför vb. yan sektörler bizim örneğimizde sınır ekonomisinin ana bileşenleridir. Sınır bölgelerinde yaşanan hızlı sosyal ve kültürel değişim ve dönüşümlerin ana nedeni bu sınır ekonomisi ve bu ekonomiye katılım biçiminin şekillendirdiği yeni ilişki tarzlarıdır.

Hopa’da sınırın açılmasından hemen sonra bu etkiler ve yeni tarz ilişki biçimleri kendini göstermeye başlamıştır. Sınırın ilk açıldığı dönemde, özellikle altın,

demir, bakır kaçakçılığı, taşımacılık ve sınır ötesi ticaret insanların kısa zamanda çok para kazanmasını sağlamıştır. Ancak iki ülke arasındaki anlaşmalar/anlaşmazlıklar, Gürcistan'ın uyguladığı vergi politikaları, sınırın diğer tarafındaki ekonomik belirsizlik ve istikrarsızlıklar ve bu ticarete giren insanların birçoğunun sınırötesi ticaret konusundaki yetersizlikleri birçok insanın da batmasına neden olmuştur. Bavul ticaretinin Doğu Karadeniz sahilinden İstanbul Laleli'ye kayması, Rus pazarlarının kapanmaya başlaması ve dolayısıyla karşı taraftan gelen insanlar üzerinden kazanılan paraların azalması eğlence sektörüne dayanan bir ekonomik yaşam ortaya çıkarmıştır. Daha önce elindeki ürünleri karşı taraftan gelenlere satarak veya onlara kalacak yer sağlayarak para kazanan esnaf, bu imkan ortadan kalkınca eğlence sektörüne yönelmiş, birçok işletme bu sektöre göre yeniden düzenlenmiştir. Bugün Hopa'daki esnafı ayakta tutan sınırın diğer tarafından gelen kadınların çalıştığı eğlence sektörüdür. Ekonomik kazanç getiren bu sektörün varlığı Hopa'nın sosyal ve kültürel yaşamında ise olumsuzluklara neden olmuştur. Özellikle kadınların eviçi ve evdışındaki yaşamları bu sektörün ortaya çıkardığı koşullar üzerinden şekillenmiştir. Etnik grupların da kendi içlerinde ve diğer grupla olan ilişkilerinde ortaya çıkan bu yeni dinamiklerin neler olduğu aşağıda ayrıntılandırılacaktır.

Bu çalışma göstermiştir ki, sınır, varolduğu bölgelerde, bu bölgelerde yaşayan insanlar için avantajlar ve dezavantajlar yaratmaktadır. Bu bölgede yaşayanlar ne sadece 'mağdurdur' ne de sadece 'yararlanıcıdır'. Aynı sınır kapısı zaman zaman olanaklar yaratıp, kimi zaman da büyük olumsuzluklara ve olanaksızlıklara neden olabilmektedir. Sınırın yarattığı bu olanaklardan faydalanma ya da olumsuzluklardan zarar görme durumunda kişinin cinsiyeti, ya da etnik kimliği önemli olmaktadır. Gene bu çalışma göstermiştir ki, aynı sınır kapısı, bazı gruplar için olanaklar, diğerleri içinse olumsuzluklar yaratabilmektedir. Hatta aynı sınır kapısından bir süre yararlanan bir grup daha sonra bundan zarar görebilmektedir. Sonuç olarak sınır bölgelerinde, koşullara, zamana ve ulusal ve uluslar arası

politikalara göre deęiřebilen, çok boyutlu, çok katmanlı bir kazanma ve kaybetme dinamięi ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Hopa’da etnik grupların ve toplumsal cinsiyet gruplarının bu kazanma ve kaybetme dinamiklerini izleyebileceğimiz bir yer olmuřtur. Bu alıřmada 1988 yılında sınırın yeniden geiřlere aılmasından sonraki dönem deęerlendirilmiř ve ortaya ıkan bu yeni dinamikler etnik gruplar ve toplumsal cinsiyet grupları üzerinden ele alınmıřtır.

### **Sınır’da Etnik Gruplar**

Bu tezin temel argümanlarından biri ‘sınır ekonomisinin yarattığı dinamiklerin kendisini etnik grupların grup içindeki ve gruplararasıdaki ilişkilerinde’ gösterdiği­dir. Etnik grupların sınır bölgelerinde ortaya ıkan ekonomik yaşama dahil olma ve bu yaşamı deneyimleme biçimleri, ve bu deneyimlerinin grup içindeki ve gruplar arasındaki ilişkilerde yarattığı yeni dinamikler, sınırda ekonomiyle etnisitenin keřiřtiğı noktaları bize sunmaktadır. Bu, karşılıklı, diyalektik ve dinamik bir ilişkiye tekabül eder. Nasıl ki sözünü ettiğimiz bu grupii ve gruplararası ilişkiler sınır ekonomisinin yarattığı kořullardan besleniyorsa, aynı biçimde bu ekonomik faaliyetlerin nasıl ve hangi boyutta devam ettiğı de bu grupların ilişki biçimlerinden beslenir.

