SHOULDERING THE BURDEN:

WATER CONSERVATION CAMPAIGNS

AND THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

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Shouldering The Burden:

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Gizem Bütüner, certify that

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● this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;

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ABSTRACT

Shouldering The Burden:

Water Conservation Campaigns and The Question of Responsibility

This thesis tackles the questions of what water is and why water conservation campaigns blame individual actions for water scarcity while agricultural and industrial uses of water are much more than household use. The two questions are approached through a critical discourse analysis of the existing literature on water and Finish's water footprint campaign called *Yarının Suyu*. The first part explores the changing meanings of water in society, politics, economics, and the environment, arguing that water is an abstract hybrid with an intrinsic value as the subject in its encounters with others rather than a mere object as a resource or commodity. After establishing various meanings of water to different sets of people, the thesis uncovers why individuals are accused in water footprint campaigns, arguing that such campaigns regard water as a commodity to be profited from in contrast to their claims of water as a right to protect. Engaging with these two broad themes, this thesis criticizes an anthropocentric approach and the binary of nature/culture, arguing that water and society are internally related, transforming and being transformed in their relations. As such, it traces the global water crisis back to humanity, which can only be resolved by people changing their mindsets regarding water from a resourcist one to acknowledging its intrinsic value. The thesis concludes that only if we can change how we value water by not putting the responsibility on individuals and by making production and supply more sustainable, can we solve the water crisis.

ÖZET

Yükü Omuzlamak:

Suyu Koruma Kampanyaları ve Sorumluluk Sorusu

Bu tez suyun ne olduğu ve tarım ve endüstriyel su kullanımı evlerdeki su kullanımından çok daha fazlayken, suyu koruma kampanyalarının su kıtlığı için neden bireyleri suçladığı sorularını ele almaktadır. Bu iki soru var olan çalışmaların ve Finish'in su ayak izi kampanyası *Yarının Suyu*'nun eleştirel söylem analizi ile incelenmesiyle cevaplanmaya çalışılmıştır. Tezin ilk bölümü suyun toplumda, politikada, ekonomide ve çevrede değişen anlamlarını keşfetmektedir. Temel argümanı suyun ilişkilenmelerinde bir kaynak, meta veya obje olmaktansa, kendi içerisinde değeri olan soyut bir melez olduğudur. Suyun farklı insanlar için değişen çeşitli anlamlarını belirledikten sonra, bu tez bireylerin neden su ayak izleri kampanyalarında suçlandıklarını tartışıyor, temel sebep olarak da bu tarz kampanyaların suyu korumamız gereken bir hak olarak iddia etmelerine rağmen, aslında kar edilecek bir meta olarak görmeleri olduğunu savunuyor. Bu iki genel temayı tartışırken, bu tez insan merkezci ve doğa/kültür gibi ikili bakış açılarını eleştiriyor ve toplum ve suyun içten ilişkili olduğunu ve birbirlerini değiştirdiklerini birbirleriyle ilişkilerinde değiştirildiklerini savunur. Bu durumda, bu tez küresel su krizinin sebeplerini insanlığa bağlar, dolayısıyla bu kriz yalnızca insanların su ile ilgili bakış açılarını kaynakçı bir bakış açısından suyun içsel değerini tanıma üzerine değiştirmekle mümkündür. Bu tezin vardığı sonuç şudur: yalnızca suya verdiğimiz değeri değiştirebilirsek ve sorumluluğu bireylere yüklemek yerine üretimi a sürdürülebilir yapabilirsek, su krizini çözebiliriz.

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This thesis is dedicated to both my biological and chosen family.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AKP	Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kakınma Partisi*)
ANT	Actor-Network Theory
BPA	Bisphenol A
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
DSI	General Directory of the State Hydraulic Affairs (*Devlet Su İşleri*)
FAME	Alternative World Water Forum
GAP	The Southeast Anatolian Project (*Güneydoğu Anadolu Projesi)*
H2O	Dihydrogen monoxide
HEPP	Hydroelectric power plants
ISI	Import substitution industrialization
ISKI	Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (*İstanbul Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi Genel Müdürlüğü*)
PET	Polyethylene Terephthalate
pH	Potential of hydrogen
SUDER	Packaged Water Producers Association (*Ambalajlı Su Üreticileri Derneği*)
STS	Socio-Technical Systems Theory
UN	The United Nations
USA	The United States of America
WW2	World War 2
WWF	World Water Forum

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> *There remains nothing, in culture or nature, which has not been transformed, and polluted, according to the means and interests of modern industry.* (Debord, 1990, p. 10)

1.1 Identifying the problem

The world is experiencing a significant decline in the proportion of freshwater drinkable and valuable to humans. Only two to three percent of all the water on earth is considered fresh, while around 98 per cent is seawater, and more than half of the freshwater is not accessible in glaciers (Furon, 1963/1967, p. 7; Hawken, Lovins, & Lovins, 2000, p. 213). According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "by 2025, half of the world's population will be living in water-stressed areas" (2019), and according to a report by UNESCO, "2 billion people (26% of the population) do not have safe drinking water" (Bonazzi, 2023). The amount of potable water is decreasing due to various reasons, such as climate change, urbanization, increasing human population, as well as agricultural, industrial, and household uses of water (Hughes, 2005).

Besides the problem of quantity, water quality threatens the future of water since the remaining freshwater is contaminated through human-based activities (Linton & Budds, 2013). This is caused not merely by the primary consumer's waste of non-recyclable goods but also mainly by the industrial waste that comes from the fast-production industry and unsustainable agricultural practices (van de Worp, 2002,

p. 9). This does not only concern developing and underdeveloped countries but developed countries as well. Therefore, it is argued that there is a "global water crisis" of pollution and scarcity in the twentieth century (Linton, 2010, p. 7).

As a global problem, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of water conservation and sustainability campaigns with the aim of solving the water shortage and contamination. Once solely a part of the environmental movement in general, there are now specific campaigns and foundations for water conservation and sustainability, as well as awareness campaigns on water footprints both in the world and, more specifically, in Turkey. One such campaign called *Yarının Suyu* (Tomorrow's Water) is led by a detergent company in Turkey called Finish, for which they were awarded "the Best of the Year" in an advertisement contest (Marketing and Interactive Excellence Awards, 2019). It has attracted much attention in society and the media, partnering with TV shows and prominent and influential figures such as musicians and actors to raise awareness of the water problem in Turkey (Üçhisarlı, 2019). Their main goal is stated to be to protect Turkey's water together, written in giant letters on the main page of their website with the hashtag *#benimmirasımsu* (#mylegacyiswater) (https://www.yarininsuyu.com). To achieve this, in addition to commercials, social media campaigns, and partnering with TV shows, they also shared a documentary with National Geographic titled *25 Litre: Suyun Pesinde* (25 Liters: Chasing Water) on their website and social media channels (National Geographic Turkiye, 2019). Their campaign has attracted attention, however, mainly through the water footprint calculator, in which people are asked a series of questions about their weekly habits, including how often people wash their clothes, how much meat they eat, how many showers they take, and how long they last, and so forth.

Water conservation campaigns like Finish's Yarının Suyu usually focus on what individuals can do regarding the water problem, such as being aware of their water footprints and reducing their water consumption in the household. However, according to various research, fast production of food, textile and garments, automotive manufacturing, and so forth contribute to water consumption, waste, and contamination a lot more than individual consumption (Manganello, 2019; Beverland, 2014). In other words, there is a discrepancy between what is included in the discussion on water conservation regarding who is more responsible and on whom the blame is weighed. I am interested in why these campaigns focus on individual consumption rather than other more significant contributors. Accordingly, I will argue that campaigns that emphasize how much individuals contribute to this environmental crisis divert the responsibility onto the shoulders of the consumers rather than the industries and governments that can make more fundamental changes.

One of the ambassadors of the campaign, a famous Turkish actor, Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, says in one of their commercials that water is everything to him while looking at the brown land, which was once a blue lake (Finish, 2021c). He continues by stating that if we want water to be more than a memory, we are the remedies and need to start saving water in the kitchen. This is an excellent example of what interested me in water conservation campaigns. In the narrative of the commercial, water is associated with youth, energy, and liveliness as a boy and a teenager whom the audience grasps as the actor's younger selves jump into the clear blue water, having fun with friends. It is given a cultural significance of liveliness, hope, happiness, companionship, and briefly, everything as the actor vocalizes. On the other hand, the lack of it is associated with death, drought, loss of color, and loneliness, as the actor stands in the middle of the dried lake.

What is achieved here is to emphasize the cultural importance of water prior to explaining to the audience that they need to protect the future of water by reducing their water footprints, starting in the kitchen. Besides various advertising techniques, which will be discussed in detail, Finish's campaign successfully places water in a position of historical, cultural, and natural attraction for people to care about. This enhances the attention and acknowledgment the campaign and the problem of water scarcity receive from the public. In this respect, understanding the social dynamics of water is fundamental to discussing the prevailing question of why water footprint campaigns focus on individual action since "water bears the traces of its social relations, condition, and potential" (Linton, 2010, p. 7). After all, though it has become normalized in the easy access of it through the taps at home in the modern world, water is more than something that runs through the tap, more than H2O, and more than something we can constrict in bottles. Rather, "water is necessarily transformed, 'metabolized' water … in terms of its social characteristics and its symbolic and cultural meanings" (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 1). Thus, one of my main queries on this research is revealing the cultural significance of water and how it shapes today's water conservation campaigns. Some of the questions I have asked and answered on this topic are: What is water? How have the connotations of water changed through time? How are such meanings of water reflected in language, focusing on the example of Turkish? How has water been viewed in the history of humanity, mainly focusing on Turkey? Lastly, how have the cultural meanings of water affected and altered the dynamics of society and the relationships of people?

There is, however, another side to the story of water, which is the political and economic implications. Though provided by nature freely, the arrival of water into our houses requires some investment, resulting in service fees. Furthermore,

since water is provided not by the state but by private companies in most countries, there are also fees that are charged by that specific company. The economic importance and commodification of water also present themselves in the form of bottled water, which has become popular only in the recent century. This has become the norm so much that most modern individuals cannot imagine a time without water bottles that can be found on every corner, whether it is a store or a vending machine, as well as personalized water bottles with various colors and designs. To this extent, I asked the following questions in my research: How has water transformed from a free public service gathered from the fountains to a priced good? How has this change in access altered our comprehension of and relationship with water? Has such a transformation resulted in a change in society (e.g., people's relationship with one another)? Is water a right, a commodity, or something in between?

I believe that understanding the cultural, political, and economic implications of water is necessary to dwell on how water conservation campaigns are shaped. As Veronica Strang (2015) states: "What we think of as 'Nature' is seen, understood, and experienced through a cultural lens" (p. 8), which is why prior to discussing the reasons for water footprint campaigns' accusing individuals of water scarcity, we need to find out how water transforms and is transformed by society, and vice versa (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 1). Accordingly, I argue through this dissertation that the changing implications of water reflect a passage of society from communality in the past to individuality in the modern world. Similarly, water conservation campaigns play on such individual actions disguising them as a communal effort to reduce their water use. I claim that by referring to water as a cultural heritage and a natural resource people need to save for future generations (i.e., water as a right for all), campaigns like Finish's Yarının Suyu not only conceal the more significant causes of

water scarcity, which are the agricultural and industrial uses (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 209), but they also mask how they view the water crisis as a source of profit rather than a communal right. Consequently, such campaigns solely "redirect rather than resolve" the water crisis (Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 208).

1.2 Methodology and theory

As I have argued, understanding the reasons why Finish's campaign focuses on individual actions should be preceded by exploring various meanings of water, in other words, "how water participates in the definition and destabilization of the boundaries between materiality and abstraction" (Ballestero, 2019, p. 406). To achieve this, I will use Linton and Budds' (2013) take on the "hydrosocial cycle," which refers to the "socio-natural process by which water and society make and remake each other over space and time" (p. 10). As argued by Swyngedouw (2004), the "hybridized water" or the "socio-natural" undergoes a process of transforming society and being transformed by "its material, symbolic, political and discursive constructions" (p. 25). These two conceptions bear similarities to Bruno Latour's theory on "quasi-objects" or "strange new hybrids," which are neither natural nor cultural and social but things in between (Latour, 1991/1993, p. 51-122). To that extent, I will also incorporate some parts of Latour's actor-network theory (ANT) into the framework of this thesis, which takes humans as well as nonhumans to be "actants" rather than mere objects in the networks (i.e., the relationships) they create (1996, p. 2, 7; 2005, p. 10). According to ANT, everything exists as a result of the interaction between equal actors, or actants, the definitions of which are in constant change due to various network relationships (Latour, 2005, p. 65-66). The various

meanings of water, thus, can be approached using ANT, in which the study of the meaning is not a means to an end but "an end in itself" (Latour, 1996, p. 8).

However, Latour's conceptualization differs from what Swyngedouw (2004) and Linton and Budds (2013) argue when they call water a hybrid. In Latour's ANT, the components of the hybrid, nature, and culture, are two different and separate things (1991/1993, p. 122), whereas for Swyngedouw, Linton, and Budds, "the production of socio-natural hybrids … takes precedence over the objects themselves" (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 5) and one cannot separate the social, cultural, natural, and political forces from the hybrid (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 18). As a "socio-natural" hybrid, urban water combines all these different notions, affecting them and being affected by them, making and re-making each other, as well as "transcend[ing] the binary distinctions between society/nature, material/ideological, and real/discursive" (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 18, 22). Thus, water viewed in the hydrosocial cycle "internalizes social relations and politics, as opposed to being merely the object of politics" and such (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 2).

Influenced by such theorization, I argue that water is more than its material qualities; it is socio-natural, hybrid, and even abstract. Veronica Strang (2004) explains this hybrid abstraction of water simply and beautifully, stating: "Water is experienced and embodied both physically and culturally" as born of "a recursive relationship in which nature and culture literally flow into each other" (p. 4). As such, nature, culture, politics, economics, and water need to be understood "internally," meaning that they are not "independent entities" but internally related (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 4). In other words, hybrids do not exist outside one another, creating a heterogenous world, but are "constituted in the process of their relation[s] with other things, rather than in and of themselves" (p. 4). This goes

directly against theories of anthropocentrism, which ANT criticizes (Latour, 1996, p. 7). Anthropocentrism is placing humans at the center of the natural order, as a distinct from and superior entity to others, resulting in putting the interests of humans first, whatever the outcome may be in nature (Foreman, 1991). However, ANT, as posited by Latour (2005), recognizes the agency of the nonhuman (p. 10), and defines everything in the networks between the actors or actants rather than relationships revolving around the human. In ANT, the world is a stage in which numerous actors are at work simultaneously, and "it's never clear who and what is acting when we act" (Latour, 2005, p. 46).

However, how do anthropocentrism and water's actant position in the hydrosocial cycle relate to Finish's campaign? The answer is that anthropocentrism is at stake in Finish's campaign with respect to their greenwashing activities: aiming for brand recognition and profits while appearing green to save the waters as well as caring for water scarcity as long as it is of threat to humans. One of the main arguments of this thesis, that of water having an actant role in the hydrosocial network, will be used to criticize such anthropocentric as well as greenwashing hypocrisy of the actions taken by Finish. Still, to have an unbiased analysis, what notions such as environmental actions and sustainability mean should be discussed since, according to sustainability theory, the term sustainability has various connotations and meanings for different people (Jenkins, 2010). Thus, how the campaign defines sustainability is significant for the scope of this paper to comprehend why the responsibility is put on the individual. For instance, for an environmental activist, it might mean the protection of all waters, including salty ones; however, for essentialist anthropocentric ones, it might mean the protection of solely those on which humans rely to survive (Jenkins, 2010, p. 383). For a

corporation, it might mean maintaining and bettering market conditions (Jenkins, 2010, p. 380). For the ministry officials, it might be preserving their position in the system, in other words, "sustaining opportunity for the future" (Jenkins, 2010, p. 383). In short, understanding what sustainability means is fundamental in exploring what the campaigns stand for and why they include some things in the narrative and exclude others.

To explore these, socio-technical systems theory (STS) in relation to the environment will be used to understand "the impact of human activities on the earth's environment" since environmental sustainability is primarily affected by "global, social, technical, political, economic and cognitive factors" (Dwyer, 2011, p. 1). Barnes and Alatout (2012) suggest that STS regards water as "not a singular object of epistemology for which abstract knowledge can be produced" but as something whose "properties are not fixed" (p. 484). On the contrary, the STS approach argues that "water can be and become a border, a resource for regeneration, a foundation for empire, a means of nation building, and a material linkage between past and present" (Barnes & Alatout, 2012, p. 485). This is exceptionally important for my research in that it will help me theorize the different meanings of water for people. Linton (2010), as discussed above, argues that "water is what we make of it," an "abstraction," "a process rather than a thing" (p. 3-4). The definition of water transforms and is transformed in relation to how it is perceived and by whom it is perceived. Such discussion on the definition and meaning of water for individuals helps conceptualize how these campaigns take water into account and what they make of it (i.e., as a commodity or a public good) will vary, and such a framework will give my paper a solid ground of analysis.

Since this research relies on an analysis of how water constitutes and is constituted by society through different time periods, I thought the best approach was not an interview-based one due to its reliance on the history of water in relation to society. Restricting the matter in the present with interviews would lack a story of this long and changing history of the relationship between the two. Hence, I have decided to carry out a comparative and descriptive work of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as framed by Thomas Huckin (1997) by conducting archival research, analyzing books, research papers, articles, reports, newspapers, and blogs, all both online and on paper, as well as the websites and social media accounts of Finish and Yarının Suyu. CDA is "a highly context-sensitive, democratic approach which takes an ethical stance on social issues with the aim of improving society" (Huckin, 1997, p. 78). It analyses "the text, the discourse practices," and "the larger social context" with a "social constructionist" view, exploring the "ways in which dominant forces in a society construct versions of reality that favor the interests of those same forces" (Huckin, 1997, p. 78-79). As such, CDA considers the texts' "genre," "framing," "foregrounding and backgrounding," and "presuppositions," as well as literary devices such as metaphors, similes, personification, imagery, and so forth (Huckin, 1997, p. 81-84).

In such a framework, the literature review that I have conducted assisted me with exploring different approaches to water (e.g., how it is viewed through time), the problems with water, its conservation, and its relationship with society. While conducting this part of the research, I have not restricted my search to those resources that would support my arguments, but rather, I have tried to find out as much about different ideas on the subject as possible. I believe that the diverse and

contradictory opinions on water have helped me better analyze the changing meanings and connotations attributed to it.

Similarly, online resources of the websites and social media accounts of the campaign, which are mainly Facebook and YouTube[1], were convenient for analyzing Finish's approach to water, especially when conducted with the CDA approach. Looking at these platforms, I could decipher the meaning behind the visual materials and texts they have used to spread their narrative. These online resources have also directed me to the television commercials they have broadcasted, as well as the TV shows they have partnered with and sponsored to extend their reachability. I analyzed the language and words they chose to use in these narratives on all the platforms to better comprehend the subtext or the implicit meaning of their remarks instead of taking them at their face value. Such an analysis, when compared with the results of the literature research, has helped me understand how they value water. As Guy Debord (1990) states, in the media -or spectacles as he calls them- "what is communicated are orders; and with perfect harmony, those who give them are also those who tell us what they think of them" (p. 6). As such, I have detected a discrepancy between the environmental claims of the campaign and the aim of corporate promotion and recognition, which is why I argue that this campaign falls into the category of greenwashing, which will be explained shortly.

Additionally, their use of language also gave me an idea about how they want the audience to approach and value water, in that they present the public with a context to think about water by creating a storyline for how water scarcity came to be and what can be done by the individuals to prevent the future risk of drought. How

[1] Since almost all the posts on the campaign's other social media accounts (e.g., Instagram and Twitter) are the same or links to the original Facebook posts, I have not felt the need to also include them in my analysis. Finish seems to focus its campaign more on television and Facebook, which also indicates a lot about its directed audience as will be explained in Chapter 4.

they present this message entails the ideas they want to bring forward in the minds of the audience regarding water, water scarcity, the company, and its campaign. To analyze these, I have used Sara Ahmed's theorization of emotions and affect (2014), which she argues to be involuntary reactions in one's encounters. Finish's campaign aims for such affective reactions of fear and pain at the threat of water scarcity, hope for the future, and love for future generations, which is why using the theory of affect reveals so much about how Finish wants the audience to regard water. Lastly, I have also considered what is excluded from the narrative as much as what is included since they are equally fundamental to comprehending the message and the motives behind the campaign according to the CDA approach (Huckin, 1997). In other words, the exclusions present the ideas they want to distract the readers from, revealing once again what they want the audience to focus on.

I chose Finish's campaign to talk about water conservation campaigns due to its unprecedented recognition concerning water scarcity in Turkey vis-a-vis the attention it has gotten from the public. Though I am aware that one campaign cannot be representative of all the campaigns on water conservation, I think the analysis of this campaign provides an accurate representation of greenwashing campaigns. Greenwashing is "exploiting the perks of environmental branding" by using "exaggerated, deceptive, or unsubstantiated claims … to improve their corporate image" (Sailer, Wilfing, & Straus, 2022, p. 2) while not sincerely caring about the environment or while engaging in environmentally deteriorative activities. As such, I think the case of Finish is an on-point example of other greenwashing water footprint campaigns which emphasize individuals as the responsible for and saviors of water scarcity. Therefore, though it cannot be argued to represent every water footprint campaign, the analysis of Finish can provide an exemplary framework for other

research on campaigns engaging in greenwashing. One such campaign is the carbon footprint campaign led by a petroleum company, British Petroleum, in which people are urged to reduce their carbon footprint to protect the environment, one way of doing so being buying petroleum from their environmentally friendly company (Cherry & Sneirson, 2011, p. 1002-1003; Kaufman, 2020). Comparing the language of the two campaigns, one can see the resemblance of how both parties utilize people's concerns regarding the environment and future generations[2], which will be discussed in Chapter 4 in detail.

Furthermore, as the most popular campaign on water conservation in Turkey, Yarının Suyu is a relevant campaign to explore how water is represented in Turkish society in that through looking at the narrative of the campaign, we can discuss what water means to the company Finish, as well as the society with the help of CDA. To explain, campaigns and advertisements are directed towards the society, whom they want the attention of, so as to sell their products and increase the company's recognition as an environmentally friendly company, which is why the language, norms, and culture used in the campaign are informants of the dominant view of the public on water. Indubitably, this does not necessarily mean that society regards water the same as they are shown in the commercials. Nevertheless, I think a campaign that raised so much voice and awareness on water scarcity in Turkey uncovers at least what the general tendency and view towards water is. Such analysis also uncovers how Finish wants the public to think of water, which is how they can get their attention and increase the campaign's success in line with CDA's

[2] British Petroleum's campaign is criticized for its superficial claims on saving and caring for the environment while causing a "tragic explosion and oil spill" (Cherry & Sneirson, 2011, p. 984). Even without such a direct harm to the environment, this, and other campaigns, which prioritize profits and a good image in public eye to sincere environmental concerns, have been regarded as greenwashing, other examples of and more information on which can be found in the following research: Hamilton, 2015; Macellari, Yuriev, Testa, & Boiral, 2021; Kaufman, 2020.

explanation of agent-patient relations. Such dynamics will be revealed through the identification of the "exerting power" or the agents (i.e., the subject) and the "passive recipients" (i.e., the patient) of the texts (Huckin, 1997, p.83).

1.3 The outline of the chapters

This dissertation is organized into five chapters, each of which is written with the aim of analyzing water, its changing meanings, and how it affects and is affected by society. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 focuses on the cultural importance and the social qualities of water in collecting individuals into a community. This is where the theorization of water as an abstract hybrid is introduced by discussing water as the subject rather than a mere object in its relations, as well as the changing attributions to water in different social contexts through time. In the process, how water is signified in religion, history, and language is explored vis-a-vis how water and culture transform as their relationship changes.

Chapter 3 dwells on water's relationship to politics and economics, where new attributions to water come to the surface with the privatization of water in the forms of service to houses, a resource for energy, and bottled water. This chapter uncovers how water is transformed from a natural right to a profitable commodity through the abstraction of its material and social qualities (Linton, 2010) while also keeping its cultural qualities in some instances. As a result of such privatization, this chapter also discusses the inequality that the inaccessibility of water represents. Overall, this chapter explores how water as an abstract "flows increasingly in accordance with flows of capital" (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 3) through different advertisement techniques allocated to popularize bottled water.

