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**Fishery and Politics in Turkey:
The Case of Fisheries Sector in Istanbul**

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**Türkiye’de Balıkçılık ve Siyaset:
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**Fishery and Politics in Turkey:
The Case of Fisheries Sector in Istanbul**

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ABSTRACT

This study is a field study on the small-scale fisheries of the Bosphorus, which are facing difficult times. It emphasizes the need to analyse the fisheries from a socio-economic framework rather than ecologic or biologic anxieties. This is achieved by discussions on fisheries economy theory and the question if the commons are destined for inevitable depletion due to their nature. The usage of the commons is examined by how they fall into the hands of the consumption trend of capitalism from the 1950s and evolve to neoliberal approaches in sake of sustainability in the 1980s and finally the European sanctions of 2014. It is discussed if the collaboration of fishers offers a solution or not. All these theories have been considered in light of meetings held with a group of small-scale fishermen for the sake of investigating the Istanbul case. Furthermore, experts have been consulted who have been doing research on the same.

During the time frame of this study, 15 fishermen, who have been doing inshore fishing all their lives in the Bosphorus, have been consulted and it has come to light that the ecological crisis is not only happening due to the erroneous usage of the commons, but due to the corruption of fisheries in multiple different aspects. This corruption can be explained by the lack of inspections due to the lack of policies of the state. Undervaluing the role of the small-scale fisheries in the fisheries sector and not accepting them as actors of the industry results in future anxiety amongst the fishers and pushes them to the predisposition of 'saving the day'. In this uninspected process, middlemen, who control the market in unethical ways and businessmen who possess enough capital to finance troll fishing emerge as a result of state conniving. Furthermore, the real creators of tragedy are the authorities that realize the worth the resources hold and use them for their benefit. Therefore, it is crucial to work in harmony with the fishers.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma İstanbul Boğazı'ndaki bitme noktasına gelen küçük ölçekli balıkçılar üzerine bir alan çalışmasıdır. Balıkçılığın ekolojik veya biyolojik kaygılarla değil, sosyo-ekonomik bir çerçevede incelenmesi gerektiğini vurgular. Bunu da balıkçılık ekonomisi teorisini ve müştereklerin doğası gereği, kaçınılmaz bir şekilde yok olmaya mahkûm olup olmadığı iddiası üzerinden ele alır. Müştereklerin, kapitalizmin 1950lerde ortaya çıkan tüketme perspektifinin, 1980lerden itibaren neoliberal bakış açısıyla sürdürülebilirlik açısından yeniden şekillenmesini ve Avrupa'nın 2014 yılındaki yaptırımlarıyla inceler. Bu süreçte balıkçıların beraber hareket etmesinin bir çözüm olup olmayacağı ele alınır. Tüm bu teori, İstanbul'u incelemek adına, bir grup küçük ölçekli balıkçı ile gerçekleştirilen buluşmalarla incelendi. Aynı zamanda konu hakkında çalışma yapan farklı unvanlarda uzmanların görüşleri alınmıştır.

Çalışmada hayatları boyunca İstanbul Boğazı'nda kıyı balıkçılığı yapmış 15 balıkçı ile görüşülmüştür ve ekolojik çöküşün, sadece kaynakların yanlış kullanımı ile ilgili değil, aslında balıkçılığın birçok yönde yozlaşmasıyla ilgili olduğu sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Bu yozlaşma, devletin bir balıkçılık politikasına sahip olmaması ve buna bağlı olarak denetlemedeki zayıflığı ile açıklanabilir. Küçük ölçekli balıkçıların balıkçılık sektöründeki rolünün küçümsenmesi, hatta bir aktör olarak kabul edilmemesi onları gelecek kaygısı içine sokar ve günü kurtarma eğilimine iter. Bu denetimsiz süreçte ayrıca, piyasayı etik dışı şekilde kontrol eden kabzımallar ve trol avcılığı yapabilecek kadar büyük sermayelere sahip tüccarların ortaya çıkması ve onlara devletin göz yumması sonucu ortaya çıkar. Ayrıca, kaynakların kendi içlerinde çok büyük bir değer taşıdığını farkedemeyen yönetenlerin, onları çıkar odaklı kullanması asıl trajediyi yaratandır. Bu nedenle balıkçılar için beraber hareket etmek önemlidir.

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CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Özet	ii
Acknowledgements	iii

CHAPTER ONE/

INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Aim of the Study	1
1.2 Methodology	3
1.3 Delimitations of the Study	6
1.4 Literature Review	7

CHAPTER TWO /

UNDERSTANDING FISHERIES UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF <i>THE COMMONS</i>	11
2.1 ‘Wonderful Consumption’ of Capitalism during 1950s and Polanyi	14
2.2 Two Crucial Perspective from Gordon and Hardin	19
2.3 "State property as a form of open access"	29
2.4 Position of Small Scale Fisheries	33
2.5 The Light at the End of the Tunnel: Fisheries Co-Management	35
2.6 Ostrom’s Protestation to Hardin	37

CHAPTER THREE /

EUROPEAN PRACTICES OF FISHERIES	46
3.1 European Fisheries Before Plunge Year 2014	47
3.2 Why was the CFP in 2014 different?	52
3.3 Sustainability with Fixed Profit: West Coast of Ireland.....	56

CHAPTER FOUR /	
FIELD STUDY WITH	
SMALL-SCALE FISHERMEN IN ISTANBUL.....	64
4.1 Why Do We Consider Istanbul?	64
4.2 Upper Crust of the Fisheries Sector	67
4.3 The Bane of the Bosphorus Fishermen’s Life: Middlemen	71
CHAPTER FIVE / CONCLUSION.....	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	94

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

"We are not ready to suspect any person of being defective in selfishness."

Adam Smith, 1817

1.1 Background and Aim of the Study

In the 1970s, an American economist begins a study on a small group of fishermen in Alanya. What catches her attention is a recently escalated debate: new fishermen are throwing their nets where the other fishermen would do so since many years and this naturally ignites disagreements. Resources are used more, and usage right claims begin at sea. A solution is required to end this irregular order because the seas are the only income for the small-scale fisheries of the region. First, the old and new get together under the same roof. Following democratic methods, they come up with a simple solution: specific locations¹ and individual fishermen are given numbers and a selection by lot is made. For the first location, fisherman number one is entitled to fish on the first day, fisherman number two the second day and fisherman number three the third day and so on... Basically, every fisherman gets the chance to fish at every location once per round and accepts their luck for that specific day in that specific location. They fish whatever is available. The American economist, Elinor Ostrom, builds and exemplifies on this case and turns it into an economic model. This model –which we have simplified quite a bit for the time being- creates a brand-new perspective to the never-ending debate of the commons, in the meaning of co-management and self-govern. The Nobel Committee in Economics is to be congratulated for recognizing Elinor Ostrom "for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons" in 2009.

The commons – or in other words common property- has been defined by a number of scholars in numerous different ways. The current version, however,

¹ These locations called ‘ağlak’ in Turkish.

has been in use for quite some time now and is universally accepted. What cannot be agreed on is how the common properties should be used, or in other words, shared. The discussions deepen when talking about the seas. The sea holds more actors than hundreds of species of fish and fishermen of different capabilities. There is an overfishing crisis in many parts of the world. This is not a crisis only about the biological anxiousness that puts the destruction of aquaculture in its core. The fisheries sector is also a mirror to the economic and social welfare of a state.

As a reporter, towards the end of 2017, I decided to write an article on "The fish of Istanbul that decrease in size but increase in price". For a reporter residing in Istanbul, this was a dull title, an ordinary and not very worthwhile one. Truthfully, I wanted to get this winter-routine article out of my way in a couple of hours and pursue other opportunities. I was planning to observe some auctions, hear out a few fishermen and gather the opinions of a couple scholars. That was it!

This ordinary title turned out to be so special that it pushed me all the way to writing an academic paper on it. I realized that the Turkish fisheries sector housed a market where one could read the balance of powers of Turkey. The discomfort of every individual that had some ties with fish was that the fish never came first. To fully comprehend the problem, it was necessary to look at the Istanbul fish markets, the fish stalls or look into observations of scholars who claim, 'Istanbul's seas have become bare.' In the Bosphorus, overcapitalization was a must for the survival of fishermen; the market was overwhelmed with degradation and the irregularity of it was a bottomless pit. This proved that 'fishing was more than just the fish.' Even though small-scale fisheries may seem to be part of co-managements and cooperatives, in reality, they struggle with the problem of not being recognized by higher authorities of the state.

Although the aim of this thesis is rethinking small-scale fisheries in Istanbul with a focus on degradation, lack of inspection and irregularity with an

academic perspective and despite the fact that ecological crisis, endangered species, biological and geographic anxieties were primarily evident, above all, in fact a socio-economic crisis was encountered. If I am to evaluate my study in overall, I have to say that it is built part upon a combination of theories about the commons and part a very detailed field study. This study will contribute to the literature of small-scale fisheries by looking into their dynamics within the commons perspective and by inviting the main actors of the subject, the fishermen, under the lime light by means of comprehensive field work. I have interpreted the reflections of the theoretical framework on the small-scale Istanbul fisheries.

1.2 Methodology

In the first part of my paper, I will get into detail about the commons. I believe that, it is impossible to evaluate the fisheries sector of Istanbul without gathering a wide perspective of understanding on the commons. I will focus on essential two papers when the commons are concerned; *The Economic Theory of a Common-Property Resource: The Fishery* (1954) by H. Scott Gordon and *Tragedy of the Commons* (1968) by Garrett Hardin. Both of these studies were shocking at the time they were first published but count as quite influential today. I will work through Gordon's claim that if the fisheries sector were not handled from an economic perspective, it would turn into an unsustainable, depleted of resources, unprofitable loss. I will also examine in detail Hardin's arguments that the commons will be destroyed because they are commons and that overpopulation is the biggest enemy it will ever have. I will explain how and why they both conclude to suggest the understanding of restricting access to the resources and privatizing commons under state control. I will also share their contemporary supporters and convey their developed arguments.

In the second part, I will examine co-management, which utilizes the idea of working under the same roof and is based on collaboration. I will research in a theoretical manner why, since Gordon or Hardin, a solution to the degradation of fisheries sector is yet to be found. At this point, I will try to understand if small-scale fishermen are attached sufficient importance to. I will pinpoint how the states' lack of communication with fishermen has negative effects. In light of Ostrom's, a supporter of co-management, Alanya research, I will seek for the answer to question 'can fisheries be saved by co-management' and reveal that the Alanya case is an exception and creating the exact same order elsewhere is a utopia. However, the eight principles that Ostrom pulls out of the Alanya example are greatly important and hope inducing in terms of a co-management idea.

In the third part, I take on European fisheries practices. Every European country has its own experiences about this issue. A general title as 'Fisheries in Europe' is not sufficient to address such a subject. Furthermore, the awakening of Europe and the progress it has made between the 1950s and 2014 is worth mentioning. I will go through this process in parallel to Bresnihan's researches and the references that he makes to his country Ireland from time to time. However, it is not possible to make a direct comparison of fisheries in Istanbul and Ireland. There are vast differences between the factors that make up the fisheries sector like the regularity of fishing, fisheries history and market behavior. Although a full comparison will be misleading, there are some similarities in small-scale fisheries.

In the fourth part, with my field study, I will focus on Istanbul under in the frame of all these theories. First, I have visited Gurpinar Seafood Market three times in approximately six-month intervals. I had the opportunity to briefly chat with the fishermen returning from sea. I observed the premises and boats, both small-scale and trawler. Then, although I have not conducted a formal interview there on the spot, the fishermen that I have met there introduced me to their

colleagues and I completed a three sessions-based fieldwork in their own environments, the fishing port and the fishermen's local coffee house in Uskudar. I listened to the experiences of around 15 Istanbul based fishermen whose ages ranged from 25 to 70. My interviews were semi-structured. During all three meetings, the interviewees did not strictly follow a formalized list of questions. The one with the least experience had been in the business for 10 years. In one of these get-togethers, I met with a cooperative manager Erol Domac and one of Istanbul's most known fisherman Mesut Soydaner. I will only share a few names due to the circumstances of the sector that they work in.

Chosen from the Istanbul area, 15 fishermen that are actively fishing in the Bosphorus have shyly answered every question in one-on-one interviews. For this reason, all the interview sessions have been conducted as roundtable discussions. This way, they felt less anxious. Interviews and meetings have been held between December 2017 and April 2019. This long run has in return helped us to get used to each other.

Additionally, we roamed the fish stalls with Defne Koryurek, a cook, founder of Fikir Sahibi Damaklar, the Turkish leg of the 'slow food' movement that flourished as a protest against 'fast food' and ecology activist who since more than ten years has been researching about the fisheries crisis. We talked about what is being displayed on the stalls, the side of the story that is visible to us. Finally, I had a conversation about lack of inspection at sea and scientific fishing with Istanbul University Faculty of Aquaculture Dean Prof. Meric Albay, who is a supporter of scientific methods in regards of fishing.

I must state that this is the first academic study that is drafted by this method. There may be other works or articles that take on the fisheries crisis in the Bosphorus or Marmara Sea from the perspective of overfishing and overconsumption. However, although the two basic issues may have been

discussed over various viewpoints, it is important to approach the topic in light of the commons.

I focus on fishery policies and Istanbul fishermen in parallel but do not limit this thesis to Ostrom, Mansfield, Bresnihan, Pomeroy and Williams' or even Polanyi studies on small-scale fisheries and co-management. Following a perusal on macro and theoretic debates, I turn to Istanbul for a microanalysis.

1.3 Delimitations of the Study

Due to the lack of Turkish studies about the topic, field study is an important aspect of my paper. Furthermore, because the limited Turkish literature only has looked into the topic as aquatic products and marine science till date, my studies from time to time got congested.

Moreover, there is a good number of publishing on the commons in western literature. I have tried not to disengage from Hardin and Gordon to be able to show the extent of degradation of the Istanbul fisheries by reminding myself that its chaotic order in reality is a socio-economic crisis. Therefore, this study puts Gordon and Hardin to the center but has no intention to neither praise nor reject them in conclusion and benefits from the ideas of the two scholars from the wild capitalist and consumption era, in an attempt to interpret a contemporary situation.

Another missing link towards the knowledge of the economy of fish, use of commons and property rights and the political importance of fisheries in Istanbul is academic research. It is not possible to refer to a study that deciphers fishing as a political phenomenon and a tool that may be used to encrypt the power balances of the government. It is for this reason that I have decided to focus on interviews in my paper.

It is a challenge to complete a comparative work when the fishermen of small-scale fisheries are subject. Even though I study the European practices from Bresnihan's Ireland analyses, I have to say that, I do not make a comparison. I will later elaborate why this comparison is not possible. However, shortly put, especially the state relations and recognitions in both cases are completely different. Due to the fact that they have access to oceans, it may be possible to compare them to the fishers in the Black Sea or Mediterranean coast of Turkey. But for the 15 fishermen who I have met with, who have never sailed passed the border of the Bosphorus, this is not possible. For this reason, the European practice is not a comparative work. It is important, however, that for the first time in European fisheries history, they sincerely confront their issues and an advanced state of recognition is achieved.

Throughout this paper, it should always be kept in mind that Istanbul is a bordered area. From time to time, the topic may seem like a generalization of the Turkish case but the dynamics -especially troll fishing and co-management- in the Aegean and Black sea region are totally different.

1.4 Literature Review

Countless studies have been made about the fishing industry within fields such as seafood or geography. On the other hand, there are very few studies that analyze the fishing industry in conjunction with political debates. There are only a handful of papers published about the relationship of the fishing industry with governments, the relationship of fisheries and power or papers analyzing the political economy from the fisheries point of view. There are sources about the EU's fishery politics and the place of fisheries in Turkey's EU harmonization process (Birceyudum 2015; Cakabey, 2005), however, there is a lack of studies

about how fisheries are sculpted in Turkish politics or how big scale industrial fisheries connect with the government.

Western sources study the topic under the titles of use of commons and property rights. The debates of how and by whom the seas, oceans and their ingredients, the fish can and should be consumed are prominent. (Mansfield, 2001, 2002; Dietz, Dolsak, Ostrom and Stern, 2002; Steelman and Wallace, 2001; Jentoft 2007) The reason this aspect of the field shows prominence is because the catch as much as you can principle in fishing was first proven to be a big mistake around 60 years ago. So, the process of limiting and controlling overconsumption comes with debates such as how the commons should be used and distributed, who is authority, is the privatization of the commons an ethical tragedy or a necessity. (Gordon, 1954; Hardin 1968) At the same time, the commons, privatization and the market triangle have reflections over society. Although this triangle in theory, might seem like a well-built scenario, it may very well cause possible social crackdowns under the rule of profit and market-based government policies. (Polanyi, 1944)

On the other hand, it is noticeable that "fisheries and management" issues as listed above have started coming up under the title of neoliberalism since the 1990's. It is being discussed that neoliberal policies, being aware of the overfishing problem, show a reformist approach in line with developing technology. (Mansfield, 2001, 2002; Howard, Campling, 2012) It is possible to read this transformation of fisheries over the existing policies of the EU. This new approach towards the fishing industry asks the question "how can the sea be more profitable" not from the environmentalist but from the economic profit perspective and ignores small scale fisheries. Neoliberal policies are equally as far as "outmoded" capitalism to rights-oriented approaches and their main objective is to have preeminent control over the marketization process. (Bresnihan, 2016, 2017)

Another point that stands out is the collective movements of fishermen. What has been later added to the literature as co-management of fisheries originates generally in the 1980s. Although co-management proves to be important in terms of sustainability, efficiency and equity, its primary mission is to preserve the presence of small-scale fisheries. (Pomeroy and Williams, 1994; Mansfield, 2001; Schumacher, 1973; Greenpeace 2009, Barnes, 2006) Fisheries co-management is what I would like to thoroughly study as it is an entity able to raise its voice against rich and powerful incorporations who are in close contact with the governmental groups. (Ostrom, 1990; Berkes 1986) As per Pomeroy and Williams, co-management is not "a panacea for fisheries management... It has a limited guarantee of success." (1994, 5)

Literature shows that after the year 2000, European policies begin sanctions and limitations towards the fisheries. Deterioration done to the ecosystem throughout decades of erroneous governing of fisheries are now attempted to be reversed by harsh limitations and quota systems - specifically after 2013. What is unclear is if these new measures are aiming to protect the fish, the fishermen or profit driven entities. However, the EU, from the limitations brought by neoliberalism, sees the seas not as commons but as capital resource. It is still unclear what the EU sourced solutions such as the CFP, which was established after the 2000's, the discard ban and ITQ are really contributing to and how sincere they are. (Bresnihan, 2016, 2017; Griffin 2014)

In order to comprehend the fisheries of Turkey, one must know the phases that Europe has gone through. This is so because Turkey is currently experiencing what Europe left behind in 2013. Hence, it would be accurate to say that currently irregular fishing and the lack of scientific data is causing the desertification of the seas. However, evaluating the situation only from the perspective of ecological anxieties or geography will not render the whole picture as discussed by Hardin, Gordon and Bresnihan.