Hopa’da birçok etnik grup birarada yaşıyor olsa da, ekonomik, sosyal, kültürel ve politik yaşamda etkili olan iki grup vardır. Bunlar Lazlar ve Hemřinlerdir. Bu iki grubun kendi aralarındaki ilişkilerinde gemiřten günümüze kadar devam etmiř eřiřsiz bir yapı vardır. Aynı coęrafi bölgede yaşayan bu iki grubun eřiř bir ilişkisi olamamıřtır ünkü nerede yaşadıkları ne iş yaptıklarını ve toprak mülkiyetini belirlemiş, yaptıkları iş de sosyal yaşamlarını, ilişkilerini ve sosyal yapıdaki yerlerini belirlemiřtir. Lazlar sahilde yaşıyıp balıkılık yapmış, Hopa merkezde yerleşmiş, Hemřinler ise daę köylerinde, yükseklerde yaşamış hayvancılık yapmış

ve gerekli olmadıkça merkeze inmemişlerdir. Merkezde toprak sahibi olan ve devletle yani resmi kurumlarla içiçe olan Lazlar, köylerde yaşayan ve resmi kurumlarla zorunlu olmadıkça ilişki kurmayan Hemşinler üzerinde baskıcı/dışlayıcı ve ezici bir ilişki kurmuşlardır.

Hemşinler için, T.C'nin modernleşme sürecinin yarattığı egemen kültüre tabii olma zorunluluğunun yanında, aynı toprakları paylaştığı ve kendileri gibi egemen kültüre tabii olmak zorunda kalmış Lazların yarattığı ikinci bir baskı durumu varolmuştur uzun yıllar boyunca. Politik ve ekonomik gücü elinde bulunduran Lazlar, bu durumu uzun yıllar böyle devam ettirmiştir. 60'lı yıllarda olduğu söylenen ve ürünlerini satmak için Hopa merkeze gelen Hemşinleri, Lazların sopalarla kovaladıkları ve ürünlerine el koyduklarına dair hikayeler dışında bu iki grup arasında şiddete dönüşmüş bir olay yaşanmamıştır. Ancak zorunlu olmadıkları sürece de birbirlerinin alanına girmemiş ve birbirleriyle ilişki kurmamışlardır. Doğal işleyişinde giden süreci sınırın varlığı bozmuştur çünkü sınır çizildikten sonra hayvanlarını Batum'a götüremeyen Hemşinler, hayvancılık işi azaldıkça merkeze doğru göç etmeye başlamış ve yaşamak için yeni iş kolları bulmak zorunda kalmışlardır. Taşımacılık işine ağırlık vermeleri bu süreçte ortaya çıkmıştır. Resmi ilişkileri zorunlu kılan bu işe girmeleri Hemşinlerin merkezden olan taleplerini de artırmıştır. Yavaş yavaş merkeze doğru bir göç başlamıştır. Sınırın kapalı olduğu dönemde daha sakin ve yavaş işleyen bu süreç, sınırın açılmasından sonra, ortaya çıkan yeni ekonomik koşulların Hemşinler için daha fazla olanak yaratmasıyla yeni boyutlar kazanmıştır. Ekonomik gücü artan Hemşinler politik arenada da kendilerini varetmeye başlamışlardır. Ezen/ezilen şeklinde uzun yıllar devam etmiş bu ilişki, ekonomik ve politik olarak güçlerin eşitlenmesiyle farklı boyutlar kazanmıştır. Bugün Hopa merkezde ekonomik, politik ve sosyal olarak dengelenmiş ama birliktleştirilememiş/ bütünleşememiş ikili bir yaşam ortaya çıkmıştır.

Primordialistlere göre, etnik kimliklerin temel dayanağı kan bağıdır ve bu kimliğin varlığını devam ettirmesi kan bağıının devam ettirilmesine bağlıdır. Bu nedenle her zaman kendi içinden evlilikler yaparak grup kimliği sürdürülmeye ve korunmaya çalışılır. Bu durum Lazlar ve Hemşinler arasında da geçerlidir. Bu iki grup, aynı topraklarda yaşadıkları öteki gruba karşı varlıklarını devam ettirmek, aralarındaki sınırları sürdürebilmek için kız alıp vermekten, yani kan bağı kurmaktan şiddetle kaçınmışlardır. Bugün hala bu iki grubun üyeleri arasında evlilik sayısı çok düşüktür ve çoğunlukla kız kaçırma yoluyla evlilikler gerçekleşmektedir.