Chapter 4 starts with identifying water scarcity and pollution and why they are a threat by exploring their causes and effects. This part is a critique of the anthropocentric approach to water and water-related issues, identifying resourcism and exploitation as the main reasons why water is scarce and polluted. This chapter also introduces concepts of greenwashing, water footprint, and virtual water and discusses how Finish's campaign disguises itself as caring for the environment in the form of greenwashing. In the process, the techniques of greenwashing to attract broad public attention are explored, through which such campaigns take advantage of the hybridity of water, where the cultural significance of it is highlighted to direct the attention from its commercialization in the market.

Lastly, Chapter 5 provides a summary of the arguments developed throughout the dissertation prior to extending the narrative to a critique of anthropocentric environmentalism in general. It also dwells on how the hybridity of water works for the benefit of environmental campaigns, in that they utilize various cultural meanings of it in their narrative, which makes the campaigns successful, as well as if the methods of greenwashing can be generalized. In addition, the final chapter opts for other ways in which water should be discussed in society as a better approach to the global water crisis.

CHAPTER 2

CULTURE OF WATER

"Nothing is constant except change," famously states Heraclitus in *Fragments* (as translated by Robinson, 1987, Fragment 12), implying that everything is in a state of transformation by the minute. Not only does this mean that we as humans change constantly, but the statement might also connote that the way in which humans express themselves, what they mean when they choose a particular vocabulary, is also in a state of conscious or unconscious transformation. Consider, for instance, the word nature. There is an abstraction to what people mean when they refer to nature, a question which Raymond Williams, in his article *Ideas of Nature* (1980), asks: "When we say nature, do we mean to include ourselves?" (p. 67). Some might while others do not, and some others might merely be referring to the trees and flowers while others might include animals in the same phenomenon. Williams concludes that nature comes to hold a range of meanings and connotations that alter in different periods and conditions in close relation to human history, one early example of which is Nature as a personified, singular, and divine Goddess (1980, p. 69-70). With the idea of evolution, however, such divinity was exempt from the meaning of nature, leaving its place to nature as the "selective breeder" or "natural selection" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Williams, 1980, p. 73).

Williams (1980) argues that the conceptualization of nature shifted in the twentieth and twentieth Centuries towards a meaning of wilderness from which humans are excluded, a Nature untouched and not disrupted by human intervention. However, a discussion on whether the human is included or exempt from Nature has also surfaced around the same time (Williams, 1980, p. 77; Cronon 1996, p. 17). Do

we as humans dominate and thus are superior to Nature, or are we parts of the cog in the natural order? Where do humans stand in the binary between nature and culture? Even those questions have various definitions regarding nature, ranging from the natural areas as they are and nature in the abstract (i.e., human nature).

William Cronon (1996) argues that the concept of wilderness is our own "cultural invention" since its connotations change in different centuries and places (p. 8). That is, the dominant ideas in a particular society in a specific period affect how we conceive and define nature. For instance, some used to associate wilderness with negative qualities such as savageness until the late eighteenth century due to its uncontrollable and destructive qualities (Cronon, 1996, p. 8). As another example, the rise of religion led people to believe that Nature, the uncontrollable but controlling, was of a higher being, deciding the fate of humanity, whereas capitalism brought about a nature that is dominated and exploited by the human (Williams, 1980, p. 84; Özerkmen, 2002, p. 171-172). Once vulnerable to the forces of Nature, the modern individual forms a relationship with nature in which he holds power in the fight. Furthermore, with the contemporary consciousness of environmentalism, the twentieth-century individual tends to increasingly regard nature and wilderness as a value that needs to be protected from the climate crisis caused by human action. In this concept, nature has become sacred against evil modernity and "the standard against … the failings of the human world" (Cronon, 1996, p. 16). Organizations, groups, and societies are formed demanding instant protection of the "natural": trees, animals, rivers, air, and more. The natural is again defined by the human who is anxious about climate change and its repercussions, changing its meaning as the dominant ideas diversify.

These are not to suggest that there is not one definite nature per se. Regardless of the ontological discussion of a single nature, what Williams' and Cronon's arguments suggest is the connotation of nature that varies depending on the history in which the meaning of nature is shaped, as well as on the society which defines and conceives it (Williams, 1980; Cronon, 1996). Such questioning of the development of different definitions is fundamental while considering a history of Nature rather than merely accepting an intrinsic description of one nature. "We need different ideas because we need different relationships" as the conditions of the human world change, states Williams (1980, p. 85), and this applies not only to the idea of nature but also to individual elements, including trees, animals, water, grass, and alike. Veronica Strang (2004), for example, asserts that "Engagement with water is the perfect example of a recursive relationship in which nature and culture literally flow into each other" since it is involved in the most unconscious daily actions of the modern individual (p. 4). Just like nature, water is also an abstraction, the definition of which is transformed as the human relationship to water alters (Linton, 2010, p. 3). After all, the modern individual does not claim to be close to nature whenever they use water at home. Then, the question must be that of why and how these transformations in the meaning of water, an unnoticed component of our daily lives, occur, which is precisely what this chapter aims to uncover.

2.1 Cultural story of water

Sevim (2020), Topçu (2017), and Barışta (1995) write about a story that, I think, beautifully exemplifies the symbolic meaning behind water. As the story goes, it is the year 1700s in an Ottoman town called Beyoğlu when Emetullah Gülnuş Valide Sultan (the mother of Sultan Ahmed III and the wife of Mehmed IV) comes across a

girl crying in front of a *çeşme* (drinking fountain) with a broken water pot in front of her. She approaches the girl offering money for the water pot, assuming that the pot being broken is the reason why the girl is crying (Sevim, 2020). The girl refuses the money, explaining that she is crying not over the pot but over water, which she failed to bring back home. Moved, Valide Sultan takes the girl to the palace with her and raises her to be a future Sultan named Saliha, after whom a *çesme* is named in the place she had the previous encounter.

What is it that makes this story important? Why would the mother of the sultan, one of the most influential people in the Ottoman Empire, take an ordinary girl to the most important building in the empire and marry her within the royal family? More importantly, why was the girl weeping over the water, which she could have filled again with the new water pot Valide Sultan offered to pay for?

The answers are included in the everyday tasks one performs those days. Getting water from the closest *çeşme* was not an unordinary job for the people in İstanbul back then. It was an everyday practice since water was not provided to houses back then but could only be taken from the fountains or bought from the "water carriers" (Özel, 2009, p. 62; Mala-Jetmarova, Barton, & Bagirov, 2015, p. 225). Thus, providing a daily necessary item like water was a regular job for the youngsters in the family, which can quite be overlooked these days since the modern individual can access water whenever they open a tap or go to a store. Strang (2004) explains that everyday practices form "shared meanings" in a society, which continue to change and develop over time (p. 67). In other words, the meaning of water alters in relation to those who use it depending on the time and culture. Likewise, Linton (2010) argues that water is an abstraction: it is "what we make of it" through our experiences and values rather than having a fixed meaning (p. 3-5).

Barnes and Alatout (2012) similarly assert that “water is not a singular object of epistemology” but can mean and become anything from a border for a country to a link between the past and the present (p. 484-485).

Accordingly, what seems minor to the modern individual, such as bringing water to the family, can mean a lot more to, for instance, those living in the eighteenth-century Ottoman Empire Istanbul. In the case of the young girl in the story, water had a different meaning as it was not just a commodity or a basic need for survival. Water, harder to reach at home, represented so much more to the little girl that she found losing water more upsetting than the pot. It meant a job for her in the family, with which she probably felt more useful, contributing to the household. There was a feeling of disappointment in herself due to letting down her parents (Topçu, 2017). Her appreciation of the importance of providing water for the family, in turn, presented the opportunity to rise to one of the most important positions, being the mother of the next sultan in the empire, which she used to order the construction of a grand *çeşme* replacing the little one she cried in front of before, a symbolic act to be explained throughout this chapter.

2.2 Water and spirituality

By looking closely at the reactions of the individuals to the element of research, in this case, water, and how that element is used, it is possible to understand how people are engaged with and what meanings they attribute to that particular element. Water in the Ottoman Period was, Cerasi (1985) explains, as much a spiritual element as a material one (also pointed out in Mehsud, Khan, & Jan, 2021, p. 19). For instance, one was required to offer water to one’s guests (Ekinci, 2016), which was a sign of hospitality. When one offers water to someone, especially to the

elderly, it is customary to reply *su gibi aziz ol* (be a saint like water is) in Turkish culture (Yeler & Yeler, 2021, p. 316). A personification of saintliness is represented as one of the notable qualities of water in Turkish culture and many of its proverbs. The cleanliness and purity in the water, usually attributed to the saints of the society that are without fault and lies, are wished to be embodied by the individual who provides water for them. Recalling the story above, for instance, the girl who was the bearer of the water in the house had a saint-like quality as the one bringing the saintly valued element of water. It was the failure to provide water at home that was upsetting for the girl rather than the monetary value of the *testi* (the water pot). By failing to deliver the water, she was deprived of her saintliness as she wasted a metaphorical saint that is water.

Turkish proverbs are rich, considering such references to water, most of which one can encounter in a regular conversation. One of those proverbs is *susuz ağaç meyve vermez* (a tree without water does not bear fruits). This saying introduces the flourishing quality and essentiality of water with the idea that trees cannot survive without water, and depending on the context, it implies the vitality of something to thrive. For instance, another version deriving from such saying is *kitapsız çocuk susuz ağaca benzer* (a child without a book is like a tree without water), indicating that just as water is indispensable for the tree, books are vital for a child to flourish. Another proverb represents the holy quality attributed to water: *su içene yılan bile dokunmaz* (not even a snake touches those who drink water). This quote takes one back to the story of Eve and the serpent, which is narrated to be the devil in disguise. It is told that the snake deceived Eve into eating the forbidden fruit, the apple, which brought up the downfall of humanity from the Garden of Eden (The Holy Bible, Genesis, Chapter 3). In the Turkish proverb, however, even a devilish

serpent, the snake, does not attempt to approach the person drinking water, which is a symbolic bond between God and his followers. This distinguishes the purity of water from that of other natural elements in that the transparent liquid is so pure that not even Satan itself dares to disturb it with fiendish aims.

Although it is impossible to know for sure when and how these proverbs found their place in society, it is possible to observe society's relationship to water through such an analysis of the proverbs. The quotes so far depict the positive meanings attributed to water which are mainly based on religious backgrounds. However, there are somehow contradictory statements regarding water existing in Turkish society, which I assume emerged in different periods. Regardless, the juxtaposition between different interpretations regarding the same element, water, demonstrates good enough proof that the experiences with water shape and transform how human interaction and experience affect the meanings attributed to water. One of such negatively connoted idioms is used when one fails to achieve one's dreams, saying *hayalleri suya düştü* (his dreams are down in the water). Here, water is regarded as something that hides the good inside, making the dreams unattainable to the person. This stands in contradiction to the positive imagery given to water, as explained above. Rather, it is almost like a black hole that makes things disappear within.

A more infamous interpretation of water exists in a story that most have heard in multiple references, the story of the flood. Islam, like Christianity, includes the story of Noah and the flood, which briefly suggests that God sent the flood to punish the non-believers and sinners, ordering Noah to build an ark that will protect the believers and two of each living being from drowning (the Qur'an, Hud, Chapter 11; the Holy Bible, Genesis, Chapters 6-9). In both books, water is a part of the

destruction process and a purification process, cleaning the world of its sinful participants (Lings, 1968, p. 3), which contrasts with the imagery of birth it represents in the stories of creation in Islam. One section of the Qur'an states that God has created all the living from water (an-Nur, Chapter 24, p. 45). Here, water is inclined in the origin story of the believers of Islam, existing not only as a subject in nature but also as a part of the human individual. Such contradiction in the shared meaning of the supposedly same water, then, proves the claims on water being an abstraction in that there is not one intrinsic meaning of water. Rather, as society transforms, the implications of water also transform, affected by the changes in society's perception of it in an endless cycle of variations.

However, this last sentence has an anthropocentric undertone regarding the transformation in the meaning of water, placing the human in the position of the subject that affects water, the object of the interaction, which is in contradiction to what this thesis argues. Using an ANT approach, this thesis rather argues that all participants in a relationship are actants or actors in themselves, whether human or nonhuman (Latour, 1996; Whatmore, 2005, p. 27-28). For instance, the examples above, such as water's "life-giving" and destructive qualities (Lings, 1968, p. 3), illustrate the agency in the changing relationships and meanings of water since people's perceptions of water depend on its characteristics. In other words, water is an actant that affects human's conception of it, rather than a mere object in the relationship, which results in the hydrosocial cycle in which the actors transform and are transformed by one another constantly (Linton & Budds, 2013). In such redefinition of the interaction, as Haraway (1991) connotes: "Nature and culture are reworked; the one can no longer be the resource for appropriation or incorporation by

the other" (p. 151). Rather, they are all actants that are formed in the interaction in the hydrosocial cycle (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 4; Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 18).

In line with such theorization, supporting the idea of water's agency, water is argued to have an intrinsic value as a living being with the ability to form memories and act accordingly (Çolakoğlu, 2009, p. 112). The idea of water having a memory was first put forward by Emoto with the book titled *The Message from Water* (2001/2004) through the experiments he conducted, composed of photographing the water crystals' responses to different words, songs, and so forth. As intriguing and ground-breaking as Emoto's finding is, two idioms in Turkish culture relating to water having a memory precede his experiment: *su gibi ezberlemek* (memorizing like water, memorizing by heart) and *su gibi bilmek* (knowing like water, knowing by heart). These are used particularly when one knows or memorizes something so thoroughly that they can talk about it at any given time or place. Though there are no experiments in the past tied to the emergence of these two sayings, some qualities that water embodied must have led the people to make such comparisons between the knowledge and memory of the human and water. Dündar (2020) alleges that one reason why people attach such abilities to water is its liquid form that can take the shape of anything (p. 8). Due to such quality, water is readily available for any situation, as is one who memorizes by heart, or in Turkish, like water.

2.3 Religion and cleanliness

As briefly mentioned in the previous sections, there is also a religious background to what water means to a Muslim individual both in the Ottoman Empire and modern-day Turkey, which is visible in being included in many prayers of Islam. The official religion of the Ottoman Empire, Islam, has strict cleanliness rules, one of which is

the obligatory ablution ritual (Mehsud et al., 2021, p. 19). A Muslim must perform a specific prayer called namaz five times a day, each lasting around five minutes. Prior to praying, however, that person needs to wash up following a few definite steps, similar to the act of using holy water to make a sign of the cross while entering the church. This act that Islam commands represents cleanliness in the face of God. The mosques in the Ottoman Empire, thus, have tabs attached to them accompanied by stools to sit on so that one can complete the ritual of ablution more conveniently (Mehsud et al., 2021, p. 20).

These tabs are different from drinking fountains in Turkish. They are called *şadırvan* and used merely for the practice of ablution. Various other forms of fountains exist in Turkey, some of which lack a translation into the English language and culture, such as *şadırvan*. Religion is, thus, one of the reasons explaining the abundance of water-related architecture in Turkey. Strang (2004) argues that water is "experienced and embodied both physically and culturally," the meaning of which is formed through interactions between the human and nature (p. 4). Nature and culture, thus, have a reciprocal relationship influencing one another. For the rituals of the Islamic culture to be performed, people need to have daily access to water since practices such as ablution are obligatory five times a day (Mehsud et al., 2021, p. 19). The convenience, as well as the necessity of water, make various forms of water fountains essential as a way of being closer to the God they believe in. Water as the creation of God is also a way to connect with God (Mehsud et al., 2021, p. 19-21), detached from the materiality of the world (Namlı, 2016, p. 57). It is the path, the first step to communicate with and reach God both directly and indirectly through the most important religious practice in Islam: *namaz* (prayers) and the preparations for it (Namlı, 2016, p. 57). Therefore, water embodies not only physical importance for

cleanliness and drinking, as aforementioned, but also a cultural meaning that establishes a closer connection with a higher being through religious practices (Namlı, 2016, p. 61).

Nevertheless, the cleaning effect of water is not confined to such a practice of ablution in Turkish society. There are also famous hammams (better known as Roman baths) where people used to go, usually as a group, to wash up, which is only one of many uses of hammams. These baths are not the private baths a modern individual imagines and are used to today, but are huge salons where many people, grouped according to their genders, gather, and take baths in the same room at the same time whether they know one another or not. Hot water runs through the tabs in these salons, in front of which are long wooden seats for people to sit on while bathing. In the middle, there is usually a vast marble structure on which people are exfoliated by a *tellak* (the person responsible for removing the dirt on the skin). In a way, they also work like a modern-day sauna, although not as foggy.

Cleaning, without doubt, was the primary purpose of the hammams at the beginning when they emerged. Nevertheless, they have become a significant part of the social lives of Turkish people. As mentioned, cleaning the body is crucial in Islam, which is also asserted to mean "cleansing the soul" (Mays, Antoniou, & Angelakis, 2003, p. 1934). Mays et al. (2003) state that Turkish baths, or hammams, "served as places of social gathering, ritual cleansing and as architectural structures," in addition to the purpose of cleansing the body (p. 1934). Linton (2010) similarly suggests that hammams were used to "cement a civic bond" (p. 5). As can be encountered in many Turkish movies and soap operas, hammams are where the bride-to-be is taken by her mother-in-law as well as friends and the elderly of the family. While there is cleaning involved, there is also chatting, gossiping, singing,

and dancing to traditional songs with *darbuka* (goblet drum, an instrument popular in the Middle East), also with the purpose of what might be called the debut of the bride to be (Akyol, 2020). “The bridal bath tradition,” Akyol (2020) explains, serves as the rite of passage for the bride, as part of the transition in the woman’s life (p. 2). Water, in this tradition, seems to serve the purpose of “purification,” which is an important part of the tradition (Akyol, 2020, p. 2). This is not solely a tradition for the brides but can be applied to any transition moment of an individual in Turkish customs, such as the birth of a child and, interestingly, the death of a person as well in the form of ghusl (*gusül*), where the dead is washed before burial symbolizing the purification of the soul (Mehsud et al., 2021, p. 21). While the washing of the dead persists, most of these rituals have lost their importance today, whereas, in the past, the construction of fountains and baths was of equal importance to building mosques for ritual and cultural purposes (Cerasi, 1985, p. 43).

2.4 Fountains in the parks

The symbolic meanings attributed to water, however, are not solely confined to the proverbs and religion in Turkish culture but are also present in the construction of physical space in our modern urban spaces. Regardless of where one lives, the sight of grand fountains of various shapes, illustrations, and lighting is common in modern-day parks and open spaces. They are usually located at the center of the parks they are included in, attracting the eye easily. This is, clearly, not by accident but instead planned in detail, with several benches surrounding the fountain in the middle, almost like the center of the stage at which the seats of the audience are pointed. The glorious fountain, like in a theatre, puts on a show with the running water accompanied by the sounds of splash it creates. The visual and auditory

stimulation of the water captivates the audience, inducing a sense of relief and refreshment (Muhtaroğlu, 2010, p. 33; Bekiroğlu, 1992; Yıldız & Yüksek, 2008). Such are certainly some of the apparent reasons for encountering numerous people sitting in front of the fountains reading a book, chatting, socializing, and sometimes just watching the running water in tranquility. However, how has the constructed fountain in the middle of a city come to mean being close to nature, providing a peaceful ambiance? At which point has humanity started conceiving water in the park to be more than just water?

Said Shakerin (2005) traces the first public fountains back to the Sumerians in Mesopotamia around 3500 BC and the first fountain that allows water to flow in a human-made environment back to Hero the of Alexandra. The water element in the parks was used then due to their "cooling effect" on hot days, or scientifically, "evaporative cooling" (Shakerin, 2005). Evaporative cooling is the process in which the evaporation caused by the "air passing through water" leads to the temperature cooling down due to absorbed heat and an increase in air humidity (Fernandes & Correia-da-Silva, 2007, p. 5). Thus, apart from being a sight for the eye, the fountains had a direct effect on decreasing the temperature of the air, which is convenient for places with hot and dry weather. For similar reasons, the popularity of fountains in open spaces in Turkey can be traced back to the beginning of Islam and Arabic culture. Islamic civilizations, owing to the location of Arabia, did not have much water readily available every day, increasing the significance of water elements such as the fountains to cope with the hot and dry weather conditions (Bekiroğlu, 1992, p. 28). Briefly put, most of the fountains had such practical uses at the start rather than emerging for mere pleasure to the eye and the mind.

Nevertheless, their endurance and even progress to this day cannot solely be explained with practicality. In many cultures, the fountains are used for artistic purposes, with the science behind how the water will fall and from what types of structures the water can flow more aesthetically, representing various meanings and importance attributed to water (Bekiroğlu, 1992). In Japanese culture, for instance, "the flow of water signifies happiness," mentions Bekiroğlu, ensuring peace and quiet for the soul (1992, p. 13-14). In the Byzantine gardens, as another example, the water and the fountains were so valued that the fountains were made of gold and silver with different colors, through which water is illusioned to change color, stimulating the eye (Bekiroğlu, 1992, p. 24). Likewise, in China, the fountains were considered an art that is called *shanshui*, meaning mountain water, a term used to refer to landscape paintings in the modern period (Nair, 2021). As Nair explains, the word *shansui* addresses yin and yang energies, representing the order and balance in the universe (2021). In fact, water itself is argued to be a balancing element through being a metaphor for describing both "order" and the "ultimate disorder" by bringing about not only life (i.e., needing water to survive) but also death (e.g., floods) (Strang, 2004, p. 65). As can be understood, water and water fountains are attributed to have a balancing quality, possibly due to providing balance to the physical conditions (e.g., weather) or psychological state of mind of an individual (e.g., relaxation). Such architectural and lexical features and details included in the fountains can explain the importance that the eye-catching quality of the water fountains provides, as well as signifying them to be more than just providers of water and cooling.

Moreover, water fountains also had a unifying quality that gathered the people around, common instances of which can be strolling around, sitting alongside

or in front of the fountain. Hours are spent in the company of the fountains, not only always directly to enjoy the sight of them but also due to the unconscious soothing effect that somehow manages to create a pleasant, relaxing aura around. This may be one of the reasons why water fountains have extended their stay to modern-day parks. On the issue, Cerasi (1985) explains that the architecture of the fountains in the open spaces was one of the primary elements around which people aimed to take great pleasure (p. 43). Commonly called *mesire* spaces (open spaces), gardens with grand fountains and greenery were the favorite spots for the Ottoman people to gather up widespread in the eighteenth century (Cerasi, 1985, p. 37). However, he adds, the *mesire* spaces were not used just for strolling purposes as is a general perception now, but they were also used as gathering places where people would come in groups to have picnics and games all day long, staging plays, sometimes even building tents to stay overnight (1985, p. 37). Looking at the occasion romantically, it is almost as if the people were tuning back to the hunter-gatherer lifestyle in which they were more connected to one another as a group, to the natural way of living that was pre-modernity, remembering the deconstruction of the word nature at the beginning of this chapter.

The water element in these gardens, accompanied by the trees surrounding them, was an escape from the realities of modern life, or as Cerasi (1985) explains: “the threshold between urban life and the natural” (p. 43). Here, the word natural is used to describe the wildlife outside the urban, the greenery, animals, rivers, seas, and so forth. The combination of the urban and the natural goes as far as artificial rivers and sea in the middle of the city, redefining the boundaries of two supposedly different concepts. By deconstructing and redefining the two, the modern individual is presented with the opportunity of an escape in between, causing the formation of

another concept that is neither urban nor natural, but the “urbanature” (Nichols, 2011). The term urbanature, coined by Ashton Nichols (2011), suggests that the human is also involved in nature rather than exist as a separate identity that demolishes the naturalness, but instead establishes a new concept that includes not only the human and humanly created but also the natural as the term is used in the modern sense (p. XV). Put differently, the term urbanature extends the boundaries created by the binary of the urban and nature.

The parks with natural elements such as water and trees are perfect examples of where such binaries are crossed. “Engagement with water,” Strang (2004) asserts, “is the perfect example of a recursive relationship in which nature and culture literally flow into each other” (p. 4). The very existence of the hybrid water fountains and gardens in the cities can be proof of the contradiction to the binary that separates nature and society (Linton, 2010, p. 178). The strategically planned, unnatural naturality of water in an urban city, which is filled with industrial dust and smog covering the crowd, is neither natural in the most straightforward use of the term nor urban. Rather, it attracts people in its duality of combining both by providing a getaway to the serenity from the daily stress of the modern order of the world.