In the EU, prior to the sanctions in 2013, it was unclear in which state the fish population really was as fishermen were forced to discard fish in order to avoid fines for exceeding their given quota. Scientists were only able to gather useful data once the discard was banned and fishermen were encouraged to bring back all of their catch and cooperate with scientists. Turkish scientists are facing similar problems today. Due to a high amount unrecorded trade for numerous reasons, scientists are unable to paint a clear picture of the underwater population. Although sufficient data is not available, as per the study of the Turkish statistical institute, many fish species have decreased by 50% in number over the last 15 years. Due to the data scarcity Türkiye İstatistik Kurumu, Turkish Co-operative Fisheries Organization, Turkey Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry etc. data belong to different years.

There are some studies on the co-management of fisheries in Turkey. Mutual conclusions of these studies are that a state led management is lacking and local co-operatives do not even have the right of audience. (Unal and Yercan, 2006; Dogan, 2016; Okan and Okan, 2013; Knusder, 2004) The weakening of Turkish interest in the naturalization process towards EU has seriously harmed the fishery sector. However, the fishery business in Turkey is a deeper topic than it seems. It exceeds the wish of feeding fish to the future generations. In Turkey, the fisheries sector is an economical power, which is neglected by the government, a victim of unrestraint, which is deteriorating day by day. I must underline that; in my field studies I observed a recognition problem especially towards the small-scale fishers. Therefore, I believe putting an interview-based study on paper will contribute as enlightenment and awareness towards this issue.

CHAPTER TWO / UNDERSTANDING FISHERIES UNDER THE UMBRELLA OF *THE COMMONS*

*Society is indeed a contract between those who are living,
those who are dead, and those who are to be born.*

Edmund Burke (1792)

It needs to be understood that step by step and slowly the commons are becoming no longer everyone's property and that its a transformation period from tribal boundaries to individual. When the commons are the issue, the history brings us astonishing examples. Barnes exemplifies some historical example of them; "In Roman times, bodies of water, shorelines, wildlife, and air were explicitly classified as *res communes*, resources available to all. During the Middle Ages, kings and feudal lords often claimed title to rivers, forests, and wild animals, only to have such claims periodically rebuked. The Magna Carta, which King John of England was forced to sign in 1215, established forests and fisheries as *res communes*." (2006, 15)

Thomas Malthus, for sure, is one of the most referenced names for scholars that are involved in discussions about the commons. His work "*An Essay on the Principle of Population*" got published in the year 1789. His work has become highly influential and opened doors to new discussions. According to Malthus, who considered himself a political economist, not the biological scientist, there is a strong difference of ratio in which population and food increase; under the proper conditions of a society, population increases faster than the amount of nutrition resource. Therefore, from time to time a decrease in food per capita occurs. In a mathematical basis, Malthus explains this as: Population, increases in a geometrical ratio. (Like 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, ...) On the other hand, subsistence increases, at best, only in an arithmetical ratio. (Like 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, ...) (reprinted in 1998, 4) Some individuals in the population might decrease from scarcity. However, this is all about balance and equilibrium of the nature.

Malthus has seen this as the development of the theory of natural selection, rather than any kind of injustice.

As per Malthus, humans possess the urge to constantly search for new resources in order to provide for themselves and their family. Individuals in a society will not have the opportunity to "live in ease, happiness and comparative leisure [without] anxiety about providing the means of subsistence for themselves and [their] families." (1998, 5) At the same time, with this dynamic, he claims that no society "can live in the midst of plenty." The problem is not the scarcity of resource, nature, although at a slow pace, regenerates itself. The problem is the fraction issue amongst individuals. For him, it is impossible to create a sustainable administration of property, which will end all discussions and adds that, "selfishness will be triumphant." In such a situation, not only the ordinary people, but also the intellect will go out of control (1998, 57)

Although inspiring, just like today, it is not possible to say that Malthus dominated the state of mind of his time. Bresnihan makes a reference to Thomas Huxley's "Great International Fishery Exhibition". He claims that Huxley's statement that "All the great sea fisheries are inexhaustible; that is to say that nothing we do seriously affects the number of fishes" is one of the widely accepted ideas of the 19th century. (Bresnihan, 2016,10)

As much as the agony and crisis that Malthus has foreseen has yet to unleash for 230 years, the sustainability problem of the resources and overuse of the common values are concrete problems to discuss. For sure, optimism such as Huxley's is also far from reasonable.

It is important to study the commons in light of Gordon and Hardin, for they had expressed pessimism about the sustainable management of the commons as natural resources in the midst of the golden era of capitalism. Although their approach towards the commons may seem rebellious, they are based on Aristotle. Aristotle's statement "which is common to the greatest number has the least care

bestowed upon it. Everyone thinks chiefly of his own, hardly at all of the common interest; and only when he is himself concerned as an individual" is proof to how early concerns regarding the commons appear (Politics Book 2/Part 3, 350 B.C.E) It should also be pointed out that both authors reference Malthus in their studies.

It is only natural that everyone would want to benefit the most from a source that is seen as a common value. Overuse is therefore inevitable in such a situation. From this point rises the problem of sustainability in the commons. In theory, every individual can assess required usage and self-restrict as per the availability of the common resource or common land. Surely a sustainability problem would not emerge in such a case. Here lies the dilemma. Simply put, if one sets a limit for yourself but the other individual does not, you will not equally benefit from the source. The rational move to make would be to maximize the immediate benefit. On the other hand, our resource usage methods today are not as simple as the prototypical model. Social welfare is directly linked with economical movements and the usage of commons, which have become an active driver of the market today, are dependent on the policies of governments and the concept of privatization and commons are often talked about in solitude.

Throughout history, these dynamics have made commons the victim of market and interest groups despite the different dominant economic perspectives. It might seem like the main reasons of its own devastation comes from its own structural definition. If we are looking for a remedy for the commons issue today, we need to understand how wild capitalism contradicts the usage of commons and also how the neoliberal economy is dependent on it.

The sustainable management of the commons has been under discussions for a long time. On the other hand, the passion of these discussions is always varying depending on the period. As stated in the beginning of the chapter, it is, for instance, not smart to compare today with the Roman times. However, it is important to refer to the 1950s on discussions about the – especially, seas and

fisheries – commons because that was the golden age of consumption. And in this situation, tolerance towards limits of nature certainly was not an intriguing or paid attention to. Up until Gordon and Hardin. Although these two breaking points face strong opposition today, they managed to become two important works that developed into wake up calls for the time they were published.

2.1 ‘Wonderful Consumption’ of Capitalism during 1950s and Polanyi

In order to understand the discussions about commons, it is necessary to take a look at the issue from the 1950s. Western governments were very proud of capitalism in the 1950s. The high consumption-based market setting of the time has created serious issues against the commons because due to its definition, it is open to misuse and overuse.

From the 1950s, the consumption approach of a society was a crucial factor of capitalism. Davies and Ward connect this to the increasing production following the World War II. This productivity reduced the unemployment rates. Salaries were high; especially high for jobs that no one was interested in doing. It was a new time of welfare for qualified employees. This class spent their so-called ‘free time’ consuming even more. It is said that this class gravitated towards conspicuous consumption. (as cited in Akturan, 2015, 40)

The consumption culture that flourished in the 1950s was named as "Pop Hedonism". Bayhan explains this era as when the consumption culture normalized the expressionist lifestyles by the excessiveness of the right here right now principle. However, the more important observation is that narcissistic and extremely selfish personality disorders began surfacing in the consumption. (as cited in Akturan, 2015, 40)

Most certainly, it is not possible for this approach to pass up on the commons. Capitalism naturally did not spare such an easy picking source. Things got even worse for the fisheries sector in particular due to difficulties of collecting data and unpredictable nature; fish was a source that could be easily gathered with minimum effort for high profit. But was there an end to the fish in the sea? Who was entitled to catch which fish? How much, when and how were they supposed to be caught? As answers to these questions remained unanswered, competition escalated. The competition was based on greed for money, only the concerns of the market were regarded, not the tolerance limits of nature or the continuity of fish as the main actor of the sector.

On the other hand, in order to understand the greedy market and economy approaches of the 1950s, Karl Polanyi's *The Great Transformation* from 1944 should be referred to. Polanyi argued, back at that time, that the market system and the liberal model that it put forward was utopic and contradictory to itself. Although his works do not directly involve the commons or mention fisheries, he does advocate that the society would become disembedded in states that are capitalism oriented.

Polanyi's most important argument was that the market and the market society, with the aim of economic gain and world domination, is imposed on the society disregarding the risk of damaging its social equilibrium and semantic values, as a political project. 'The place of economy in the society' was Polanyi's primary element.

In contrary to Hardin and Gordon, who are the two pioneering scholars of this thesis, Polanyi's general frame of mind is humanist and people oriented. Polanyi states that all ideologies must serve a single purpose only and that purpose is the happiness of the people. In this regard, Polanyi states that economical goals only are worth as much as they serve the happiness of people and are embedded into social relations. It is also important how Polanyi uses the

word 'embedded', which he frequently refers to. "Instead of economy being embedded in social relations, social relations are embedded in the economic system. The vital importance of the economic factor to the existence of society precludes any other result." Polanyi states and adds that although economy should embed itself into social relationships, the exact opposite is observed; social relationships have been embedded into economy. (Polanyi, 1944, 101)

Hence, social relationships are values that should be placed in the center of all political and economic acts and be given the highest priority. What matters is society and its people. Economic benefits or power relations must be shaped according to people and not the other way around. The usage of the commons, when looked at from the perspective of Polanyi, should not be considered as a source of profit, but rather a social value. I mean, the commons cannot be designed according to the economy; they must be conformed as per social requirements. Surely, this might seem like a utopia. At this point, it is necessary to mention Polanyi's most important hypothesis in his *The Great Transformation*, a point that is essential in terms of the commons and the market relation. As per him, the economy of the market has not emerged naturally and on its own. On the contrary, it is a 'political project' that by various corporate tweaks presents labor, land and money as commodification tools. Market liberalism and economic globalization are actually political issues with tragic consequences. (Polanyi, 1944)

The market has become a system that has freed all economic activities from social control and is operating according to its own rules. This is a system that contradicts to human nature and is impossible to survive for long without harming the social structure. Therefore, the commons entering a commodification process is not natural but an economic and political subject. Moreover, the states institutions are actors that are working for maximum profit. None of these consider the society priority and focus on the economy. But the society suffers greatly as a result of this situation.

A reminder that I must make is that *The Great Transformation* begins with the statement “Nineteenth-century has collapsed”. As per Polanski, the effort to isolate economical relations from the social relations in the nineteenth century was a mistake and every market that disregards the society and operates as per its own rules is destined to collapse. Polanski, who refers to historical facts in order to explain how the market system has collapsed, shows that economical relations have not been independent from social relations but rather the exact opposite, entwined to social relations, by referring to pre-capitalist societies and even primitive economies. Removing the link between economic relations and social relations that have been connected for centuries and assuming economic relations can operate on its own terms was an unnatural configuration and the creation of this unnatural structure emerged together with its own collapse: "Our thesis is that the idea of a self-adjusting market implied a stark Utopia. Such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society; it would have physically destroyed man and transformed his surroundings into a wilderness." (Polanyi, 1944, 3). The future of the market is not bright. But how will the society respond? Society cannot remain oblivious to the shattering effects of such an establishment and will try to protect itself, which in return will only create more commotion: "Inevitably, society took measures to protect itself, but whatever measures it took impaired the self-regulation of the market, disorganized industrial life, and thus endangered society in yet another way. It was this dilemma which forced the development of the market system into a definite groove and finally disrupted the social organization based upon it." (Polanyi, 1944, 4)

As per Polanyi before the emergence of the market, countermovement was defined by economical behaviours and these behaviours came from within social relations (Halperin, 2004, 264). A market that operates as per its own rules is so detrimental that, before its own collapse, it causes the society to divide into economic and social levels. However, institutions that operate incommunicatively

with other segments of the society are in reality a misinterpretation as the economic order is only a function of the social order and is embedded into it.

All societies have markets but this does not necessarily involve the market violently capturing everything valuable, as the society should be the actor to draw boundaries to the market. However at this point the economical order is only a function of the social order. Polanyi states that the economic system being abstracted and fixed on distinct economical targets is extremely dangerous and harmful towards social values and resources.

The existence of the state, international regulations or other economic assumptions is not enough for the market economy to operate. A market economy can only be existent within a market society. A market society is where all productive values such as labor, land and money are defined. However, for Polanyi, this definition that seems to be proper in theory has serious issues because labor, land and money are not meta. These are natural norms that societies and people that live in societies live by and nothing else. Pulling them into the mechanism of the market means pulling the essence of the society into the reign of market rules: "Labor, land, and money are essential elements of industry; they also must be organized in markets; in fact, these markets form an absolutely vital part of the economic system. But labor, land, and money are obviously not commodities; the postulate that anything that is bought and sold must have been produced for sale is emphatically untrue in regard to them." (Polanyi, 1944, 75) With his own words, Polanyi continues to elaborate the reason for this view as: "Labor is only another name for a human activity which goes with life itself, which in its turn is not produced for sale but for entirely different reasons, nor can that activity be detached from the rest of life, be stored or mobilized; land is only another name for nature, which is not produced by man; actual money, finally, is merely a token of purchasing power which, as a rule, is not produced at all, but comes into being through the mechanism of banking or state finance. None of them is produced for sale. The commodity description of labor, land, and money is entirely fictitious." (1944, 76) Commodification of the land and labor means

people becoming dependent on the market in order to survive. One cannot speak of a social peace and a socio economic order in such a situation.

Some may see Polanyi as a fortune-teller, as his analysis from over 70 years ago still continues to be surprisingly accurate today. All around the world, as the markets continue to grow, societies look for different ways to swim upstream as a result of their dissatisfaction towards the market, that choses to operate by its own rules and tries to push the people and their needs away from the focal point of the system.

2.2 Two Crucial Perspective from Gordon and Hardin

In 1954, Gordon Scott wrote a paper, which would later become a cornerstone of this subject. It is a staggering piece of work; taken into consideration the circumstances of the time it was written. The aim of Gordon's critical paper was "economic theory of natural resource utilization as it pertains to the fishing industry" (1954, 124) with his own words. Gordon constructed his literature directly from the fisheries point of view but added that his theory could also be interpreted for fields such as oil or agriculture.

Gordon stated loud and clearly that fisheries are not solely about fish but are an economic actor. According to Gordon, fisheries sector must be evaluated within theoretical economic researches. What he specifically insisted on was that if the sustainability of fisheries is to be maintained, then rather than focusing on biological or geographical researches, economic data and economic anxieties should be in the foreground of debates.

"Many others, who have paid no specific attention to the economic aspects of the problem have nevertheless recognized that the ultimate question is not the ecology of life in the sea as such, but man's use of these resources for his own

(economic) purposes" Gordon says and critics, even though there was a few number of publications about economic considerations in the biological literature, It was not possible to find analytical integration of the economic factors. (1954, 124)

The influential work of Gordon explains that the overfishing problem stems from the ineffective organization of the industry. He criticizes that the fisheries managements that prioritize the number of fishes landed and "taking as the human objective of commercial fishing the derivation of the largest sustainable catch" is the reason for this inefficiency. (Gordon; 1954, 128)

Gordon's claims are, "the fish in the sea are valueless to the fisherman, because there is no assurance that they will be there for him tomorrow if they are left behind today" and so, every fisherman wants to catch fish as many as possible today. This save-the-day approach makes the sustainability of the fisheries sector impossible. This anxiety, on the other hand, is the anxiety about the fisheries sector disappearing from being a part of the economy. Therefore, Gordon, models the fishing industry with an economic theory and a scientific point of view. He focuses on, "the effect of fishing effort (the quantity of fish harvested from a fishery) on ecologically sustainable yields as well as calculating the economic results of varying levels of effort." (Dietz, Dolsak, Ostrom, Stern; 2002, 8)

There is a need to explain Gordon's theory in depth. In the 1950s, Gordon, together with Schaefer, created an economic model for calculating the ecologically sustainable yield of fisheries that would be made useful as reference for many new studies and fisheries management since. Basically, as per the model, in a newly discovered fishing source, the yield quickly increases as the source is fruitful and fishing is effortless. At this point, fishers can increase their efforts and benefit from even more yield. However, Gordon has also identified a point of maximum sustainable yield. Simply put, once the efforts of the fishers become so high that they begin pulling more fish out of the sea than the

reproduction speed of the fish, slowly the population of the fish will decrease and therefore the fishing activity will not be sustainable anymore. Continued high efforts of fishing will not only result in even lower population of fish but because the density of fish in the sea has decreased, a lower profit per given effort is inevitable.

For Gordon, for successful and continuous operation, all fisheries managements should aim for any amount of harvesting equal to or below the maximum sustainable yield. As I have stated before, the point that Gordon focuses on is the fact that the bettering of economic factors in fisheries management are the key to sustainability and socio-economic welfare. However, one must also keep in mind that every source has its own limit and fishers must respect this limit in order to benefit from it without destroying it. Gordon insists on the model of privatization because he thinks only a single owner could determine what's best for his resource. When users increase, due to competition, it becomes inevitable to exceed the maximum sustainable yield and overfishing results in fish massacre.

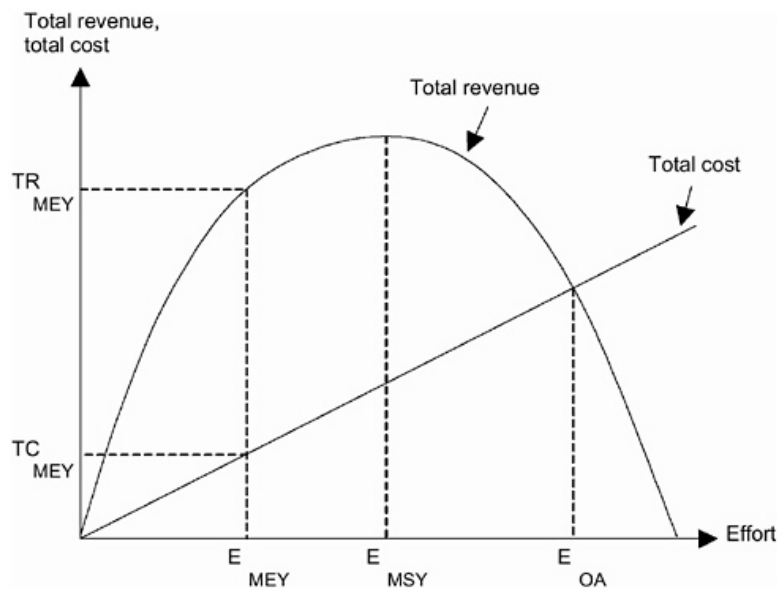


Figure 1: Relationships among fishing effort, cost and revenue²

Total revenue, TR; total cost, TC; level of fishing effort; E; maximum economic yield, MEY; maximum sustainable yield; MSY; open access, OA. Profit is revenue minus cost and is represented by the vertical distance between the total revenue and total cost curves at any particular level of effort.