Hemşinlerle Lazların ekonomik yaşama katılımlarında meydana gelen değişimler, sosyal yaşamlarındaki dönüşümler ve birbirleriyle olan hiyerarşik ilişkilerindeki kayma, onların ilişkilerinin materyalist bir analizine izin vermektedir. Toprak mülkiyeti objektif bir durumdur, bu objektivitenin ortaya çıkardığı Lazların sahil bölgelerindeki egemenliğidir, yani sosyal ve politik olarak üstünlüktür. Bu objektif koşulda değişim olduğunda yani Hemşinler de sahilde toprak sahibi olmaya başladığında, ya da toprağı olmasa da ekonomik olarak bu güce ulaşmış olduğunda subjektif koşullarda değişmiştir. Hemşinlerle Lazlar en azından sosyal ve politik güç anlamında eşit duruma gelmiştir. Ancak kültürel yaşamdaki sınırlar varlığını devam ettirmiş üstelik yeni dışlama söylemleriyle bu sınırlar derinleşmiştir. Her ne kadar ayrı mahallelerde yaşamaya, ayrı kahvehanelere gitmeye ve mümkün olduğunca ayrı dükkanlardan alışveriş yapmaya çalışsalar da, küçük bir ilçede ve ekonomik çıkarların sıklıkla çakıştığı bir ortamda bunu yürütmeleri çok da kolay olmamıştır. Bugün Hopa'da hala Orta Hopa Lazların, Sundura mahallesi Hemşinlerin mahallesi olsa da bu durumda değişmeye başlamış, zengin olan Hemşinliler Orta Hopa'dan ev satın almaya başlamıştır. Günlük yaşamda daha çok karşı karşıya geldikçe ve aynı mekanları paylaşmaya başladıkça, bu kez mekan kullanımı üzerinden, örneğin Hemşinlerin apartmanda yaşamayı bilmedikleri, kaba oldukları gibi ya da Lazların kibirli ve ukala oldukları gibi anlatılar ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu iki grup arasındaki sınırları anlamsız bulan ve arkadaşlık kurmaya çalışan sosyalist olduklarını söyleyen görüşmecilerimizin dahi

birbirlerinin evlerine gidip gelmemeleri, henüz katedilmesi gereken çok yol olduğunu göstermektedir.

Sınırın yarattığı bu yeni yaşam biçimleri ve ilişki kurma biçimleri bu iki grubun birbirleriyle olan ilişkilerinde aile yaşamına vurgu yapılarak devam ettirilen dışlama söylemlerini de beraberinde getirmiştir. Teksas Caddesi<sup>204</sup> örneği ekonomik yaşama giriş biçimi nedeniyle ortaya çıkan yeni ayrımları göstermektedir. Görüşmecilerimizin deyimiyle ‘ikinci kalite fuhuş’un yapıldığı Teksas Caddesindeki tüm işyerlerinin Hemşinlerin elinde olması Lazların, yapılan işin niteliğine ya da daha doğrusu niteliksizliğine vurgu yaparak, Hemşinlere dair ötekileştirme söylemlerini derinleştirmelerine neden olmuştur. Bu söylemler, Hemşinlerin aile ilişkilerine yapılan vurgularla sürdürülmektedir. Lazlara göre aile hayatı zaten bozuk olan Hemşinler fuhuş işine girmiş ve bu işe girdikten sonra da aile hayatları daha da bozulmuştur.

Yukarıda da bahsettiğimiz gibi Lazların ve Hemşinlerin ekonomik yaşama katılım biçimleri farklılıklar göstermiştir. Lazlar daha çok toprak sahibi olmaları avantajını kullanarak otel, büyük şirket sahipliği ya da en azından esnafılık yaparken, Hemşinler uzun yıllardır yaptıkları işe devam ederek nakliyecilik (şoför olarak ya da nakliye şirketi açıp tır satın alarak) yapmışlardır. Lazlar zaten varolan kaynaklarını kullanırken, Hemşinler ailelerinden aldıkları maddi desteklerle, akrabalarıyla kaynaklarını birleştirerek sınır ticaretine dahil olmuşlardır. Bu sürecin grup içindeki ilişkilere etkileri birkaç biçimde olmuştur. Ticarete ilk

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<sup>204</sup> Resmi adı Dumlupınar olan caddenin Teksas Caddesi adını alması sınır kapısının açılmasından sonra gerçekleşmiş. Burası barların ve birkaç tane de otelin olduğu bir sokak. Bu barlarda yabancı uyruklu kadınlar çalıştırılıyor, yani pazarlanıyor. Burada anlaşılanlar geceye otelde devam ediyorlar. Bu barlar bodrum katlarında ve lobi şeklinde. Bu lobilerde pazarlık yapılıyor fakat fiyatlarda anlaşma sağlanamayınca sık sık silahlı bıçaklı kavgalar oluyor. Teksas caddesini Hopalı kadınlar kullanamıyor, herhangi bir biçimde bu caddeden geçmekten imtina ediyorlar. Bu sokaktaki dükkânları çalıştıranlar büyük bir kısmı Hemşinlilerden oluşuyor, Laz esnaf bulunmuyor.

başlandığı zamanlarda yaşanan belirsizlikler ve riskler, yatırılan paraların kaybedilmesine, dolayısıyla da aile içindeki ya da akrabalarla olan ilişkilerin zedelenmesine neden olmuştur. Grup içindeki ilişkilerde, çatışma diyemezsek de çözülme diyebileceğimiz bir süreç yaşanmıştır. Elbetteki bu süreç Hemşinler için köyden kente göçle başlamıştır. Fakat sınırın açılması, ekonomik hayata hızlı bir adaptasyonu ve dolayısıyla sürecin çok daha hızlanmasını getirmiştir.