2.5 Drinking water

Drinking fountains, as much as water, used to have significance not only for their use value back in the day. They were also important in many other ways since they were the actors in providing water to the public, as gathering places, and so much more, as mentioned throughout this chapter. Ivanov (2015) describes the importance of drinking fountains as providing “ideas of beauty, wealth, temperance, municipal obligation, and environmentalism” (p. 11). These descriptions still fall short of the

meaning the drinking fountains carry. They are also “a metaphor for social responsibility” and “can function as a window onto society's most fundamental values” (Ivanov, 2015, p. 12). This is exactly the case in Ottoman society, which will be explained in this section.

The translation of *çeşme* as a drinking fountain in today’s world is actually an unjust translation since *çeşme*s are different from typical drinking fountains common today. Drinking fountains today are, as Ivanov (2015) describes, “low maintenance, utilitarian, and simple” and comprehended merely through their use value (p. 35). In the past, however, they were architectural figures, usually as high as and even higher than an average human, with various motives and decorations on it as well as the name of who donates it to the society, and sometimes containing poems and words of wisdom. Though most of these *çeşme*s survive today, most of them do not have running water, indubitably with some exceptions, where people still collect potable water. However, the taps that are usually provided to collect water, which are not so common in Turkey apart from campuses, do not hold such messages or architectural designs.

Such aesthetics to the *çeşme*s of the past should not get lost in translation since they represent the significance of water to Ottoman society. They were contributions to the public, a charity activity that is highly valued in Islam and Islamic societies. Such a moral value did water endow the individual with that these *çeşme*s were built by the common people themselves (or in the name of individuals after their passing) as well as authorities and charities[3]. These *çeşme*s could be found almost everywhere, some of which were without taps and run continuously directly

[3] One example of such charity is exemplified by Önge (1984) to be *su nezareti*, which helped build drinking fountains and supplied water maps from 1584 to the 1900s. For further information, see Önge, Y. (1984). Vakıf müessesinde su ve önemi. *Vakıf Haftası Dergisi*, 1, p. 23-34.

through the pipe, thus enabling the animals to drink water from the *su yalakları* (water reservoirs) where water accumulates[4].

Such was a donation to the society or the humans and nonhumans to benefit from, which is an act enduring to this day[5]. One can see a lot of such *çeşme*s, which are specifically called *hayrat*, with the names of the donors engraved in the marble. It is customary for the believers to pray for the soul of whoever built that fountain, ensuring further blessing both in the physical world and the afterlife (Boyar & Fleet, 2010, 136). In other words, such action not only establishes the formation of a communal bond in the society but is thought to help the person donating closer to heaven as well.

Water secures such a connection with God since it is considered to be one of the most crucial deeds ordered by the prophet Muhammad of Islam (Özel, 2009, p. 13). He is claimed to say that responding to the humans' and animals' need for water was more virtuous than almsgiving in the name of one's mother (Özel, 2009, p. 13). Building a *çeşme* is thought in Islam to count as a good deed in the name of the person even after their death, helping them to get to heaven through the benedictions offered by those using the water (Özkartal, 2015; Özel, 2009, p. 10). A Turkish proverb states, as explained by Boyar and Fleet (2010):

> 'Do good and throw it into the sea, even if the fish don't understand, God will know'. Such charity was also designed to create and instill an idea of community and develop a bond among the *ümmet*, the body of Muslim believers. (p. 136)

The water in the quote can be regarded as, once again, the symbolic mediator between God and the believer. Considering the social and holy bonds for which the

[4] There were also water bowls for birds to drink from, as well as other animals, all of which were highly valued. (Özel, 2009, p. 13).
[5] Although most of those *çeşme*s still exist today, almost none of them provide water anymore due to the water shortage in the world.

donation of water paves the way, the *çeşme*s, as they are responsible for the supply of water, can be regarded as the physical mediators between the human and the water, the holy representative of God's path.

Therefore, it would be unjust to take water merely as a physical object. Water is so important for Muslim society that it is presented aesthetically, not only in the architectural state of the distribution fountains but also in art and literature[6]. In fact, the fountains were usually ornamented with poems or verses specifically written for a fountain, for which poetry contests were held (Özel, 2009, p. 40). It was a way of sharing not only the necessary water but also architectural taste, wise words, and literature, almost like social media today. Posters and little writings were hung on the fountains, acting as a tool for one to express themselves. Water has been, thus, beyond a natural need, and it certainly is more than H2O. It is a tool for helping others, as mentioned above, a representation of communality and belonging. It has the power to connect humans and nonhumans alike (Linton, 2010, p. 5). By donating water to those in need, as is the case with the aforementioned girl, one is able to connect with others, albeit not knowing them personally. By sharing poetry and alike, people could connect to others with words without vocalizing them.

Water had, and still has, a unifying effect on society not only symbolically but also physically. Located strategically where everyone can reach them easily, such as in the middle of a square or around corners, water distribution fountains (*sebil*, *çeşme*, and so forth) were significant as meeting points for the society (Hattam, 2021). Most fountains were easy to spot due to their magnitude and known due to

[6] The importance of water can be deduced from many poems, for instance, of the Turkish and Ottoman literature as analyzed by Türkmenoğlu. For further information, see Türkmenoğlu, S. (2012). Türk şiirinde İstanbul çeşmeleri. *Turkish Studies, International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic*, 7(2), p. 1093-1102. Retrieved from https://www.acarindex.com/dosyalar/makale/acarindex-1423933677.pdf

their significance of use, which led the way for them to be used as a way of locating places. Water resources have always been a way of measuring distance and nearness, or in other words, determining and referencing location and direction (Tilley, 1997, p. 61-62). The streets, for instance, that include an observable fountain were usually given the name of the fountain, which are typically the busiest parts of those areas[7]. One could socialize around those highly popular grand *çeşme*s while collecting water and filling their *testi*s. Water, then, allows an individual a place in society through channeling communication and forming relationships. It enables a sense of community and belonging, which is again an important part of Turkish culture (Gordon, 2013, p. 14; Boyar & Fleet, 2010).

2.6 From the community to the individual

As important as they once were, water fountains have decreased in number and lost their vitality as a water source as bottled water became popular. The first bottled water emerged in the first half of the nineteenth century; however, it did not take off until the early twentieth century (Moss, 2018). That was the time when bottled water started being advertised as healthier compared to tap water (Ivanov, 2015, p. 35-36). Moreover, water carried in a light and easily disposable plastic was much more convenient for the users than the water pots and thus began the reign of plastic water bottles. The introduction of Turkish society to bottled water took place in 1984 when Pınar, one of the pioneering water companies in Turkey, launched Turkey's first

[7] 167 streets in İstanbul are named after the *çeşme*s there (Şahin, 2017, p. 10), one of which is Horhor Street, which takes its name from the Horhor Çeşmesi on the street (Şahin, 2017, p. 26). Interestingly, the word *horhor* is also a made-up word based on the imitation of the sound water makes. There are also other water-related structures that form the name of a street. For more information on how water affects how people call a place, please see Şahin, C. (2017). İstanbul'da su ile anılan sokak adları: Hidrografik adlar. In C. Yılmaz (Ed.), *Mimar Sinan ve Su*. Istanbul, TR: Sultangazi Belediyesi Kültür ve Sosyal İşler Müdürlüğü Yayınları, p. 378-413.

packaged water (Pınar, n.d.-b.). It is only recently being discovered as detrimental not only to the health of people but also to that of the environment, which will be discussed in detail in the upcoming chapters. What this part focuses on is not the economic or environmental arguments about bottled water but on what such a transition from public water supply to privatized bottled water means for society.

As argued throughout the chapter, water does not have one intrinsic definition but rather exists in the abstract, with its connotations changing through different time periods, interactions, and cultures. Once a collective experience, attaining water through water fountains has decreased in importance as bottled water became more available in every store and corner, which led water fountains to be "an anachronism, or even a liability, a symbol" of the times when other ways of attaining water were not present (Gleick, 2010, p. 24). As if water fountains were not present and available everywhere, bottled water has successfully challenged the presence of water fountains with advertisements such as "hydration on the go," presenting itself as a "portable device for drinking" (Hawkins, 2011, p. 536). The lightweight mobility that plastic bottles provide, however, comes up with its drawbacks, which will be detailed in the next chapter. With the constraint of water to small bottles that one can carry in a bag, various qualities of water have been restricted to hydration and soothing. As aforementioned, water was once more than just something that people needed to survive but a comforting element as well as the metaphor for purity, happiness, saintliness, a good memory, and so much more. Indubitably, some of these meanings have certainly continued to exist, as one can observe in our persisting use of the idioms as an example, or some *çeşme*s still being used to collect water, or hosts still offering water to their visitors.

Nevertheless, as the concept of bottled water indicates in the passive voice, some of those positive qualities associated with water have been restricted and passivized, and some were eventually taken away as the culture changed. The metaphors and similes that we use regarding water are, much like the fountains mentioned above, habits of the past in that most of us do not associate water in these idioms with the physical water that we encounter daily but only acknowledge it as another word in an idiom. As another example, most do not recognize the *çeşme*s where water does not run anymore as once working but think of it as another structure. Now, as bottled water dominates society, water is mostly considered a necessity for the survival of living beings. Such a material quality does water have in the modern era that we are given instructions on how much water one needs a day, depending on the age, sex, and body weight of a person. Restricting water to bottles that we can measure, we have also numbered and measured water, something that is intrinsically uncountable. In a way, we have reduced water to an object to our agency, depriving water of its actant position in the actor-network relationship (Hawkins, 2011, p. 538; Latour, 2005).

How come so much has transformed in the humanities' conception of water? Apart from being conveniently portable, Gleick (2010) suggests that taste, style, and safety concerns have contributed to the rise in the demand for bottled water (p. 14). The cholera outbreak that was later discovered to be rooted in the toxic water led to fear in many of using public water distributors, as a result of which the tendency towards choosing bottled water over tap water increased (Gleick, 2010, p. 50). Suddenly, something so soothing not only for the body but also for the soul has become an object of fear which one should refrain from. Sara Ahmed, in *Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2014), argues that fear is not simply that which occurs at the

moment but anticipates a future danger with the possibility of affecting the person to act on the feared future. The advertisements for bottled water used this fear to their advantage. “The fear of the tap” was inflicted on the audience by touching upon their feelings, which would make the bottled option more suitable for the public good, or it seemed like it (Gleick, 2010, p. 38; Hawkins, 2011, p. 551). While bottled water has been so convenient for the wealthy that have no problem purchasing it, it has made the lives of those who cannot afford it harder, let alone the pollution plastic bottles cause to the environment, which will be discussed in the next chapters. It has also transformed society’s relationship with water. No longer can people remember the various meanings once attributed to water, other than those that are related to health and entertainment.

The modern water that is confined to the materiality of plastic has transformed the relationship of not only the human and water but also the human and the human. Water, which was once an item to be gathered around as a way of socializing, has turned into something that belongs to the individual, a commodity that one buys and carries around rather than a shared experience[8]. By restricting the experience of getting water to the individual and the seller, and in some cases the human and the machine (e.g., vending machines), the concept of chatting while filling the *testi* vanished and gave up its place to a consumer-product capitalist relationship, which Kaplan (2011) names as “lonely drinking fountains” (p. 518). The loneliness does not only lie in the fountains themselves but presents itself in the practice of drinking water as well. Thinking back, the desert scenes in movies where

[8] Such generalization, of course, might not be valid for every instance since, as I have mentioned, such unifying practices of collecting water from some running *çeşme*s and offering water to people still exist in some places. However, these instances have significantly decreased in number with bottled water and home delivery options, especially with the new generations who have not grown up observing such practices.

one shares the last drop of water in any water vessel usually have one thing in common: the one receiving the water almost always drinks out of the cup without touching it with their lips. It must be a form of safety, courtesy, and any other culturally related niceness for sure. However, it also suggests that humanity has become more individual in their preferences over water, a consequence Kaplan (2011) arrived at while he analyzed the habits around water in a school in the USA (p. 256). Observing the students' actions in how they get and share their water, she makes the point that regardless of the preference of the source of water, the modern young are consistently individualistic in their share of water bottles (2011, p. 256). This is not specific to the young, though. This is the last step of a cultural transformation that started with the restriction of water to individual bottles from communal drinking fountains.

2.7 Concluding remarks

Due to the modern technology that has enabled clean water in houses, such systems as *çeşme*, *yalak*, *sebil* and *maksem* (distribution fountain) have lost their importance. Today, most drinking fountains, regardless of their type, do not run water. Having lost their primary purpose of existence, most are not being cared for and renovated (Özer & Dikmen, 2021). They are now mostly left unseen or used to put up posters or as a paper for political or individual messages, and some are even demolished to make way for road construction (Ekinci, 2016).

Now, Taksim, which takes its name from the Turkish word for distribution (Kentel, 2019, p. 161), is solely the name of a part of Istanbul rather than an important point for the distribution of water due to its *maksem*. The unifying power of water explained throughout this chapter, however, somehow remains to some

extent in that those visiting İstiklal Street in Taksim still meet near the *maksem* in Taksim without realizing the history it holds. The public does still attribute so much to water by using water as a metaphor in their daily lives, using the good qualities of water in idioms, and referring to rainwater as a blessing that brings abundance and good for the agriculture of that year. They still value it in religious practices, appreciating the cleanliness it brings due to its importance in Islam.

Considering that a third of Turkey is surrounded by seas, Turkish society would be expected to appreciate the warm waters with significant touristic potential, which is benefitted from to some extent, particularly in the summer months. However, the potential of such activities is not used to the full, and the seas are not as integrated with the culture as other waters or land, which is why I have not included this aspect in my dissertation. However, why have the seas not been valued more by society, considering that water bears great cultural significance? One reason, as Çağlar Keyder (2005) states, is the nationalism that prevails in Turkish society (p. 9). The coastal areas of Turkey have long been considered of Greek origins, where "those not of us" lived, which is why the Turks have not identified with and did not incorporate the seas there in their culture (Keyder, 2005, p. 9).

Still, as mentioned, water has great importance in bringing people together, which I have argued have decreased in importance with the advent of bottled water. This, however, does not mean that water has lost all its cultural meanings explored in this chapter, and some even persisted, as mentioned, but rather means that such meanings have transformed as the relationship between them changed. Most still use water in idioms, some get water from the taps that still work, go to hammams, and those who live according to Islamic rules still practice ablution. Water is, thus, the perfect opportunity to explore the concept of hybridity since it exists in all its

meanings all at once, such as a liquid for hydration, a unifying element, a priced commodity, and a free public good. It transforms as society transforms, adapts to the existing conditions of society, and changes its meaning without losing its subjectivity and actant position. Chapter 3 will take this discussion on the various connotations of water and explore the ways in which water has changed or preserved these meanings in the context of political economy.

CHAPTER 3

POLITICAL ECONOMY OF WATER

In addition to various cultural definitions mentioned in the first chapter, water meant, and still means, a source of life for society. This brings us to another field, the political economy of water, where the attributions to it alter significantly. Due to its market potential and resource qualities for the consumption and production of energy as well as its vitality in agricultural and industrial productions, water constitutes the most important intersection of ecology and economy (Erensü, 2016, p. 45). Water in the political and economic environment is usually regarded as a commodity in the prevailing capitalist system (Barlow, 2010, p. 184). This is interesting since water is not a commodity in the traditional sense (e.g., produced for the market like computers) but is something found for free in nature and an "uncooperative commodity" due to its various qualities such as heaviness (Bakker, 2005, p. 542; Piper, 2014, p. 9, 231). Therefore, to discuss the presence of water in political economy, we need to first understand Karl Polanyi's notion of "fictitious" commodities, such as "labor, land and money," which are not "produced for sale" (2001, p. 76). Water can also be regarded as a fictitious commodity in that it is not produced for sale but is rather transferred for sale from its natural sources, such as the rivers to the factories bottling them or to the taps in houses. However, it is still a commodity in that it is sold in the market economy, with the corporations and the state gaining profits from it, the history of which will be explained in this chapter.

Water has been privatized, commercialized, and commodified in different forms (e.g., bottled, tap, and a resource for other goods) due to various reasons such as access, convenience, health, scarcity, and so forth since the start of the 1990s

(Bakker, 2005; Jaffee & Newman, 2013; Linton, 2010, p. 216; Erensü, 2016, p. 46; Opel, 2008, p. 68). However, before its privatization and commodification, water was hard to reach and could not be found at home or at the store, as mentioned in Chapter 2; therefore, people had to go to the nearest fountain to get their water. With urbanization, cities got crowded, and finding water became harder to reach, particularly in Istanbul (Özel, 2009). Due to such shortage, providing water to the inhabitants of İstanbul was one of the main occupations of the authorities, for which Kanuni Sultan Süleyman gave the order to build a waterway to the most prominent architect in Turkey, Mimar Sinan (Özel, 2009), who was also the first person to include tabs in mosques to perform the obligatory ablution (Tuncer, 2017). Nevertheless, most houses did not have running tap water in the comfort of their houses. Apart from a few privileged people accessing water at home, the general public had to rely on watercarriers whose job was walking around distributing water (Ekinci, 2016) or had to go to drinking fountains to collect water. The possession of water was restricted to one's effort in that accessing it required going to *çeşme*s or buying from water carriers.

Today, however, by solely opening the tap, most can have potable water in their houses, which was once a privilege granted only to the elite (Jaffee & Newman, 2013). Water, in this sense, is a way of reinforcing the "already existing" inequality in the world, which was also the case for the Ottoman capital, Istanbul (Kentel, 2019, p. 165). The Terkos waterworks, founded in the nineteenth century, is a water infrastructure in which water is taken from Lake Terkos and distributed to the citizens of Istanbul, more specifically, to the Istanbul elite in the European side of Istanbul due to the more extensive sales they could have in the wealthier side rather than the somewhat poorer "native" side, the Anatolia (Kentel, 2019, p. 164-165).

Though the contract between Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople, the company of the Terkos waterway project, and the Ottoman state required water fountains to be installed in other areas, the few that were built were not sufficient to meet the demand of the large population (Kentel, 2019, p. 166). This created segregation depending on one's class in society in that merely the elite could access running water (Kentel, 2019, p. 167).

In the twentieth century, most of us take running water at home for granted since it comes so easily to us. In Turkey, all one needs to do to access water services is to go to the related water administration, apply for a subscription, and pay the application fee and the deposit. With just a click of the officials in the online system, one's house is provided with water. By monthly paying for the amount of water used by the household, the service fees, and the taxes, one can *easily* get running water at home, that is, if they can afford to do so. Some still cannot afford to access potable water at home due to the privatization of water services. It is shocking but true that those who cannot pay such prices monthly are stripped of their fundamental right to live as the administration selling water to them cuts their services to those specific houses with, again, a click on their online system. This creates more problems than before when people did not have running water at home since there are not many public fountains where people can get potable water right now.

The discussion on access to water, then, does not start or end with the system's ability to provide water for houses. There is no doubt that modern technology allows the supply of water to our houses, which is collected from its natural resources such as rivers, treated and purified with chemicals in facilities for it to be safe for consumption, and finally provided to the taps in our houses, or bottled and sold in the market (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 1, 18; Strang, 2015, p. 108-109).

Nevertheless, the question is not the *ability* to supply water per se but rather the inequality that comes with it. The privatization of water supply was something highly supported by the World Bank in the 1990s with the promise of cheaper and safer water as well as profits for the water companies, which resulted in increases in the price of water due to not meeting the anticipated profits (Erensü, 2016, p. 46-48; Goldman, 2007, p. 790). Can we talk about human rights when some are stripped of one of the most fundamental sources of life, either because of price or availability? Is water as something that is indispensable for the survival of a living being a commodity to be sold, or a right that should be provided for everyone? What is water considered in political and economic analysis?

As in the previous chapter, these questions do not receive the same answer from every individual. This chapter will discuss various definitions of and approaches to water in political and economic contexts by first providing a brief political history of the world and Turkey, which will provide the ground for the discussion on how water is understood in different political environments and how it has changed through the years. Then, I will talk about the commodification of water and how this development has transformed the way society regards water. To dwell on this, I will analyze the popularization of bottled water in the market through advertisements, which has significantly altered people's relationship with water. Overall, this chapter will argue, as I have done in the previous chapter, that water is an abstraction, or "what we make of it," in that how it is defined varies depending on people's perception of it (Linton, 2010, p. 3), which has changed from a communal one (as in Chapter 2) to an individualistic, profit-based one as the political and economic setting of accessing water has changed at the height of capitalism. The political and economic story of a country and of water in that country, thus, is crucial

to understand how various other approaches to water emerge since such a timeline provides the framework for the changing relationship between water and society.

3.1 Political story of water

Before dwelling on water politics, it is necessary to provide an account of Turkey's leading political and economic environment with an idea of what was happening around the world at the same time. In the years following the 1930s, especially after World War 2, developing countries prioritized state interventionism in their economy as a way of industrialization, though having “limited capacity” (Pamuk, 2018, p. 10). Following the devastating WW2, most of the governments in the developing countries did not have many resources to provide for a strong economy, which is why they focused on "inward-looking policies" and import substitution industrialization (ISI), as can be observed in the case of Turkey (Pamuk, 2018, p. 222). The 30-year period between 1945 and 1975 in Turkey is thus considered a period of economic growth, with some occasional short recessions, through national developmentalism, as was the case for developed and underdeveloped countries (Keyder, 1996, p. 9, 12).

Such was a time of growth for most, particularly the 1960s and 1970s, known through the term Fordism around the world, which was the “mass production of standardized goods for societies in a secular transition from rural to urban and industrial ways of life” (Streeck, 2012, p. 29). David Harvey (1996) states that the “symbolic initiation date of Fordism” is 1914, as it was the time Henry Ford recruited workers for “the automated car-assembly line” (p. 125). With the arrival of mass production, affordable products entered the market, and people, notably the middle class, had the means of purchasing such items as cars and refrigerators,

sometimes waiting for months for production to keep up with the demand[9] (Streeck, 2012, p. 29). During this decade, the goods were sold on a need basis, which means that people bought these items out of necessity, either to make life easier or not having an as good alternative, which made the standardized goods valuable. Mentioning needs, however, we also need to point out that consumption was defined by the market (Harvey, 1996, p. 134) in that the needs were created by corporations in accordance with the new and modern ways of living, controlling people's lives outside the workplace as well (p. 135-138). Fordism, Harvey states (1996), "meant the formation of global mass markets and the absorption of the mass … into the global dynamics of a new kind of capitalism" (p. 137) with a "balance of power" between corporations, organized labor, and the state (p. 133), in which system both the production of goods and their consumption were controlled by the market such as creating needs that people can spend money on (p. 138).

This new kind of capitalism, Harvey (1996) writes, led to the "destruction of local cultures" for new ones, "inequalities," such as "low wages and weak job security," as well as "race, gender, and ethnicity," and an overall "capitalist domination" in favor of the "very affluent indigenous elite," particularly in Third World countries, which was "threatening to Fordism" at the rise of "movements towards national liberation" (p. 138-139). Moreover, over time in the 1970s and 1980, when the needs of a new society were met, there also came a crisis with the decrease in demand (Streeck, 2012, p. 30). As the households' needs were fulfilled, the sales came to a halt, bringing about a revolution in the market (Streeck, 2012, p.

[9] For example, the 1950s and 1960s witnessed the mass production of one standard item, such as a car in one color, sold on demand with a waiting period of months (Streeck, 2012, p. 29). One famous example of such mass-produced standardized item was the black T2 model Ford car, with the famous phrase by Henry Ford stating, "you can have it any color you like as long as it's black," as explained in Wolfgang Streeck's article *Citizens as Consumers* (2012, p. 29).

30), which was also caused by the rising crisis of Fordism due to the reasons Harvey pointed out. Once standardized, the producers launched new designs in various shapes and colors to attract consumers who already possessed the standardized versions, which Wolfgang Streeck (2012) names “commercialized diversification” (p. 31, 33). The market evolved from a need-based production to a want-based production when the market became mature and affluent, after which the consumers started to choose from a pool of diversified products according to their wants (Streeck, 2012, p. 33, 35). During that time, Fordism, according to Harvey (1996), shifted to “flexible accumulation” (p. 147), where “problems of rigidity” in Fordism (p. 142) were replaced by flexibility in “labor processes, labor markets, products, and patterns of consumption” (p. 147). Such transformations, as well as the fall of the national developmental ruling, created an environment where capitalism could work globally on its own terms (Keyder, 1996, p. 13).