It is not for nothing that Gordon numerous times states that fisheries will disqualify as a sector and become a diminishing source if not taken over with an economic perspective. He places the fishermen in the center of the debate and not the fish. The reason the fishermen are put under the limelight is due to the fact that they are the necessary actors in the creation of a sector of aquaculture. The inequalities between the fishermen who are in an endless struggle for increased benefit, the greed that the inequalities cause and the competitions that will result from this greed are the main components of the economic concerns of Gordon. "fisheries can be affected by good and bad years... The fish population is entirely unaffected by the activity of man", he claims, pinpointing that neither the fish nor the environmental conditions are the primary concern. (Gordon, 1954, 126) Thus, what can be controlled is to turn our focus back to the source itself. The fishermen

² Source of graphic: (Townsend and Wilson, 1987, 317) as cited in (Dietz, Dolsak, Ostrom, Stern; 2002, 18)

that will win in this competition will be the ones who use their resources in the most efficient manner. Gordon, who writes "the only fisherman who becomes rich is one who makes a lucky catch or one who participates in a fishery that is put under a form of social control that turns the open resource into property rights", summarizes the out of control and unregulated status of the seas as "everybody's property is nobody's property." (Gordon; 1954, 135)

If Gordon's era should be taken into account, with the current neoclassic economic model, the exploitation of the oceans and seas under the influence of growing capitalism was nothing but inevitable. The fisherman is not in a long-term result-oriented setting in a fisheries sector not governed by an intrusive and top down authority. The main goal is to act faster than others and land the highest possible catch. For more profit, naturally a higher capital is necessary. Capital in the fisheries sector consists mainly of new boats, new fishing nets and new technological innovations making it possible for the team to catch more fish in less time with less effort. Hence, competition in fisheries is more than just a lucky catch or being in the right place at the right time. Gordon states that in case fisheries are continually seen as common property, economic inefficiencies will start occurring. This will, most definitely, cause a crisis in terms of social welfare; hence a boomerang effect will eventuate.

With the support of new technologies, every fisherman wants to collect a larger piece of the pie and shapes their investments accordingly. Mansfield names this process as overcapitalization. It is clear that as technology advances, the overcapitalization of fisheries will increase and the competition that will follow will be fatal. Mansfield, who shares Gordon's point of view, explains that "This then drives increasing capitalization and effort as fishers compete for ever diminishing fish and profits, and so on. It is impossible to have an efficient and environment friendly industry for a common property resource" (2003, 315) and identifies the situation as a dilemma. She adds that as long as fish is a profit instrument that can be transformed to currency, the access nuisance will always be

a hot topic in discussions. Rights of property, re-spoken of for the first time in 48 years, is put forward as a solution. As per her, in the crisis that is to happen, the fault is not of the fish or the fishermen, it is the lack of privatization.

Although Gordon refrains from directly defining concepts like privatization or property rights, he mentions the need of economic restrictions and interference. In consequence, Gordon claims that the fisheries market should be led by economists. He argues that a rational scheme where the resources are used correctly is also to the benefit of biology and geography. In short, the analysis of the economic actions in the fisheries sector should be given top priority for the well being of the fish population.

Gordon classifies as anxious and a pessimistic but result oriented in his literature on fisheries and commons. Hardin, who follows Gordon's footsteps, on the other hand, has a slightly different stance. Hardin's famous paper, "Tragedy of the Commons", that was published 15 years after Gordon's work, resembles an apocalyptic scenario. As per Hardin, the commons will destroy itself the sooner or later. There is nothing people can do to change this destiny. Technological advancements or technical solutions will only help to delay this predestination as the real problem is the increasing human population and that they have no intention of stopping reproduction.

Hardin's work, which at first glance seems shocking but still is a centerpiece, is actually influenced by the literature of Lloyd written in 1832. Lloyd, who is a political economist, began researching how the pastures in England used as common land could be regenerated. His starting point was marked by the question "Why are the cattle on a common so puny and stunted? Why is the common itself so bare-worn, and cropped so differently from the adjoining inclosures?" (reprinted in 1980, 482) Lloyd concludes that the usage of commons today would result in overuse in the attempt of maximizing benefits. The basis of his statement comes from an assumption; there is no guarantee that

the fraction of what an individual can benefit from today, will still be there tomorrow.

Hardin's ideas might seem to have drifted apart from Lloyd, or even far from reality. However, "Tragedy of The Commons" has been used as reference, either as supporting or opposing material, in an endless range of fields involving in discussions around common place, common property and common resources. The statistics that show data before Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons" may prove the importance of this work. Before "Tragedy of the Commons" was published, titles such as "commons", "common-pool resources", or "common property" appeared only 17 times in academic literature published in English. Between 1996 and 2000, 573 new articles appeared on the commons., according to an analysis. (Dietz, Dolsak, Ostrom, Stern; 2002, 6)

As per Hardin, the trouble of increasing population to the commons is not a secret. People are aware of the situation, but instead of halting reproduction, they tend to search for new common resources as solution. Hardin, who states "people who anguish over the population problem are trying to find a way to avoid the evils of over population without relinquishing any of the privileges they now enjoy. They think that farming the seas or developing new strains of wheat will solve the problem – technically", argues that none of the societies have a rate of zero birth rate or no one would confess that the birth rate has come to the optimum rate and quit reproducing. (1968, 1243) This population problem is the greatest enemy of the commons and, in a very pessimistic way; Hardin claims that the inevitable end is a tragedy.

It is not a coincidence that Hardin uses the word tragedy instead of devastation, termination or any other similar word. He utilizes mathematician and philosopher Whitehead's definition of tragedy at *Science and the Modern*. It says, "the essence of dramatic tragedy is not unhappiness. It resides in the solemnity of the remorseless working of things... This inevitableness of destiny can only be

illustrated in terms of human life by incidents, which in fact involve unhappiness. For it is only by them that the futility of escape can be made evident in the drama." (1948, 17 as cited in Hardin, 1968, 162) That's exactly how Hardin structures his theory and named it as "Tragedy of the Commons."

Hardin tries to explain this idea with a metaphor of herdsman. According to him, a rational herdsman has a tendency to add another animal to his herd one after the other. There is no limit for his desire. At the end of it, therein is the tragedy: "This is the conclusion reached by each and every rational herdsman sharing a common. Each man is locked into a system that compels him to increase his herd without limit—in a world that is limited. Ruin is the destination toward which all men rush, each pursuing his own best interest... Freedom in the commons brings ruin to all." (1968, 1244)

Although Hardin exemplifies "Tragedy of the Commons" from Herdsman's literature, when capitalism is in question, he does not separate between a village or city, just as he does not separate between fisheries or agriculture. Hardin claims that individuals, in all circumstances, will put their own interest before the interest of the society they are a part of and that factors such as education will only be a temporary fix to the everlasting problem. For him, a solution that would run through generations is not to be found.

As per Hardin, if a solution is to be found, personal interests need to be obstructed from different perspectives. Although he proposes a solution called "recognition of necessity", he emphasizes that these must be in low population density. What Hardin refers to as necessity are the coercions to be implemented for the commons to be restricted. Similar to Gordon, although he does not specifically describe privatization as we know of today, he states that the commons are left behind as a result of increasing population and lose their significance if restrictions are not to be enforced. Hardin criticizes mankind, "as the human population has increased, the commons has had to be abandoned in one

aspect after another" and goes on, "we abandoned the commons in food gathering, enclosing farm land and restricting pastures and hunting and fishing areas. These restrictions are still not complete throughout the world." (1968, 1243)

Hardin claims that the commons will reach their potential if they are restricted. Hence the lack of regulation has left the commons to become derelict places. With the increasing population, it has become impossible to govern the commons. For example, he has explained that the commons are being used as waste disposal locations. Despite the current regulations, Hardin says, automobiles, factories, insecticide sprayers, fertilizing operations and atomic energy installations, pollute the air, water and land.

Hardin emphasizes the importance of restrictions and the necessity of them. On the other hand, contrary to Gordon, he does not only describe privatization or the right to own private property when discussing restriction and enclosure. What he rather wishes to pinpoint is the necessity of abandoning the commons in breeding. Hardin who believes "freedom to breed will bring ruin to all", argues that the instruments designed to influence large audiences, what we know of today as mass media, is responsible for this undesired situation. "Freedom is the recognition of necessity"³ says Hardin and continues that being able to sincerely confess that this is a necessity that would set us free. What does 'freedom' mean according to Hardin? He offers his explanation in a very simple way. "When men mutually agreed to pass laws against robbing, mankind became more free, not less so." Thus, restrictions are the key for freedom. Just as the restrictions enforced on the commons increase their value and life span. Hardin views the population crisis from precisely the same perspective. Humankind must see the necessity of abandoning the freedom to breed for ending the crisis he calls tragedy of the commons.

³ Hardin refers to G. W. F. Hegel here. However, it belongs to Friedrich Engels. The German original is "Freiheit ist Einsicht in die Notwendigkeit."

Mansfield believes that Gordon and Hardin must be read in regards that rational individual behavior poses a serious threat if property rights with strict boundary rules are not defined. He also links the development of neoliberal market understanding and the growth of privatization to the level it is today to this basis. In other words, if the neoliberal market lacked its natural desire to expand and property boundaries were not as strictly controlled as they are today, individuals would find courage to use any chance to benefit from the commons and in result deteriorate the resources within. Also "importance of privatization (is) central to the birth of social science approaches to fisheries and concerns about control over and access to oceans." Neher, who sees economic efficiency as the most important actor of social welfare summarizes the situation as: "rights-based fishing offers an economic alternative to the political process." (as cited in Mansfield 2004, 316)

Summing up this section, it needs to be emphasized that Hardin and Gordon's works are two important tools for the commons theory, the fisheries policies all around the World and understanding the situation of the fishermen in Istanbul.

Gordon's claim that the fisheries market should be led by economists most certainly is not an approach for protecting the nature or increasing the fishers' welfare. However, it can be said that where the resources are used correctly, this will also be to the benefit of biology, geography and such. He states that the returns of a properly functioning order will be from many different areas. Also, placing the fishermen in the center rather than the fish is at least a beginning. Yet, his primary goal is state intervention, privatization. He mentions achieving hundred percent efficiency from resources. He presents this idea with, a logically very well-prepared theory, the graphic that I have shared above.

Hardin's statement that the end of resources will come, and that tragedy is inevitable is shocking. Although his criticism about human reproduction and that

births need to stop can be considered marginal, what he says about access to resources is important. Hardin, who I like to call neo-Malthus, claims that with "Tragedy of the Commons", the resources will lose value and that efficiency can only be possible if the resources are restricted. This efficiency later led to a series of new discussions. These discussions are about the argument that the biggest problem of the resources is not Tragedy of the Commons, but "Tragedy of Open Access."

2.3 "State property as a form of open access"

Parting from the idea that the seas are commons, started when countries first began claiming usage rights for their inshore territories. Mansfield names this situation that continued from the 1950s to the 1980s 'territorial control'. During this time, although open seas remained open access for all, coastal states dominated their respective shorelines. But after 30 years when their owners claimed all inshore waters, the coastal states became interested in increasing their territories even further. Eventually, this strategic desire of expansion at sea that originated inshore and expanded offshore, found itself to be a form of property rights. For instance, in the early 1980s, approximately 30% of the world's oceans and the 95% of the world's fishing was already defined as state properties. (Mansfield, 2004, 316, 317)

Although, at first glance, limiting the access might seem contradictory to neoliberal understanding, from Mansfield's point of view, the limitation is actually a form of expansion. For her, the political enclosure is the expansion of state control and governance and does not represent a limitation. Mansfield claims that in this setting, the individual states step up and claim control over open access seas, for the higher benefit of fisheries managements to later make designs for new property management. Hence, when the sea is the subject of matter,

privatization actually begins first with state control and then builds up from there step by step.

As per Bresnihan, the restricting approaches advised by Gordon and Hardin do not have a change of success in today's neoliberal order. The reason for this is that the institutional modelling, which is based on privatization with government decisions and non-negotiable state regulations, ignores the local groups and limits the individuals' economic self-interests. On the other hand, members of this kind of local groups used to keep exploiting common resources with a collective action or individually. This order is failure, it has been understood that sharp interventions have not been successful. Bresnihan states that the key factors of neoliberal governance are turning into 'governing access rights' and allowing the capacitating collective movement of individual resource users. In short, he talks about a controlled liberation. (Bresnihan, 2017, 9)

The co-management idea may cause states to make less profit or may cause some ideas to emerge that are not to its benefit. However, co-managements or cooperatives should still be encouraged because at the end of the day, they will ensure a more controlled use of the stocks. So, the stocks will be controlled and protected by local groups and states will not be required to show any effort. This is the golden key to a neoliberal economy. (Bresnihan, 2017, 9-10)

By the 1980s, it was possible to find references to Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons" publication in nearly all papers about the commons. This situation also created a back-fire against pessimistic approaches to the subject like Hardin or Gordon has. The main argument of the opposing approaches is that in many parts of the world, some local groups of people, villagers or tribes, have actually managed to create a sustainable and efficient usage of commons. They claim that social rules and cultural norms can be used as tools in managing resources instead of privatization of legal enclosing. In other words, especially when the seas are concerned, rather than the prejudice that leaving the commons unattended would

cause economic disaster, they believe that the commons are actually the solution to its own problem. At this point the idea of community is highlighted. (Mansfield, 2004, 318) However before detailing the ideas of community and cooperative management, it is crucial to understand how the opposing ideas define the source of the problem.

If the approaches after 1980's do not see the commons as the source of the problem due to its nature and definition, then what might have been the problem? Mansfield explains that the researchers take on the problem from the 'power relations' aspect. Power relations refer to the debate on by whom and how the resources should be used. As a result, whoever is more powerful or rational will be a step ahead of the others. Arrangement of the commons is actually an arena where the powerful show who they are. Hence access to the commons is actually the source of the problem. (Mansfield, 2004, 318) Ostrom believes that overfishing is directly related to the access issue. She states that the wrong methods in the restriction of open access are the root cause of the problem. (Ostrom, 2000) This stance, also, criticizes the works of Hardin and Gordon who do not separate open access from common property.⁴

Up until these studies, the commons were always considered as areas where individual interests always dominated and the contrary was out of question. Open access debates, on the other hand, searched for the answer to who should have access to them rather than considering the commons as the problem itself. Bresnihan separates himself from these two approaches and shows his difference by discussing top-down management and directly mentioning privatization. Both approaches are restrictive and share the anxiety of overuse but describe the reason of the problem differently. (Bresnihan, 2017, 2) Both approaches do not reject the idea that the commons are an economic actor. Mansfield even states that in open

⁴ Mansfield explains it, "researchers define common property as that which is owned and controlled collectively, and distinguish it from that which is now owned and controlled by anyone (open access)." (2004, 318)

access situations, behavior is governed by economic rationality. (Mansfield, 2004, 319)

According to Mansfield, although it is now necessary to look at the issue as ‘tragedy of open access’, the necessity of property rights still is the solitary solution, just like it was for ‘tragedy of the commons’. At different times, access to the common resources can be redesigned with different logics, with different goals. For instance, it may even purposefully allow some groups to benefit more from the resources than others. Although this might seem unfair, in reality, at the end of the day, evaluations will always be made as per the market-based resource relations. (2004, 319) But how open will the access be and how will this be determined? At this point it is necessary to once more again make mention of community and cooperative management.

As we have discussed, property rights debates have different approaches towards the usage of the commons. However, all of these approaches are concerned with economic rationality and again all offer solutions with the focus of enclosing the commons. At this point the question is how this closing⁵ will take place. We have talked about the fact that there are different types of privatization: individual or collective. It is clear that analyses from the 1950s take self interest and individuals’ personal decisions as the defining factor. On the other hand, opposing views state that factors like communication, trust, cultural sharing and common future anxiety are too precious to be left out in fields like people-oriented economy and social sciences. Hence it is thanks to these dynamics that although from time to time the commons go through difficult times, they never end in tragedy. (Dietz, Dolsak, Ostrom, Stern; 2002, 4)

It is still strongly debated how successful the approach of intervention and restriction is against the "Tragedy of the Commons." It is evident that

⁵ The word closing is used in similiar meaning to restrict, limitation, enclosure and in sometimes even to privatization.

governmental pressure is not enough alone; an overfishing crisis is still being talked about in many parts of the world and still there is not a solution to the degradation of fisheries sector problem since Gordon or Hardin. Why? We are going to return to this when looking deeper into the Istanbul case, but this void can be filled if local communities and governments can share responsibility. I refer to an exchange of knowledge and a 'dynamic partnership'. This partnership, "using the capacities and interests of the local fishers and community, complemented by the ability of the state to provide enabling legislation, enforcement and other assistance." (Pomeroy and Williams, 1996, 6) This partnership is also a 'fishers jointly manage the fisheries' order rather than a top-down enforcing system. Furthermore, "fisheries are consulted by the government before regulations are introduced to those in which the fishers design, implement and enforce laws and regulations with advice from the government." (Pomeroy and Williams; 1994, 7)

The degradation of fisheries is not an issue that can be solved from the office alone. Fishermen, who are distant to bureaucracy and sit at the bottom of the food chain, must be involved in this process. In other words, the fishermen are a huge economic part and a key factor of social welfare. Is the role of the small-scale fisheries directly proportional to their income? Or do they, just like a puzzle, come together in small pieces to form a greater entity? Answers to these questions must be given with focus on the importance of small-scale fisheries despite the earlier academic literature custom of seeing them as a group affected by their environment.