Lazlar için süreç biraz daha farklı bir biçimde işlemiştir. Genellikle resmi kurumlarda memur olarak çalışan ya da uzun yıllardır esnafılık yapan Lazlar nakliyecilik, şoförlük gibi işlerden uzak durmuş, dolayısıyla sınır ekonomisinin ortaya çıkardığı risklerden de daha az etkilenmiştir. Eğlence sektörünün yoğun bir biçimde işlemeye başladığı dönemde de önemli sayıda Laz aile Hopa'dan göç etmiştir. Burada söylemek istediğim Lazların etkilenmediği ya da daha az etkilendiği değil, Hemşinlerin moderleşme süreçleriyle içiçe geçip hızlanan çözülme sürecinin Lazlarda daha önceden zaten yaşanmış olduğu ve ekonominin yarattığı etkilerin Lazlar için genellikle çekirdek aile düzeyinde kalmış olduğudur. Oysa Hemşinlerde örneğin kaybedilen paralar sadece çekirdek aileyi değil, tüm kardeşler ve akrabalarla beraber geniş aileyi etkilemiştir. Ticari başarısızlıklarla güven ilişkisi zedelenmiş, bu durum eğlence sektörünün yarattığı aldatmalar, boşanmalar ya da ikili evliliklerle yeni güvensizlikler ve çatışmalar ortaya çıkarmıştır.

Uzun yıllar boyunca yakın yerlerde ama birbirleriyle en az ilişkiyi kurarak varlıklarını devam ettirmiş bu iki grubun birarada yaşamak zorunda kalması yeni sembolik sınırları beraberinde getirmiştir. Grup kimliklerini devam ettirebilmek için Lazlar Hemşinlerin aile yaşamı üzerinden yeni etiketlemeler yapmışlardır. Lazlara göre, zaten aile yapısı bozuk olan Hemşinler eğlence sektörünün yarattığı 'ahlaksız' ilişkilere daha çok girmiş, ikili evlilikler, boşanmalar, aldatılmalar daha fazla Hemşinlerde olmuştur. Hemşinlerin, ekonomik olarak güçlenmelerine, sosyal yaşamın her alanında bulunmalarına ve aynı zamanda politik olarak da söz

sahibi olmalarına rağmen, Lazlarla aralarında yüzyıllardır varolan o eşitsiz yapı kırılmamış, tam tersine yeni küçümseme ve aşağılama söylemleriyle derinleşmiştir.

### **Sınır’da Kadın**

Türkiye’de son yıllarda artan bir biçimde kadınların eşleri, sevgilileri ya da eski eşleri tarafından öldürüldüğü haberleri yapılmaktadır. Sayıları tespit edilemeyecek kadar çok kadın ise yine aynı kişiler tarafından şiddete uğramaktadır. Can güvenliğinin bulunmayışının yanında, kadınların mağduriyetlerin bir başka boyutu ise, ataerkil sistemin kapitalist sistemle kesiştiği noktada ortaya çıkan ve kadının yaşamın ekonomik, sosyal ve kültürel her alanında ezilmesiyle, yok sayılmasıyla ve kamusal alandan dışlanmasıyla sonuçlanan günlük yaşam deneyimleridir. Bu teze inceleme konusu olan sınır bölgeleri de kendilerine özgü yaşam koşulları nedeniyle bu bölgelerde yaşayan hem yerel hem de göçmen kadınların bu mağduriyetleri fazlasıyla yaşadıkları yerlerdir. Bu bölgelerdeki göçmen kadınların ekonomik yaşamda başat bir rol oynaması (bavul ticareti ya da seks işçiliği yaparak), göçmen kadınların bu varoluş biçimlerinin yerel kadınların hemen bütün yaşam pratiklerini etkilemesi ve kapitalizmin ataerkiyle kesiştiği noktada kadın olmaktan kaynaklı yaşanan mağduriyetlerin kolayca izlenebilmesine olanak yaratmıştır. Sınır bölgesinde kadın olmak, Türkiye’nin herhangi bir yerinde kadın olmaktan daha farklı zorluklar barındırmaktadır.

Hopa’da sınırın yarattığı kaotik süreçleri en fazla hissedenler kadınlar olmuştur. Burada hem yerel-Hopa’lı kadından, hem de sınırın diğer tarafından çalışmak ya da yerleşmek üzere Hopa’ya gelen kadından bahsetmek gerekmektedir. Bu kadınların süreci deneyimleme biçimleri elbette ki birbirinden farklı olmuştur. Ancak en temelde hepsi için ortak olan ve şiddet, ezilmişlik ve yoksayılma üzerine kurulmuş bir yaşam ortaya çıkmıştır. Hem yerel kadının hem de göçmen kadının hayatını belirleyen şey ‘eğlence sektörü’ olmuştur. Seks işçisi olarak gelen göçmen kadın, bu sektörün temel bileşeni iken ve sektörün yarattığı sömürü ve

eşitsizlikten doğrudan etkilenirken, yerel kadın kocasının eğlence sektörüne girişi ve ‘öteki’ kadınla ilişki kurma biçimi üzerinden etkilenmektedir. Yerel kadının kocasıyla, ailesiyle ve çocuklarıyla kurduğu ilişkileri ve sosyal yaşamdaki statüsü yeniden belirlenirken, göçmen kadının daha somut bir biçimde ‘bedeni ve can güvenliği’ sözkonusu olmaktadır. Özellikle sınırın ilk açıldığı zamanlarda, henüz bir sektöre dönüşmemişken, sınırın diğer tarafından seks işçisi olarak gelen kadınlara karşı şiddet, dağa kaldırma, para vermeden cinsel sömürü aracı olarak kullanma olayları yaşanmıştır. Dövülme, tecavüze uğrama vakaları da ortaya çıkmıştır. Daha sonra ise kuralların konduğu, kadınların görece daha güvenli ortamlarda (oteller gibi) çalıştırıldığı bir sektöre dönüşmüştür. Bu kadınlar, üzerinden para kazanılabilir bir meta haline gelmiştir. Fuhuş, izbe evlerden, kötü otellerden daha sistematik işleyen bir sektöre dönüşmüştür.