Turkey was undergoing similar transformations. From its foundation in 1923 until the 1950s, Turkey had a single political party period with ISI policies with the state assuming a leading entrepreneurial role (Öniş, 2010, p. 46; Şenses, 2012, p. 12) Güngör Ergan (1998) argues that the involvement of the state in economic affairs was inevitable since the country had “neither necessary capital nor technologies required” to have a capitalist structure right after the war and its foundation (p. 52). Such domination of the state in economic affairs, Keyder (1996) argues, results from the anti-liberalist and national developmental approach in founding a new state with nationalist ideologies (p. 26-27). This state-driven ruling began to alter in the 1950s with the multiparty system, which witnessed “the opening of agriculture to market forces, stimulation by infrastructural investment and generous support prices, and rapid urbanization” (Şenses, 2012, p. 12; Pamuk, 2018, p. 12, 231). During this

decade, the shift of labor from agriculture to the urban sector accelerated (Pamuk, 2018, p. 12, 15). Ziya Öniş (2010) states that "the 1950s correspond to the liberal turn in Turkish economy involving an attempt to reverse the statist and protectionist policies of the inter-war era" (p. 48). "In the late 1950s," he continues, "ISI started to be implemented in a piecemeal manner, with governments resorting to protectionism as a short-term response to growing balance of payments" (2010, p. 49).

Until the 1960s, the primary source of income and growth was agriculture in Turkey, whereas the manufacturing industry became the widespread economic strategy after (Pamuk, 2018, p. 224, 231). In the 1960s and 1970s, there were "five-year plans implemented" with the aim of "national developmentalism and ISI-based strong protectionism of the domestic market" (Öniş, 2010, p. 48). This decade marked the goal of a "domestic market-based industrial capital" (Öniş, 2010, p. 48). Private sector investments dominated the public ones with the state's incentives (Güngör Ergan, 1998, p. 53). For this reason, it can be argued that Turkey had a "mixed economy increasingly controlled by the private sector," with the state still playing a role (Pamuk, 2018, p. 232; Güngör Ergan, 1998, p. 53). In other words, as Pamuk states, "protectionist and inward-looking policies continued after WW2 as industrialization began to be led increasingly by the Muslim-Turkish private sector" (2018, p. 308).

The time of abandoning agriculture for urbanization and manufacturing corresponded with the time of the belief in capitalism to bring prosperity for everyone, which failed considering the fast increase in population (Keyder, 1996, p. 18). Under the "trickle-down" belief that the influence of capitalism would expand to larger groups, including the poor and areas, most migrated to urban areas, thinking that they would prosper with rising capitalism (Keyder, 1996, p. 18, 21). Such

urbanization has caused the already populated cities to slowly become overcrowded, yet the real problem was the rise in automated technological production, leaving many workers unemployed since the reliance on human labor no longer existed (Keyder, 1996, p. 18-19). Such caused the grouping of the citizens as “real” ones and others, such as immigrants, and as those who were part of a union and those who were not, whose citizenships and economic rights were no longer equally distributed (Keyder, 1996, p. 20, 28-29). However, since cities were still more or less the best and only option for the hope of earning enough to survive in this system, people kept on moving to large cities in poor countries[10] (Keyder, 1996, p. 21).

In the 1980s, a recession period for many countries (Keyder, 1996, p. 10), another shift occurred in the Turkish economy towards more neoliberal policies (Öniş, 2010, p. 48) due to what Keyder (1996) calls the bankruptcy of national developmentalism (*ulusal kalkınmacılığın iflası*) (p. 10). This decade witnessed “economic policies and institutions of the inward-looking industrialization era” being abandoned to implement “the Washington Consensus principles, most importantly, greater emphasis on markets, liberalization of external trade, and finance and privatization” (Pamuk, 2018, p. 308). Compared to the former decades, this decade put importance on “the decrease of the role of the state in economy” (Güngör Ergan, 1998, p. 54) and instead had a shift towards an export-oriented economy, which is referred to as “export protectionism” (Öniş, 2010, p. 49). The 1980s Turkish economy focused on "implementing radical market-oriented economic reforms" under the leadership of the prime minister, later the president, Turgut Özal (Öniş, 2010, p. 1). Özal is argued to trust in “the importance of trade liberalization as a

[10] Overpopulation and urbanization are two of the main causes for the ever-increasing global environmental problems, such as water shortage and pollution (Cisneros, 2014, p. 431), which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

means of disciplining domestic industry through exposure to external competition" even when "import-substitution and heavy protectionism" were popular (Öniş, 2010, p. 11). Though exports increased in the 1980s (Pamuk, 2018, p. 247), this was a "highly fragile, debt-led growth" due to "rising inflation" (Öniş, 2010, p. 21). Thus, the 1990s were called "the lost decade" due to such poor performance (Şenses, 2012, p. 16).

Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power in 2002 after such a decade and the economic crisis of 2001, initially producing good results with a decrease in inflation and increased incomes and exports, resulting in an "economic recovery in the first five years" (Pamuk, 2018, p. 261-263; Şenses, 2012, p. 17). However, this came to a halt after 2007, when the Turkish economy started to deteriorate as consolidating power became a priority for the government (Pamuk, 2018, p. 265). As a result, private investments declined with "rising political tensions and a steady deterioration of the institutional environment after 2010" (Pamuk, 2018, p. 265).

Still, privatization and liberalization have dominated various sectors in Turkey as the consequence of "reducing the scope for state intervention," though not fully retreating, after 1980 (Öniş, 1991, p. 163, 167). As national developmentalism provided the necessary monetary and ideological conditions for modernity, the shift to privatization caused economic liberalism and a globalized economy (Keyder, 1996, p. 25), as a result of which privatization was implemented in various sectors, including but not limited to "energy, transport, and communications" (Öniş, 1991, p. 167). Accordingly, industrialization, neo-liberalization, and globalization all together brought about changes in how public services are provided, one of which is the privatization of the water supply as we know it today (Cavallo, 2013, p. 40). To

better comprehend the privatization of water and its effects on society (e.g., the relationship between people and water), we need to look at the story of how Turkey provides potable water to its citizens. Today, the primary water institution is called the General Directory of the State Hydraulic Affairs (the DSI) (Islar, 2012, p. 320; Oktem, 2016, p. 70). The DSI is responsible for "water planning" and "project development and implementation at the national level" (Oktem, 2016, p. 70). However, the DSI is not the only actor in the supply and management of water.

Tayfun Cinar (2009) states in his article that "Turkey has implemented various water-privatization models, and the transformation of public services in the water sector has been guided by the international finance institutions as well as the political support of successive governments" (p. 350). In other words, the 1990s witnessed the partial or complete privatization of the water sector in Turkey (Erensü, 2016, p. 48). As a result, the infrastructure for and delivery of water have increasingly transformed into more private-sector-dependent participation, where companies hire the right to use the rivers from the ministry (Cinar, 2009, p. 350). As mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, the supply of water to the citizens necessitates going through applying and paying for it to those private companies that provide water to that specific area, in which case the citizens are forced to engage with a private organization to access the most basic need for life as a result of the shift in the responsibility of the supply of water from the state to the private companies (Cavallo, 2013, p. 40-41). This means that "supplying water becomes hereby a means to achieve an economic goal post: economic growth and profit maximization" with the transition to a neo-liberal economy mentioned above (Swyngedouw, Castro, & Kaika, 2002, p. 20).

The law in Turkey requires that water supply services are in the control of municipalities, directorates, or "water offices" in most cities, depending on the population (Cinar, 2009, p. 351). Such a model that separates the water supply responsibilities emerged because of the "increasing decentralization of the 1990s" (Oktem, 2016, p. 71). In metropolitan areas, water supply and waste-water management are regulated by other administrations, such as Istanbul Water and Sewerage Administration (ISKI), "with the responsibility for the planning, design, construction, and operation of all water supply and sewerage services in metropolitan areas" (Cinar, 2009, p. 351). Though merged with the municipality, ISKI can establish its pricing without government approval (Cinar, 2009, p. 351). However, as Mine Islar (2012) points out, the state's role did not necessarily disappear but was transformed from "the provider of public utilities and services" (p. 319-320) "to encourage private sector involvement in the provision of these services" (Harris & Işlar, 2014, p. 53). This shift of power from the state to the private companies in the control of water-related decisions, Swyngedouw et al. (2002) argue, is inevitable after the privatization of water (p. 21).

Not solely do private companies control the operation and supply of potable water, but they also can have "user rights" on the rivers owned by the Turkish government to produce electricity, which is bought from those companies and sold to consumers (Islar, 2012, p. 321). With its first hydroelectric power plant (HEPP) constructed in 1902, though small-scale and elementary, Turkey is one of the leading hydroelectric-producing countries in the world, which has been around since the 1960s but came to fruition in the 2000s (Aksu, Erensü, & Evren, 2016, p. 12, 15). Regarding the use of water to generate electricity and water politics in Turkey, Islar (2012) states:

> The DSI's position in terms of current water politics in Turkey is heavily linked to national energy politics and industrial needs. In this narrative, rivers are described as governable resources that would gain value through energy production through HEPP projects. If water flows into the sea without producing energy, then it would be wasted. Such a discourse is a clear illustration of lack of recognition since it does not recognize, thereby excluding other uses of water. (p. 323)

In this sense, the approach to water in Turkey is through its use value in that it is valued merely "through the application of human labor, by framing unimproved nature as valueless" (Islar, 2012, p. 323; McCarthy & Prudham, 2004). Such a conceptualization of water and the supply of water leads to a profit-based supply of water, contemplating water as a commodity rather than that which prioritizes the public good (Şahin, 2016, p. 44), even when both the states and the companies have a duty to consider interests of the community according to their agreements (Cavallo, 2013, p. 48). The Southeast Anatolian Project (GAP) in Turkey can be an example of where the monetary aspects of the project (i.e., building dams) were prioritized, whereas the social branches (i.e., "poverty elimination" and "irrigation development" were neglected since they were of no economic value (Oktem, 2016, p. 69-70).

Through projects such as GAP, the use of water resources is restricted to the companies managing those projects, whereas by renting the management of the lakes and rivers to private companies, the villagers are ripped off from access to natural resources that have been used for hundreds of years. Similar to Polanyi's arguments on land being tied up with the villager's life and nature, forming "an articulate whole" in *The Great Transformation* (2001, p. 187), the inhabitants and the lake create a whole with a culture tying them all together. The nearby water is probably the reason their ancestors chose to reside in those areas since living closer to water was the most convenient way to access it, as explained by Shiva in an interview with Opel (2008, p. 501). However, as Polanyi (2001) argues, "to separate land from man

and to organize society in such a way as to satisfy the requirements of a real-estate market was a vital part of the utopian concept of a market economy" (p. 187). In this way, the natural is stripped from the whole, deconstructing it into a resource for the market economy.

Water is used not only by the industry and state as a source of profit but also by the government to increase their votes (Oktem, 2016, p. 80). In an interview Onur Oktem (2016) conducted with a senior groundwater expert in the DSI, he listened to the senior explaining how drinking water is "one of the best agents to politically and appropriately meet the expectations of voters" (p. 81). Due to water being one of the most vital necessities for survival, it can be argued that those politicians who promise a solution to the water crisis, as well as an improvement and reduction in the cost of water supply, can get the sympathy of the voters as long as such promises match with the overall stance of the said politician or party. Such is an example of how the cultural importance of water is utilized to gain public support, whether in politics or advertising, as will be analyzed in Chapter 4. These show that though the meanings of water have evolved with the commercialization of water, its qualities as unifying different concepts and people have remained, which is possible due to its hybrid position that affects and is affected by its network relations in the scope of ANT.

One example of politicians utilizing water can be the İstanbul Mayor, Ekrem İmamoğlu, who is planning to bring free potable water to Istanbul by bringing the drinking fountains back to be used by the public free of charge (Hattam, 2021). To achieve this, 40 fountains were restored in İstanbul in 2020 (Hattam, 2021). Talking about the project, the mayor acknowledged the cultural significance of drinking fountains as well as the right to access free water, stating that the drinking fountains are "an indispensable part of urban culture" (Hattam, 2021). This is not to argue that

the mayor of Istanbul is a person that cares much about providing for the citizens but to indicate the importance of water not only as an element of survival or as a source of financial profit but also in socio-politics. Restoring the fountains for public use by the municipality cannot be regarded as separate from the politics of public services.

3.2 Commercialization of water: Bottled water

Returning to the discussion of potable water provision by private companies, we should also analyze the primary means by which water is privatized, commercialized, and politicized: bottled water. Most people in Turkey prefer buying 19 liters of bottled water from private companies to safely drink it, as tap water and water directly found in nature are considered undrinkable in most cities, which will be discussed shortly. However, how did people come to comprehend water so untrustworthy that they have preferred to drink water from bottles even when it is abundant nearby? Jaffee and Newman (2013) state that if someone came a few decades ago and said that we would pay for water in bottles instead of just drinking it from the tap, we would not believe them (p. 1). It was common practice not so long ago to drink water from a tap, whether it was free drinking fountains or the taps at home, and water is still acquired as such in some places. Nevertheless, with modernization, technology, and, unsurprisingly, capitalism, this habit has shifted to drinking water from bottles almost exclusively in developing and developed countries. As the bottled water industry grew, the number of drinking fountains that supply water declined, leaving the market as the easier choice to access water due to "infrastructural disinvestment, distrust in and privatization of public goods, and poor design of public space" (Ivanov, 2015, p. 35-36). Ivanov (2015) argues that although "clean, cheap" tap water is an outstanding success of modern governments with

“higher standards” than bottled water, the latter being promoted as the safe option to drink water shows something else is at play (p. 12), and I agree. A lot contributed to the shift from tap water to bottled water, which will be explained in this part.

Jaffee and Newman (2012) observe that the “growing crisis of access” to water led to water being seen as a profitable commodity (p. 7). The commodity qualities of bottled water are apparent to all: they belong to different companies, are taken from other water sources, cleaned with chemicals, bottled in various plastics with or without BPA (Bisphenol A), and finally sold for profit, the same as any commodity. However, the privatization of tap water might not always be easily detected. There are two types of tap water: the one people get from the drinking fountains, which is free or charged with very little tax, and the one we get at home. Although nature resists commodification, the last decades have witnessed the commodification of water in significant quantities (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 87), both in the form of tap bottled and tap water. However, bottled water production involves “processes of accumulation by dispossession that are more extreme, far-reaching, and long-lasting than those at work in the privatization of tap water” (Jaffee & Newman, 2012, p. 23). Moreover, they do not get the same responses from the public, with bottled water being more popular than the latter.

Bottled water companies in Turkey are gathered under Packaged Water Producers Association (SUDER), which includes 31 brands and companies. Their missions include bringing supplier organizations together and ensuring cooperation between these organizations to protect the rights and interests of member organizations (Ambalajlı Su Üreticileri Derneği, n.d.-a). As their missions suggest, the sale of bottled water primarily aims to protect the producers’ rights and profits rather than the consumers’ health and well-being, and it pays out. According to the

statistics issued by SUDER, there has been a gradual growth in the bottled water sector in the last two years (Ambalajlı Su Üreticileri Derneği, n.d.-b). Moreover, there is also a page explaining why we should drink packaged water on their website, detailing the health, taste, convenience, sustainability, and quality benefits of packaged water over tap water, which aims to increase public use with efficient advertising methods (Ambalajlı Su Üreticileri Derneği, n.d.-c). This part will explain how such mechanisms are used to sell bottled water.

3.2.2 The government or the company?

As aforementioned, after the 1980s, the private markets launching various versions of the same products provided the consumers with their wants with "more customized products" instead of needs in a top-down service, which is what the governments supply (Streeck, 2012, p. 37-38). Private companies have long had the resources, such as money and technology, to diversify and multiply their products, which led to the government's lack of satisfying the wants of their citizens (Streeck, 2012, p. 37). In such a system, "the traditional relationship between citizens and the state became increasingly subject to unfavorable comparison with the relationship between customers and producers in the refurbished post-Fordist markets for consumer goods" (Streeck, 2012, p. 39). That might be one of the reasons why bottled water is preferred over tap. While tap water is a necessity that is met by the government, bottled water bought from private companies appeals to people's wants, hence is more popular. This is somewhat similar to diversifying the products in the early crisis of capitalism when people's needs were met, and the market was saturated (Streeck, 2012, p. 40). Tap water is always there for most of the population and is standard for everyone, and governments cannot keep up with the private

market's fast individualization of products (Streeck, 2012, p. 42), which is why bottled water attracts more attention.

Another one of the most critical reasons bottled water is in the lead, surpassing tap water as a potable resource, is that there is "distrust in the government" (Ivanov, 2015, p. 12; Teodoro et al., 2022, p. 4). "The failure of the government to provide basic public services to citizens," one of which is potable water, results in this distrust in the government (Wilk, 2006, p. 305). As Ivanov (2015) points out: due to the cutbacks by the government on public services, such as drinking fountains, a large part of the building and maintenance costs of the fountains were dependent on private funding in the 1970s in the USA (p. 35). This led people to lose trust in the government and its services, creating suspense regarding water use from drinking fountains (Ivanov, 2015, p. 35); as a result, most turned to other services, such as bottled water. Consequently, though the governments may one day start to provide healthy, potable tap water, the public cannot quickly adapt and trust the government once the "often justified" feeling of distrust is established, and the offers of the governments usually do not suffice the public's "preferences" (Streeck, 2012, p. 44).

Indeed, some drink or might drink tap water in places where there is potable tap water, which still indicates that there is trust in the government to provide safe-to-drink water since "to trust tap water is to trust the government" (Teodoro et al., 2022, p. 24). However, this is not that simple. Teodoro et al. (2022) explain that "trust operates both directly…and indirectly" in that the deeds of the government, as well as "public agency," "reputations," and "the identity of the citizens" also affect this trust relationship between the two (p. 29). For instance, as mentioned, the wealthy have had access to potable water in their taps almost since they were

invented, which substantiates the class differences and favoritism in public services (Strang, 2015, p. 110). Moreover, there is also a racial and class side to such public services in that places where non-whites and the poor are dominant usually do not get safe, potable tap water (Teodoro et al., 2022, p. 25).

That is the primary reason bottled water is "mostly consumed among the lower-income respondents" (Teodoro et al., 2022, p. 16). This justifiable distrust has led people that can afford to opt for the bottled option, which can be explained by rational choice theory, as Teodoro et al. (2022) state:

> … our claims are about decisions that individuals, commercial firm managers, public administrators, and politicians make to maximize utility, given their contexts and constraints. In the tradition of Herbert Simon (1985), we assume that people rationally pursue goals (e.g., health, financial profit, or reelection) using the alternatives available to them, subject to their informational and cognitive limits. (p. 37)

Within the spectrum of rational choice theory, bottled water can be personalized when provided by the private sector, hence appealing to people's wants. Similarly, if there is distrust in the government, then the rational option for one would be to buy and consume bottled water by brands rather than the tap water that the government provides. There are also other reasons why bottled water attracts more attention from the public since it is advertised to be better than tap water in various ways that will be listed in this part (Jaffee & Newman, 2013, p. 10; Wilk, 2006, p. 307).

3.2.3 Advertisements

Wilk (2006) argues that bottled water became a successful commodity because of the "cultural branding," in other words, the media coverage it gets besides the failure of the governments to provide safe water for the public (p. 307). "Corporate media," Shiva argues, "represents the image that water comes from corporations" instead of the earth (Opel, 2008, p. 505). This commercialization and media attention bottled

water gets causes people to choose freely, as mentioned above, from a variety of products rather than the tap water that is “old-fashioned, utilitarian, boring, and unresponsive to users-turned-consumers” (Streeck, 2012, p. 37-38).

Furthermore, though advertised as the healthier option, bottled water is proven to be as unhealthy as, if not more than, tap water (Wilk, 2006, p. 306). The consumers’ fear of illnesses and death is used as an advertising technique by bottled water companies to boost the sale of their products (Gleick, 2010, p. 14). Since one cannot see pollution in clear water, one cannot decide whether the water at hand is good or bad for their health. In other words, tap water is advertised to be contaminated with things that one cannot detect with their eyes or smell, which is precisely what the advertisements take advantage of (Gleick, 2010, p. 7). As we do not have the chance to test water ourselves, we are forced to believe in and trust the analysis we are provided with, which leads the majority of the population to be attracted by bottled water advertisements that deem tap water as polluted.

These advertisements are more misleading in the twentieth century than ever due to the increasing use of the internet as a way of receiving information (Gleick, 2010, p. 111). Since the information put on the internet is “less well monitored,” people are more “vulnerable to misleading information and outright fraud” than before (Gleick, 2010, p. 111). Most of the advertisements and information online are carefully delivered to confuse the “uninformed public” with scientific explanations, such as the pH (potential of hydrogen) levels, with which they “prey on the fears” of the consumers and lead them to think that tap water is not safe compared to bottled alternatives (Gleick, 2010, p. 125).

Bottled water companies use the imagery of nature on their labels, such as fresh waters, flowing visibly clean rivers, the colors blue and white, clarity, and so

forth. In this way, they induce the idea that what they sell comes from nature and is pure and safe to drink (Wilk, 2006, p. 309). However, Wilk argues that if consumers of bottled water encountered one of those fresh waters, they would be afraid of drinking from those fresh rivers “without some kind of purification” (2006, p. 309).

3.2.4 Fear of health for the wealthy

By the time the option of bottled water emerged, people were well aware that unsafe water could take one’s life, remembering many unsanitary water-related diseases, including but not limited to the infamous cholera outbreak. This is another, also related to the first, reason for bottled water’s popularity: fear of illnesses and death. “Fear,” Gleick (2010) argues, “is an effective tool,” particularly those related to health (p. 14). Due to various water-related diseases, such as "cholera," "typhoid," and " dysentery" in the seventeenth century, most lost trust in the sanitation of water and chose to drink beer instead (Gleick, 2010, p. 27). When it arrived, bottled water was advertised as the best healthy alternative to water, whose resources are unknown and untrusted (Hawkins, 2011, p. 536), which led those who could afford it to turn to bottled options (Parag & Roberts, 2009, p. 626).

On the other hand, those who could not afford it were not so fortunate, which continues to this day (Barlow, 2007, p. 239). As water provision becomes the monopoly of private companies and the governments fail or choose to fail in the supply of potable, healthy, and individualized water, “those who, for lack of purchasing power, remain dependent on public provision are also affected” (Streeck, 2012, p. 46). In an interview, Dr. Akgün İlhan states that some people in Turkey consume tap water due to the high prices of the bottled option (Kobal & Batı, 2021). Just last year, in 2021, several citizens who drank tap water were rushed to the

hospital in a poorer side of Izmir, a city in Turkey, due to water poisoning, saying that the water they drank had a foul smell and taste ("İzmir'de içtikleri," 2021). This is an example of further increasing the gap between the elite with access to safe water and the poor without, which could have resulted in, and indeed did in the past, the death of those who cannot afford safe water (Parag & Roberts, 2009, p. 626).

Though to be argued otherwise, let us assume for a second that bottled water is, in fact, healthier than tap or natural water. The technology that enables water to be sanitized indeed saved thousands from water-related diseases. On the other hand, even this has some ramifications, as Christopher Hamlin pointed out back in 2000:

> We face the possible loss of the universal provision of potable water from the realm of public utility and the potential development of a two-tier water society: those who buy bottles and those who take from the terrible tap. Such an outlook might translate into a cavalier 'let them eat cake' attitude on the part of the world's wealthy nations toward water development in the underdeveloped world. (p. 322-323)

This is the perfect analysis of how politics and sociology are unbreakably related in the discussions of water. The twentieth-century water crisis is precisely what Hamlin successfully predicted two decades ago. Water has brought about conflicts between different countries, resulting in water being called a "precious natural resource which knows no borders defined by politics and history" by Rouyer (2000) while discussing the Palestinian-Israeli conflict (p. 1). Water, thus, is something "global" both in its nature and its use (Jaffee & Newman, 2013, p. 9) in that companies usually use "water from poor communities in the global South to sell to rich markets in the global North" (Barlow, 2007, p. 239). For this reason, the developed, rich countries have little to no water crisis, neither lack of nor sanitation, and use the most water in the world, while the underdeveloped countries are forced to depend on "often polluted sources" (Barlow, 2007, p. 239). Thus, it is safe to say that the promise of a "healthy life" is directed solely toward the wealthy who can already access sanitized

tap water and are not in danger of contamination. This is also apparent in the Izmir example, in that only people living on the poorer side of the city were affected by this sanitation problem.