2.4 Position of Small-Scale Fishermen

The small-scale fishermen sit at the bottom of the food chain, but I will emphasize that they make up the foundation of the fisheries economy. Pomeroy and Williams who explain, "Small scale fisheries are embedded in larger aquatic

resource, and in social, economic and political systems" claim that small-scale fishers struggle with low social status, low income, poor living conditions and little potential influence. As per scholars, this is the key reason for the degradation problem that has been debated for long. If they are integrated into the system, resource conflicts may be diminished. (Pomeroy and Williams; 1994, 2) It can clearly be said that, policies of nationalization or privatization could not solve degradation problem or overfishing, at the same time "these policies have deprived many small-scale fishers of their livelihoods." (Pomeroy and Williams; 1994, 6)

Bresnihan emphasizes that neoliberal management looks down at fisheries. At this point, far from being cooperative, their attitude is rather arrogant. Bresnihan gathers support from Pinkerton and Davis when he claims, "critiques of neoliberal fisheries management thus tend to focus on and challenge the reductive depiction of fishers as profit-motivated economic agents and the negative social and economic impacts of privatization." They also agree that neoliberalism's attitude towards small scale fisheries is as if it is the only possible solution and add that "disconnect that often occurs between neoliberal policies and the local knowledge and practices that usually characterize small-scale fisheries." (Pinkerton & Davis, 2015, 308) Therefore, neoliberalism has integrated into the system that it is a must for the small-scale fishers just as Hardin convinced everyone for decades that the commons would be destroyed without privatization.

According to Pomeroy and Williams, in the many parts of the world, "rights to common property resources are all that separate the poor from destitution." (1994, 4) Especially when fisheries are involved, for those who do not have a steady income, the sea is a very important common. This fact needs to be thoroughly considered when making new economic regulations. Otherwise, it very likely will damage social welfare. But how will it be possible to consider the fishermen? The answer to this question will most certainly point to cooperative management; the intersection of governments and fisheries. The successful bond

is dependent on fieldwork. Meaning to say, small-scale fisheries and the government must have contact. These are efforts to explain that 'one-size-fits-all' types of solutions would fail to succeed. Institutions are required to step up and be flexible so that they can continuously adapt to the socio-economic realities directly on site and not from their office desks. Bresnihan calls this type of management that causes degradation in fisheries, 'top-down management'. (2017, 3) As a result of such poor management comes the critiques on top-down privatizations as previously discussed. He emphasizes that without getting your hands dirty, it is impossible to solve fisheries problems from the office desk.

2.5 The Light at the End of the Tunnel: Fisheries Co-Management

Many papers about the commons have referred to Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons" from a wide range of fields. In these studies, the main argument of the opposing scholars is that local people can use the commons without draining the resources, in a form of order for a very long period of time. Those opposing Hardin, rather than believing that leaving the commons unregulated would result in economical failure, argued that commons actually the solution to its own problem. They formulized this theory in light of how successful local people could use the commons as community and cooperative management. The goal here is to limit economic rationalities with social practicalities and the establishment of institutions to intervene in the access problem. (Mansfield, 2004, 319)

The World Bank emphasizes the importance of leaving the usage and the control of resources to local units in a regular order. This statement does not directly refer to the word-by-word definition of cooperative management. However, it does show a great deal of sympathy. "Governments need to recognize that smaller organizational units, such as villages or pastoral associations, are better equipped to manage their own resources than are large authorities and may

be a more effective basis for rural development and rational resource management than institutions imposed from the outside" (1992, 143). In the neoliberalism world, there is a popular opinion that, in units, cooperative management can be a good alternative to management. Cooperative management can be seen as "...in which people's ability to design institutions for resource use and allocation is harnessed to the specific goals of contemporary resource management." (Mansfield; 2004, 318) Mansfield's view is that fishermen function in groups as individuals. This can also be interpreted as the key to having a strong voice comes from moving in collectivity.

According to Bresnihan, on the other hand, community-based resource managements have a structure that supports neoliberal rationalities. This management type is not an alternative against neoliberalism. "Community-based resource management can replicate and extend dominant neoliberal rationalities. By assuming that individuals will degrade and ultimately destroy common resources unless subject to norms and regulation appears to reproduce the basic assumption of the 'tragedy of the commons' narrative." (2017, 3) But it is necessary to point out that Bresnihan refrains from making negative criticisms towards this situation. The important point of this subject is the position of fishermen in this system. Bresnihan sees co-management as the best possible way for fishermen to adapt to the system and not find themselves as an opposition movement.

Bonnie McCay, during her research on Pollack fisheries, realizes the benefits that cooperatives have on fishermen. McCay, who is pro cooperative management for the economic operation of open access, also calls this community management because instead of trawlers fishing in solitude, an agreement had been made defining how many fish can be caught and in which order in a collective way. For sustainability, she argues that the access to the commons should be left to these groups. She sees the common rights that have been identified for them as the basis of the network she calls community management.

This will be the key to basic privatization and as a result, with the proper competitive environment, sustainability will be achieved. (as cited on Mansfield, 2004, 324)

To move as a group is not as easy as McCay illustrates. In community-based management, from time to time, how the individuals will be organized may cause issues. There might be disputes about allocation of catch or distribution of tasks. When commonality, commitment and compliance is ignored, the community is harmed. Pomeroy and Williams explain that the communities have their own effective elimination system that is utilized at such times: "Most common property regimes are based upon the exclusion of certain potential users. The entire community, sensing security of tenure and enjoying some of the benefits from access control, will actively take responsibility for monitoring and enforcement." (1996, 5) The fishermen are expected to behave this way for the sake of sustainability.

This point very closely resembles a so-called ying-yang; both self-interest and collective movement are considered. Shortly said, fishermen negotiating with the government in reality will not create a stance against neoliberalism. On the contrary, it will strengthen the government and not put sacrifice privatization.

2.6 Ostrom's Protestation to Hardin

The only possible way for the local fisheries to enhance their capacities to the maximum is to work in union. Solving this problem by creating co-managements or cooperatives is relatively easy in theory. But how much is it practically possible? I will talk about the Alanya fishermen that created their very own system nearly 50 years ago, from Ostrom's material. Part of Ostrom's masterpiece *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* refers to Alanya. Ostrom wrote about the system that she witnessed in the

1970s. Certainly, especially after the 1980s, the political atmosphere and economic dynamics have changed in all parts of Turkey. But the Alanya case still stands as an inspiration and is one of Ostrom's strongest examples against Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons".

Ostrom's work that has earned her the Nobel Prize, *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* and the numerous papers she has written about the field of commons since the 1950s, brings a new and opposing point of view to the subject. It is also possible to say that her work can be classified as promising. She created this hope by working shoulder to shoulder, in the field, with especially fishermen from many different parts of the world. It is first necessary to understand how and why Ostrom became the strongest opposition against "Tragedy of the Commons." In order to do this, referring to a few points in her important text *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* is needed.

Ostrom is a scholar that values individuals. When referring to individuals, not only should the consumers come to mind, but also the fishermen. As per Ostrom, the current restricting policies that are being implemented in order to prevent degeneration of the commons, has a faulty foundation in terms of its idea of individuals. This faulty foundation assumes that individuals that use the commons are helpless in regards of destroying the resources they benefit from, inevitably prepare their own end and that all this destruction that happens is their own fault. (2008, 8) She believes that individuals, who she chooses to name as users from time to time, have increasable capacities and states that "I would rather address the question of how to enhance the capabilities of those involved to change the constraining rules of the game to lead to outcomes other than remorseless tragedies." (2008, 7). The main criticism at this point is that the individuals who have been regarded as kings from the time of wild capitalism in the 1950s, all the way to the neoliberalism of today, are now seen as pawns. They deserve more credit.

The common term for Ostrom's whole work is the 'common-pool resource.' She defines CPRs as: "a natural or man-made resource system that is sufficiently large as to make it costly (but not impossible) to exclude potential beneficiaries from obtaining benefits from its use." (2008, 10)

In her critical text, Ostrom mainly gets two main findings out of her work: first one is, "neither the state nor the market is uniformly successful in enabling individuals to sustain long-term, productive use of natural resource systems." (2008, 1) At second, collective action increases the returns from the appropriation efforts. (2008, 38) These thoughts may seem shocking when current neoliberal policies are concerned. Especially when all commons have been captured, including the seas, and there is not a single common resource usage area left where governments are not involved. However, the fact that there is not a place in the world where fisheries policies have achieved success, explains Ostrom's stubbornness about co-management. Throughout her studies, Ostrom criticizes Hardin for exactly this point. She repeatedly emphasizes that "Tragedy of the Commons" is not a solution-based piece of literature. Privatization, restricting governmental sanctions or top down imitations are not solutions. Hardin's principles need to be abandoned. Creating a privatization process that begins with governmental regulation for the sustainability of the commons will actually be the real reason for the tragedy. As per Ostrom, the idea that created the foundation of "Tragedy of the Commons" has uncontrollably grown for decades in this fashion. These ideas have first taken over scholars and then governments under influence and established the perception that central control is the sole remedy and that local administration would emaciate local resources.

Ostrom is not anti-privatization, but a scholar who prioritizes co-management. She believes that it is the states' work to construct the environment where fisheries can build co-management systems. "Institutions are rarely either private or public - 'the market' or 'the state'". Many successful common-pool

resource institutions are rich mixture of 'private-like' and 'public-like' institutions defying classification in sterile dichotomy." (Ostrom, 1990, 14)

Ostrom has made close contact with fishermen in many parts of the world. She is a powerful scholar who builds the most solid foundation for the opposition of Hardin. In *Governing the Commons, The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, her articles and her speeches, she refers to the Alanya case. For her, it is a very strong case for the whole world because she sees Alanya as "a theoretical alternative to centralization or privatization as ways to solve common-pool resource (CPR) problems. Let us now briefly consider a solution devised by participants in a field setting -Alanya, Turkey- that cannot be characterized as either central regulation or privatization." (1990, 18) Ostrom argues that, units of local fisheries may break their chains and leave their inherent dilemma, or they repentantly suffer and fall into a death trap. Therefore, Alanya is an example that destroyed the commons dilemma.

Ostrom explains us the Alanya prior to the 1970s from the observations of Fikret Berkes. He mentions a small inshore fishery consisting of around 100 fishermen of groups of 2-3 per boat who use only specific types of fishing nets. Almost half of the fishermen are members of the local cooperative. Berkes talks about the years following the 1970s as 'the dark ages' that vicinity. Berkes gives details about economic viability of the fishery of Alanya and put the most risky two factors, which upsets the balances. "First: unrestrained use of the fishery had led to hostility and, at times, violent conflict among the users. Second, competition among fishers for the better fishing spots had increased production costs, as well as the level of uncertainty regarding the harvest potential of any particular boat." (1990, 19)

Right at this point where the problems arise, the members of the local cooperatives get together. There are fishermen in the cooperative who have been at sea since generations as well as new fishermen who are interested in benefitting

from the commons that are open for all. The process is concluded with a series of regulations. We will later return to these regulations of which Ostrom speaks of as good examples. To begin with, the timeframe and fishing locations are very sharply defined. Zones are adjacent and it is important to know the boundaries. The movement of fish is respected, and reproduction is not obstructed. The fishers move as per the fish. The rules are also valid for the non-member fishers of the co-op. These regulations that have been agreed on in the beginning of the 1970's is summarized by Berkes as below.

1. Each September, a list of eligible fishers is prepared. Consisting of all licensed fishers in Alanya, regardless of co-op membership.
2. Within the area normally used by Alanya fishers, all usable fishing locations are named and listed. These sites are spaced so that the nets set in one site will not block the fish that should be available at the adjacent sites.
3. These named fishing locations and their assignments are in effect from September to May.
4. In September, the eligible fishers draw lots and are assigned to the named fishing locations.
5. From September to January, each day each fisher moves east to the next location. After January, the fishers move west. This gives the fishers equal opportunities at the stocks that migrate from east and west between September and January and reverse their migration through the area from January to May. (Berkes 1986, 73-74).

This system that the local fishermen created, for Ostrom, is a system that prevents overfishing by giving every fisherman the chance to fish in the most efficient spot, with enough time. In a system like this, there is no threat of overcapitalization. The situation explained by Ostrom, "the process of monitoring and enforcing the system is, however, accomplished by the fishers themselves as by-product of the incentive created by the rotation system". On the other hand, the

government is only involved in the process when the locations in Alanya are being selected for fishing. So, it can be said that the state is a supporting actor and a controller. There already is a list of fishing locations, which was made by fishers on their own by debates. "The list of fishing locations is endorsed by each fisher and deposited with the mayor and local gendarme once a year at the time of the lottery." (1990, 19-20) Enforcing of the rules, are left to the fishers on their own.

But will there not a be spoilsport in this system? Will all fishermen obey the rules? How will they be punished if they do not? This s a good opportunity to reminiscence the example of how cooperative members who act inappropriately are excluded in Pomeroy and Williams' study. Ostrom and Berkes bring this theoretic statement into Alanya's case. They claim that every other member protects the rights of each member of the cooperative management or co-management. In such cases, they explain, the fishermen gather at the local coffee house and solve their own problems themselves. (Berkes 1986b, p. 74 as cited in Ostrom; 1990, 20).

Ostrom suggests that all small-scale fishers around the world in national and international levels can enjoy this very basic order. So, she lists eight principles for a successful process in creating a sustainable common-resource pool and recompenses for her sustainability efforts.

1. *Clearly-defined boundaries.*

There should be a powerful exclusion for external, ambiguous and non-descript parties. There cannot be a privileged community of benefit. Not only Ostrom but also Pinkerton and Weinstein state about the importance of this issue. With their own words, they say, "Exclusion of outsiders from fishing space was the main mechanism used by the villagers to control fishing effort. This is one of the most common and universal mechanisms found in community-managed inshore fisheries." (1995, 25),

2. *Congruence between appropriation and provision rules and local conditions*

Local fisheries themselves depending upon their needs should describe the rules. Provision of rules can be chanced labor, material, money etc. Accordance should be a key factor. Cox, Arnold and Thomas describe this order with a historical practices in Peruvian irrigation systems: "Under normal conditions farmers are given water sufficient to cover the requirements of their fields, a proportional allocation with Inka antecedents... when water scarcity threatens, this principle is modified and actions are taken to ensure that each household has access to a subsistence minimum." (2010, 8)

3. *Collective-choice arrangements*

Ostrom states, "most individuals affected by the operational rules can participate in modifying the operational rules." (1990:90) Decisions should be made following debates and arrangements. As many people as possible should be involved in decision-making. So, it can be criticized in the name of democracy.

4. *Monitoring*

Accountability and observation are important to assess if members of a cooperative are following the rules or not. Pinkerton and Weinstein point out many times the importance of environmental monitoring in their articles. According to them, it is not peeking on the members or bothering them but the gathering of information about the conditions of the allocated CPRs.

5. *Graduated sanctions*

Contravening the rules or abuse of the commons must be graduated. This is the only way to create resentment. Ghate and Nagendra, for example, describe the failure of forest management in three local groups, which have different

populations but have similar ethnic background, in Maharashtra, India. Although there were graduated sanctions formally existing in all communities, only the successful communities had a strictly implemented, graduated penalty structure, according to them. (Ghate and Nagendra, 2005 as cited in Cox, et al. 2005, 9)

6. Conflict-resolution mechanisms

Problems should be solved rather than ignoring them. There must be some preconditioned order to discuss all conflicts with ease and in a straightforward manner. This principle is also based on low-cost conflict resolution mechanisms. Cox et al. emphasize there is a need to understand that this principle was moderately well supported by the empirical data. Cox explains it with an example: "In the acequia irrigation communities in northern New Mexico, for example, there is a long history of recourse to external court systems under different national regimes to resolve intercommunity conflicts. Several agreements reached by territorial probate courts more than 100 years ago are the basis for functioning, modern water-sharing agreements today. " (Cox 2010 as cited in Cox et al. 2005, 11).

7. Minimal recognition of rights to organize

The state authorities must recognize the right of co-management for local administration and self-governance. Otherwise, co-management can be legitimate for a group of fisheries, but it has no count, if it is not admitted as a legal authority. At the same time, this principle can be interpreted as; central government agencies should not challenge the right of local users to create their own institutions. They must be respectful to local progress.

In the case of larger common-pool resources, there is an additional principle:

8. Nested enterprises

A large network of appropriation. Provision, monitoring, enforcement, conflict resolution, and governance activities are important factors for the sustainability of fisheries sources and other CPRs. Local managements should have close contact with the central government. However, the nesting process may also arise between user groups themselves. I mean, not just between groups and governmental jurisdictions, ministries or institutions but also within them. It is important to add that the nesting process does not obey to the hierarchical system either.

Ostrom's achievement is to be the first name to stand against "Tragedy of the Commons" with the strongest of arguments. She was able to show effective examples of governing the commons" in Kenya, Guatemala, Nepal, Turkey and Los Angeles, apart from Alanya, to the world. Starting from the 1970s, she constantly explained the importance of co-managements, cooperatives, self-governing and acting together against privatization. She emphasized that top-down intervention is the real tragedy and it is normal that resources may face difficulties from time to time. Survival for their needs and future generations, for her, is impossible with office intervention. She understood the importance of cooperatives trusting each other.

Lessons from Ostrom's efforts proved that self-governance was possible but that in some cases it might be dependent on multiple factors. Although Ostrom has supporters, the primary criticism is that the design principles are incomplete and if sustainability is the goal, more criteria need to be added. (Singleton and Taylor, 1992; Harkes, 2006; Agrawal 2002; Young 2002) Ostrom's principles need be upgraded and "critical social variables need to be included in a full account of successful community-based natural resource management." (Cox et al. 2005, 12).

In my opinion, incompleteness is the most influential part of Ostrom's work. Moreover, I believe she has restricted her list with eight items with the

awareness of this, knowingly. Cox et al. answer the question 'what could Ostrom have added' with: "cultural and political ecology could serve as a useful complement to the primarily political science orientation embodied in the principles" and so goes on, "a probabilistic, rather than deterministic, interpretation of the design principles is warranted." (2005, 14-16).

CHAPTER THREE / EUROPEAN PRACTICES OF FISHERIES

There is no disagreement that there is a crisis of overfishing in many parts of the world. However, for the shores of Istanbul, situation is going from bad to worse every passing day. Defne Koryurek states that the fish is now depleted and the Bosphorus needs to be fallowed. She explains that the Bosphorus has now become unable to cope with the degradation caused by all the power relations and greedy market mentality. With the fallow, large corporates with capital will move on to other profitable markets. The middlemen will scoot from the fisheries sector to agriculture and large vessels and trolls will sail to other waters such as oceans. But this fallow will mean disaster for the small-scale fisheries. "A few years ago, the sponges between the island of Kos and Bodrum got sick and sponge fishing nearly came to an end. Greece immediately created new areas of employment for the sponge fishers and shifted them to tourism." With this example, Koryurek invites the state to create a fisheries policy, like in Greece. It is evident that this policy will disturb some people. This policy, that is important for sustainability, will also surely cause the profits to drop, today.