“Eğlenmek isteyen adam kadını önce yemeğe çıkarmak, sonra diskoya götürmek, sonra da otelden oda tutmak yani gecede ortalama 500-600 lira harcamak zorunda bugün. Ancak Teksas caddesi olarak bilinen sokakta biraz daha ucuza maletmeleri mümkün. Yıldızlı otellerde ise daha pahalı” (MH\_IW-39).

Sınır ekonomisine dahil olma biçimleri yereldeki kadınla, dışarıdan gelen ‘göçmen’ kadın için çok farklı bir yol izlemektedir. Dışarıdan gelen kadın bu ekonominin ‘belkemiği’ olurken, Hopa’lı kadın bu ekonomiye dahil olamadığı gibi, bunun tüm etkilerini kendi yaşamında, eşiyle, ailesiyle ya da çocuklarıyla olan ilişkilerinde deneyimlemektedir. Özellikle daha önce köyde yaşamış, köy yaşamında söz sahibi olan ve aile ekonomisinde önemli bir rol oynayan kadınlar, şehir merkezine göç ettikten sonra, ailedeki söz haklarını büyük oranda yitirmişlerdir. Ekonomik ilişkilerde atıl duruma düşen kadınlar, ev içinde de sadece evislerini yapan, çocuklara bakan ve kocasının eve para getirmesini bekleyen bir konuma gerilemişlerdir. Çay üretimine ve köydeki diğer üretimlere bağlı olan aile ekonomisi, sınırın açılmasından sonra bu niteliğini kaybedip sınır

ekonomisine bağı hale gelmiştir. Dolayısıyla kadının çay üretimindeki emeği açığa çıkmış ama sınır ekonomisine de dahil olamamıştır.

Sınırdaki ekonomik yaşamın ortaya çıkardığı yeni yaşam dinamiklerini tartışırken, Hemşinli kadınlarla Laz kadınların süreci deneyimleme biçimlerindeki farklılıklara da değinmek gerekmektedir. Çünkü, sınırla beraber köyden şehir merkezine göç etme durumu Hemsinli kadınlar için söz konusu olmuştur. Eğitim almamış, hayatı boyunca da sadece çay ve tarla işlerinde çalışmış Hemşinli kadınların karşısına merkezde kendilerine göre daha eğitilmiş, ‘şehirli’, onların söyleyişiyle “sosyete” Laz kadını çıkmıştır. Üstelik buna bir de, sınırın diğer tarafından gelen kadınlar eklenince bu hiyerarşide Hemşinli kadın en altta kalmıştır. Eşlerinin sınır ticaretinden daha fazla para kazanması, aile ekonomisinin düzelmiş olması onların sosyal yapıda en altta olma durumunu çok da değiştirmemiştir. Sınırla birlikte ortaya çıkan ve Hopa’ya ve daha doğrusu Karadeniz sahiline genellenebilecek bir gerçeklik de, kadının içine düştüğü bu durumun, tuttuğunu koparan, güçlü ve söz sahibi Karadeniz kadını anlayışının yıkılmış olmasıdır. Elbette ki sınırdan önce kadınlar çok rahat koşullarda, evin içinde kocalarıyla eşit bir ilişki sürdürmemişlerdir ancak kadınların üretim sürecinde yer almaları onlara bazı durumlarda söz hakkı sağlamıştır. Sınırın açılması kadın için zaten çok az olan bu alanı da ellerinden almıştır. Bugün, çalışma olanaklarının olmaması, topladıkları çayın da ekonomik olarak bir getirisinin kalmamış olması bu kadınları evlere hapsedmiştir.

Çay toplayan, tarla-bahçe işlerini yapan, çocuklara bakıp, bütün ev işlerini yüklenen Hopa’lı kadınlar, geçmişte geniş aile içerisinde yine de daha fazla saygı görüyorken, bugün sarfettikleri emek ‘görünmez’ hale gelmiştir. Üstelik maddi durumu iyi olan ailelerde yaşlı ve çocuk bakımı, ev temizliği gibi işler için Gürcü kadınların çalıştırılıyor olması –eğer bir de koca dışarıda başka kadınlarla birlikte oluyorsa- kadının evde ‘anlamsız bir nesne’ye dönüşmesine neden olmuştur. Üstelik, sınırın diğer tarafından gelen bakımlı, genç, cilveli ve kocalarının her an

ulaşabileceği seks işçileriyle rekabet etmek zorunda kalmışlardır. Hem evişleri yapmak, çocuklara bakmak, çay toplamak vb. yüzyıllardır üzerlerine yapışmış kadınlık görevlerini devam ettirmek, hem de güzelleşmek, bakımlı olmak ve kocalarını memnun edip evde tutmaya çalışmak zorunda kalmışlar. Daha önce Karadeniz kadınların kendilerine bakmadıkları, yiyip-içip şişmanlayıp, çocuk doğurup çirkinleştiklerini ancak dışardan gelen kadınları gördükten sonra, kocalarını eve geri çekebilmek için giyim-kuşamlarına daha fazla önem vermeye başladıkları söylemi hemen herkes tarafından dile getirilmektedir. Üstelik erkeklerin başka kadınlarla ilişkiye girmesi meşrulaştırılırken, kadınlar için erkeği evde tutmaya çalışmak ya da başka kadına gitmesini kabul edip evinde oturmak bir zorunluluk gibi görülmektedir.