Piper (2014) argues that since most of the population in the world does not have the resources to access safe bottled water, there is a “price of thirst” that brings “social unrest, disease,” and even death (p. 218). Hence, she explains, the pricing is not on the product of water itself but also on one’s life, which is why a more accurate description of water than a commodity or a right can be “blood” (2014, p. 218). Like blood, neither people nor the planet Earth cannot live without water, “supplying food for life” (Piper, 2014, p. 218).

On the other side of the argument, there is enough evidence to assume that though advertised to be safer than tap water, bottled water is more dangerous for one’s health than some tap water. Water bottles are mostly made of Polyethylene Terephthalate (PET), which is preferred due to its “lightness, strength and physical luster that was equivalent to glass in terms of translucency and clarity” as well as “low cost,” which is appealing to both the companies and the consumers (Hawkins, 2011, p. 545). Water bottles contain various chemicals, “fossil fuels” and “carbon,” which lead to a "toxic load on bodies" (Hawkins, 2011, p. 535). They also have "BPA (Bisphenol A), which becomes unstable when heated or as it ages" (Hawkins, 2011, p. 535). To clarify, when bottled water is exposed to sunlight, for instance, it can threaten one’s health (Kobal & Batı, 2021).

Health concerns are valid due to not only the chemicals in the bottles but also the regulation of the bottled water industry. Teodoro et al. (2022) analyzed the market for water in the US, finding out that bottled water is less regulated than tap water there (p. 8). The Ministry of Health regulates the drinking water market in

Turkey with the help of the DSI and the Provincial Directorate of Food, Agriculture, and Livestock, as well as the municipalities. The Ministry of Health in Turkey licenses packaged waters in three categories: “natural mineral spring water,” “natural spring water,” and “drinking water” (“İçilebilir su değerleri,” 2020). Whatever their source, the companies can get permission to bottle water from the relevant departments mentioned that control which purifications companies are allowed to do and what bottling materials they will use while also testing the quality of the water, as explained in the Regulation on Water Intended for Human Consumption in English (Su Yapilari Denetim Hizmetleri Yönetmeliği, 2015). For example, tap water in Istanbul is argued by some, including Dursun Yıldız, former Deputy Head of the Water Affairs Department and Water Policy Expert, and Prof. Dr. Kenan Demirkol, as healthier since it is inspected regularly (İnan, 2019). This is supported by Prof. Dr. Osman Erk, who claims bottled water is not inspected enough (İnan, 2019).

However, the quality tests' results for either are not revealed to the public, nor are they provided when asked, for instance, by Food Safety Movement (GGH) (Gıda Güvenliği Hareketi, 2013, p. 5). That is why it is challenging to find information on the value or safety of packaged water. According to the report by GGH (2014), the values of a majority of the packaged water provided by various brands fail to provide safe and healthy potable water to consumers as their values are below the least acceptable value of zero, except for merely 13 brands. Thus, though advertised as healthy, bottled water can be argued to be harmful to the individual as well as the environment, which will be discussed in the next chapter. This contradiction of arguments about taps or bottled water being more dangerous proves the importance of advertising and marketing in the popularity of bottled water. Most consumers are made to be unaware of the drawbacks that come with packaged goods such as water.

Hawkins (2011) states that bottled water companies "try and keep these problematic qualities of the bottle out of the market frame, to contain the socio-material meanings of the container" (p. 546), such as healthiness, affordability, and so forth. By directing attention to the positive qualities bottled water has or may have, the advertisements help bottled water to be preferred by most to tap water.

3.2.5 Convenience

Before the advent of bottled water, people spent more energy on finding reliable water resources, which was more time and energy-consuming than today, when we can find bottled water quite literally steps away from where we are, no matter where we are. As Teodoro et al. (2022) also observe, bottled water is in supermarkets, kiosks, peddlers, and so forth (p. 9). In other words, as Teodoro et al. (2022) put it: "Once rare, bottled water is now commonplace" (p. 8). Though this is enough proof of the convenience of water, vending machines emerged as well, designed specifically for the sale of bottled water, which is again everywhere from metro stations to malls.

This availability in the market is one of the most fundamental reasons why bottled water dominates the water market, which was brought about by the introduction of PET to the industry by Nestlé in 1990 with the first plastic water bottle (Gleick, 2010, p. 90). Since water is a heavy element to transport, PET's lightness and durability helped the shipment of water easier by not adding more weight and thus resulted in lower costs of transportation to distant locations than before (Hawkins, 2011, p. 545). Compared to glass, PET was the ultimate product to sell water since it could not break easily, was lighter, and could easily be carried in a

bag, all of which contributed to a shift in the culture around water practices by expanding its areas of use with the help of advertisements (Hawkins, 2010, p. 545).

Advertisements used these qualities of PET to persuade the public of bottled water's convenience. Bottled water was referred to as "hydration on the go," which was what attracted the crowd since most of the time, what was in the bottle was "purified tap water," which is why the public can be said to be purchasing a package rather than what is inside the package (Hawkins, 2011, p. 536). The mobility and constant availability of bottled water everywhere and the disappearance of public drinking fountains contributed to the purchase and consumption of bottled water, making it more popular than tap water (Jaffee & Newman, 2013, p. 10; Hawkins, 2011, p. 536). Thus, Hawkins (2010) refers to PET as "something that helps articulate economic action, reconfigures everyday drinking practices, the qualities of water and more" (p. 545). This is also apparent in the decline in public drinking water services, as Jaffee and Newman (2013) state: the popularity of bottled water "feeds a generalized weakening of public policy responses" and decreases "public water infrastructure" (p. 10). Put simply, the lack of public water supply, whether through drinking fountains or safe tap water, is both the cause and the effect of the popularity of bottled water.

As PET bottled water's health and environmental drawbacks started being known, the popularity of bottled water began to decline, which is when the companies directed their attention to glass bottles. However, due to the glass being heavy, not as durable as PET, and more expensive both to produce and to transport (Gleick, 2010, p. 242-245), they are not so favored by the general public nor the companies due to not bringing as much profit, which is why Gleick (2010) argues

that if plastics were never used to sell water, bottled water would not have popularized as much (p. 226-227).

3.2.6 Taste and experience

Another advertising technique the bottled water companies use is comparing tap water and bottled water regarding their taste. The companies create demand by conveying that their water tastes better and is healthier and more convenient than regular tap water (Brisman & South, 2012, p. 127). Most bottled water consumers tend to argue that there is a difference in taste between bottled and tap water while stating the reasons they prefer bottled water; nevertheless, most cannot distinguish that said difference on blind tests (Gleick, 2010, p. 210; Wilk, 2006, p. 306). In fact, the results demonstrated that "two-thirds of them [the participants] preferred the taste of tap water to bottled water" (Gleick, 2010, p. 210). This is not to suggest that all water tastes the same, but rather to argue that people's arguments on bottled water being tastier seem to mostly be related to conscious or subconscious associations that come with bottled and tap waters. This association that bottled water tastes better, thus, can indicate various new connotations of water in this new relationship formed with people, which will be discussed in this part.

Since there are no proven differences for people in taste, Teodoro et al. (2022) claim that the purchase of bottled water shows "luxury" (p. 13). Consumers often prefer bottled water due to its convenience, health scares, popularity, and so forth; thus, they buy different brands rather than the actual water product. "Indeed, bottled water advertisers don't try to sell water: They sell youth, health, beauty, romance, status, image, and, of course, the old standbys, sex and fear," states Gleick (2010) while referring to the role of advertisements in people's preference of bottled

water over tap (p. 106). However, I want to add that bottled water companies also sell experience and taste. One example of this is the "personalized water special for food and individuals" (Karaboğa, 2012). Karaboğa (2012) explains that there are now water menus in restaurants, recommending which type of water (e.g., fruity) pairs well with which dish, just like wine.

There are also personalized water bottles, which government-provided water does not meet. For instance, one bottled water company in Turkey, Hayat Su, has bottles in different colors and designs: pink and blue ones, princess pictures for little girls, black and grey ones[11], usually with movie heroes' pictures for boys, and regular clear ones for adults. Another brand called Pınar, for example, has the Smurfs pictures on their water bottles to attract children[12]. Selling the bottle rather than what is inside is apparent, as these companies have shown in Turkey. Attracting the public, particularly children, with the bottles is not a trend specific to this occasion. There is also a huge market that sells water bottles to consumers in the name of fashion and popularity, health, and environmentalism, which all contribute to the overall attractiveness of bottled water. A company called SuCo, for instance, sells sustainable water bottles with various designs that do not have a hard shape and thus can be bent, reused, and recycled, unlike traditional water bottles[13].

Buying water bottles in various shapes and colors with such meanings attached to them has become one of the ways in which individuals differentiate themselves from those buying affordable, one-type plastic bottled water with

[11] A few examples of the bottles can be found on the company's commercial: Hayat Su. (2017, June 7). *Hayat Su maskotları ile su içerken eğlen* [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8xmFgtu_z4

[12] For further information, please see: Pınar. (n.d.-a) *Şirinler'in eğlenceli dünyası Pınar Su şişelerinde.* Retrieved from https://www.pinar.com.tr/medya_merkezi/detay/Sirinlerin-eglenceli-dunyasi-Pinar-Su-siselerinde/2719/3077/0

[13] For further information, please visit the company webpage: SuCo. (n.d.). *Hikayemiz*. Retrieved from https://www.mataramasu.co/pages/hikayemiz

arguably uglier designs. Such is an example of what Simmel names *Vergesellschaftung*, one translation of which is sociation, which is "a way for individuals to link up to others and thereby define their place in the world" (as explained in Streeck, 2012, p. 35). This type of consumption allows people to present "individual expressions of social identities," which they could not have done with government-provided water since such typical services, at their core, "ask their members not to insist on their separate individuality but to accept a collectively shared identity" (Streeck, 2012, p. 33, 42). Consequently, by engaging with individualized services, people set themselves "apart from some social groups" while also uniting themselves with other groups they may want to be identified with (Streeck, 2012, p. 35). This makes social structures and relationships much weaker than before "since communities of consumption are much easier to abandon than traditional 'real' communities" (Streeck, 2012, p. 36).

3.3 Transformations in the political economy of water

Considering such values attributed to water in changing political and economic structures, the meaning of water once again transforms, as it does in the sociocultural context mentioned in the previous chapter. In other words, the politicization and commodification of water, as we have discussed so far, bring about another discussion over the definition of water. The two most popular definitions are in the binary of water as a right and commodity, as Karen Piper (2014) explains that the Forum Alternatif Mondial de l'Eau, or Alternative World Water Forum (FAME), approaches water as a "human right," whereas for the World Water Forum (WWF), it is merely an "economic good" (p. 10).

Piper sets two other examples that summarize this debate continuing to this day: South Africa and Dublin. She states that water was declared as a right in South Africa in 1994, whereas the acceptance of water as an "economic good" was put into words with the "Dublin Principles" in 1992 (2014, p. 212) as a result of the shift in the management of water:

> In the 1980s, economic theory shifted in favor of deregulation and privatization. It was only then that the Bank began to fund drinking water supplies through a program called "full cost recovery," in which the public was charged for the construction and operation of the utilities. In the 1990s, the Bank made water supply privatization an explicit condition of its aid packages, which meant that nationally or municipally run water utilities were forced to hand over management to corporations. (p. 22)

Such a form of privatization has distanced the public from water resources in various ways. First, the meaning of water has transformed in this privatized relationship, in which system, Dr. Vandana Shiva argues in an interview, the supporters of privatization conceive water to be "just another commodity" (Opel, 2008, p. 500). Secondly, the people had to pay the government for the supply of water at home, before which they would have to go to the nearest water source and collect it themselves, which was a more intimate relationship than the former. In this case, the people were the actors of the relationship as opposed to the government being the provider, which was a more indirect relationship where the people were the receivers rather than the actors. Nevertheless, this does not mean everyone should return and collect water from the nearest source. It is merely an indication of the changing relationship between people and water.

What the privatization of water did was to add another dimension, another step in the interaction between the people and water. People now must get their water from a secondary source, and they must go through a private company that looks out for their profit rather than the public. In this relationship, water is understood as a

commodity while the people are regarded as the "consumers" or "customers," the audience of service in the market economy rather than "symbolic co-managers through common ownership" (Strang, 2004, p. 136). The establishment of private water companies has altered how we approach water, water services, and our perception of ourselves in this interaction. We have transformed into the ones who pay a third party for a source that all require. Even the physical qualities of private company buildings help reinforce this alienation, "emphasizing the geographic and social distance between them" (Strang, 2004, p. 137).

When it is the government that manages water, society can, at least to some extent, feel a connection between themselves and water in that they are the ones who choose the government. They have a saying in who controls the water through their right to vote and choose whomever. However, when it is a private company that controls it since they have "no social connection" to those companies, they are seen as the "other group" (Strang, 2004, p. 133), which results in an "alienation between people and resources" (Strang, 2004, p. 132). Piper (2014) refers to this phenomenon as "the loss of democratic decision-making ability about this life-sustaining force" (p. 211). Strang (2004) states that "by disconnecting people from even symbolic control and management of water resources, privatization generated – and continues to generate – feelings of separation and exclusion" (p. 132). In conversations about waters and loss of water, residents nearby have only been ignored and labeled as people accidentally living near the resources, leading to "the marginalization of people whose livelihoods, sense of self and communities and practical knowledge are rooted in" the use of those waters (Scaramelli, 2020). These simplify the discussion on waters, the shared culture of the people, who "transmit knowledge," have

“interconnected” lives with nature, and thus should be included in the political discussions of the natural life in those places (Scaramelli, 2020).

Such arguments contribute to the other side of the debate: water is a right rather than a commodity. Ercan Ayboğa (2010) supports this idea arguing that water is necessary for life and, thus, every living being has the right to access it freely, the sale of which as a commodity cannot be accepted under any circumstances (p. 4), to which Piper agrees (2014, p. 211). Filiz Kartal (2009) also agrees with this, stating that defining water as a “need” instead of a “right” leads to water being privatized and commodified (p. 67). She argues that when water is defined as a need, the government can direct the responsibilities to private companies; nevertheless, when water is defined as a “right,” the government is the one to manage that this “right” is applied to all, including the “marginalized and vulnerable segments,” for which the government is responsible (2009, p. 66-67).

Though both Ayboğa and Kartal use the word right in conversing about water, their stances come off as different. In the case of the former, water is defined as a right that should be free from privatization and commodification (Ayboğa, 2010). However, the latter believes in a “liberal but regulated” market in which private companies still hold the rights to water (Kartal, 2009, p. 66). In Kartal’s argument, everyone should be able to access water which should be guaranteed by prioritizing the marginalized segments of society and the regulation of prices; in other words, water is seen both as a right and a commodity. This is an example of water being a hybrid entity holding two different sets of juxtaposing meanings. What is called the hybridity of water in this thesis is also pointed out by Richard Wilk (2006):

> Bottled water lies in the middle of this intersection. If nature is dangerous, technology makes it safe. By generic reverse osmosis water is ‘pure’ because it has passed through a machine. The technology is protecting you from a wild and dangerous nature. For the romantic, water is pure because it comes

> straight from nature. Technology is a danger, and the way to ensure health is with natural water. (p. 309)

The threshold existence of water allows the space for these two binaries of nature and technology, right and commodity, to come together in that it can be both a right for all and a commodity that is sold. Water, as Carrier (2003) points out, carries various "sets of meanings for different sets of people" (p. 225). Such meanings not only indicate "individual and collective histories" but also "justify the exclusion" and "inclusion" of some from the landscape, which occur not "automatically" but because some actors are "more powerful than others" (Carrier, 2003, p. 226). As Strang (2004) conveys in her research, is that "water belonged to everyone and no-one" (p. 130). The uncontainable, uncontrolled nature of water restricts our ownership of it. However, we can control and administer it to some extent. We can and do direct it to pipes, contain it in bottles, and turn it into energy, for example. This threshold existence of and relationship with water is what makes it so hard to restrict it in a single definition. However, one thing is clear, as Linton (2010) argues, "water is a social product," therefore, how water is comprehended transforms "as a result of changes in the society" (p. 20).

Such a threshold existence leads to a variety of definitions, one of which is "modern water," as Linton (2010) names it, referring to the "abstract, isomorphic, measurable quantity" (p. 14). Since water is made to be a measurable good that can be identified, bought, and sold, it is above and beyond natural limitations. Modern water is something that is abstracted from "social and ecological relations" (Linton, 2010, p. 163). This abstraction enables the quantification of water, which is how and why political and economic conceptualizations can be discussed. In that sense, the threshold existence of water that I have mentioned so far can also refer to a new concept, which Linton (2010) calls: the "hybridity" of water in that "in every

instance of its involvement with people, it internalizes ideas, material practices, and discourses, as well as the unique properties that emerge from H2O" (p. 176). Such attributions to water create the alienation mentioned above between water and the locals. In other words, as Linton explains, the "deterritorialized and dematerialized modern water" separates water from its natural habitat by making it an idea, abstract, rather than something in nature that exists per se, creating further alienation between the visible, touchable, drinkable, and material water that exist in nature and the villagers residing near it (2010, p. 18). Linton (2010) argues:

> Even the term "water management" implies a particular kind of hydrosocial relation, one characterized by deference to a kind of abstract expertise and professionalism. It also implies a particular kind of water, stripped of its complex social relationships such that it may be managed by experts who are not necessarily directly involved in these relationships. (p. 58)

By defining water as a commodity, market good, and profit, the social relationship between the locals and water has been reduced to a political and economic one (Swyngedouw et al., 2002, p. 20). Expressions such as management, as in the quote above, refer to a control mechanism that can be done professionally rather than leaving water use to the local community. Strang (2004) supports this idea, stating that "the loss of control over water resources is, for most people, a loss of something that is symbolically integral to their own identity" (p. 34).

3.4 An uncooperative commodity: Water

The materiality of water is also in a threshold existence of some sort. That is, though fresh water cannot be bought and sold, it can be controlled and measured, as mentioned above. Still, due to the process being somewhat challenging, the liquid form of water deems it an "uncooperative commodity" (Bakker, 2005, p. 542). For example, water in nature is not the same as cotton or rock. It is not in a particular

shape, is “heavy” to transport, and cannot be produced by bringing together different materials; thus, something that “resists commodification” (Piper, 2014, p. 9, 231; Snitow, Kaufman, & Fox, 2007, p. 197; Teodoro, Zuhlke, & Switzer, 2022, p. 8-9). Instead, it needs to be purified for human consumption and put in bottles for it to be a transportable good to be sold in the market, which unsurprisingly has high costs. Such qualities of water make it an uncooperative commodity regarding the commodification of water, or in other words, converting it into a marketable good (Linton, 2010, p. 49; Bakker, 2005, p. 545).

That is why when waters were directed to pipes, thus changing the direction of the flow of water in a human-driven process, Jean-Pierre Goubert called it “the conquest of water” (as cited in Linton, p. 2010, p. 97; Wilk, 2006, p. 308). Water, something so uncooperative and wild, was tamed in the face of modernity. These enabled a more abstract conceptualization than the one people can see and touch (Linton, 2010, p. 98). “Measuring water,” Linton (2010) argues, “abstracts it from its qualitative dimensions” (p. 98-99). Untamed and wild water was first broken down to its compound of H2O by science. It was once again transformed into a commodity by turning it into something measurable and selling it to the public, whether accessed from the tap or bought from a store.

However, this did not happen overnight or even in recent history, but instead was first “steadily abstracted from small and stable village communities passing first to urban communities and semi-local water supply companies, then to more extensive and distant suppliers, which merged over and over, becoming grand corporations and municipal institutions.” (Strang, 2004, p. 36). The first instances of this can be traced back to Frontinus, who, in the book *The Stratagems and The Aqueducts of Rome* (AD 1/1961), conveys that the city of Rome used the water of the

river Julia as early as the year 35 BC[14] with a system that "water-men" who transmitted water from the river to the aqueduct, also named Julia, to distribute and sell to people (p. 349). Even then, Frontinus explains, the water source Julia was "exhausted" by the water carriers "by diverting its waters for their profit" (AD 1/1961, p. 349). They measured water using a system called *quinara* (Frontinus, AD 1/1961, p. 369), the details of which are not relevant to the scope of this water. What is crucial is that more than two thousand years ago, water was conceived as something which could be measured and gained profit out of. This further strengthens the argument that water is a hybrid that has various meanings all existing simultaneously in its different network relationships.

However, it was not until the twentieth century that what Linton (2010) refers to as "complete control" of waters was accomplished with "the means by which modern water came to dominate the rivers" (p. 161). Later in the twentieth century, through "a rapid process of centralization," the water institutions took "control of water resources right out of the hands of local communities into a direct tug-of-war between the central government and an increasingly monolithic industry" (Strang, 2012, p. 36). Such value, however, rips the local population of the right to use the source of water that their ancestry has used for centuries, which alienates people from a source so familiar (Strang, 2012, p. 36). In most cases, it proceeds to displace the local community of their houses and hometowns due to various problems that occur after the privatization of the waterworks. Such was argued by Polanyi (2001) to be "a catastrophic dislocation of the lives of common people" when he talked about the separation of the land and the working classes (p. 35). This was the case in

[14] The year is stated as 719 in the original book due to the use of the Julian Calendar back then instead of the Georgian Calendar that is used at present. For further information, please refer to Frontinus, S. J. (AD1/1961). *The Stratagems and the aqueducts of Rome*. (C. E. Bennet, Trans.), M. B. McElwain (Ed.). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

the Terkos example, where the villagers were forced to move elsewhere after losing the fight against the dams (Kentel, 2019, p. 176).

That is also an example of what Swyngedouw (2005) calls “accumulation by dispossession” (p. 87). In this system, private companies take hold of water the locals used before, privatizing it, and selling it back to them. Such is “the subjection of the surface of the planet to the needs of an industrial society,” as Polanyi names while discussing the transformation of civilization through soil (2001, p. 188). To achieve this, he argues, “the commercialization of the soil” was the first step (2001, p. 188) since it was the initial action to be able to detach land from the villagers as when something is commercialized, it is no longer a public good that the people can claim to have rights on, as a result of which the villagers were separated from the land.

The process is the same with water, with what Polanyi calls a “fictitious commodity,” which are not commodities per se since they are not “produced for sale,” one of which is “land” or nature in general (2001, p. 75). To be able to sell water, something not produced but already exists in nature, it was first commercialized mainly as something to be sold, which allowed a detachment of the commons from the rights to water. Such eliminated the claims of ownership, assimilating and absorbing such conversations, transforming them into commercial discussions (Polanyi, 2001, p. 188). Either through privatization for the distribution of potable water to the cities or through the construction of HEPPs to produce energy, the privatization of water bodies disturbed the lives of the people residing in those areas (Erensü, 2016, p. 52) through the dislocation of the villagers, causing some resistance depending “on the measures taken to regulate the process” (Polanyi, 2001, p. 189).

3.5 Resistance to the privatization of water

Such resistance occurred since it seemed as if rivers were the property of the private companies that hire them instead of being a public good that belongs to nature and the people living there since it restricts, if not wholly prohibits, the use of that river by the locals (Islar, 2012, p. 324). In other words, "commodification of nature" entails "a new wave of enclosing the commons" and "dispossession" (Harvey, 2004, p. 75). It is, then, no surprise that the local community resists the privatization of water since it, as mentioned, alienates people residing in those areas from the land (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 97; Harvey, 2004, p. 75). In Turkey, the resistances were mainly against the construction of HEPPs, which attracted resistance primarily due to the destruction of small villages surrounded with dams (Aksu et al., 2016, p. 16).