How will fixed profits bring sustainability? Although these terms seem contradictory, they are part of a successfully applied process in Europe. Therefore, Koryurek's Greece example is not an exception. Before going into detail, after the wild consumption years of the 1950s, the next date that needs

mentioning is 2013. Surely the years in between hold many discussions. However, the European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) of 2014 is a reform in the history of fisheries. It is an inspiring and important step first and foremost for the conservation of fish stocks. It is when Europe confronts a big problem it has, when fishers and their problems become fully visible and laid on the table in a solution-based environment. (Griffin, 2012, *Privatising the common fisheries policy*) The initiatives for the policy that the European Union worked on step by step from the mid 2000s reached its peak in 2014.

Before moving forward to explaining the importance of the year 2014 for European fisheries, it is necessary to take a look back at the preceding years. I must highlight that this study does not focus on the history of European fisheries management. This is a separate topic. However, the last 5 years hold serious success in Europe's fisheries policy-making. Light needs to be shined on the road leading to 2014 in order to comprehend how this perspective has been achieved and which routes were followed during this process.

3.1 European Fisheries before Plunge Year 2014

The idea of fisheries as a part of commons was embedded in the EU's 1957 founding Treaty of Rome. Environmental politics researcher Liza Griffin, about this milestone development, states, "(Treaty of Rome) declared that its fish stocks are a shared resource constituting a 'common pond'. For the nascent European Community of the 1950s, food security and co-operation between nations were high on the political agenda after the depredation of World War II." The transformation of fisheries from solely being a food source to a power with high importance in terms of international collaboration falls into the same period. (Griffin, 2012, *Privatizing the Common Fisheries Policy*)

In 1964, the European Fisheries Convention was held with the attendance of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) member countries Denmark, Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Norway, England, Ireland and Spain and the six founding members of the European Economic Community. (Vestrom, 2011) Until the European Fisheries Convention in 1964, a regulation related to the rights of fisheries is nonexistent. (Birceyudum Eman, 2015, 13) On the other hand, different from today where we are speaking of depleting fish stocks, because this was not an issue in the early twentieth century, the threat of overfishing arose. Griffin, about this issue, states "cognizant of this (threat), the EU established a Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) in the 1970s. However, despite successive rounds of reform, the CFP has thus far failed to deliver a sustainable fishing industry for Europe." (2012, *Privatizing the Common Fisheries Policy*)

According to Bresnihan, after 1980s, under the challenges of globalization, the only way to make this 'transformation' possible was by modernizing the European industrial fisheries. This modernization called for a new policy making process. If this process would not happen, it was understood that it would bring an end to inshore fishing and also result in the small-scale fishermen losing their livelihood and their homes. It was decided to make some liberal interference against the overfishing crisis. Hereby, it became clear that all the restrictive quota impositions implemented till that date have in reality failed. For the first time, with sincerity, the unsustainable and inefficient fishing practices used by fishermen due to quota restrictions have been laid on the table. (Bresnihan, 2016, 10)

The motivation of the policy makers to come up with a successful policy was not only because of deteriorating fish stocks due to overfishing. Following years of strict regulation enforcement, they also built up a serious image problem and had lost their credibility in the eyes of the fishery community. But how did it come to this? Was the European Union's Fisheries policy always a "bureaucratic, top-down control regime that (they) describe as archaic?" (Sissenwine and Symes,

2007, 50 as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 23) The answer is 'no'. In 1983, the European Council, through consultation with the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee (STECF) and The International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) introduced a fixed quota system after observing that member states started having disagreements about usage rights of fish stocks. As per this fixed quota system, every state was given a percentage of the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) defined for that specific year. Each state would then distribute its quota amongst its fisheries and monitor their yearly catch. This order seemed to be the fairest solution to the problems of that time. However, during the 1980s and 1990s, mainly due to technological advancements reducing fishing efforts, the fisheries started exceeding their allocated quota.

In 2002, the CFP highlighted concerns about the sustainability of fish stocks due to overfishing. As per Bresnihan, "according to estimates at the time, yields were exceeding sustainable levels by 40 percent." (2016, 22) The CFP, in response increased incentives for decommissioning and applied stricter enforcement of quotas, hoping to reduce the total catch back to sustainable levels. Not only did they fail, they also caused the relationship between each party of the sector to deteriorate. Another by-effect of stricter enforcements became discarding. As the inspections and fines for exceeding quota increased, fishermen tried to find ways to keep their profit as high as possible by landing the most profitable fish. Although the ethical solution was to invest into better technology and efficient tools for fishing, fishermen, who were already struggling with economical problems, found the most effective tactic: catch everything you can and discard lower value fish that exceeds the quota.

This approach had multiple disadvantages for the fisheries sector. Most importantly, as Schmidt emphasized at survey report named *The EU fish discard ban: Where's the catch?* in 2013: "Once a fish is caught, it is almost certainly going to die either because it is out of the water or because it was injured during the process." Apart from the fact that this exercise is wasting valuable resource

and is questionable in economic and moral perspectives, it was also obstructing the flow of correct data to scientists as they relied on the number of fishes that reached the land and keeping in mind that "in many fisheries discards occur at high levels, with mixed fisheries estimated to have a discard ban of anywhere between 20 and 60 percent." (*Commission for Environmental Cooperation 2011a*, as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 26) Scientists were not able to assess the actual health of the fish stocks. Hence, they were unable to correctly define the quota limits for each succeeding year.

Observing the negative effects discarding was having on the fish stocks, the EU has decided to introduce a discard ban to all fisheries. The ban will be gradually implemented and fully applied by the year 2019. This ban naturally puts high pressure on especially the small-scale fisheries, which have small or no budget to improve their technology and tools in order to do selective fishing as mentioned earlier. The European Union was well aware that without supporting regulations, the discard ban would mean disaster for the small-scale fisheries. As a preventive measure, the CFP (2013) has come up with a transferable quota system to act as a regulator between the mismatch of available quota and the fish caught and landed. In other words, the fisheries would now be able to buy or sell their quota as per their needs. For instance, an active fishery that has the capacity to land high amounts of high value fish may buy quota from the less active fisheries that do not exceed the quota given to them.

The crisis of overfishing was particularly severe in the European fisheries. The topic of overfishing was constantly debated but little effort was shown for moving forward. Bresnihan states that, in the year 2008, the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) concluded that 35 of 41 commercial fish stocks in European waters were overfished, compared to 25 percent of fish stocks worldwide (*Commission for Environmental Cooperation 2008b* as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 10). The problem actually was very obvious. There were too

many fishermen but too little fish to catch in the sea. However, this issue was not coming from nowhere in a year.

The European Commission had described it as a "vicious cycle" as fishermen are pressured into fishing more intensively in ever more distant fishing grounds to repay debts and compete with other fishermen. (Bresnihan, 2016, 10). However, there was a lack of data for proper policy-making and a lack of knowledge about the fisheries. As James Carney, who is a fisheries scientist at the Marine Institute, told Bresnihan: "If you look at attention paid to it prior to 2000, it was almost zero. I don't think there was a scientific paper published between 1963 and 1995, or a policy paper. So it's a blank sheet from the state's point of view." (Bresnihan, 2017, 214) It will always remain a mystery if the scientists refrained on doing research on the issue before 1995 due to the evident lack of data or because this was not a hot topic at that time. However, collaboration between the fishing industry, fisheries managers, and scientists had come to the point of necessity that no one could deny.

In the *Commission for Environmental Cooperation*, published in 2008, it is mentioned that, "Without active collaboration between them [industry and managers], even the best-drafted regulations founded on the best-researched science, and supported by carefully targeted subsidies can achieve little. Policy is only as good as its implementation. And in the final analysis, it is the people who work in the fishery who have to make that policy a reality." As per Bresnihan, the European Union has created a new phenomenon that can be named 'culture of compliance'. This is a fisheries focused reform emerging from lack of regulation, control, security and representation. (Bresnihan, 2016,15) At this point, I believe it is necessary to add that although the idea of bringing scientists into the game is presented as a new idea to solve an existing crisis, in reality scientists were not always welcome by the fishermen due to the practice of discarding that was not allowed but commonly done as a necessity. The biggest achievement of the CFP

was to find a way where the fisheries do not have to dump less valuable fish back into the seas so that they can make a living.

3.2 Why was the CFP in 2014 different?

The fisheries commissioner for the European Union, Maria Damanaki, held a press conference in Brussels to announce the finalization of the new European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP). She stated, "This is a historic step for all those involved in the fisheries sector. We are going to change radically the way we fish in the future." (quoted in Commission for Environmental Cooperation 2013 as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 20)

According to Bresnihan, for the first time in the European fisheries policy-making process, the sustainability of fish stocks was placed at the center of policy and decision-making. Up until that day, especially from the mid 2000s, policies were discussed but for the first time, there were written agreements. Therefore, this was a reform. Now, Europe had a 'common goal' that needed to be achieved, "which scientists, fisheries managers, consumers, and fishermen can work together to achieve real, measurable changes in how the fisheries are exploited and managed." (Bresnihan, 2016, 20) It is both triumphant and thought-provoking that such an achievement was made possible right before the over-exploitation, to the point of no return, of the resources.

The new Common Fisheries Policy has stated the European Union's commitment to 'returning' to a stable cycle of production with fishermen themselves. However, for the European Union, the primary concern was, most certainly, maximum sustainable yield (MSY). "MSY is the highest number of fishes that can be taken safely each year while maintaining maximum productivity of fish populations." (Bresnihan, 2016, 15) It is tagetted that all Fisheries in the European countries will achieve MSY numbers by 2020. MSY numbers are

defined by the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES) and scientists from relevant national governments annually.

As per Bresnihan, for the states, the MSY is not as easy as a norm as the European Union defines it to be. It is especially contradictory to neoliberal economies. The policy reports that have been published by the EU since the mid 2000s, which were the forerunners of the CFP, warned that the fishery policies must not be top-down, and command-and-control based. More importantly, they emphasized that the needs of the fishermen who were looked down on until then should not be disregarded anymore and that the recognition issue should be eliminated. (Bresnihan, 2016, 16) If the MSY will be defined by the same people that have profit relations with the market, the collapse of this system will become unavoidable and uncontrollable.

The ban on discards and the introduction of ITQ are the most significant policy changes in the CFP reform were two key formulas in order to sweep away the recognition problem. The design of the CFP was based on "it becomes an open-ended process that aspires to work with and through the actions of fishermen rather than trying to control them directly." (Bresnihan, 2016, 21) Unlike before, the fishermen were given the privilege to sit together with the policy makers and scientists for the works that they carry out. With this perspective, the CFP brought in a ban on discarding. Moreover, 'Individual Transferable Quotas' (ITQ) was now going to become an important actor. The differentiation of this CFP from its predecessors was the ITQ. The ITQ came into play as a request from the fisheries in line of their needs. Pita et al. (2010) points out that involving the shareholders to the decision making process of fisheries managements contributed in facilitating mutual ideas, forming trust, solving conflicts, increasing the shareholders' responsibilities and accountability, management policies and increasing the legitimacy and acceptance of decisions and increasing the efficiency in the execution of rules and regulations by bettering the alignment of parties. This approach naturally also increased the communication between the

parties as they were given the opportunity to stand on the same side of the debates, rather than the opposition.

Before the ITQ was introduced, the CFP was trying to control the amount of catch by the fixed quota system. This top-down, restrictive policy inflicted fines to fisheries that exceeded their total allowable catch. The fishermen, on the other hand, who were already suffering financially wanted to achieve maximum profit from everyday catch. Investing on technology and tools to do selective fishing was expensive so they found a way to cheat the system. They pulled whatever they could from the sea, kept the best fish and discarded the amount exceeding the quota before returning. The discard ban was introduced in order to regulate this unsustainable behavior of fishermen. The discard ban may still be seen as a top-down regulation. However, positive impacts to the respect fishermen had towards their profession were observed. The fishermen were guided through correct methods to more selective and precise fishing. Together with the discard ban came another new policy, the individual transferable quota (ITQ). According to this new policy, if a fishery for any reason passed its quota, they could buy quota off other fisheries, which were not able to fill their quota. In the end of the day the total catch stayed below the maximum sustainable yield as the less effective fisheries quit the unsustainable 'catch all that you can' approach, sold their available quota to more efficient fisheries with better technologies and tools. ITQ's have opened up a new income possibility for less efficient fishermen. Also, the small-scale fishermen received a serious investment tool against capital owners.

For Griffin, the most crucial point of the reform was about privatized fishing quotas. As per this regulation, from 2014, "the EU fleets will formally be allocated quotas of tradable rights to fish." Griffin explains it as, "Individual transferable quotas, (ITQs) are a form of privatization, where shares of fishing effort are allocated to individual fishers, who can either use that effort themselves,

or sell or lease it on an open market to someone else. Under this system, fishers may own, buy or sell quotas as they might a boat."

Since 2014, the collaboration mentality grew beyond the fisheries and high authorities. Science was introduced to the subject. Fishery institutions and laboratories play a key role in analyzing the fish stocks. These institutions and laboratories drive the researches on creating and enhancing new biologic and population analysis methods for better understanding the fish stocks in the seas. An international scientific organization, ICES, together with STECF, mainly focus on coordination, control and scientific consultancy. (Birceyudum Eman, 2015, 21)

These developments reflected as adoption of neoliberal discourses to European fisheries. Hereby, the European Union accomplished many achievements at once: dealing with scarcity and increasing the welfare of fishers who exist in large groups in each EU country, manage fishstocks for economic gains and at the same time the fisheries becoming an economic recovery tool for the EU.

Bresnihan reseaches about how these important initiatives have effect on community-managed inshore fisheries in Ireland. He also analyses if these liberal responses will create an alternative against industrial fishing and if they will enhance the welfare and economic possibilities of small-scale fishermen. In this sense, one of Bresnihan's observations is that there is a collectivity based, respectful and binary order between the fishermen and the non-humans. He describes it as the "more-than-human commons", where resources shared rather than accumulated, owned or controlled. With this perspective, he refers understanding the commons (Bresnihan, 2016, 173).

He explains how the fisheries are built upon uncertainty and emphasizes the importance of observation. At this point, the experiences of fishermen are

crucial. He states that policies cannot be based on controlling nature and mastering from the offices makes no sense. Herein, the importance of the fishers' collective movements and information exchange and also their distinction in terms of sustainability can be mentioned. The difference of neoliberalism from wild capitalism, or in other words its success, is how it managed to transform social and ecological relations in fisheries, with regulatory and institutional coordination, according to Bresnihan. What he calls "tactics" may become instruments of states as response to "do not derive from a preexisting authority but are an ongoing response to particular social and environmental phenomena" (Bresnihan, 2016, 14) to solve crucial problems at the heart of fisheries.

3.3 Sustainability with Fixed Profit: West Coast of Ireland

Bresnihan calls the period until the regulations as slow tragedy of improvement. For him, Hardin's tragedy is a reality but the reason for this tragedy is not the commons themselves, it's the improvements being slow and insufficient. Bresnihan, who states "Fishermen are not all the same – they interact with and use the marine environment in different ways", shares his observations from very large commercial fishing trawlers as well as smaller, inshore boats in the 16 months he spent in Castletownbere, one of the largest commercial fishing ports in Ireland since 1994. His experience in the field allowed him to make an extensive analysis on the big picture rather than being stuck on specific details and was essential for the accountability of his paper, as is my field study is to mine.

Bresnihan examines how the EU has reacted to overfishing and there with, degradation, focusing on Ireland's implementation of these policies and finds out that the routine activities of fishermen can "not translate easily into the terms of political economy or liberal frameworks of only governance." (Bresnihan, 2016, 68) This process has to be an improvement process that happens in order to

establish a socio-economic welfare in various areas. As mentioned before, Bresnihan names the process before the regulations as a slow tragedy of improvement. As per him, Hardin's tragedy is, yes, a tragedy but the source is not the commons. The source of that tragedy is that improvements are slow and inefficient and that the managing high authorities are sluggish. This means that the correct management of the commons has direct relation to the sustainable usage of the resources and the correct management starts with the actions and experiences of the users of the commons.

The small-scale lobster fishermen observations of Bresnihan, who prefers field study and shuttles back and forth between fishermen and scholars, are indeed important in terms of the effects of CFP in Europe. Bresnihan states that, Ireland is home to both offshore and coastal, also known as 'artisanal', fishing. He adds that there is transition between these fishers. This means that it is a fisher's choice to be small-scale. The opportunity to become ocean-based is available. However, there are several groups that are not in need of this transition. This is because they have the choice of fishing for crabs, lobster, prawns and assorted flatfish apart from fish. This versatility has created the need for even more regulations. Therefore, in his 2016 and 2017 publications, Bresnihan mentions many different associations, groups and organizations.

The awakening in Ireland coincides with the process that starts in the mid 2000s in Europe. In a conference held in Dublin with environmental NGOs in June 2011, the Irish Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Simon Coveney said that "fisheries management could not return to the past, to a time when many people made a living from the sea, when there were healthy fish stocks." There was "no choice but to become a modern fishery adapted to global realities" (Coveney, 2011 speech as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 11). Organized as part of a lobbying campaign for the upcoming reform of the European Common Fisheries Policy (CFP), "restoring" the fisheries to a sustainable path. At this point, Coveney becomes the first politician that openly takes responsibility and

confesses that a 'mistake' is being made. This is where political based deflection begins.

Bresnihan has followed the happenings before the 2014 regulations in the field. In 2009, during the time he is "Tracing the cause of overfishing to the unregulated activity of individual fishermen exploiting limited natural resources", he does an interview with fisherman Tom O'Sullivan, who explains the current situation of the fishermen as: "I couldn't be proactive because the management system doesn't allow me to. It effectively forces me into a short-term view. So that has to change certainly. If you look at the problem with the lobster fishery at the moment, it's not due to bureaucracy, it's due to a lack of bureaucracy, a lack of collective action and talking." (Bresnihan, 2017, 214) O'Sullivan, during his conversations with Bresnihan, states that they are aware of the negative effects that they have on the resources but also that there is a recognition problem. Their invisibility hinders them to become part of the system as decision-making actors and instead they try to save the day in panic.