Bu kadar haksız bir rekabet ortamının bu kadar kolay kabullenilmesi acıklı bir durumdur. Üstelik bunun yarattığı sosyo-psikolojik etkilerin kadınlar ve çocuklar için çok daha derin sonuçlar doğuracağı da açıktır. Sınırın ilk açıldığı zamanlarda, çok net rakamlara ulaşmak mümkün olmasa da, boşanma oranlarında çok ciddi bir artış meydana geldiği bilinmektedir. Sınırın diğer tarafından gelen kadınlarla bu tarafta yapılan evlilikler ya da sınırın diğer tarafında yapılan evlilikler, evlilik dışı çocuklar herkesin dile getirdiği ve bugün neredeyse kanıksanmış bir durumdur. Bugün boşanma oranlarında düşüş olsa da aile içindeki ilişkilerde yaşanan çözümler devam etmektedir.

Yerel kadın için haksız rekabeti yaratan, bu hikayenin ‘kötü karakteri’ olarak görülecek göçmen kadının hikayesi ise bir başka sömürü ve mağduriyet öyküsüdür. Sınırın yarattığı ekonomik ortama farklı biçimlerde katılan bu kadınlar da küresel ekonominin ve ataerkinin kurbanı olmuşlardır. Sınırın açıldığı zamandan günümüze kadar geçen sürede, sınırı geçip gelen ve sınırdaki ekonomik yaşama dahil olan dört farklı göçmen kadın tipinden bahsetmek mümkündür. Bunlar; bavul ticareti için gelen kadınlar, evlenip yerleşen kadınlar, seks işçisi

kadınlar ve temizlik, yaşlı ve çocuk bakımı gibi eviçi işlerde çalışmak üzere gelen kadınlardır.

Sınır ilk açıldığı zamanlarda bavul ticareti olarak adlandırılan ve çoğunlukla da günöbirlik yapılan ticaret için sınırı geçen ve elindeki ürünleri satıp ülkesine dönen kadınlar hem `satıcı` hem de `alıcı olarak Hopa`daki ekonomik yaşama katılmışlardır. Bu kadınlar çoğunlukla aileleriyle beraber ve evlerindeki eşyaları satmak üzere gelmeye başlamış, daha sonra ise Karadeniz sahilinden İstanbul Laleli`ye doğru kayan bavul ticaretinin bir parçası olarak devam etmişlerdir.

Sınırın diğier tarafından gelen kadının Hopa`daki günlük yaşama entegre olabilmeksinin en önemli araçlarından birinin evlilik olduğı söylenebilir. Sınır açıldıktan sonra evlenerek sınırın bu tarafına yerleşenlere, hem sahte evlilik yapıp vatandaşlık alanları hem de gerçekten evlenip gelenleri dahil etmek gerekmektedir. Hopa`da sahte evlilik yapıp Türk vatandaşlığını alanların birçoğı Hopa`da kalamayıp çalışmak üzere daha büyük şehirlere gitmişlerdir. Nüfus müdürünün verdiği bilgiye göre, sınırın diğier tarafından evlilik yapıp gelenlerin sayısı 2004 ten sonra düşüşe geçmiştir. Çünkü, 2004 yılına kadar, evlilik yapanlar bir günde Türk vatandaşlığına geçebilmişlerdir. Bu nedenle o dönemde paravan evlilikler çok olduğunu belirten nüfus müdürü, bugün ise vatandaş olabilmek için 3 yıl ikametgah zorunluluğı bulunduğunu ve vatandaşlık işlemlerinin zorlaştırıldığını belirtmiştir. Bu nedenle sınırın diğier tarafından gelen kadınlarla evlenme oranı düşmüş gibi görünmektedir. Ancak bu noktada insanların genelde resmi evlilik yapmadan, nikahsız bir biçimde birlikte yaşadıklarını da belirtmek gerekmektedir. Sınırın diğier tarafından gelen ve evlenip yerleşen bu kadınlar için sürecin farklı zorlukları vardır. Evlenip geldikleri ailelerdeki özellikle yaşlı aile üyeler isimlerini değıştiriğ, Türkçe isim koyarak onları sahiplenmeye ya da topluma kabul ettirmeye çalışmışlardır. Ayrıca bu kadınların kendilerini aileye ve topluma kabul ettirebilmek için din değıştirdikleri de bilinmektedir.