However, such resistances in Turkey were not against all HEPPs, but mostly against small-scale HEPPs, with the exceptions of Ilısu and Yusufeli[15], indicating the difference between the experiences regarding water and neoliberalism (Erensü, 2016, p. 51-52). Some of the resistances succeeded, with the locals standing in front of the police, the construction machines, and employees, thus restricting their movement and obstructing, and sometimes canceling the project altogether (Yavuz, 2021; Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 97) whereas others, such as in Solaklı, could not stop the construction of HEPP, where the protestors were made to leave by police force and brutality (Oğuz, 2016, p. 199-200). Some resistances had large recognition, with the then-minister of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization accepting the

[15] As aforementioned, Turkey has a long history of HEPPs and fights against them dating back to 1902 (Aksu et al., 2016). Such a long history of HEPPs in various locations comes with its resistance stories and analysis, which I have not been able to discuss in detail due to the scope of this thesis and the longevity of such type of analysis. Further information on HEPP projects, social movements, implications of these in terms of commodification and changing meanings of water, water energy, the relationship between neoliberalism and environment, and more can be found in Aksu, C., Erensü, S., & Evren, E. (Eds.). (2016). *Sudan sebepler: Türkiye'de neoliberal su-enerji politikaları ve direnişler.* İstanbul, TR: İletişim Yayınları.

destruction of the streams by small-scale HEPPs and promising to ban them, most of which persist today (Aksu et al., 2016, p. 16). Apart from the promises not kept,

The resistance was not limited to those against the HEPP, nor is it limited to the twenty-first century. In fact, the story of the resistance towards privatization goes way back, one historical example of which is the aforementioned Terkos project that provided water to the residents in Istanbul, which was not appreciated by the locals, as K. Mehmet Kentel (2019) explains. They argued that the project was harming the environment and the animals while displacing the villagers there, in addition to preventing the use of their primary source of water (Kentel, 2019, p. 173). There were also floods in times of heavy rainfall due to the poor planning of the dams that blocked the natural passage of water, which increased the uneasiness of the local population (Kentel, 2019, p. 173). Though the villagers were not able to succeed in their fight over Lake Terkos, they managed to get compensation fees from the company (Kentel, 2019, p. 175). In any case, such acts of resistance as the Terkos example prove to those in power that such politics of "accumulation by dispossession" will be resisted, and the "struggle for water" is also "a struggle for fundamental human rights" (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 97-98).

Though Turkish history has encountered resistance against privatizing waterways for irrigation or sale, such opposition usually focused on the rights to those rivers rather than being directed explicitly to commercialized and commodified water. Resistance towards commodified bottled water is a recent phenomenon in Turkey, dating back over a decade. The campaign *Su Hakkı* (The Right to Water), led by several groups in Turkey, is the main, if not the only, action taken against this purpose, which is indicated in their articles such as *Yaşam Hakkı Olarak Su* (Water as the Right to Life) by Ayboğa (2010). In that article, as mentioned above, Ayboğa

(2010) argues, as mentioned, that water is a right that cannot be commodified, and the sale of it is as absurd as the sale of air (p. 4). Unfortunately, this has yet to gain attention from the public in Turkey, where resistance against the privatization of water is mainly surrounded around HEPPs, mostly disregarding the commodification of it in other forms such as bottled or tap (Erensü, 2016, p. 48-49).

3.6 Concluding remarks

Water is an element that is part of our everyday life. However, it does not have one single definition for all since "environmental transformation is not independent of class, gender, ethnic, or other power struggles" (Swyngedouw et al., 2002, p. 4). For those who argue that water is a right, it is the source of life that everyone should have free access to (Ayboğa, 2010). In a capitalist system, however, it is a source of income, a commodity in the market (Strang, 2004, p. 136). For those who do not have access to potable water, it is a luxury, whereas it is a luxury for the wealthy in the sense that they can differentiate themselves with the use of expensive glass and personalized bottles. In any case, water is something abstract, something hybrid, which changes its meaning in different contexts, for which reason it cannot be defined solely as H2O (Linton, 2010). There is no water that exists without the conceptualization of the human; in other words, to generalize, society and nature exist together in their relationship, not as separate entities but bound to one another (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 14).

As argued throughout this chapter, various changes have led to these multiple understandings of water. Jaffee and Newman (2012) argue that "the privatization of drinking water can be understood as one facet of a much broader, ongoing process of commodification of nature, linked to the strategies of global capital firms to ensure

continued accumulation" (p. 5). As water became part of the capitalist culture, it changed its meaning in the eyes of everyone. Fundamental variables contributed to this changing image of water. People earning money with the sale of water and tap water, which was proven to be the cause of various illnesses, enabled the water industry to become more and more significant (Gleick, 2010, p. 27). In the case of the resistance, regardless of the time, place, and scope of them, an analysis of the fight against the privatization of water reveals the changing meanings of water, such as a resource for energy, as seen in the construction of HEPPs, disregarding water's agency (Aksu et al., 2016, p. 24, 26). As Erensü (2016) states, a fight for nature is a fight for its meanings (p. 44); hence, a discussion of the ontological presence of water, its agency, and the meanings attributed to it is crucial in the discussions of the commodification of water in the scope of neoliberalism (p. 38), as I have attempted to do with this chapter. The resistances against the construction of HEPPs show how nature is not just an object, a resource for capitalist and neoliberalist systems, which is an anthropocentric approach (Erensü, 2016, p. 42-43). Rather, nature, in this case, water, is an agent or an actant in the relationship (Latour, 1996, p. 2) and an abstract hybrid, which is why its meanings alter for various people (Linton, 2010). It is these network relationships and hybridity that make a discussion on various meanings of water that exist simultaneously possible.

In addition, such changes brought about other variables, including advertisements for bottled water being healthier, more convenient, and more stylish than tap water (Gleick, 2010). While selling these, I have explored how the media brought attention to people's feelings, such as fear of death, affecting the meanings attached to water to sell more bottled water products (Gleick, 2010). I have argued in this chapter that these, as well as a distrust in the government coupled with private

companies meeting the public's demands, led to bottled water becoming more popular than tap water, which is also privatized and treated as a commodity. The next chapter will focus on the consequences of such changes in humanity's relationship with water.

CHAPTER 4

SAVING WATER… FROM WHOM?

Notions like climate change and environmental problems are not surprising to us in the twentieth century with daily experiences or "lived actualities" of climate change and its repercussions, including floods and droughts (Hastrup & Rubow, 2014, p. 4). In other words, though argued through this dissertation that water is an abstraction, water scarcity and pollution are not so abstract in the daily lives of individuals (Hastrup, 2014, p. 24). Environmental crises are undoubtedly present and noticeable in water, as is recognized in the World Water Forum, that water resources are "under threat from pollution, unsustainable use, land-use changes, climate change, and many other forces" (2000, p. 1).

However, the problem is "not just quality but also quantity" of water (Strang, 2004, p. 42). In the report by United Nations-Water in 2022, 11% of the global population lacks access to basic water services" (p. 68). Many countries face water scarcity and shortage today, calculated through a country's water use index. If the country's water use index is above 20%, there is water scarcity; if it is more than 40%, there is a water shortage (Dikmen, 2021). However, some might think that since "about 71% of the Earth's surface is water-covered" (Water Science School, 2019) and "the same amount of water [exists] on the planet now as there was in the time of the dinosaurs," the quantity of water should not logically be an issue (Piper, 2014, p. 26). This is why Piper (2014) argues that water shortage is a "misnomer" since the actual shortage is in the amount and the quality of clean, drinkable water (p. 26).

Piper (2014) reports that "only 1 per cent of the world's water is drinkable, while the rest is stored in the ocean or ice caps," and most of the 1% is not suited for consumption due to river and stream pollution (e.g., chemicals) as a result of pollution from increasing urbanization and industrial and chemical waste (p. 26-27). Moreover, of the remaining clean drinkable water, around 70% is used for agricultural purposes, around 19% for industry and energy, and merely 11% for municipal purposes (United Nations-Water, 2022, p. 48, p. 74; Cisneros, 2014, p. 431). Most goods also rely on water for production and transportation (Yeo, 2015, p. 214). Thus, the scarcity and pollution of water resources are severe threats to other natural resources and every sector in every country (Yeo, 2015, p. 211).

Polluted water is a threat also because it kills millions who have to drink it due to not having any other options, particularly living in underdeveloped countries (Piper, 2014, p. 26-27). More than two billion people in the world are reported to "lack access to clean water" and suffer from and are killed by "water-borne diseases" (Piper, 2014, p. 3; Ahuja, 2014, p.1). To specify, the poor are the primary victims of the water problem since they are "hit first and the hardest" (The Second World Water Forum, 2000, p. 1). Some even argue that there is enough clean water on earth, but there is an "injustice of water poverty" (Loftus, 2009, p. 953). Thus, even with enough quantities, water has very different connotations for people from various segments of society and those in other countries. Similarly, even with the same quality, as exemplified by Yeo (2015), "a liter of water in the Brazilian rain forests has a very different significance than a liter of water in the Kalahari Desert" (p. 214). That is, when something is abundant (e.g., water in a rainforest where it frequently rains), it is thought about, valued, and prioritized less than when it is scarce (e.g., water in a desert where hardly any water can be found).

As mentioned in the previous chapters, “water is experienced both physically and culturally” (Strang, 2004, p. 2). However, these work in inverse proportions; in other words, as the physical qualities of water decrease (e.g., the amount or the condition of water on earth), its cultural significance increases. Similarly, water's physical and cultural qualities are related to how it is valued economically. For instance, Thames Water executive Peter Spillet claimed that “people do not understand the value of water and they expect it to fall from the sky and not cost anything” (as quoted in Piper, 2014, p. 24-25). However, as a matter of fact, water does fall from the sky and is available for free in rivers and alike. Indubitably, living in urbanized environments where humans have lost touch with nature, the modern individual does not have the luxury to collect water from the nearest river, nor do they have the option to collect water from the nearest drinking fountain for reasons discussed in Chapter 2. Still, what is crucial here is that Spillet views water as a commodity from which some can profit, as opposed to viewing it as a right that should be provided for everyone. Hence, the solutions people like Spillet offer for water scarcity issues rely on the privatization and commodification of it, thinking that pricing water would make people appreciate it more due to its monetary value, which has been shown to be ineffective (Strang, 2004, p. 45).

Nevertheless, the meaningful argument here is not whether water should be free. Rather, it is to realize the power and authority relationship that this instance brings forward, as Strang (2004) states, “to control the most vital resource is a powerful political position” (p. 21). By saying that people do not understand water’s value, Spillet positions people like him who have status and control over water and its prices above the citizens who use it, indicating that people are so naive and ignorant that they cannot comprehend the issue at hand. Moreover, through such

remarks, the value of water is discussed in terms of whether the consumers value it enough by paying to access it. Put differently, people are put in the position of mere consumers, as discussed in the previous chapter, and water is seen as a commodity, a product, rather than a right. Consequently, water's value is decided by how much people pay for it. In such a hydrosocial relationship, the subject and actant position of both water and the public is passivized as the authorities exert their power with their control of the waters and its prices. Furthermore, similar remarks are made to encourage raises in water prices, especially in underdeveloped countries, "to avoid life threatening shortages and environmental damage" (Financial Times article, 2000, as cited in Goldman, 2007, p. 790-71). Through these and similar comments, individuals, especially the poorer segments of society, are posited as the main actors for water scarcity, directing the attention away from agricultural or industrial uses of water.

Observing the issues of water scarcity and pollution, various organizations, campaigns, programs, and so forth have long focused on what individuals can do to save the earth's water resources, "especially for short-run solutions" (Berk et al., 1980, p. 99). One such campaign in Turkey is Yarının Suyu, led by a detergent brand, Finish, since 2019. To be detailed later in this chapter, their main goal is to reduce the water footprint of households in Turkey and educate the people on the water crisis and measures that can be taken against it. Their campaign includes advertisements, social media posts and trends, documentaries, and TV presence with different actors and singers to gain the public's attention. As can be understood, they seem to blame water issues on the individual by focusing on the individual consumption of water. This chapter will look at the reasons why such campaigns address the restriction of individual consumption as the leading solution to the

world's water problem, while agricultural and industrial uses account for so much more of the overall water use. Prior to dwelling on these, a detailed account of water issues, their causes, and their effects will be addressed.

4.1 Water pollution and scarcity

That climate change has a direct effect on the waters of the world is of no question, especially on the decline in the amount and frequency of rains and consequently in hydraulic energy as well as drought and heat waves (Cekinir, Ozgener, & Ozgener, 2022; Hughes, 2005, p. 176; Ahuja, 2014, p. 9; Grant, 2016, p. 5; Şahin, 2016, p. 67). There is a fast and notable "shrinkage of glaciers" and evaporation, and the little rain that the world gets is "distributed far from evenly around the globe" (Strang, 2015, p. 26-29) in that some areas get more rainwater, such as rainforests, than others, such as deserts. As another example, "the melting of glaciers and ice caps significantly decreases the amount of freshwater available in the world" (Piper, 2014, p. 28), which shows how climate change directly affects the amount of water available to humans.

These changes are noticeable to the public in their daily lives in the form of "hurricanes, flooding, depletion of freshwater sources, coastal erosion, and drought" (Hastrup & Rubow, 2014, p. 4). Personally, I have always encountered, both on the media and in chatter, that due to climate change, rain not falling that year would cause drought and how that will affect agricultural products and their prices that year, all saying it will be a tough year. Over time, these have become more common, to the point that I can make the same comments, realizing how little it rains each year now compared to the last. I have always thought that since these are the results of climate change, nothing could be done; it was a natural event that is not affected by

humans in any way. Little did I know that climate change is only one of the reasons for the water scarcity we face, some notable others being water pollution, "over-extraction" of water resources, urbanization, and so forth (Piper, 2014, p. 27). I was awakened by Linton's (2010) words:

> Water pollution, water scarcity, the inadequacy and uneven distribution of water and sanitation services – all these are combinations of the water process and human social processes. (If you thought water scarcity was a "natural" event, consider what such an event would mean without the presence of any people.). (p. 177)

Even after admitting the social indicators of water issues, one might think that since water is a renewable resource, this should not be a problem for long. Such would be true if water bodies were not approached anthropocentrically, e.g., over-extracted to the extent that nature cannot keep pace, treated as a resource, and exhausted for the production of other goods such as food and energy, as well as wasted by the general population, the number of which increases every day (Piper, 2014, p. 27; Hughes, 2005, p. 141; Grant, 2016, p. 6; Cisneros, 2014, p. 431). This is why Strang (2014) renders freshwater to be "a semi-renewable resource" in the short term and climate change to be "anthropogenically created" (p. 13). It is commonly accepted today that climate change does not occur by itself but is connected to the anthropocentric view that treats nature as slaves to humans, or the actions of humans for short, who are considered "the major driving force of planetary change" (Rockstrom et al., 2014, p. 8; Yavuz, 1975, p. 1; Uslu, 1993, p. 49; Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 205).

This umbrella term, anthropocentrism, can also be called resourcism when directed towards the natural world as used as resources. Evernden (1985) theorizes resourcism to be regarding everything in terms of their "utility," and "by treating everything as homogeneous matter in search of a use," the human "devalues all" (p. 23). He exemplifies that "to describe a tree as an oxygen-producing device ... is

equally violent, equally debasing to being itself" (p. 23), where the tree is only valuable as a "useful object" (p. 100), which can be claimed to be the same for water. To value water as a source of life, an element needed for human survival, necessitates water to be defined in how they value the human. It means that water is valuable as long as it is useful to people. If there were another source where human animal could slake their thirst without a need for water, I find it highly likely that the concern over protecting water resources would cease to exist. "Once adopted," Evernden (1985) conceptualizes, "resourcism transforms all relationships to nature into a simple subject-object or user-used one" (p. 24).

To be fair, humans have long benefitted from nature for their own interests, which is how modern people have various opportunities, from food to houses, all necessities for a good life. However, scientific knowledge and the growing power of technology have transformed this ancient anthropocentric understanding into a modern attack on nature (Özerkmen, 2002, p. 172). To exemplify, the ill effects of industrialization and urbanization stem from an anthropocentric mentality, in which humans dominate and exploit nature for themselves (Ökmen, 2000, p. 19), and "the history of renewable resources is full of examples of overexploitation" (Holling, Berkes, & Folke, 2000, p. 343). This anthropocentric mentality is highly relevant to water problems since most water scarcity and poor-quality result from human actions that pollute and stress waters (Brugnach & Ingram, 2012, p. 49).

As mentioned briefly, the increasing human population causes stress in the water supply since though a renewable resource, waters in nature cannot keep up with the growing demand of the users (Hughes, 2005, p. 132; Gleick, 2010, p. 28; Vairavamoorthy & Sempewo, 2011; Kılıç, 2008, p. 172; Grant, 2016, p. 6; Pearce, 2006, p. 23). In addition, the amount of pollution that goes into the waters also

increases as a result of the growing population as well as industrial activities, which will be detailed shortly (Sharma, Gulati, & Puri, 2014; Kılıç, 2008, p. 161; Yavuz, 1975, p. 1). In many parts of the world, the drying up of rivers and lakes and the rapid depletion of surface waters cause more intensive use of spring waters, the popularity of which should be accepted as a sign that the balance of supply of nature and demand of the people has deteriorated (Kılıç, 2008, p. 172; Pearce, 2006, p. 58).

Urbanization is another problem concerning polluting and stressing water resources (Furon, 1963/1967, p. 107; Ökmen, 2003, p. 2; Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 10). As Hughes (2005) states, "the metabolism of the cities also excretes pollution, sewage, garbage, and other wastes" (p. 142), which are dumped in water bodies, causing contamination of fresh waters. This affects not only the water resources in the cities but also others far away "since cities depend on the resources of the countryside," to be exact, "the environmental damage, or "footprint," of a city may extend to lands hundreds of kilometers or half a world away" (Hughes, 2005, p. 142; Swyngedouw, Castro, & Kaika, 2002, p. 5). Moreover, urbanization also changes the relationship of one with water, in that "the most significant (and intimate) hydrological experience" of a person in the city occurs "at the mouth of a tap or in relation to a toilet" (Linton, 2010, p. 97). In other words, the modern individual does not and cannot engage with water in a natural surrounding where water can be observed and viewed with its agency, but rather is encountered in humanly created and controlled environments where water is the passive object (e.g., the one consumed) to our active and subject position (e.g., the one that consumes), pertaining to the anthropocentric and resourcist approach to water.

Industrialization, in addition to urbanization, is regarded as another main contributor to environmental issues (Özerkmen, 2002, p. 172; Shiklomanov, 1998, p.

18; Ökmen, 2000, p. 19) since it depends on the exploitation of natural resources such as water for various uses such as energy production (Özerkmen, 2002, p. 171). To exemplify the role of industrialization in water scarcity, pumping "too much groundwater" causes people to have less groundwater to rely on "during dry periods" (Kaplan, 2023). Moreover, water is relocated, drained, and taken from nature to our houses "to supply the voracious thirst of mega-cities," in which process "much of it is lost to evaporation," and most of the remaining water "is usually dumped as waste in the ocean" (Barlow, 2010, p. 182; Marsh, 2003, p. 304). Similarly, alterations on the rivers, such as "constructing dams, building levees on their banks, straightening out their twists and curves … eliminated the rivers' natural floodplains, making it more difficult for groundwater to replenish" (Kaplan, 2023). Hawken, Lovins, and Lovins (2000) explain that this is a problem with most industrialized countries as they liken "the mistakes with water" to the mistakes "made with energy," stating that developed countries "rely on the highest-quality water for every task, flushing toilets and washing driveways with drinking water" as well as building "big dams and water projects by reflex, rather than asking what's the best solution and the right size for the job" (p. 214).

Severe industrialization brings about significant amounts of waste, as does the urban population, in the form of sewers, chemicals, detergents, waste such as plastic, combustion of coal and oil, pharmaceuticals, and so forth. (Furon, 1963/1967, p. 107-108; Shiklomanov, 1998, p. 17-18; Barlow, 2010, p. 189; Muthu, 2019, p. 15; Hawkins, 2011, p. 536; Hughes, 2005, p. 142-146; Strang, 2015, p. 152; Ahuja, 2014, p. 6). Though waste and pollution were present well before industrialization, "industrial development had a greater effect, introducing into water courses chemicals that could not so readily be absorbed and rendered harmless"

(Strang, 2004, p. 42). After its use in the industry, “water generally contains components which deteriorate its quality in such a way that the water cannot be reused in the process without treatment,” which costs more money than the discharge, which is why most companies opt for the latter option of dumping the wastes and polluting waterways (van de Worp, 2002, p. 11-12, 19).

In the form of industrialized farming, the agricultural sector is another great polluter and stressor of water resources (Shiklomanov, 1998, p. 19). As mentioned, “agriculture is the largest water user” since it requires much water in production, much of which is wasted, and contributes to pollution through chemical use (Rockstrom et al., 2014, p. 40). “Food production in general and more specifically feed for animal production” are stated to be the main actors in high water footprint rates, which indicates the amount of water used in the process (Ocak et al., 2013, p. 262), and the most water loss occurs in this sector (Şahin, 2016, p. 41). Growing vegetables and alike, as well as raising animals for consumption, undeniably requires the use of water (Ocak et al., 2013, p. 262); however, the main problem is the reckless ways of using water while acknowledging various ways water use can be decreased. For instance, “setting irrigation schedules without regard to the weather” leads to more water being used even when nature can provide the necessary water with rain (Hushes, 2005, p. 148). Such unsustainable practices of irrigation are responsible for the over-extraction of groundwater, which is “finite” and “take[s] centuries to recharge,” as well as containing “salts and other minerals that have negative impacts on soil” (Strang, 2015, p. 148).

Another form of agriculture’s contribution to water pollution is because much of modern industrialized farming relies on fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and manure (Strang, 2004, p. 42; Hughes, 2005, p. 146; Ahuja, 2014, p. 6). Unnecessary

use of “pesticides at intervals to kill pests that may not show up at all” increases “pollution by wasteful methods” (Hughes, 2005, p. 148). Moreover, “mass production” of the livestock industry “produce nitrogenous waste that in many cases flows into the rivers and the sea” (Hughes, 2005, p. 148). Industrial farming can also cause water pollution due to “salinization” and “excessive use of chemicals” (Berkun, 2010, p. 324) such as “herbicides and pesticides” as well as “fertilizers,” which can cause “a lack of oxygen in the water” (Strang, 2015, p. 149-150; Furon, 1963/1967, p. 106).

4.1.2 Water pollution and scarcity in Turkey

Water pollution has long been one of the most severe environmental problems that affected Mediterranean Turkey since “the Mediterranean Sea is a sink for the effluents of modern industry” (Hughes, 2005, p. 138, 146), in that the Mediterranean is “landlocked,” any pollution in the water “remain[s] within it and accumulate[s] over time” (Hughes, 2005, p. 138-139), hence the recent mucilage incident pertaining to exist since early in 2021 (Yazan, 2021). As mentioned above, the role of agricultural and industrial use has undeniable contributions to water scarcity and pollution, which is the same in Turkey (Ocak, Öğün, & Emsen, 2013, p. 262; Pegram, Conyngham, Aksoy, Dıvrak, & Öztok, 2014, p. 19). Unsustainable forms of irrigation systems used in agriculture continue to stress the waters in Turkey (Seyidov & Akçay, 2021, p. 34; Tapan, 2022, p. 311; Kılıç, 2008). Moreover, the effects of industries on water can be observed in the pollution in the Ergene River as a result of the wastes of companies discharging untreated wastewater, threatening the health of people and the land there (Akkoç, 2022; Ocak, 2018, p. 27). Pollution has become so concerning that most farmers in the area have switched from irrigated

farming to dryland farming, while no deterrent punishment is given to the responsible parties and no meaningful action is taken to prevent them from further polluting the river (Akkoç, 2022). As can be deduced in this case, in developing countries such as Turkey, the relevant units support pollution by not making the necessary arrangements or postponing the actions, which is why many industrial establishments in these countries do not feel any discomfort from discharging their wastes in a way that pollutes the waters (Kılıç, 2008, p. 171).

Furthermore, hydropower has been a popular resource in Turkey since the 1950s, and negative repercussions can be observed, such as "changes in sediment transport" due to "slowing down the river's velocity," resulting in "changes in the water's quality" (Berkun, 2010, p. 321). Apart from the effects on the soil and species living in the environment, projects like GAP mentioned in the previous chapter, pollution due to chemicals, "flooding of dam reservoirs," and so forth caused huge negativities in the water in Southeast Anatolia in Turkey (Berkun, 2010, p. 324). Such problems result from the anthropocentric view of resourcism that natural resources are renewable, justifying the exploitation for profit (Kılıç, 2008, p. 83). The same exploitation and water pollution are also relevant in the tourism industry, which has become popular in Turkey after World War II (Hughes, 2005, p. 141). The service sector, specifically those regarding leisure activities like tourism, also exhausts water resources due to high consumption and waste "by promoting large-scale consumption" (Destek, 2021, p. 2; Baoying & Yuanqing, 2007, p. 123). What is meant by that is that such touristic activities increase the demand for everything in touristic areas, not limited to but including the demand for water, in that the amount of water used in those areas increases in accordance with the number of people visiting these places.