Bresnihan states that the small-scale fishers are important actors in the crisis that is evident in the shores and that the fishers themselves have warned about what was coming. Bresnihan once again does not hold himself back when criticizing the top-down approach of the authorities for this case. As per him, this priggish and condescending view always blamed the fishers. All restrictions of this order were being designed to limit the fishermen. The state achieved something, recognized it but did it with disdain. So he cites his ideas with this critic: "Unlike more familiar depictions of neoliberal responses to over-fishing that emphasize 'simplistic' solutions that orientate around the need to limit the activities of fishermen (private rights of accessor top-down state regulation), the position of the fisheries managers and scientists is that inshore fishermen need to be able to better manage their own resources." (Bresnihan, 2017, 214) As mentioned before, the correct management is what will prevent tragedy. Progress

can not be made without involving the users of the commons into the decision making process.

As a matter of fact, efforts of fishermen to improve the health of the resources have existed since the beginning of the 1990s. Various associations have made proposals many times. Even a lobster management plan reflecting these demands has been published in 2008, but nothing has been implemented. On the other hand, this situation suddenly changed in 2012 because of Ireland's commitment to European biodiversity directives, according to Bresnihan. Under the *EU Birds and Habitats Directive*, a network of nature conservation sites known as *Natura 2000* sites were established around Ireland, including in many coastal areas. Briefly, Bresnihan explains this period: "in 2007, the EU Commission brought five complaints against the Irish government for failing to adequately classify or protect several important areas." On the other hand, Ireland had its own responsibilities anymore and the EU had heavy fines unless the Irish government complied with the directive. So at the end of the day, "peripheral areas along the coast suddenly became a priority for the state." (Bresnihan, 2017, 216) Hereby, the Irish government and other coastal states that would not wish to disobey the EU, under compulsion, noticed the fishers. This may be seen as a 'top-down management', but in reality is not a *fait accompli* that occurred out of nowhere.

How effective was the threat of the EU? Bresnihan explains that the rapid changes in the beginning, after a few years, slowed down in Ireland. There are two reasons for this de-escalation. First is the governments focus shifting to other directions. Second were the fishermen themselves. O'Reilly speaks about these fishermen as: "They were the established, full-time lobster fishermen with polyvalent licenses (access to both non-quota shellfish and quota fin- fish) - those who were, 'ironically', most dependent on the health of the fish stocks. Among other concerns, these fishermen were fearful that the new management plan would reduce the value of their tonnage." So, the problem stems from the large-scale,

capital owning fisheries. What draws attention is that this group is the most profiting among the fishermen. (Bresnihan, 2017, 217) They give up on their total profit and instead of choosing sustainability, chose to save the day, in contrary to the small-scale traditional, artisanal fishermen. The will to profit in short-term has overpowered long-term proper order. Hence, policy alone does not suffice. How will these policies be implemented? The key was to, without putting pressure on the fisheries, creating a structure that would function as a bridge and explaining the importance of sustainability. Also, explaining that if continuity is not achieved, soon income will fall to zero and maximizing today's profit in an irrational manner profits no one in the long run.

At this point, Bresnihan examines a particular project initiated by Bord Iascaigh Mhara (BIM), the Irish state agency responsible for developing the fishing industry, called the Environmental Management System (EMS) launched in 2010. This structure acts as a bridge between the fishers and the government by collaboratively creating projects. EMS is a tool which was designed as a voluntary audit to help fishermen to "minimize their impact on the marine environment" and additionally, it creates a new path "for fishermen to record and document their impact on the marine environment so they can demonstrate responsible fishing." (Bresnihan, 2016, 36) They have regulatory authorities, for instance, giving eco-label accreditations within the laws set by the states' institutions. According to Bresnihan, this is another mode of governance, which cannot directly establish policies but supervises. However, for the fishermen, this meant a bottom-up, motivation driven management mechanism. According to Bresnihan, this interference was "how neoliberal policy makers have moved beyond 'natural' biophysical and economic limits by actively constructing the market as a site of competition, the individual subject as an environmental entrepreneur, and nature as informational content... The EMS attempts to provide a more empowering form of environmental regulation that bypasses the inflexible, bureaucratic apparatus of the state by directly harnessing individual innovation and enterprise." (Bresnihan, 2016, 37) It is particularly interesting how the small-scale fishermen

are very interested in taking part in such initiatives that aim to improve their 'work environment' but stakeholders and large corporations remain neutral and proceed with regular operations.

As the surprising part, Bresnihan claims that, this situation is a co-management formed according to Ireland's fabric, needs and dynamics. It has been understood in time that cooperative management is not functional. This is a "third-way" approach and "it moves beyond the limited choice between state-centered and market-based options. It is promoted particularly as a more effective form of environmental governance in small-scale, 'traditional' spheres of resource exploitation. With the establishment of BIM, states Bresnihan, "the Irish government has responded by attempting to introduce a framework for community-based lobster management." (Bresnihan, 2016, 16, 17)

Let's focus on the EMS' eco-label accreditation project in depth. It aims to provide fishermen with greater access to markets and potentially higher prices for their catch with an interesting way of marketing. The project tries to establish a permanent combination with "no contradiction between economic profitability and environmental sustainability." (Bresnihan, 2016, 16)

Jean O'Sullivan, who spearheads the project for the BIM, explains the eco-label accreditation with an example. She says a fishery cooperative in the West of Ireland contacts her. Their aim is to create a marketing plan for their crab using the EMS. O'Sullivan asks them what makes their crab different but fails to receive a good answer. Bresnihan writes about the rest of the dialogue between the fishermen and O'Sullivan: "They had no way of showing or proving how they caught the crab, how pure the waters were, or how healthy the fish stock was. By engaging with the EMS, committing to better fishing and handling practices, and, most importantly, documenting these practices, the fishermen could provide tangible proof of their environmental fishing practices and unique product." (as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 39)

After the meeting, it was understood that the actual worry of the fishermen was that the new European policies could affect their ability to access different kinds of fish and lobsters and such. On the other hand, O'Sullivan states that, by advancing documentation, the regular fishermen would turn into environmental fishermen and that the EMS will be their voice in this collaboration. (as cited in Bresnihan, 2016, 39)

Document and data-based fishing and as a result responsible fishing was the key to the successful fisheries in the west of Ireland. The fish that is being sold in the stores with the 'eco-label' accreditation, aims to enhance the quality of the fish without increasing the amount of fishing. This fish that reaches the consumer is being sold for a higher price due to its quality, being documented and being a collaboration product. As a result, the fisher makes more profit and sustainability is achieved in fisheries management.

Ireland in particular, similar projects to the EMS are available in Europe. These are neoliberal marketing acts that can make example for co-managements. Bresnihan concludes: "The point was that marketing opportunities like eco-labels could encourage fishermen to work collectively by demonstrating that a biologically sustainable fishery could also be a profitable fishery. Eco-accreditation schemes also function to both commodify certain (measurable) forms of environmental performance and exclude fishermen who do not have the financial, scientific and institutional supports, or motivations, to achieve such accreditation." Although such methods can be utilized by particular groups, separate plans can be created for the groups left out of the scheme. The important point here is to have the least number of methods covering the most amount of users, otherwise the consolidated management of all these systems first will fail to maintain an evenly distributed support, lose motivation to audit and later inevitably collapse.

In this chapter, I aimed to look at European fisheries policies prior to 2014 and the fishermans place in these policies. On the other hand, as I have stated before, the European fisheries practices have a vast history and should be analyzed on its own. Furthermore, Ireland is one of the pioneers in fisheries policy making and this success is a result of the EU's insistence on its policies from the mid 2000s. However, Ireland's proactivity about this subject cannot be disregarded. Especially the formation of state-based co-managemet institutions, which I have mentioned in the last part of this chapter, is key factors of this success. Ireland's unique co-management understanding also coinsides with Ostrom's principles. Especially, congruence, recognition by the state, monitoring and nested enterprises are the basis of the EMS. This new form of collectivity actually is the reflection of Irelands upgrade to a more liberal, contemporary market understanding, parting from the outdated cooperatve. However, the basic goal is the same: sustainability and taking control of overfishing with recognition of fishermen.

**CHAPTER FOUR /
FIELD STUDY WITH
SMALL-SCALE FISHERMEN IN ISTANBUL**

"Whether or not power corrupts, the lack of power surely frustrates."

John Forester (1989)

4.1 Why do I consider Istanbul?

It is possible to understand that written sources on the fish market of Istanbul dates back to very old years from the literature of the former fish market manager Deveciyan's 1915 dated "Fish and Fisheries", of which the first edition was published in Ottoman language. It is a one of a kind piece, which introduces the fish in the Turkish seas and fishing equipment used by Turkish fishermen, as well as compares the number of fishes entering the fish market. Istanbul fish market manager Karakin Deveciyan explains in his book that in those years, close to 80 different types of fish would enter from the market doors. Although this work is a classic, its main goal is not to show the degradation of the seas. However, when the book is read today, it can easily be said that, together with the fish themselves, our fishery culture has disappeared. The swordfish, of which the author writes about as the favorite and plenteous fish of that time, cannot be spotted anymore since the 1970s!

Why do we need to focus on Istanbul? For the more you dig deeper into the fisheries sector of Istanbul, instead of finding answers, you are left with even more questions. Fishermen, salesmen, activist, professor... Both in my field studies and collected data, although they all speak of different matters, we will realize that they all lead to similar conclusions. The first find is that two subjects are injured the most: the sea and the small-scale fishermen. Second, without changing the middlemen order and restricting fishing by trolls, it will not be

possible to debate about a fair system and social welfare. The Bosphorus is home to an ecosystem that makes up 15% of the total fishing economy of Turkey.

I have mentioned earlier that there is a lack of literature on the socio-economic perspective of fisheries of Turkey or how the fishery sector is a day-to-day diminishing topic of the local economical cycle. It is possible to say that even studies on the commons are scarce. For these reasons have I asked how Gordon and Hardin's (who are most certainly two of the most fundamental thinkers on the commons) statements on the commons could be read from the Istanbul perspective. Are we prioritizing the fishermen not the fish due to our economic concerns as Gordon says? Are we aware that overfishing is a failure of economy? Also, how far are we to Hardin's tragedy? Would restrictions bring any benefit to Istanbul's fisheries where the absence of government is evident? Is it possible to observe Pomeroy and Williams' claim that fisheries save the poor from destitution? How can the 'top-down management' that Bresnihan believes is the enemy of fisheries be read in conjunction with the administration of Istanbul's fisheries? And finally, is co-management, what seem to be the light at the end of the tunnel, a romantic dream or neoliberalism itself? I have tried to find answers to these questions and more, jointly with the actors that constitute the fisheries sector, in the field, where they call home.

In this section, I will often emphasize the practices in the field. I will begin writing my observations from my first stop, the Gurpinar Fish market. I will explain how the auction, which I have visited a few times since the last two and a half years, is where degradation begins. I will detail what difficulties the fishermen face with the middlemen the instant they return from sea and the illegal but so-called legitimate authority that the middlemen give themselves. At the fish market, the summary of the situation is that most stalls are already under the patronage of a few names. This results in the rejection of new fishermen to the market.

"There is no fishing policy in Turkey" is what Istanbul University Faculty of Aquaculture Dean Prof. Meric Albay emphasized while explaining the wrong practices of fishing and deliberate exploitation in the seas. He stated that as opportunities increase, so does greed for more income and this growing structure increasingly exploits the country's economy and its natural resources.

Two prominent experts with field experience, Chief Executive of Uskudar Fisheries Cooperative, which is a cooperative holding 69 experienced fishermen, who has been fishing since a toddler of 9 years, Erol Domac and Istanbul's famous fisherman Mesut Soydaner, who has been in this business for 35 years, have added valuable contribution to Prof. Albay's statements. They had solutions to problems, ideas about necessary inspections and answered all questions one after another. However, they also shared how groups that enjoy unearned income would suffer. They stated that although they are constantly working hard as a cooperative, they have not been able to contest these groups, which resemble the mafia in many ways. I met with Domac and Soydaner at the fishermen's shelter, a place very familiar to them, almost a second home. I chose not to reveal the names of the fishermen I spoke to due to security reasons I will explain later in this paper. But the two 'celebrity' fishermen of the Bosphorus, without hesitation shared their names and visuals. I believe the reason for this was their hope for solution and change and, surely, their eagerness to contribute to a stronger story.

I went to the Besiktas fish bazaar with Defne Koryurek. I had been there before for research purposes and had noticed a certain disinterest for conversation from the salesmen at the stalls. This time, owing to Koryurek, they spoke. She has been working on this issue for such a long time that all the salesmen are acquainted with her. We wandered around the fish market and discussed the priorities and exceptions given to entities with close ties to the government with professional cook and ecology activist Defne Koryurek. She stated that the real issue is not at the market, which is visited by us to buy some fish. It is aboard, where the catch is made and how this happens. However, the government

ministries are refraining from taking any action towards such a ban as an access restriction would cause the current balance of power of the fishing industry's mega corporations to tipsy-turvy.

The salesmen at the fish stalls are the aggrieved in this organization as they are the ones who get fined for selling juvenile fish. From their point of view, if a fish has been caught and brought to the market, why should they not be entitled to sell them? You can immediately see how much this issue bothers them and that they feel common sense is lacking in this practice. They say "If they (marine authorities) decide to restrict fish that land by size and amount and start fining the responsible entities, we would wake up tomorrow to two news articles tomorrow morning. First, you would not be able to find any fresh fish in Istanbul. Second, the people who we call "the fish mafia" and some troll owners and middlemen that have good relations with the government officers would be in the newspaper defined as criminals."

4.2 Upper Crusts of the Fisheries Sector

The milestone of this study surely is what the fishermen have to say. However, before all, let us analyze the numbers that Koryurek puts on the table. From the 52 cooperatives, which have a total number of 17 thousand member fishermen who rely on the income from the fish they land for a living, only 6 cooperatives have a selling spot. These 6 cooperatives control less than 10% of the total fish that daily enters the market. But who sells the remaining fish? Koryürek mentions at least 117 middlemen at this point. This is a group of people that control the capital and priority of defining the price range, earn money by debiting the fishermen, are privileged and not audited.

Koryurek claims that both the market authorities and Istanbul City Agriculture Authority do not have enough data about any subject. The same

institutions are also mute when it comes to how the relationship between the middlemen and fishermen are audited. In 2011, Koryurek stated, when the capacity of the fish market was recorded as 40 tons, 84% or 33 thousand 600 tons of the recorded aquaculture were dealt through middlemen.

During his speech in the meeting "Istanbul Balıkçılığı, Kooperatifler, Hal ve Kabzımallık Müessesesi", Istanbul Yenikapi aquaculture market manager Arif İrfan Eker, stated that the current situation of the Yenikapi aquaculture market has many deficiencies but with the electronic auction system, that will be used in the planned for construction, new Gurpinar market, the middlemen tyranny would come to an end. This statement was made after a voiced concern from the audience asking about the effects of middlemen on the total catch amount and the fishermen themselves. Again, as per Eker, it is thought that the formal economy that Istanbul hosts only from the fish trade is around 130 million Turkish Liras. It is difficult to even assume how much over 130 million liras the informal, underground numbers may be. Koryurek added that apart from the 988 boats licenced to 52 cooperatives which host 17 thousand licenced fishermen, together with having a 130 million recorded aquaculture economy, also, allegedly owe around 70-80 million liras to the middlemen.

But how is the current situation at Gurpinar Seafood Market? It was announced that the huge new Gurpinar Seafood Market's most anticipated feature was going to be the new 'electronic auctioning system'. As per this system, the fisheries would have to either corporatize or sign a contract with the municipality through their cooperative. An important part of this contract is that the fish must be delivered to the designated 'fish receiving stations'. Aquaculture engineers would be present at these 'fish receiving stations' and after measurements and type segregation, the fish would be ready for auction. The fishermen and middlemen would follow these steps from the waiting area, where they will not have the opportunity to interfere with the process. The selling price and the buyer of the fish would be announced, and everything would be transparent. After the

sale, the amount would later be transferred to the fishermen's bank account and the municipality business would prepare the invoice with 8% commission. Istanbul aquaculture cooperatives association manager Erdogan Kartal, in an interview after a couple of days from the opening, mentioned the impossibilities of the system. Although the system would not be a problem for corporate fisheries, there are insufficiencies for the cooperatives in terms of area declaration, he stated. Also, he added that, for the small-scale fisheries that have to categorize every catch that has been made in different conditions, all roads still lead to the middlemen system. Kartal concluded the interview by summarizing the failure. The fishermen were already making loss. The opening ceremony was on the 24th of August. The fish was sold once again by the middlemen with no paperwork or records. Turns out, we did not have to abandon Kumkapı. (Arslanoglu, 2015, *Istanbul Balık Hali'nin balıkçısına, Türkiye'ye hizmet verme şansı yok*)

During my first visit to Gurpinar Seafood Market, I directly am chatting with fishermen returning from the sea. My goal here is to observe them returning to land, how many they are and how the fish enter the market. The setting does not allow for a proper-seated conversation. Firstly, it is a men-only environment where everyone knows one another. Also, its 4 in the morning and the fishermen are very tired and sleepless. The younger ones are still at work; rearranging the nets, emptying cases. If I am to outline my 2-hour observations, today the Gurpinar Seafood Market is far from the perfect scenario that was dreamed about. I witnessed the chaos that ruptures before the first lights of dawn in many of my visits. It is possible to observe the system a few middlemen have built for themselves. There is no proper auction, as promised before. I ask the fishermen returning from sea, what they think is the place of middlemen in the fisheries sector. They answer that the fish gets to the shopkeepers via the middlemen. A senior fisherman said "have a good look at the fish on your plate and see; the market's profit, the middleman's profit plus the seller's profit is on the plate in front of you. We have nothing to do with this topic!"

Five months later, during my second visit to Gurpinar Seafood Market, I focus on the interior mechanisms of it. Many stalls in the fish market are never used. When I ask for the reason, I always get the same response: "There is no fish!" One fisherman links this situation with unregulated sells. He says that many fishermen before arriving at the market sell the better fish to the restaurants, thus, evade significant inspection and make informal transactions without invoice. The chaotic situation of the market actually sums up the fisheries sector of Turkey well; underground sale, lack of regulation, degradation of a giant sector.

In my three visits to the Gurpinar Seafood Market, I was not able to get a chance to make a proper interview with the fishermen. Firstly, they were in a hurry, but the main issue was their security concern. However, my struggles eventually paid up. After a couple of days, for the first time, I came together with the fishermen I met at the Gurpinar Seafood Market in Uskudar. They are an all-male group of 8 experienced fishers. Even the most junior among them has 10 years of experience. The fishermen's cabin boys, of whom the youngest was 25 years old, accompanied them, but never spoke. Although our meeting lasted for three hours, I had to spend the first hour to explain my goal to them. It took time to persuade them. As I mentioned before, I understood that the reason for this was due to security reasons. They all are married. Like Ali, one of the younger fishermen, says: "I would not stay in Istanbul even for a minute, if it was not for the kid." I ask what Ali means by that. Ali and the other young fisherman Eren state that the Bosphorus is finished and if the fishermen want to earn money, they need to go to the oceans or the Black Sea for troll fishing. This certainly means going offshore for months.