Son dönemlerde sıklıkla bahsedilen bir başka durum ise, temizlik, yaşlı ve çocuk bakımı için sınırı geçen kadınlar olgusudur. Hopa’da artık yaygın bir biçimde evlerde çocuk ya da yaşlı bakımı için gelip çalışan ve çoğu zaman da yatılı olarak kalan Gürcü kadınlara rastlamak mümkündür. Kimileri çocukları için müzik dersleri aldırırken, birçoğu da temizlik ve yaşlı bakımı için bu kadınları evlerine almakta ve bu kadınların birçoğu bu evlerde yatılı olarak kalmaktadır. Bu durum, göçmen kadınlara karşı algıların yumuşamasını sağlayan bir ortam yaratmış aynı zamanda. Sınırın diğer tarafından gelen kadınlar, Hopa’lı kadınlar için artık “yabancı” değildir ve onları evlerinde yatıracak kadar güvenmektedirler. Oysa, sınırın diğer tarafından gelen ‘yabancı’yla kurulan bu ilişki, daha önce de bahsettiğimiz gibi yüzyıllardır birarada yaşayan Laz ve Hemşinli kadınlar arasında kurulamamıştır.

Dünyadaki başka sınırlar ve bu sınırlardaki kadınlar tartışılırken daha çok eğlence sektörüne girmiş ve seks işçisi olarak çalışan kadınlar konu edilmektedir. Hopa içinde durum çok farklı değildir. Sınır ilk açıldığında, yerleşmemiş/ kurumsallaşmamış tüm diğer sektörlerde olduğu gibi fuhuş olaylarında da bir kaos ortamı hakim olmuştur. Kadınlar sokaklarda anlaştıkları adamlarla ve izbe evlerde hatta cay bahçelerinin yakınlarındaki kulübelere birlikte olup böyle para kazanmışlardır. Can güvenlikleri olmamış ve yaygın bir şekilde şiddete maruz kalmışlardır. Birçok dağa kaldırma, tecavüz ve dayak olayı yaşanmıştır. Bir kadın görüşmecimizin aşağıdaki sözleri bunların münferit olaylar olmadığını, herkes tarafından bilindiğini göstermektedir. Buna benzer şeyler başka görüşmecilerimiz tarafından da dile getirilmiştir.

“Ölenler oldu. Bir de ne olduğunu tahmin edemediğimiz intiharlar oldu. Otel balkonlarından attılar 2-3- defa yani nasıl bir şey yaşadılar onu da bilemeyiz ama sonuçta fiili olan şeyler bunlar. Şiddetle öldürülenlerde oldu. Çoğu zamanda kim vurduya gidiyor üstelik” (ML\_IW-10).

Zaman içerisinde sınır ekonomisinin ortaya çıkardığı diğer para kazanma yolları kapanınca fuhuş da eğlence sektörünün bir parçası olarak kurumsallaşmıştır Hopa’da. Bu sektördeki kadınlar, ister kendi başlarına gelip çalışsınlar isterse de bir şebeke aracılığıyla gelmiş olsunlar, mekan sahipleriyle - otel, restoran ya da bar- stratejik bir ortaklık içinde çalışmaya başlamışlardır. Şöyle ki; bu kadınlar, para kazanabilmek, müşterileriyle buluşabilmek ve görece daha güvenli bir ortamda çalışabilmek için mekana ihtiyaç duymuş, mekan sahipleri ise illegal olarak çalışan bu kadınlara mekan sağlamış ve bu kadınlarla eğlenmek için gelen erkeklere kalacak yer, yiyecek, içecek ve eğlenecek mekanlar sağlayarak para kazanmaya başlamışlardır. Fuhuş sektörünün gündüzleri sokaklardan çekilmesiyle ve belli kurallar içerisinde yapılmaya başlanmasıyla da kanıksanıp, kabullenilmesi de kolaylaşmıştır.

Bugün, Hopa’da yaşayan kadınlarla, sınırın diğer tarafından gelen seks işçisi kadınların kamusal alanda karşılaşma ihtimalleri oldukça düşüktür. Çünkü kurallar içerisinde, belli mekanlarda, belli sokaklarda ve akşam belli bir saatten sonra yapılan bir ticaret sözkonusudur artık. Seks işçisi kadınların gittiği kuaförlere yerli kadınlar gitmemekte, mümkün olduğunca aynı dükkanlardan alışveriş yapmamaktadırlar. Her ne kadar yerel kadınlar seks işçisi bu kadınlarla iletişim kurmasa da, onlara karşı bir nefret söylemi de yoktur. Burada seks işçisi bu kadınlara yönelik yaklaşımda sol söylemle bir eklemlenme gözlemlenebilir. Bu kadınlar genel olarak çok da “kötü” algılanmamaktadır. Hemen herkeste “onlar da insan”, “öbür tarafta yoksulluk çok, mecburen bu işi yapıyorlar” gibi ortak bir söylem bulunmaktadır. Yerel kadın eve hapsediği için ve dışarıdan gelen kadında yukarıda da belirttiğimiz gibi otellerde hapsediği için bu kadınların karşılaşma ve ilişki kurma olasılıkları oldukça düşük olmaktadır. Ancak yerli kadınlar ailesindeki erkeklerin (eşinin, babasının, ya da oğlunun) bu kadınlarla kurduğu ilişkilerin etkilerini günlük yaşamlarının her alanında deneyimlemektedirler.