When naming the causes of water scarcity and pollution as natural (e.g., climate change), agriculture, industrialization, and urbanization, a disassociation tends to occur in the minds of the people from the roots of the problem. It seems as if these problems were not anthropocentrically created but occurred on their own. In such a narrative, technology and modernity become the roots of all problems, the evil enemies that corrupt the natural world and future generations. Such alienization justifies the actions of the masterminds behind; those who *decide* to disregard the natural consequences of those actions, such as water pollution. After all, technology or cities do not exhaust water on their own; instead, how humans utilize all these resources causes these problems (Ökmen, 2003, p. 31; Uslu, 1993, p. 49).

4.2 Water footprint and virtual water

Such human effect on the environment is most apparent while discussing water footprint and virtual water. The term footprint was first coined by Wackernagel and Rees (1996) as "ecological footprint" in the 1990s, explained simply as people's impact on the environment in chains of supply and consumption, quickly gaining popularity with British Petroleum's campaign of "carbon footprint" among researchers and society in 2004 (Kaufman, 2020). Suddenly, the carbon footprint of everything a modern individual does daily, from driving to eating, has started to be calculated, as a result of which a lot of guilt and pressure has been put on the individuals by making them responsible for environmental issues like climate change (Kaufman, 2020). I will dwell on whether such responsibility is justified later. For now, it is essential to acknowledge how the term footprint, albeit with good intentions at the start, has been directed at the individual actions of the commons rather than the industries.

After the popularity of the carbon footprint campaign, many other footprint campaigns to blame the issues on society have surfaced, one of which is the water footprint campaign. However, to understand this, we must first discuss what virtual water refers to. Coined in around 1993, virtual water is used to describe the "water-food relationship" by John A. Allan (1998, p. 545), or, if put shortly, it is "the indirect water use" (Hoekstra, Chapagain, Aldaya, & Mekonnen, 2011, p. 1). Basically, virtual water is the water used and wasted in the production of commodities; in other words, "water embedded in commodities" (Allan, 1998, p. 545). While Allan (2003) states that he focused on virtual water in the production of agricultural commodities at first, he later acknowledged that this concept could be used to produce any other commodity (p. 107). The term "water footprint" emerged from this concept when Hoekstra and Hung (2002) used it to describe "the sum of domestic water use and net virtual water import" (p. 15). In other words, everything we eat, wear, use, and so forth has a water footprint in its production and transportation, adding up to the amount of water used by the person.

The water footprint is divided into three categories: blue, green, and grey. The blue water footprint is used for "the consumptive use of ground or surface water," the green water footprint calculates "the rainwater used in soil," and lastly, the grey water footprint is used to refer to "polluted wastewater" (Ercin & Hoekstra, 2014, p. 72; Strang, 2015, p. 163). Water footprint calculations focus on "measuring the water consumed in the whole supply chain from production to consumption" (Xu & Li, 2020, p. 13) since the direct consumption of freshwater, whether it is bottled or from a tap, is a small part of how much water an individual uses a day. To exemplify, about 140 and 34 liters of water are used to produce one cup of coffee and tea, respectively (Chapagain & Hoekstra, 2007, p. 109). A bowl of chips requires 23

liters of water to be produced (Yarının Suyu, 2022a), a cotton shirt requires 2700 liters (Yarının Suyu, 2021), 200 grams of red meat needs 3100 liters (Yarının Suyu, 2022b) and lastly, one small and PET bottled water requires 5.5 liters (TEMA, n.d.).

Such calculations of virtual water while finding out how much water a person uses throughout the day is vital for the accuracy of overall rates (Hoekstra et al., 2011, p. 13-14). For instance, according to World Health Organization (WHO), 25 liters a day suffice the direct water needs of one as the minimum limit, while the amount one uses is around 80 liters on average in the world (Eryar Ünlü, 2019). In contrast, a person living in Turkey usually uses around 216 liters of water for drinking and other uses; however, when virtual water is calculated within, including the indirect uses of water, that amount can go up to 5.416 liters (Pegram et al., 2014, p. 60-61). The stark difference between these numbers actualizes the water costs of living in today's world and Turkey. However, average water consumption rates include those who cannot find water to drink, which decreases the average rate, which is a discussion not within the scope of this paper. What this chapter focuses on is that "virtually all water sources on earth bear a human footprint" (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 3). In other words, this chapter argues that an anthropocentric approach to water, in the form of high rates of water consumption, waste, and pollution, is the root of water-related issues, which is why saving water in an anthropocentric setting is not the solution but the problem, as I will argue in the upcoming parts. To achieve this, I will discuss the roots of the problem and the steps taken to solve the issue.

4.3 Saving water in the anthropocene

Not only the use and management but also the conservation of water have been dependent on political and economic reasoning (Scaramelli, 2020) or anthropocentric

reasoning in general, as water has become a discursive element to be used to increase the sales of products or to enhance public relations. Here, another commercialization of water occurs, in addition to the actual privatization and commodification mentioned prior, in that various organizations and corporations have utilized a scarce element, water, into something they can take advantage of either in the form of money or reputation (Bakker, 2005, p. 548). Such can be observed in the steps taken in the world to address environmental issues, which will be mentioned in this part.

The 1960s marked the year when environmental problems, such as the exhaustion of not-so-renewable natural resources, started to be discussed and attempted to be solved (Ökmen, 2003, p. 16). United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, "was the first world conference to *make* [emphasis added] the environment a major issue" (United Nations, n.d.). This conference was significant in its emphasis on the globality of the problem (Ökmen, 2003, p. 20). Water has been included in the UN's discussions of environmental problems, which can recently be observed in their 2030 agenda for sustainable development, including goals such as improving "access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene" (United Nations-Water, 2022, p. 33), as well as "sustainable production and consumption" (United Nations-Water, 2022, p. 79).

Several corporations are present in the discussion of water scarcity and pollution, forming the World Water Council hosting the World Water Forum held every three years, first in 1997, in Morocco (World Water Forum, n.d.; Piper, 2014, p. 1-3). The World Water Council, one representative of which is Turkey, works "allegedly for the purpose of solving the world's water problems" (Piper, 2014, p. 1). The problem is that this is an "exclusive" entity deciding that water is a commodity that can and should be privatized "with the help of governments and institutions like

the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF)" (Piper, 2014, p. 3-6, 22). In other words, as Piper (2014) states: "Publicly, their goals are saving the planet and helping the poor," however, "the meetings are all about making the poor pay and raising water prices" (p. 25). This is problematic in that "applying monetary evaluation to nature is dangerous" since "monetary evaluation distracts people from the fact that the values that are at issue are not economic in the first place," which in this case is conserving water (Evernden, 2014, p. 11).

This is an on-point moment to recall Thames Water Executive Peter Spillet's remarks mentioned in the introduction that water should not be free, as was also pointed out in the World Water Forum in Kyoto in 2003 (World Water Forum, 2003). He argued this after the World "Bank's decision to mandate privatization in the 1990s," with "the idea that the "poor" must be educated about what they should pay for water" (Price, 2014, 24). One can observe in Spillet's remark that rather than saving water, there are neoliberal policies that are at stake, disguising themselves in the name of environmentalism. "The motto" in that message of understanding the value of water through pricing is "that raising water prices would lead people to conserve water" (Price, 2014, p. 25); however, in such a mindset, the value of water is understood by people like Spillet in its "growth potential" (Spillet in an interview with Carty, 2003). With a top-down approach and attitude, a hierarchy of power established in the relationship works for the industry's benefit instead of water.

What is achieved here, more than the conservation of water, is that by monetizing water, corporations gain financially through the crisis of water under the name of sustainable development or "natural capitalism," which aims at "obtaining the same amount of utility or work from a product or process while using less material and energy" (Hawken et al., 2000, p. 9; Rockstrom et al., 2014, p. 8).

Though a friendly solution on the surface, such a focus still presents an anthropocentric approach in that corporations engage in sustainable development solely to the extent that it is "good for business" (Munshi & Kurian, 2005, p. 518). Green and sustainable products have resulted from the increase in the number of people concerned about the environment as the industry started to answer the demand for such products (Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 504). However much there are remarks on saving water in such industrial societies, this does not stem from an approach that takes water, or nature in general, as something that needs to be saved in itself without considering the advantages or disadvantages to humans (Kökalan Çımrın, 2014, p. 1009). It is viewed as a resource for "economic development" while "minimizing environmental impacts," though there is not much effort into the latter (Rockstrom et al., 2014, p. 8).

Such anthropocentric reasoning is the main, if not the only, reason why there is a concern over water. Ecological problems are of concern to humans insofar as it presents a danger to humans (Kökalan Çımrın, 2014, p. 1009), and this danger can be in the form of both life or death and financial loss. Companies depend on sustainable development since their image as caring helps them survive and make profits in the twentieth century when environmentalism betters public relations (Munshi & Kurian, 2005, p. 513; Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 507, 525) since their "first and absolute mandate is to make money and enhance profits for their shareholders" (Munshi & Kurian, 2005, p. 514). When there is talk of development and profit, which is "the language of expectation of more," however, sustainability and conservation, "the language of balance and limits," seems unachievable (Illich, 1999, p. 15), which is why sustainable development is a juxtaposition of two contrasting ideas challenging to actualize in life.

4.4 Saving water in Turkey

Turkey is considered a water-stressed country, meaning it lacks sufficient usable, potable freshwater (Bilen, 2009, p. 75; Hakyemez, 2019, p. 11). According to the data taken from ISKI, as of March 14, 2023, only 35.3% of the dams in Turkey are filled with water (ISKI, n.d.). Lastly, according to the assessment report by the Turkish State Meteorological Service (2023), around 55-60 out of 81 cities have faced droughts with varying severities in 2022 (p. 17), with an overall 40% decrease in precipitation compared to normal rates (p. 14). To tackle such issues of water scarcity and pollution in Turkey, Harris and Işlar (2014) state that "with rising industrialization and growing environmental awareness of the 1980s," environmental concerns are acknowledged in Turkish law in that saving the environment is the responsibility of both the government and the individuals (p. 54). More recently, with the popularity of water footprint calculations, several municipalities, for example, started water footprint awareness campaigns. For instance, Küçükçekmece Municipality has a webpage explaining water footprint and what people can do to reduce their footprint (Küçükçekmece Belediyesi, n.d.). Similarly, Muğla Municipality conducted the Water Footprint and Clean Water Project (*Su Ayak Izi ve Temiz Su Projesi*), the aim of which is to raise awareness by explaining the problem of water footprint, making people aware of their water footprint as well as advising people to reduce their water consumption, as the head of the Department of Environmental Protection and Enforcement, Aylin Giray, states in an introductory seminar for the project (as cited in Muğla Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2015).

These campaigns regarding reducing the use and waste of water are not new, though. The past few decades have witnessed many public service advertisements,

mostly on television, that encourage Turkish citizens to decrease their water use, one of which shows an unattended tap leaking water, with tense music in the background (Uz-İş Su Armatürleri, 2014). At the end of the video, “Do not waste” is written in capital letters on a black background. There is also another video by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry that likens water to a nation, informs the viewer on how much water they waste through their daily activities, and at the end states, “Do not betray water!” in capital letters (Tarım TV, n.d.). Such is aimed to ignite patriotic feelings in the viewer to care enough about water to save. However, both these advertisements differ significantly from the campaigns today in that back then, as the examples show, the advertisements had a top-down directive and assertive tone to them. They almost ordered people what to do in a manner that left almost no agency to them. Today, on the other hand, water conservation campaigns focus more on raising awareness and encouraging people to decrease their water use while leaving space for people’s decisions, making suggestions rather than commanding actions, as will be explained shortly.

Today, the most popular campaign in Turkey regarding increasing the awareness of water footprint and the problem of water scarcity has been conducted by a detergent brand, Finish, of the company Reckitt with the campaign Yarının Suyu, starting in 2019. Their manifesto includes saving the waters in Turkey by rethinking the ways in which we use water and by using Finish Quantum to leave safe tomorrows for our children (Finish, n.d.). They have carried out several projects to achieve this aim, such as collaborating with famous actors, singers, and popular TV shows, as well as various creating social media campaigns and interactive events. For instance, they have shared the Finish water index on their website to raise awareness, which shows that Turkey’s water index was 85.2 in March 2023, less

than the ideal 100, which is why Turkey is a water-stressed country (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-c). The most crucial message in all these projects seems to be making people aware of how much water they are using and wasting daily, which, they claim, will solve the problem of water scarcity.

While these seem to be done with good intentions, I argue that it is a form of greenwashing, which is the term used to describe corporations that "use exaggerated, deceptive, or unsubstantiated claims of environmental benefits in order to improve their corporate image"[16] (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 2). Companies, firms, banks, corporations, and alike pick up an environmentalist appearance while their primary goal and question are an environmentalist reputation and making money over natural resources, such as water (Piper, 2014, p. 25). Reckitt, for instance, claims that they work for "a cleaner, healthier world" (Reckitt, 2022, p. 2) and have raised their brand recognition with Finish's campaign as caring for the environment. However, despite Reckitt's promises of reducing their water footprint in production, the statistics they share show there is, in fact, an increase in their product water footprint (Reckitt, 2022, p. 61). Moreover, Reckitt also states that "businesses can only succeed in the long term if they're aware of the impact they have on people and the planet" (2022, p. 2), which clearly reveals the priority of the company: a successful business rather than the protection of the environment. Such contradictions between the claims and actions of the company are examples of the greenwashing behind their campaigns.

[16] There is also bluewashing, which is similar to greenwashing except that bluewashing is used to "define the attempts of improving the corporations' reputation through the association with the UN" principles (Viana Alzola, 2017, p. 59; Sailer et al. 2022, p. 4). The company Reckitt, of which Finish is a brand, notes that they are in partnership with the UN and act in support of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (2022, p. 2, 8, 63), which is why Reckitt's, and indirectly Finish's, arguments and goals can be analyzed within the scope of bluewashing. However, since Finish's campaign does not necessarily emphasize UN principles, since the focus of this paper is on this specific campaign, and since this dissertation is ultimately about the relationship between the brand and people instead of between brands or companies and the UN, the term bluewashing is left out from this dissertation.

To make their case, most companies engaging in greenwashing, including Finish, use green to make people face what they are saving or destroying, playing on the emotions of the audience (Tapan, 2022, p. 331). Though using lots of blue in their advertisements, since they are trying to "save Turkey's waters," even Finish uses green imagery to associate themselves with environmentalism (Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 527). For instance, in their commercial *Söz Ver* (Promise), they show brown soccer fields that boys play at, deprived of the green since there is no water, which changes at the end of the film when people save water by not rinsing their dishes (Türkiye'nin Reklamları, 2019). In Finish's case, the company presents an environmentally aware appearance while advertising its detergents, gaining public approval for raising awareness of water scarcity. They "mislead" the individuals into believing that they are causing the water crisis (Tapan, 2022, p. 310) and put the duty of saving water on the individuals, the consumers of different detergents and water. All of these, I will argue in this chapter, is possible due to the hybrid nature of water that brings about different meanings in various network relationships it creates, of which greenwashing campaigns make use to attract the public's attention.

In this part of the dissertation, we will discuss how Finish's campaign Yarının Suyu is greenwashing by using CDA, focusing on the campaign's framing as explained by Huckin (1997) and Budinsky and Bryant (2013), as well as on the methods they use in the process, which are categorized and named as the "sins of greenwashing" by TerraChoice (2007). Framing constitutes what the campaign includes or excludes from its framework while telling a story, directing the attention of its viewers to a desired outcome (Huckin, 1997, p. 82). In Finish's case, this works for the accusation of the individuals for their water use with the overall purpose of reducing household water footprint. Additionally, the seven sins of greenwashing by

TerraChoice dwell on the misleading tactics of greenwashing companies, composed of the sins of “hidden trade-off,” “no-proof,” “vagueness,” “irrelevance,” “lesser of the two evils,” “fibbing,” and “worshipping false labels” (2010). Related to the scope of this paper, Finish’s campaign will be analyzed using some of the sins explained by TerraChoice (2007), mainly focusing on the following three: the “sin of hidden trade-off,” which is relevant to companies claiming to be good for the environment in some instances, disregarding the other ways they are harmful (p. 2), “sin of vagueness,” or “every claim that is so poorly defined or broad that its real meaning is likely to be misunderstood by the intended consumer” (p. 3) and “sin of fibbing,” “making environmental claims that are simply false” (p. 4).

4.4.1 Framing

In the process of guilting people, Finish makes use of several techniques, one of which is “framing” as well as “foregrounding” and “backgrounding” (i.e., what is included and “emphasized” as well as excluded and “marginalized”) (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 212; Huckin, 1997, p. 82). Firstly, like the municipalities, they have a webpage explaining the notion of water footprint, and, in addition, a water footprint calculator on their website, asking the participants questions such as how much meat they eat in a week, how many cups of coffee they drink daily, how long their showers are, and if they rinse their dishes before putting them in the dishwasher (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-e). As one can observe, water footprint is directly associated with individual water use, while the resulting water footprint is affected by the supply of the products, which increases individual footprint. In other words, the contribution of the production sector is excluded from the framework to the extent that, on the surface, the industry does not come off as guilty for having a high-water footprint but

the individuals for purchasing and consuming such products. Consequently, after one finds out how much their water footprint is or signs into their website, they get an e-mail urging them to become a Water Hero with a 21-day challenge of reducing their water footprint.

With such framing and use of the phrase Water Hero, Finish's campaign successfully restricts the guilt within the individual. Following the guides on the Yarının Suyu website, without even realizing it, most are deceived into the presupposition that water scarcity has always resulted from household waste since they are presented solely with household water use in the campaign. The word choice of the Water Hero presents individuals as the protectors of the water. By naming people as saviors, this campaign creates the illusion that individuals are the only ones accountable for, and thus the only redeemers of, the water scarcity issue, disregarding any other contributor. Resulting from neoliberal governmentality, this "externalization" "to responsibilize individuals for self-governance" "originally emerged so as to encourage her/him in developing the proposed behavioral changes," which creates rational individuals that are responsible for their own lives, contributing to the guilt that comes when one fails to act in the preferred way (Aykan & Güvenç-Salgırlı, 2015, p. 74, 83). This, as mentioned, differs from the advertisements in the past in that in this campaign, people are made to believe that they are active actors in this fight, encouraged to take action rather than ordered.

The report by Reckitt states the reason for the emphasis on individual use is that direct consumer use of water makes up 94% of their water footprint, whereas raw materials, manufacturing, and packaging make up 6% of the total use (2022, p. 62). Though domestic use comes off as the responsible party according to these statistics, there is misdirection in the presentation of this information. To clarify, the

water footprint of the company, or the brand, does not include the users' rates since they use it after the company's part in the process is done, or as Hoekstra (2020) points out: "the footprint of a company consists of direct (operational) and indirect (supply-chain) components" (p. 5). In other words, the inclusion of the people's water use only redirects and disguises the attention from the actual water footprint of the company.

Moreover, even if we take the company trying to reduce the use of water not under their responsibility as positive behavior, the information on the water use of production, materials, packaging, and retailing is not advertised to the public but rather is only stated in a report by the company Reckitt rather than Finish's campaign, which is why people tend to take the responsibility on themselves unless they find out which company Finish is the brand of and look at the report and find out about industrial use and waste of water. Otherwise, agricultural, and industrial uses of water are hardly ever included in the framework of Finish's campaign, except for occasional posts on reducing the consumption of high-water-footprint products such as meat and coffee, despite the reports that the most significant loss in Turkey's water results from the conventional irrigation systems (Hakyemez, 2019, p. 12).

In this case, if the agricultural and industrial contributions to the current water problem are more than the households, and environmental problems primarily arise in production rather than consumption (Ökmen, 2003, p. 21; Hoekstra, 2020, p. 31; Sojamoa, Keulerts, Warner, & Allan, 2012, p. 171; Xu & Li, 2020, p. 9-10), why are people assigned the duty of saving waters by reducing their water use?. In relation to this, Hoekstra (2020) states:

> The traditional view on issues of water overexploitation and pollution is that the farmers, industries, and municipalities are to be held accountable because in all those places where aquifers are depleted, rivers run dry or water bodies are polluted, it is because farmers, industries or municipalities abstract too

> much water, put too many chemicals on the field or discharge polluted effluents. Obviously, if this has to change, who else other than the farmers, industries and municipalities should act? Usually, state, or national governments are recognized as key players as well. Governments must regulate it all properly – through water abstraction licenses, effluent standards and permits, proper water pricing or whatever – so that water users receive proper incentives and clear boundary conditions. (p. 30)

Thus, better solutions than restricting household use can be macro-ones rather than micro (Tapan, 2022, p. 331). For instance, industries can "reuse" the same water with a system that cleans the used water, hence do not waste or overuse it (Hoekstra et al., 2011, p. 100; Hawken et al., 2000, p. 227; Cisneros, 2014; United Nations-Water, 2021, p. 17-19), and add a small amount each year to make up for the water lost to evaporation, as Finish has also shown in one of their videos with National Geographic about how Cape Town saved its water (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-b). Similarly, drawing from their fieldwork in the US, Hawken et al. (2000) state that due to the farmers' education on water conservation techniques in the research area, "a tenth to a fifth of farmer's water, and sometimes twice that amount," was saved (p. 218) [17]. They argue that changes in the irrigation system, such as subsurface drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation, can save enough water to tackle the scarcity issue (2000, p. 218-219). In other words, allocating efficient irrigation techniques is essential to tackle water scarcity, which is the most significant cause of the problem in the first place (Hakyemez, 2005, p. 12, 16). When "proper local standards" are implemented and "production processes" operated "within the boundaries of what is sustainable," consumers would easily be reducing their footprint without even trying, as the

[17] Briefly, they conclude that education can help reduce agriculture's share in the water footprint of the world (Hawken et al., 2000, p. 218). While this is true to some extent, educating the public, farmers, and so forth is not a feasible option in some countries, especially those that lack a good economy that enables their farmers to decrease their water use by incorporating costly technologies into their farming methods. Turkey is one such example. It is simply too expensive for most farmers in Turkey to purchase new irrigation systems since they have other cheaper alternatives at hand, mainly because they need a satisfying income even with the system and techniques still need to be changed. Rather than education, such people getting support from the government or companies through donations would be a better way of approaching the issue than leaving people to be sustainable by themselves.

consumption of unsustainable products is the main reason why individual footprint is high (Hoekstra, 2020, p. 31)[18]. The absence of these remarks is why Finish's campaign is a form of greenwashing, in that "they shirk responsibility by claiming that it is the consumer's responsibility to make the right purchase decisions" (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 5).

Still, let us assume for a moment that individual consumption of water is the sole reason for water scarcity since those who blame individual use argue that household water consumption is argued to be 40 times higher in number than in the 1700s due to the increase in both the population and the usage rate per person (Kılıç, 2008, p. 173); however, with high rates of industrialization and knowledge of hygiene, people must use more water than the 1700s. The coronavirus pandemic alone has drastically increased people's use of water while washing their hands for at least twenty seconds after each encounter with an outside item, most of which is done while the water is still running (Üstün Odabaşı, 2022, p. 595). Lastly, there is also a discrepancy between the recommendations people are given by different campaigns in that while one advises the reduction of water use for environmental reasons, another promotes increased water consumption for hygiene (Brennan & Binney, 2008, p. 266). All these do not directly result in individuals' choice to use more water, but rather these are the results of living in a modern society in that there is no other option for individuals to choose from (Kaufman, 2020). For instance, provided that the production of certain items did not cost so much water, the

[18] Other ways of solving the water crisis exist in literature; however, they are excluded from this dissertation since a detailed analysis of the solutions does not correspond with the scope of the main question of this thesis: the reasons for blaming individual consumption. For further research on other solutions to the water crisis, please refer to the following examples: Sharifa, Baris-Tuzemen, Uzuner, Ozturke, & Sinha. 2020; Berk et al. 1980; Holling et al., 2000; Barlow, 2010; Camkin, & Neto, 2016; Muthu, 2019; Grant, 2016.

consumers' water footprint would not be as high either; however, with the system unchanged, the contribution individuals can make is limited at best, if any.