I ask all of them what fishing is to them. Boat, captain, a crew of 10-25 people, sea, the seas conditions and the fish of the sea. I repeat the question with even more insistence: what is fishing? They begin talking about hunting. Foresight, experience, correct decision making, ability to take risks, competition

and lastly luck. A couple of the factors that they speak of towards the end are actually the most conventional basic elements of fishing, but they are very abstract.

They explain that in these times when the fisheries economy is just as unpredictable as the fish in the sea, banks refrain from giving out loans to fishermen. Certainly, the situation is reversed for the fish farms that have the ability to do a feasibility estimate! There is no state guarantee. Not for individual fishermen or for the fishery cooperatives. Hence, we are talking about middlemen.

4.3 The Bane of Bosphorus Fishermen's Life: Middlemen

The fishermen begin their words by saying that in Istanbul, these is not a middleman that charges less than 15%. They are very happy to accept the 8% ranges that is the standard for the agriculture sector and what I had thought would be for fisheries as well. The biggest problem, however, are the authorities the middlemen give to themselves illegally. First of these is that they ignore some fisheries collectively. Although it seems strange, this is precisely what they are doing! When they come into conflict with some fishermen or when fishermen show disobedience, they take the decision to not deal with that particular fishery and ignore them. This, of course, means disaster for the fishery. For this reason, the fisheries are forced to accept the payment methods and rates that they are given.

In my previous studies, I came across middlemen giving quality agricultural and logistic support to farmers they work with in the Southeast Anatolia region which has a very warm climate. This was done, of course, not intended to help the farmer, but for personal interest, a small investment that would act as an insurance policy for good quality harvest.

In the fisheries sector, however, the middlemen are like the symbol of degradation. Mustafa, a fisherman of 40 years of age, resembles the middlemen to loan sharks. He links this to the banks not giving out loans for the fishermen and surely also to the unpredictable sea that is full of risks. "If it is an unproductive season, this means fuel expense. Has your net been ripped, your boat damaged or do you have engine failure? These mean immediate cash need. What if you cannot land enough fish to re-pay your debts? Every year there are a couple of unfortunate fishermen who have been turning an honest penny since years but have to give away their boat to middlemen due to unpaid debt." Middlemen merely became the symbol of unrest for fisheries.

The lack of state support towards small and middle scale fisheries becomes visible when it comes to economic support. None. When this is the case, the fishermen aim for saving the day rather than obeying rules that are in theory advanced. They catch whatever they can. There are two reasons for this. First, nearly every one of them who does not have a second income is in debt. More so to entities like middlemen who are far from any type of legal arrangement. Second, because middlemen do not have any kind of quota for allowable catch. There is no law for middlemen that is set to ensure equal limits.

Junior fisherman Eren believes that implementation of municipal sales or similar methods will save the fishing sector but is not sure if it is the correct way in terms of sustainability and protecting the ecosystem of the seas. He says that the boats should directly handed over to salesmen rather than middlemen. "How this distribution can be achieved, I do not know, but surely the prices will fall by 50% by tomorrow. Maybe it will result in overfishing, but it surely will end the order of middlemen. They are such a powerful mafia. Do you think, if you wanted to, you could become a middleman? Try if you like!"

I ask the market employees the allegations that the fishermen are selling their fish illegally while still at sea, if they sell their good fish to large businesses

such as restaurants or hotels. They link this situation to middlemen pressure and the unpredictability of payments. The existence of this informal economy is evident. They say that they do not find this trade ethical and would not have thought it would come to this point 10 years ago.

Focusing on Istanbul, while talking to people in the fisheries sector with different roles, all of them speak of one specific thing; fishing with trolls. Troll fishing is one of the foremost reasons that negatively effects fish diversity in the seas. Simply put, trolls are submerged to the seabed and sweep everything that it comes across including fish habitats, fish eggs and even sand.

The troll issue is actually directly linked to the middlemen. Middlemen encourage fishing by trolls. In this parallel relationship, the increase of both is due to the lack of inspection. I would like to elaborate. There is not an authority that inspects what the middlemen buy from the fishermen. They can buy any fish, in any size and any quantity. They have a system that rewards buying all that they can. They only pay less for juvenile fish. None of them says 'I won't buy this'. The fishermen on the other hand, are sure that they can all the time sell everything that they land. Because no one inspects what they land, they just catch everything they find in the sea. Fisherman Emin, who gave me this information, although once was a member of a crew fishing with troll in the Black Sea but now is part of a small team onshore, explained that this method could be used in open seas but using it in the Bosphorus is indifferent to murder. Hence, fish is not pulled out fairly.

As per Eren, trolls and middlemen are partners in crime. None of the fishermen argue with this statement when it comes up during debates. As for me, I believe the third guilty is who does not do proper inspections in the strongest way possible. But what about the salesmen who sell these fish on the stalls? One of the people who does not think that they are to blame is Defne Koryurek, a professional cook and ecology activist. Everyone knows her in the Besiktas fish

bazaar in which we roam together. Koryurek talks about increasing expenses and the increasing competition the high numbers of fish markets and supermarkets create when Istanbul is subject. She explains that as competition increases, fairness towards the sea decreases. "We only see the ending of the story when we look at the fish on the stall. The fish we see on the stalls are not expensive they are actually cheap! I can say this because in order for the salesman to make profit, he needs to sell all the fish on the stall. If we are going to talk about the fish themselves, they should not be on these stalls anyway. The hunter must hunt so that it can afford the expenses that Istanbul brings" she says.

As per Koryurek, neither the fish nor the fisherman is guilty. The guilt belongs to the state and its insufficient inspection system. But in such a vast economy as the fish market is, is it really this difficult to inspect middlemen whose numbers are just above 100 and a couple of fish markets? Koryurek explains that the state chooses not to inspect. "We do not have a fish policy. The state cannot come up with a policy that they can offer the anxious fishermen who cannot predict what will happen tomorrow or come up with alternative solutions. Because they cannot think of a regulation that would put the fishermen to the center of the industry, they decide not to inspect and look away from the chaos."

Koryurek shares that, non-governmental organization, between 2011 and 2015, bureaucrats and fishermen came together for the first time during the time Dr. Mehdi Eker's was the minister of agriculture to discuss the issues regarding the fisheries sector, but the political agenda got ahead of them. These dates actually are not surprising. They coincide with the time the European Union noticed the fish and tried to embed similar sanctions that were applied to European countries to the naturalization process of Turkey. Furthermore, "Nowadays no one even talks about fisheries policies. Large corporate fisheries with sufficient capital sail out to the seas, catch everything they come across and bring them back with them to the market. Not a single municipality officer or authority checks their catch and all middlemen are happy to accept the job of

distribution. The fish has already arrived at the market. So, it might as well be put on the stall" explains Koryurek, the happenings after 2015.

One of the stalls that we visit with Activist Koryurek belongs to Omer. I ask Omer, a stall owner at the Besiktas fish bazaar, about middlemen and trolls. "There is an anonymous saying that is well known to the fishermen. They say, 'the excuses of fishermen are never-ending'. But by hiding behind such words, we never managed to team up. For Istanbul fisheries, there now is a year-on-year-off order in terms of availability of fish. If trolls are not banned, things will not get better. Whenever debates fire up about the lack of inspections, authorities come and hand out fines to the stalls. Does this make any sense? Go to the fish market and find whoever is catching these fish. Ask them why they landed so many juvenile fish, ask them why they landed so many fish and fine them."

Just like all small-scale fisheries are complainant about middlemen, I observe during our walk with Koryurek that all stall owners are complainant about troll fishing. The stall owners are aware that every smaller fish that arrives to them, in realty means a shrinking market. You can definitely distinguish between mature fish and juvenile fish using sonars or radars. How does the European manage this? You can also use the correct fishing net, use your sonar and radar more efficiently and know what you are pulling on board. These seas will also be necessary for us tomorrow. This is what hunting actually means. The order that we have here today is not contemporary and respectful fishing, it is an economic exploitation done by a group of people.

On the second get-together, I meet with two solution-oriented names; Domac and his friend Soydaner. Chief executive of Uskudar Seafood Cooperative, who has been fishing since a toddler of 9 years, Erol Domac, claims that a ban needs to be introduced in the Bosphorus against vessels that are above 25 meters. He adds that the kilowatts of the radars are not inspected, and this gives way for increased exploitation. He has witnessed fishermen using extremely

deep fishing nets that would normally only be used in oceans. As per Domac, the fishing nets to be used in the Bosphorus should not exceed 100 fathoms and he adds, "The nets of the trolls are blind. In other words, they are very small and narrow. The juvenile fish cannot escape once within the net. There is a fish massacre going on. Bluefish have gone missing. These people cannot be regarded as captains or skippers. They save today and do not care about tomorrow. This is not fishing. It is obvious that they have no fishing culture. They see the sea as a source of income."

According to, Istanbul's famous fisherman Mesut Soydaner, who has been in this business for 35 years, "large, small, no difference. Fishermen just pull out whatever they find. By domino effect, what the corporate fisheries have started, now has passed on to the small-scale fisheries." Soydaner, like Domac, is for technical arrangements but is agitated that everyone is blaming each other or more even another part of the sector. "Whoever is making unearned profit from the sea is to blame. Like an Indian chief from the 18th century who was in love with nature once said: 'When the fish will finish, gold will not be accepted' meaning that when the last fish is gone, we will understand that money is not something we can eat."

According to the law, all fisheries related activity is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock and the legislation number 1380 for aquaculture is the primary address to turn to for the fisheries sector. It includes chapters such as regulations about the fish markets, prerequisites for licensing and co-management. Also, the restrictions and fines fall under this code. According to the law, troll fishing is prohibited in the Marmara Sea and the Bosphorus. The only exceptions are if the purpose is scientific research related and with official permit or during the few dates that are announced officially. In the 2010 update to the 1971 originated legislation, the administrative fine against fishing by troll in the Marmara Sea and the the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles is defined as 3 thousand Turkish Liras. The registration of the vessels used for troll

fishing would be confiscated for one month for the first, 3 months for second and cancelled for any proceeding violation. The entities involved in selling or transporting the goods collected by this method would also be fined. (Chapter IV, Clause 24, 25)

We need to be reminded how Ostrom places the state into co-management. She only did so for the macro necessities of co-management and cooperatives. In other words, the state was not involved in the decision making and authorising mechanisms of the operation. This was, for sure, possible only in the case the community logic was well established. In order to talk about the co-managements of Istanbul, we will first take a look at official figures and descriptions.

The model mentioned in "Turkey's cooperatives report" by the Ministry of Customs and Trade Cooperatives Administration, is classified as a third alternative that lies in between state and the private sector. Cooperatives have the characteristics that encourage the less fortunate individuals to achieve economic and social assurance and small-scale initiatives to become big actors by joining forces. As of the end of 2016, there are 53.259 cooperatives and 7.422.994 cooperative members in Turkey. (*Türkiye Kooperatifçilik Raporu 2016*) Aquaculture Cooperatives Central Association, on the other hand, holds 31.241 members and 572 aquaculture cooperatives under its roof.

These figures show that in Turkey, there already are alternatives to co-management and organizations such as the Aquaculture Cooperatives Central Association even have hierarcal orders within them. The reports published also might give the impression that the state is involved in this topic. On the other hand, it is possible to comprehend the situation in Turkey from the comprehensive analyzes of Unal and Yercan. The fisheries cooperatives in Turkey still haven't been able to team up as desired. From these cooperatives only a selected few are able to make profit and at the end of the year share ths profit with the members through a payment called risturn. There are regularly functioning cooperatives

that support members with fishing nets, low interest or no-interest loans, but their numbers can be counted with the fingers of a hand. (2006, 226) Such as Ostrom's Alanya case, Unal and Yercan also have an exceptional example. The Cesme – Dalyankoy Fishery Cooperative can be regarded as a successful one. This cooperative earns income from yachts that come to the harbor and shares the profit with its members.

The cooperatives have not reached the desired activity since the 1940s. Nevertheless, cooperatives are one of the most effective tools for eliminating the problems that the fisheries are facing, keeping the fish stocks and fishermen community sustainable. In the 1980s, as the Turkey Cooperative Report also suggests, cooperatives became accepted. However, the reason that they are still unproductive comes from how the fishermen view the cooperatives and co-management system. As long as a system is not generated that will save them from the factors such as middlemen, every cooperative that has no effect on the socio-economical state of fishermen will not go further than being a coffeehouse. Just like the places I got together with the fishermen. As Knudsen (2001) also states, these are only "signboard" cooperatives, which only get together for general assembly. (as cited in Unal and Yercan, 2006, 226)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has important data from all over the world. 50 out of 51 million (99%) fishermen are small-scale fishermen. 95% of these fishermen are citizens of developing countries and account for 58% of worldwide fish production. Fisheries cooperatives, against the shocking figures, may serve as an alternative. However, how the state sees the fishermen is of utmost importance. As previously explained by Pomeroy and Williams and Bresnihan, top-down approach towards fishermen are at the same time reason for the failure of cooperative management. Knudsen explains that this insulting behaviour stems from the bureaucrats and scientists and reflect on general state policies. This behavior, actually, comes from the difference of view. For the 'idealistic fisheries policy' that they aim to create, will

solely be about increased level of productivity. (2004,136) Moreover, Knudsen realizes during conversations in Turkey that fishers are regarded as an ignorant and uneducable group and adds that: "This approach provides evidence that the elite's ignorance of practice and the adherence to futurism is still influential in contemporary Turkey." (2004, 146) The same approach holds the fishermen responsible of the cooperative managements' inefficiencies; co-management is far from institutionalization, fishers are not prone to add value to their job by cooperatives and so on. This situation creates a long-distance relationship between the state and fishers; the state sees the fault in the fishers and has left them on their own just as Koryurek stated previously: "Because the state is not able to create policies, they prefer not to inspect!"

That the cooperatives are struggling to thrive is linked to lack of inspection because cooperatives do not have the mission to save the fishers. It would in anyway be totally against the rule of law principle if they had given themselves the duty of dispensing justice. However, statements from the fishers such as "I have three kids, do not let the middlemen hear these conversations", "I owe the middlemen, they should not know that I am here" or "I do not have insurance, If you use my name, they will use this against me" are proof how the state has abandoned them and the security concerns that they have.

It is evident that there is a serious lack of inspection in the middlemen system. On the other hand, although they avoid a proper talk or agree to contribute to this study, their primary argument is that they invoice every transaction and "we pay taxes to the state. Everything is clear and transparent!"

Another lack of inspection about the middlemen is happening at the fishmarket. During our interview, Erol Domac is optimistic that although the state is not putting the fishers to the center, they are showing effort to create a fisheries policy and states that the degradation problem can be easily be overcome from an experience that he once had: "They tried to create an inspection web beginning at

the stalls. They are actually going to the fishmarket for inspection. Who inspects? They have assigned talented young engineers. Would you like me to explain what happens during inspections? They are all afraid. The middlemen have so much power that I have even heard that they threaten female engineers. They all have families that they are worried about. This sector now belongs to the middlemen. This sector now means, 'balancing of power'. If inspections are to be done, the state needs to provide law enforcement officers for the engineers. Without the police or the gendarmerie, inspections cannot be made because there is a much stronger network against us."

According to Mesut Soydaner, the people who do this cannot be called fishermen. Fishing is about culture and experience. Erol Domac explains "from the straits to the Black Sea, everywhere juvenile fish are caught, and no one inspects these. Juvenile fish must be able to escape from the openings of the fishing nets, the nets must be sewn in that consideration. In this irregularity, currently there is an on-going fish massacre. Before handing out licences, whoever is a boat owner, must be trained properly. You cannot achieve this with 2-hour lectures. It must be a months-long training process that would put it in these people's minds what the problem really is. Fishing is more than just a profession."

Soydaner and Domac are only two of the hundreds of small-scale fishers that are ready to take responsibility. Even scholars think similarly. They frequently ask themselves where the problem is.

Prof. Saadet Karakulak, Head of Fishing Technologies Department at Istanbul University states that the biggest problem in fishing is poaching and lack of inspections, specifically of the trolls. As per Koryurek, although troll fishing is illegal since 1971 through the aquaculture legislation issue 1380, poaching is proceeding. Not being able to inspect in an inland sea increases illegal fishing.

Inspections need to be carried out at every stage, at sea, on land and on the stalls. (CnnTurk, 2017, *Yakında sofranızda bazı balıkları göremeyebilirsiniz*)

The Security Marine Port Branch Office of Istanbul police have taken legal action against 140 boats for illegal fishing between the beginning of 2017 and mid 2018 alone. 250 people were fined for using banned fishing tools. I remind this to the fishermen. Some cannot hold in their laughter and some shine a fake smile at me. One of the young fishermen, Hamza, states that these figures could be achieved in two, maybe one month. Another fisherman points out that the troll cap, nets and crew require serious cost and can only be financed by corporations. A third fisherman adds, "This is a troll vessel we are talking about. It's not quiet. You cannot put it in your pocket and hide it. Its invisibility has a price. I for instance can land a catch of 2000 fish on a very good day. A troll on the other hand can land 20.000 in the same circumstances."

After meeting with fishermen and visiting Gurpinar Seafood Market, I decided to learn about the academic background of the whole issue and I got together with Istanbul University Aquaculture Faculty Dean Prof. Meric Albay. An underground economy is already created by illegally selling the fish before arriving at the fish market and this alone is a degradation of Istanbul fish as per Prof. Albay. Also, Albay explains that, stockpiling is done and people other than the fishers earn money from the fish market in unethical ways.⁶ "We have a void in terms of fish data. We only know the number of fishes that are taken to the fish market. But there are also the fish sold to restaurants and fish that are frozen due to overfishing which hit the marketplace after months. Another disaster that is going on since the last couple of years is fishing with artificial light. Think about it. You direct hundreds of watts of light into the sea, the fish gather up and then comes a massacre. While we are still fighting against trolling, new, unethical methods keep coming up."

⁶ Prof. Albay does not directly use the word middlemen. However it is easy to observe that his claim is true. You may observe non-seasonal fish within huge blocks of ice already being displayed on stalls as the first boats are just returning from sea.