Laz ve Hemşinli kadınların sınır ekonomisiyle ilişkisi ve bu ekonominin ortaya çıkardığı dinamiklerden etkilenmesi dolaylı bir biçimde, kocalarının bu ekonomiye giriş biçimine bağlı olarak şekillenmektedir. Bu etkilenme biçimleri, Laz ya da Hemşinli olmaya yani etnik kimliğine ve kocasının bu ekonomik ilişkilere hangi biçimde girdiğine bağlı olarak değişmektedir. Laz kadınlar, bu ekonomik ilişkilerin sonuçlarından daha farklı bir biçimde etkilenmiştir. Çünkü, Laz erkekler toprak sahibi olmaları avantajını kullanarak büyük otel sahibi olmuş ya da zaten dükkan sahibi oldukları için esnaflık yapmaya devam etmişlerdir. Gümrük şirketlerini Hemşinliler kurmuş ya da tır sahibi Hemşinliler olmuşken, Lazlar Esnaf ve Sanatkarlar Odası başkanlığı ya da Ticaret ve Sanayi Odası Başkanlığı yapmışlardır, yani resmi kurumlarda, daha ‘temiz’ işlerde çalışmışlardır. Dolayısıyla sınırın diğer tarafına yapılan küçük ölçekli ticaretle, şoförlükle ya da eğlence sektöründeki gene küçük ölçekli işlerle uğraşmamışlardır. Fuhuş için bu mekanları işleten olmamış, dolayısıyla da Laz kadınlar bu sektörlerden sistematik bir biçimde değil, daha çok kocalarının seks işçileriyle kurduğu bireysel ilişkiler üzerinden etkilenmişlerdir. Oysa Hemşinli kadınlar için süreç tam tersine bir biçimde işlemiştir. Üstelik Hemşinli kadının sadece çekirdek ailesi değil, geniş ailesi yakın akrabaları da bunlardan etkilenmiştir. Çünkü, Hemşinli erkekler, sınırın açılmasından önce de yaptıkları şoförlük mesleğini sınırın açılmasından sonra daha da arttırmış, aile ve akraba yardımlarıyla kamyonlarını tır’a çevirerek işin sadece çalışanı değil sahibi haline de gelmiştir. Ayrıca Hopa merkezdeki daha küçük mekanlarda bar, lokanta, küçük otel sahipliği yaparak eğlence sektörünün tüm alanlarında kendini varetmiştir. Sınırın diğer tarafındaki kadınlarla hem sınırın diğer tarafında hem de Hopa’da ilişki kurmuş ve Hemşinli kadın bu kadınlarla kurulan ilişkilerin etkilerine sürekli olarak maruz kalmıştır. Sınır ilk açıldığı zamanlarda yükselen boşanma oranları zaman içerisinde düşüşe geçmiştir. Kadınlar ‘yuvalarını bozmamak’, ‘çocuklarını bırakmamak’ için kocalarını terketmediklerini söyleseler de, bir yandan da kocalarının sınır ekonomisi üzerinden sağladığı ekonomik kazançla daha rahat hayatlar elde etmişlerdir. Kandiyoti (1988)’nin ataerkil pazarlık olarak tanımladığı

ve yedinci bölümde ayrıntılı olarak ele aldığımız bu durum, Hemşinli kadının sınır ekonomisinin yarattığı bu ilişkiler içerisinde kendi durumunu meşrulaştırma biçimidir.

Hopa`da sınır ekonomisinin toplumsal cinsiyetle kesiştiği noktada kadınlar için yeni eşitsizlikler ortaya çıkmıştır. Farklı etnik kimliğe sahip olsa da, dışarıdan gelen kadın karşısında ortak bir küçümsenmeye ve aşağılanmaya maruz kalan Laz ve Hemsinli kadın, buna rağmen birbirine yaklaşmamış, birbirlerinin “ötekisi” olmaya ve hatta bu yeni ortama uygun yeni ötekileştirme söylemleri geliştirmeye devam etmişlerdir. Yerel kadın eğlence sektörünün yarattığı ortamda eve hapsolurken, dışarıdan gelen kadın aynı sektörün bir nesnesi, bedeni üzerinden pazarlık yapılan bir metası haline dönüşmüş, o da otellere hapsolmuştur.

## APPENDIX G

### TEZ FOTOKOPİSİ İZİN FORMU

#### ENSTİTÜ

Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

☐

Uygulamalı Matematik Enstitüsü

☐

Enformatik Enstitüsü

☐

Deniz Bilimleri Enstitüsü

☐

#### YAZARIN

Soyadı : Akyüz

Adı : Latife

Bölümü : Sociology

**TEZİN ADI:** ETHNICITY AND GENDER DYNAMICS OF LIVING IN BORDERLANDS: THE CASE OF HOPA-TURKEY

**TEZİN TÜRÜ :** Yüksek Lisans

☐

Doktora

☐

1. Tezimin tamamından kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

2. Tezimin içindekiler sayfası, özet, indeks sayfalarından ve/veya bir bölümünden kaynak gösterilmek şartıyla fotokopi alınabilir.

☐

3. Tezimden bir bir (1) yıl süreyle fotokopi alınamaz.

☐

**TEZİN KÜTÜPHANEYE TESLİM TARİHİ:**