I ask Prof. Albay who fishes where in which way and in what kind of order this all happens. "Anyone who feels like it can fish in our seas. They can use net sizes and types they should not use, and they catch juvenile fish. We, on the otherhand, wonder helplessly if fish will be available next year" he says. Another topic that Albay points out to is the use of technology. Albay evaluates Mansfield's dilemma if advancing technologies and opportunities would cause 'overcapitalization' or not: "The technology that our fishers have are very modern, but they fish with the 'catch as many as you can' principle. We are not fishing in a good way and we need to confess this. Our fishers only aim to save the day. We need to learn about scientific fishing. Therefore, we need to reduce the usage of tools, restrict them."

In Albay's words, "We do not have a limit for fishing. We pull out all the fish in the vicinity, sell them at the fish market and try to save the day. We need to set a limit to what we should catch and have the knowledge of how much we should not catch. The tools restricted for inshore and inland use in foreign places are not in Turkey. Authority for inspection at sea is with the coast guard, gendarmerie on the shoreline and the city agricultural authorities are in charge of the fish that have made it to land, but we fail to inspect." He is confident that students who graduate from their university will have great influence against degradation, for the change of perspective towards fishermen and the teaching respect for the nature. Albay is one of the few who believes that scientists must get their hands dirty. For him, graduates of their faculty should be on the boats, in the markets and at the ministry. He explains that they will create a buffer zone that aims become a council between the fishers and bureaucracy. However, currently there is no employment area.

Prof. Albay is more courageous than the fishers. The sentence "Seas have gone bare" that he has used during our get together for the newspaper article has made headline and is still widely shared on social media. He claims that he

received repercussions due to his courageous words and that some of his colleagues and names from the fisheries sector asks him why he has said such things. Nevertheless, "It is what it is. Everyone needs to see in how much of a bad shape we are. It might seem as if fisheries are the concern of fish and fishers, but the topic is way deeper than that", he said.

Istanbul is going through the process that Europe experienced before 2013. The lack of data and scientists not being involved to the fisheries sector are what Prof. Albay draws attention to. These problems also are the cause for lack of inspections. The state does not even possess a data pool strong enough to create laws. However, the main problem is the state not showing recognition to the fishers. The issues with fish stocks and incorrect fishing, that we come across everyday in mass media is due to this specific reason.

Another issue of the Bosphorus, which is linked with the recognition problem, is the middlemen and capital owners in general. This privileged group of people has no place in such a culture with history. There is tradition based legitimate unwritten laws. These groups do not obey these laws.

Both the fishermen at sea and the sales people at the stalls -who are also called fishermen in the Turkish language- have future anxiety. This brings with it an aggressive fishing and 'save the day' approach. Even though the success of fisheries is evaluated by the profit, this in return creates a sustainability problem. The state must aim the criticism about resource management to itself. The cooperatives must be explained the importance of cooperation and interdependence. The same confrontation done by Europe 5 years ago must be done for the Bosphorus.

CHAPTER FIVE / CONCLUSION

" Like an Indian chief from the 18th century who was in love with nature once said: 'Only when the last tree has been cut down, the last fish been caught, and the last stream poisoned, will we realize we cannot eat money.' This exactly where we are now."

*Mesut Soydaner,
who is one of Istanbul's most known fisherman for 35 years*

Trying to analyze the relation between fisheries and politics in the Bosphorus by focusing on the small-scale fisheries might be considered an irrelevant argument. Moreover, fishing can be seen as a cliché topic in this region. However, it is a very deep subject including socio-economic norms and the degradation problem of power relations. By taking this approach into consideration, firstly, this study tries to emphasize that the fisheries sector is a socio-economical activity utilizing the commons as its theoretical basis. Secondly, this study includes a field work with 15 local small-scale fishermen from the Bosphorus in an attempt to show how this issue applies in practice. Furthermore, scholars, activists and other actors of the fisheries sector are part of this thesis. The goal is to define how the theoretical 'fisheries as a part of the commons' should be read in practice and reveal the depth of the problem.

Why is understanding the commons so important for this thesis? Primarily, in economy, the commons have been as precious as gold in every era. This value is due to the commons being the capital of nature itself; many sources open to innovation, providing wealth without the requirement of any effort. The notion that these resources were diminishing initially came up during the 1950s. This anxiety peaked during the 1980s and has ever since remained a never-ending qualm. When fisheries are in question, the seas and oceans, as part of the commons, have been classified as natural resources. However, the seas, oceans and other waters differ significantly from air, forest, agricultural fields, etc. This is

mainly because of the difficulty of collecting data about their limitations in order to anticipate the happenings of tomorrow and the waters being almost completely unresponsive to corrective actions against mistakes. Therefore, this paper studies the commons in light of two important works regarding the commons; Scott Gordon's *The Economic Theory of a Common-Property Resource: The Fishery* (1954) and Garrett Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons* (1968). It is important to choose these two-pioneering works as the base literature. Gordon states that fisheries are not just about the fish in the sea but an economical reality. This approach is shocking and new for traditional views that the fisheries sector is merely a geographical subject. Gordon supports his claim on a strong mathematical foundation. He repeats the critical necessity of sustainable economy for social welfare many times. On the other hand, Hardin speaks of a tragedy that at first seems to be utopic. He states that the commons will cause their own end and the real reason for this will be the ever-growing population of the world. Like Hardin, he too solidifies his argument utilizing strong mathematical support. As per him, any attempt to prevent the tragedy for the sake of social welfare by the usage of technology or policies will only postpone the inevitable end. When thought about, Hardin's seemingly marginal pessimistic thought continues to remain a possible threat. His article from 51 years ago seems to be written just yesterday; the commons still face the same dangers. Specifically, the human race currently not willing to decrease birthrate and its direct effects on the usage of natural resources remain Hardin's strongest argument.

This study includes a fieldwork with 15 local small-scale fishermen from the Bosphorus in an attempt to show how this issue applies in practice. This part is the realization of the theoretical 'fisheries as a part of the commons' and constitutes the most crucial part of the study. This type of fieldwork is unique to studies made in Istanbul. Surely, there are many studies about the commons. However, it must be criticized that debates on the commons in Turkey remain limited to the area of enclosure, limitations, privatization and intervention of state.

Therefore, it is important that a theoretical study of this nature is combined with the fieldwork that I have made.

Throughout this thesis, I have emphasized that the fisheries issue is mainly a political one. There are serious power relations between the state and fishers in limited spaces such as the Bosphorus. The source of corruption and degradation, as explained in this study, is the disregard of this power relation. In the Bosphorus case, the most easily seen and uncontrolled outcome of the degradation are the capital owners. The two main upper crusts of these capital owners are the trawler owners and middlemen. The government connivance for the formation of upper crusts in the fisheries sector is a disaster both for the future of the Bosphorus fisheries and its economy. This unhealthy situation pushes the fishers to create ways of underground economy. Furthermore, in the medium-term, this attitude most probably will not stay limited to the fisheries and cause a domino effect. It will be inevitable to observe the same degradation in other commons as well.

In Istanbul, we face a scenario where collaboration is not present, a self-interest-based system is prevalent, and in other words the worst-case scenario is carried out. Prof. Albay's criticism that in Turkey we only 'save the day', is therefore, not for nothing. Because the fishers are not confident about the expected return of tomorrow, they focus on maximizing their yield today. They are right and wrong at the same time because the fishing that they do under difficult conditions is what keeps them on their feet in moral and material ways. Apart from the fact that they are left abandoned by the state, they also are forced to struggle with middlemen and troll owners. These are groups that act like the immediate market order at the stock market, do not prioritize the fish, the sea, the nature or the, not written but legitimate, ethical fishing traditions. On the other hand, if small-scale fishermen do not stand against and forestall this destruction, they will be left with no leg to stand on.

The negligence towards the small-scale fishermen comes from a top-down management system, far from any brainstorming and in form of commands. This

kind of privatization or restriction by the state will benefit no other than the capital owners and result in a socio-economic collapse. The state must shift its perspective and act in an accommodationist manner. The fisheries have shown that a state viewpoint update is necessary.

Dietz et al. state about another important effect of top-down management. Negative perspective in policy investments and also the transformation of common properties to government property hurt the resources. The restriction of common property is faster than the staff receiving sufficient education and obtaining enough experience: "Common property with some limitations on access and use patterns became de jure government property—but due to the lack of enforcement, they frequently turn into de facto open access. Corrupt public officials also find opportunities to collect side payments from local resource users hoping to exploit resources that were officially government owned." (2002, 15) This situation is another important aspect of the degradation described earlier and evidence of corrupt power relations. This can be frequently seen in my thesis.

A fact at least as important as degradation is how the small-scale fishermen are looked down on in the world and also in the Bosphorus. This situation has become a serious factor for the harming of seas and oceans all over the world because in a perspective where the fishermen are not considered to be in the foreground, sustainability or a successful result is not achievable. In Turkey and specifically in the Bosphorus, the situation is even worse. The fishermen who are low-income and seen as low class have a serious visibility and recognition problem. For decision making, the state, neither sits in the same table as them nor appreciates their thoughts. My study has clearly shown that fishing needs to be considered as a profession. The welfare of especially small-scale fisheries must be increased. Security concerns must be eliminated. It has to be explained that sustainability only can be achieved in unity. Even if bank loans cannot be guaranteed, cooperatives must evade their symbolic presence and receive authority to financially support their members. For sure, such an initiative can only succeed if fishermen, non-governmental organizations, scholars and capital

owners come together. None of them have more rights than the other. There is a deep and historical culture of small-scale fisheries in Istanbul. Additionally, time and space must be given to scholars and students who have comprehensive knowledge on the culture of fisheries and have the urge to elucidate such as Prof. Albay. Remembering the December 1988, The Economist article: "left to their own devices, fishermen will overexploit stocks.... [T]o avoid disaster, managers must have effective hegemony over them." (as cited in Ostrom, 1990, 8) This study has shown that we have not been able to come a long way since.

This study questions if co-management can become the solution to this neglected crisis with Ostrom's perspective. In this theoretical point, surely, co-management has not been introduced as a savior on its own. However, it is important that Ostrom, in addition to the Alanya case, exemplifies how all over the world small-scale fisheries can self-govern themselves. This idea may seem romantic and impossible in today's wild capitalism but is still inspiring for limited areas such as the Bosphorus because from Ostrom's perspective, a micro reality has been theorized in macro scale. Surely, co-management, cooperative management or collaborations are not hundred percent fail-proof remedies. But they are the strongest alternative against the tragic ending of the commons, a light at the end of the tunnel. The situation in Turkey, on the other hand, is more tragic. The current co-management system is contrary to minimal recognition of rights to organize. Cooperatives are dysfunctional. They do not even possess the authority to create income to suffice themselves. They are legal on paper but have no voice. Accessible low-cost tools have not been provided till date for the solution of problems. The hands of the cooperatives are tied. Even though they manage to supply requirements such as capital and equipment, tomorrow holds no guarantee. Under these circumstances, for example, the fishers do not take the cooperatives seriously as their superior management.

It must be said that the co-management is full of subsets of neoliberalism. With this approach, units can make their own policies and announce them to the state. They do this via the manager or governor of the state. Simply put, rather

than communicating with each individual fisherman, the state divides them into groups and manages them collectively. Additionally, small units such as cooperatives possess the motivation to self-govern but within the limits of the local authority. Only in this way, can fishers respect co-managements and the economic contribution of fisheries and fisheries sustainability can be achieved. This is the only way that benefits the state and cares about the fishers simultaneously. The reflection of this collaboration to nature is, of course, another positive effect to talk about. For this reason, co-management can not be considered as a rebel movement against the state but, in contrary, as a piece of it. This perception is unavailable in Turkey.

For the Bosphorus case, as an outcome, I have to say that it is important that we create and use a common language; a language that will save the fishers from of the darkness of isolation and explain them that this situation is not a tragedy. And if there really is a tragedy, a language that tells them they are not alone. For this reason, space has to be made for co-managements. Not just for the sake of gathering in a local coffee shop with a symbolic co-management license, but a flexible entity that possesses zeitgeist, set to ‘pull the ones left out in’ and where the state will be available for inspections like a referee.

The most important inference from the Bosphorus case is that beyond all theoretical debates, the small-scale fishermen are far from a state of welfare. Certainly, great theories in terms of economy policies or any other socio-economic perspectives should be debated but when the social perspective and the truth and necessity of welfare is taken into account, it does not suffice for the Istanbul case. In Istanbul, fishermen’ profession do not impact their quality of life well. For example, nearly all have hernia of the loins and no insurance policy. They all turn to hearsay treatments and try to manage this serious medical issue with low cost remedies. Small boats do not have a monthly salary system. The captain gets half the total profit and distributes the rest between the expenses of the boat and crewmembers. This naturally results in less people doing more work for more share from the profit. It is important to see at this point that Gordon

approaches the fisheries as an economical activity. But there are more parameters to the story. The performances of the fishers and their personal needs become just as important in the field. Remembering fisherman Eren's statement at this point is important: "Becoming a fisherman is not an occupation. It is a necessity full of desperation; whereas it was my childhood dream."

We are not close or far from Hardin's harsh and cruel approach against the users of commons and even to his opinion that they should not reproduce. We may still be far from "Tragedy of the Commons" but Ostrom's "Drama of the Commons" perspective is not enough to understand the seriousness and severity of the situation for the Istanbul case. In order not to face the fate that Hardin worries about, the states need to be humble enough to make global outcomes from local struggles.

It needs to be understood that the small-scale fishers' 'save the day' approach is not an egotistical self-interest, but more of an anxiousness: future anxiety. The global order serves investors and those behind them with capital. However, the reign of state-friendly capital owners must come to an end. Middlemen and similar actors, who appear as bugs of the system due to state abandonment, must be combatted. This should be what is understood of restriction and intervention. Mansfield's 'overcapitalization' concern is in reality important to explain those move by the hit-and-run tactics. This subject promotes overconsumption as well, that causes the small-scale fisheries to panic and move by apprehension.

Ostrom, during her Nobel acceptance speech, emphasized the importance of mutual trust for local groups to build their own systems. It is possible to find some reflections from this systematic approach of Ostrom in the post 2013 EU fisheries policies. I do not intend on doing a comprehensive study on European fisheries. However, the EU has noticed the importance of involving all entities and making decisions collaboratively. Since 2013, the fishers are becoming less

invisible. For sure, different countries are having different experiences but it is clear that positive progress begins with the acceptance of the problem and where the question ‘what do we need to do now’ is sincerely asked. Even though the term cooperative is not mentioned directly in the Common Fisheries Policies, the initiative itself is alone an example of co-management and collective act. This is the same in the Ireland example. Ireland shaped the research and policies of the EU to fit its own needs. Therefore, the process of policy-making that the EU began in the mid-2000s is inspiring. However, although I give the Ireland example, the cases of Turkey and Ireland are not comparable. This is because, before the introduction of innovations like the EMS or reforms like the CFP, Ireland had already overcome the recognition problem. There are market-based issues such as "how to increase the welfare of the fishermen" or "how to add value to the fish" on the table aiming to further enhance the positive results. In Turkey, on the other hand, fishermen are still stuck up in a social class struggle. We, specifically in Istanbul, are at the very beginning of a long and bumpy road.

In my study, by focusing on the small-scale fisheries of the Bosphorus, I, in reality symbolically analyze many diverse communities and groups using the commons in Turkey. In Turkey, the state went passed Hardin and Gordon’s definition of privatization. Since long, privatization is not about protecting the resources or groups, but is entirely profit based. Moreover, in this process, the laborers, villages, small-scale commons users are ignored. This situation causes a new type of minority problem to evolve. Therefore, although throughout history we have thought of minority groups as ethnic groups and their relations with the state, this recognition issue and ‘do not ignore’ attitude of the state is causing deprived groups who feel anxiety towards their future, such as the small-scale fishermen, to develop.

Apart from the lack of co-management incentives or them not being taken into account, today we find ourselves discussing another important topic, the function of the unions. Former Minister of Finance, Naci Agbal, shared that

between the years 2003 and 2017, a total of 59 billion 900 million US dollars' worth of privatization took place. Additionally, the 14 sugar factories that will be privatized, of which discussions are still going on during the writing of this thesis, must not be forgotten.

To sum up, it is undeniable how invisible the Istanbul small-scale fisheries are. To explain what position, they should take or at least state of mind they should have can be exemplified by a case that found its way to mass media and is still remembered by the individual efforts of local people. On 16 February 2016, in Artvin Cerrattepe, the community's reaction against a planned mining activity and 2600 km road works bypassing flatlands lead to public indignation in Turkey. Security officers attacked the activists and local community, who obstructed the vehicles of the mining company. Old and young people finally made their voice heard to the country after long struggles of standing in front of heavy machinery and defending their grounds. In the General Assembly of Turkey, 'Cerattepe research proposals' by the parties HDP and CHP were rejected. It was reminded by parliamentarian Ertugrul Kurkcu, that the pro- government Cengiz Holding executed the activities. Although a final verdict is yet to be made, cessation has been achieved by the efforts of the local community.

Today, the local community still continues to create a collective movement every 16th of February. The Yesil Artvin Association members remind the social media and press what has happened and shares news about the court proceedings. In their 2019 gathering, The Yesil Artvin Association chairman Nur Nese Karahan stated that the Artvin communities' Cerattepe struggle continues. She continued, "Our supreme court application that we have made with 730 people is still being investigated. However, although the mining company got approval for 32 hectares of land, they are now speaking of 240 hectares. And now, they gave the water sources to the mining company."

During my field study, I realized how vividly the fisheries sector portrays this phenomenon in particular. The market that is constantly after more and more profit is pushing the Bosphorus fisheries towards a social crackdown, just like a realization of Polanyi's double movement. The very basic instinct of survival forces the Bosphorus fisheries to involve themselves in a countermovement and turn to grey economy in search for a yield that is relatively fairer against their efforts. This act of double movement naturally limits the growth of the market slightly but saves the day for some fishermen. It is very clear that as long as the current system is not modified or completely rebuilt, the market will continue to grow and the labor and resources will suffer. Moreover, the fisheries are only a single piece of a huge puzzle making up the commons. As I have stated before, all resources will suffer from this disorder. The only solution is the collective movement of all small units and the insistence towards self-governing.

Wrapping up, let's remember Havva Bekar -aka Havva Ana-, who during the Cerattepe resistance sat on the route of bulldozers with a stick in her hand. She had reacted against the governor, who had insulted them by calling them looters and who never distained to come to the site to talk to them, by saying "Who is the government? The government is the government thanks to us. This governor will come here. The roads of the flatlands shall not be joined. Every flatland has its own road anyway. We definitely do not want it. The governor calls us two looters. If we are looters, what are you supposed to be? You just sit in your chair. These flatlands have made us who we are. We live here since our childhood. Take your heavy machinery with you and leave." So, the real tragedy is, the state realizing the huge value the resources create and using them only to its own benefit.

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