Furthermore, even if individuals were the leading causes of water scarcity, more critical measures need to be taken before not rinsing, despite Finish's statements, such as saying change should start in the kitchen (Finish Türkiye, 2021c). For instance, 200 grams of red meat need 3100 liters of water to be produced (Yarının Suyu, 2022b), which is why reducing one's meat intake significantly decreases one's water footprint so much more than drinking less coffee a day, hence is more sustainable not only in our water use but also for the environment in general due to the carbon dioxide released while producing meat (Singer, 2002, p. 167-169). Another and still more sustainable example is the production of water bottles. To produce one 0.5 ml standard bottle of water, 5.5 liters of water is used, more than five times the amount that is consumed by the individual. Considering this added to the PET's hazards to people's health and the environment (e.g., the use of petroleum in its making) (Gleick, 2010, p. 92), a more sustainable way of living would be to stop using bottled water than the pieces of advice of Finish, such as showering less. Finish's insistence on not rinsing, reducing one's coffee consumption, and so forth (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-f), while all these more effective ways of saving water exist, are all further proof of the greenwashing Finish advertisements make use of. They generally focus on one part of the actions one can take, small and uncontroversial ones, that will not receive backlash from society and harm their image.

The solutions mentioned in the previous paragraph, however, are not the ideal ones since they still put the responsibility to act on individuals while "voluntary conservation is [almost] impossible to motivate" in most cases (Syme, Nancarrow, & Seligman, 2000, p. 540). Indeed, informational campaigns like Finish's Yarının Suyu

usually increase society's awareness, which happened with Finish as well, “but not necessarily in behavior change” (Steg, Van Den Berg, & De Groot, 2013, p. 230). Though aware of the problem, most of the population is still found not to restrict their water use[19] (Steg et al., 2013, p. 230), or even if they do, it is temporary (Syme et al., 2000, p. 540). This is why informational campaigns are called “soft measures” (Steg et al., 2013, p. 224), the effects of which are still questionable (Hamilton, 1985, p. 317). Therefore, rather than aiming to “induce voluntary action” (Hamilton, 1985, p. 317), “structural strategies” should be “aimed at changing the circumstances in which behavioral decisions are made” so that change is not dependent upon individual actions (Steg et al., 2013, p. 224). The most effective solution for water scarcity, for instance, can be the supply of sustainable alternatives to every individual by the governments, and campaigns like Yarının Suyu could lead the way (Ökmen, 2003, p. 47-51; Syme et al., 2000, p. 541). If every citizen, for instance, were provided with sustainable items, and if campaigns were directed towards such major steps, individuals would not have to go out of their way to live a sustainable life, as aforementioned.

Another misdirection in framing the campaign is also visible in the presentation of the world water use averages. In a documentary called 25 Liters which they produced, collaborating with National Geographic, it is argued that the average global water footprint per person is 80 liters a day while the average in Turkey per person is 190 liters a day, which is well above the world average (National Geographic Turkiye, 2019; Eryar Ünlü, 2019), which seems to be the

[19] For instance, Howard and Butler (2004) state that one of the “turn it off” campaigns concluded “that although 91% were aware of the need to save water, only 43% made a conscious effort to do so in their daily activities” (p. 41). They argue that this is because of “a lack of national profile for the issue, distrust of private water companies and a feeling of “helplessness,” i.e., my individual action won’t make any difference” (p. 44).

reasoning behind their claims on reducing household use would save water. Such comparison, though, is not justified since the world average is unreliable data as it is a “statistical norm” (Lock & Nguyen, 2010, p. 32), in that it includes those who live in highly water-stressed areas that cannot find water to drink, such as those residing in Africa. Including those in calculations significantly decreases the world average, resulting in 80 liters a day, which is not mentioned in the data presented in the campaign. Even then, the global average water footprint is made to look extreme compared to the 25 liters argued to be enough for each individual daily (National Geographic Turkiye, 2019). This is another misdirection and accusation, in that 25 liters a day does not include the virtual water we use through our consumptions, contrary to the 80 and 190 liters mentioned before. Through such misguidance of information and lack of honesty, individuals are made to feel worse about their habits, further emphasizing their part in water scarcity.

4.4.2 Sins of fibbing and vagueness

If there are such various ways in which water scarcity can be prevented, why do campaigns like this focus on the individual? This is an example of the sin of fibbing or lying in common terminology (TerraChoice, 2010) because if the campaigns focused on the agricultural or industrial uses of water, they would be the ones to change how they treat water, which would not help them with profits but would rather hurt their economy since they would have to change entire systems that depend highly on water use and pollution (Hoekstra, 2020, p. 232). This is why corporate environmentalism, green capitalism, or sustainable development works only to the extent that environmental protection does not prevent economic development, which is the “precondition” to environmental discussions (Harris &

Işlar, 2014, p. 54). “Placing agency in the hands of individuals rather than corporations,” guilting people into believing that they are the causes and the solutions to the water problem, “serves to further advance the neoliberal agenda by keeping us thinking about ourselves as individuals and consumers rather than as citizens” (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 209).

For instance, the first step of saving water and reducing our water footprint, according to Finish’s 21-day challenge on one’s profile page on the Yarının Suyu website, is to put a waterdrop emoji on our social media accounts next to our names, something vague on how it saves water which shows the sin of vagueness. The second day’s step is to follow Yarının Suyu Instagram account, the third is to load the dishwasher without rinsing first and to use Finish Quantum to wash them, and the fourth is to watch a documentary by Finish. The list goes on with other steps combining a few things that can be done to reduce one’s water footprint and others advertising Finish and its products. It seems from these steps that Finish does more to advertise its environmentalist image than to raise awareness about water scarcity, let alone solve it. As Viana Alzola (2017) puts it, “business participants take low-cost steps to convey the impression that they are fulfilling their obligations” of environmental awareness (p. 61) when building an environmentalist reputation is the primary concern (Macellari, Yuriev, Testa, & Boiral, 2021, p. 7).

Finish’s campaign also emphasizes the word donation, which is another sin of vagueness in greenwashing. They claim that each time people tap the buttons on the screen in relation to Finish’s social media campaign, listen to Finish’s song on YouTube, promise not to rinse, participate in a #NoWaterChallenge on TikTok in which people upload videos of themselves in a dystopia where there is no water left, and so forth, people are made to believe that Finish donates 57 liters of water to the

Kuyucuk Lake on behalf of those participants (Finish Türkiye, 2021a, 2021b; Yarının Suyu, n.d.-d) as if large corporations like Finish do not waste or pollute water in the production process. Finish reports that the *Yarının Suyu* campaign has successfully led 6 million people to reduce their water use and saved 25 million liters of water in three years (Finish Türkiye, 2022), also states that Finish donated 1.000.000 liters of water to Kuyucuk Lake with the #NoWaterChallenge (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-a) the numbers of all of which are astounding. However, as Macellari et al. (2021) state, "reporting companies tend to disclose more positive pieces of information than negative ones" (p. 2). Moreover, donating water is a successful misdirection with its vagueness because it positions water as something that can be donated like money (i.e., a commodity) and not taken from nature (i.e., underground water brought to the surface via pumps). Not even Finish with large assets can create water from nothing, which seems to be what they want people to think since there is no official information on how they provide water to the dried-up lakes, committing the sin of no-proof (TerraChoice, 2007, p. 3). In the comment section of one of their Facebook posts, some of the audiences of the commercial have questioned this idea of donating water and its possibility, criticizing Finish with greenwashing (Tapan, 2022, p. 310).

Briefly, the goal of such private companies like Finish seems to be "the encouragement of responsible resource exploitation and the discouragement of actions which jeopardize the life-sustaining function of the earth" (Evernden, 1985, p. 35). Much as pointing to other water-related sustainable actions at home, Finish's campaigns mainly focus on not rinsing the dishes prior to putting them in the dishwasher, which, not coincidentally, happens to be the area where they can raise their profits. They claim that by rinsing, we waste as much water as there is in a lake

(Havas Istanbul, 2020), and by not rinsing, one can save 57 liters of water (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-d), which is extremely specific to be true for everyone and unclear (Tapan, 2022, p. 331). Such vagueness of the method and the opposite numeration creates more question marks in their liability and accuracy in different conditions. Still, such specific numbers are included in the campaign because they work to Finish's advantage as a part of advertisement techniques. Such statistics help people comprehend how much water they waste and hurt the environment, more so than vague phrases like a lot of water. Overall, Finish seems to have figured out where to play the three monkeys and stay silent and where to be scientists relying on numbers.

Another slogan for the campaign is: why do we need to rinse when we have Finish Quantum? (Finish Türkiye, 2019d). Such a statement is good marketing, indicating that not rinsing only works when one uses the Finish product, which directly associates the detergent with environmental actions since "functional positioning strategies create positive brand associations by communicating environmentally friendly attributes of a product" (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 3). Finish's focusing too much on rinsing is intentional: had they focused on closing the tap while brushing, they would not have succeeded in associating acting environmentally friendly with using Finish Quantum. They would not be awarded the 14th Felis Award and a WARC Award for their advertising success (Seyidov & Akçay, 2021; Uçar, 2022), and they certainly would not be able to raise the sales of their expensive dishwasher tablets (Uçar, 2022). One of the leading indicators why Finish's campaign is greenwashing is that they do not seem to be sincere in their environmentalism in that their goals are stated to be increasing both the loyalty of the consumers to the brand and the brand's market share via touching people's emotions (Interactive Advertising Bureau Türkiye, n.d.).

Some might claim that whatever the motive or the means, the advertisements for green products help raise awareness and lead people to purchase environmentally friendly products (e.g., Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 508), and some others might believe that individual action really makes a difference (e.g., Gardner & Stern, 2002). While I agree that individuals can contribute to solutions, such arguments do not consider those who cannot steadily buy said products. Not everyone has the means to afford expensive Finish Quantum dishwasher tablets that are advertised to work perfectly even on dry stains (Finish Türkiye, 2022), let alone new dishwashers that clean effectively. Advocating for sustainability while charging higher prices, as Sailer et al. (2022) argue in relation to the sustainable and expensive textile industry, "can be described as a paradox" (p. 6). The Finish Quantum, the advertised product that works without rinsing, is more expensive than other tablets, which is why not all segments of society can afford them, and thus the goal of saving water collectively seems unlikely. Still, Finish presents people from the poorer segments of society as users of the product in their advertisements, which might indicate that their target audience is the poorer segments. It is as if the responsibility is burdened on the poor to pay that extra money to save the waters though "the footprint of the globalized rich is much bigger than that of the localized poor" (Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 214). When this is the case, increasing awareness while targeting the wrong classes does little to "transform the practices of those most responsible" (Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 214).

4.4.3 The sin of the hidden trade-off

As mentioned, a good tactic of greenwashing that Finish includes is "the ultimate form of backgrounding," as explained by Huckin (1997): "omission," intentionally

leaving certain information or words out (p. 82), which serves “to distract the reader” from the concealed truths that might make them appear insincere (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 212). For instance, as an industrial detergent company that contributes to the waste and pollution in the waters, Finish likely does more harm to nature than good since there is no transparency in their supply chain (Hoekstra, 2020, p. 236). This is where the sin of the hidden trade-off takes place, the hidden destructions to the environment by companies promoting an environmentally friendly product or appearance (TerraChoice, 2007, p. 2). Finish’s campaigns make the products seem to be good for the future of water as they are advertised to help people use less water by not pre-rinsing; however, the products themselves are not informed, and not even advertised, to be environmentally friendly while it is known through research that detergents are one of the main polluters of water (Strang, 2015, p. 152; Furon, 1967/1963, p. 108, Ahuja, 2014, p. 6). To exemplify, the 1960s witnessed a battle of detergent companies “over who had the longest-lasting suds, and the waterways lost” (Outwater, 1996, p. 155). By their very nature, non-green detergents contain chemicals that are not dissolved easily; hence, they pollute the waters and harm the quality of soils. Thus, much as and even if one can reduce their water footprint using Finish products and not rinsing, they harm the environment in other ways, which is the hidden trade-off of Finish’s campaign.

This is also an interesting point because Finish’s saving water campaign solely focuses on water scarcity through human consumption, while water pollution is as much a serious threat as scarcity in the global water issue. As mentioned, Finish does not have green products itself since to call a product sustainable, it and its production must cause no harm to the environment; however, Finish does not mention the ingredients of their products as green (Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 519).

Had they been sincere in their saving the water claims, they could make their products more sustainable or at least acknowledge the problem and promise to do so, the absence of which indicates the greenwashing behind the actions. Granted, from a non-capitalist perspective, these would not be enough even if they made them since "people can make their own cleaners from household ingredients (e.g., baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice)," which would be significantly less harmful to the environment (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 214), yet expecting statements as such from a detergent brand existing in a capitalist system would be unrealistic.

Coming back to the subject of burdening the individuals, if Finish did not focus on individual consumption and sustainability, they would also have to explain why they are still testing their products on animals, for which they have received backlash in the comments of their Yarının Suyu campaign posts (Tapan, 2022, p. 319, 325; Tanrıverdi, 2021), while also using flamingos as the mascot for their campaign, which shows up on all their social media accounts and Yarının Suyu webpage. Greenwashing relies on deception as its main component, which Finish successfully carries out by including flamingos and other birds as creatures that need people to save by not rinsing their dishes, while Finish harms animals directly in their experiments of the same detergent products that they advise people to use to save the birds (Tanrıverdi, 2021). This is another hidden trade-off that Finish chooses to conceal in the shadows of the benefits of their products for the waters.

4.4.4 The sin of manipulation

Besides the seven sins of greenwashing TerraChoice (2010) identifies, I believe there is an eighth sin, which can be called the sin of manipulation, which can be analyzed with the story of the aforementioned flamingo. In that specific advertisement with the

flamingo, a little baby flamingo called Tuzlu (Salty) tells the audience that its home Lake Tuz is drying out, which is why they must migrate to other lakes (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-g). In the story, the little flamingo does not accept the fate of having to move due to the drought and informs the neighborhoods that they need to reduce their water consumption with a little boy named Bulut (Cloud). The audience of the Bulut and Tuzlu's save water campaign comprises the lower-class villagers close to Lake Tuz, as understood in the story. In the end, by people reducing their water use, the lake is saved, and birds return to their homes. At the end of the story, it says on the screen: Now that you know the *true* [emphasis added] story of Tuzlu, share this to support it.

Using the word "true" story of the flamingo is ironically intentional since there is clearly no way a talking baby flamingo goes on a quest to save a lake by raising the villagers' awareness. Choosing a baby flamingo instead of an adult one is also not random but an advertising technique since it helps the campaign manipulate the audience, especially the parents, into sympathizing with it, wanting to save the animal they unconsciously resemble their children. Using Sara Ahmed's conceptualization of "affect" and emotions (2014), in the campaign, the "suffering" and "pain" of a child and the flamingo put the audience "into a position of charitable compassion" (p. 192). This is achieved by giving the flamingo personality traits like being afraid of the destruction of its habitat, sad in the face of a loss, and innocent of the guilt since they are not the cause. Through the personification of a little flamingo with apparent similarities to human babies, Finish tells the story of future generations that will be affected by people's recklessness with water. In this case, people become both the causes and the saviors of the water scarcity issue, creating a "culture of compensation" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 32), while the flamingo becomes the object of

people's affection as an embodied version of their own children. "That child could be mine" is the thought that is brought up in people's minds, and their "pain is what brings us closer to the others" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 192). This is also the advent of the aforementioned anthropocentric mentality in that personification and resemblance to humans are required for people to sympathize and care for animals, water, and everything else in nature. Put differently, such a view and actions "privilege human life," denying "the intrinsic worth and moral considerability of plants, animals, mountains, or ecosystems" (Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 205).

Using little boys, girls, and a baby flamingo is a strategic choice also because it encourages people to think about future generations, which the Finish advertisers are aware of and verbalize as much as they can (Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 527). In a video for WARC Awards for Effectiveness, which Finish won, they explain how Finish took a massive step towards preventing the drought threat in Turkey by creating a documentary with National Geographic, in which they "spoke to them through their future victims: their children" (Uçar, 2022). In one briefing video of their actions so far, a woman vocalizes that they have called people out with the voice of someone to whom they cannot turn a blind eye: their children (Havas Istanbul, 2020). In other commercials that are advertised on TV and YouTube, children are closing the taps while their parents are rinsing the dishes and wasting water with hashtags like *#benimmirasımsu* (#mylegacyiswater) (Finish Türkiye, 2019c). Including vulnerable children and animals that cannot save themselves as the primary receivers of the threat of water scarcity and openly referring to them as victims, the aforementioned hero imagery is strengthened, as a result of which people tend to save water for vulnerable others and become heroes. Such "emphasis on future generations" is meant to indicate that people "cannot use up critical resources,

overwhelm sinks, or despoil land if this undermines the ability of our progeny to meet their needs (Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 214).

These are also achieved with the same "affect" mentioned above if we take Ahmed's conceptualization, which suggests that "affect" is something involuntary, evoked in an encounter with other elements, and "leaves its mark" in that impression (2014, p. 6). As including future generations makes people realize the actual "victims" of their crimes (e.g., not reducing their water footprint) by showing them their pain in the commercials, the audience is obligated to respond to their pain, which "involves being open to being affected by that which one cannot know or feel" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 30). At this point, the future generations are presented as the object of the audience's "love" by wanting to relieve them of their pain. In other words, the "pain" the future generations feel shows "the sociality or the 'contingent attachment' of pain" (Ahmed, 2014, p. 30). A "commodification of suffering" exists through this sociality of pain (Ahmed, 2014, p. 32). Through evoking "affective" reactions to the pain of future generations, the campaign creates an audience that is "reactive rather than active, dependent rather than autonomous" in that they go with the characterization laid upon by the campaign as heroes (Ahmed, 2014, p. 3). Finish's campaign directly addresses the audience: "If you do not start saving up today, you will not have water to save tomorrow!" hoping for a reaction from them to avoid rinsing the dishes and use Finish Quantum instead (Yarının Suyu, 2019). They ask, "Who wants to be a Water Hero?" as if anyone would answer with a no and as if there was a choice (Yarının Suyu, 2022c). As understood by the campaign, such heroism comes with purchasing the commodity, the Finish Quantum, due to associating it "with qualities not inherent in the products themselves, such as the ability to enact social change" (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 215).

They evoke such associations of heroism with positive emotions in the face of pain through elements of dying. A correlation of "dryness or drought with aging and death" (Strang, 2004, p. 69) is visible in most of the visuals for the campaign, where the dried lake is juxtaposed with the liveliness of children or the green and blue environment of the future that comes with individual effort. For instance, in one of the commercials starring Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, he recalls the good old times when he was a child, and there was water in the lake, juxtaposed with his adulthood when there is no water when the young version tries to jump on the lake, there is brown ground as a consequence of the waste of water in the kitchens, as understood from the commercial (Finish Türkiye, 2021c). This imagery transforms into beautiful greenery, and the bluest blue water to which laughing children jump as people close their taps and put Finish Quantum in the dishwasher filled with un-rinsed dishes. Such "emotional strategies" of presenting drought with unhappiness and a better environment, saved through using Finish, "are used to evoke pleasant feelings in order to create positive associations with the brand" (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 3). As a result, when the brand is associated with environmentally friendly actions, they make the people buying and using the detergents from that brand think of themselves as helping the environment.

To reach their audience, they have cooperated with three popular TV series and their actors in the commercials, claiming to raise awareness while, more importantly, increasing their media appearance. Using villagers or lower-middle-class citizens, especially women, as the intended audience, they usually include handsome and beloved male actors and singers in their advertisements, such as Kıvanç Tatlıtuğ, Mert Fırat, Gökhan Özoğuz, and Taner Ölmez, attracting attention to their message since "credible celebrities -and even non-credible but attractive

celebrities- have a positive impact on the credibility of the green claims" (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 4). In such videos, the famous male persona looks upset at the waters lost each day, lakes disappearing, and so forth, and explains how there is not enough water and how not to waste the ones we have, while non-famous women are generally at the kitchens at home, wasting water during rinsing the dishes (Finish Türkiye, 2021c). The men shown as the educators of the crowd and the women as the receivers of such messages exemplify the "marketing strategy aimed at females that reinforces stereotypical gender ideologies by placing women in domestic roles such as cooking and cleaning" (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 216) as well as addressing women the leading causes of water scarcity. Their placement as caregivers at home further plays on the emotions associated with motherhood, protecting their children's future, which indicates "women's oppression in western culture" characterized by their association with emotion, the body, and nature (Gaard, 2001, p. 159).

In their defense, though ironically, Finish has published two commercials for International Women's Day where men are in the kitchens instead of women with the hashtag *#mutfaktabirlikte* (#inthekitchentogether) (Finish Türkiye, 2019a; Finish Türkiye, 2019b). They have also cooperated with the popular morning show of Müge Anlı, whose audience is mostly women, with an added section to the program called *Müge Anlı'yla Gücümüz Yeter* (We Have Enough Strength) (Finish Türkiye, 2020a, 2020b), reinforcing women's power. In that part of the show, the story of a lower-class, uneducated, crying woman, mostly with a hijab, and her entrepreneurial dream are told, after which Müge Anlı supports those women in their dream on condition that they promise not to pre-rinse their dishes for our children (Finish Türkiye, 2020a). The adverts end with women achieving their goals and becoming strengthened and crying happy tears while Anlı looks at the screen, saying: Let the

dishwashers do their job while we step out of our kitchens and chase our dreams, showing the Finish logo on the screen. Such narrative, however, “assumes that within every woman there are entrepreneurial qualities” (Hamilton, 2015, p. 8), reached solely through letting Finish deal with the dishes as women walk out of the kitchens where they have always been prior to Finish. This positioning of women and the environment strengthens and “reside[s] under a powerful myth of societal and environmental change via the corporate entity” (Hamilton, 2015, p. 68).

4.5 Concluding remarks

The modern world is facing the challenge of water scarcity and pollution, which is highly visible in the daily lives of individuals. They encounter it in the rising food prices due to the lack of rain, in the rise of waste in rivers and lakes, in the migration of birds from the dried-up lakes, in the death of the fish that could not survive in polluted waters, and many more instances that will be too long to name one by one. Such changes, however, “are not evenly distributed in the lived environment” in that “people experience climatic changes in different ways, emotionally and socially” (Hastrup & Rubow, 2014, p. 92). For instance, a person living in a developed country that is not water-stressed does not come across discussions on water scarcity as much as one residing in a water-stressed area, as in the case of Cape Town, which has only temporarily recovered from highly threatening water scarcity and still discusses and acts on ways to preserve their waters (Yarının Suyu, n.d.-b).

Such experiences have made more people concerned with the environment and its protection. Environmental advocacy has increased, which resulted in global acknowledgment of the issue publicly. The first step was to identify the issue. To understand how much water is used and wasted, the concept of virtual water has been

allocated, calculating the water used in producing goods, which started with the "agricultural commodities," though it can be "expanded into non-agricultural" ones (Allan, 2003, p. 106). The virtual water cost of a product is then added to the water footprint of those who use those products, resulting in a somewhat realistic one's total water use. Simultaneously, various causes of water scarcity and pollution are identified, such as climate change, the agricultural sector, the industrial sector, urbanization, population growth, and household use, as detailed in this chapter. The common variable in all the listed causes, as I have argued, is the human, or, to put it differently, the anthropocentric approach to water and, more broadly, to the environment (Brugnach & Ingram, 2012, p. 49). Humanity's recklessness with water surfaced as factories discharged their waste into waters, agricultural and industrial use has increased in unsustainable amounts, and the urbanized and increasing population has used up more water each year than nature could compensate for. Unfortunately, it took a long time for humans to realize that we have exhausted available water resources as we have been too occupied with the anthropocentric, let-them-use-it state of mind.

As neoliberal and capitalist discourses have become dominant, we have started to "think and live as individuals, rather than as a collective," which "alienates us from other human beings, as well as from nature" (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 210). Accordingly, I have argued that such individuality has become the norm so much that gaining profit at the cost of the environment has not been viewed as destructive and selfish but as intelligent moves for the success of businesses. Such prioritization of financial gain is also apparent in the proposed solutions to the environmental water crisis, surfacing in the form of sustainable development, where the main goal is to reduce the amount of harm caused to the environment while not

compromising on economic gain since being known as caring for the environment is way more sympathetic than as an evil corporation. This, however, is not sustainable in practice since most had “very limited success” (Syme et al., 2000, p. 572), contrary to what the name attributes, but rather existed in the form of greenwashing where corporations take up an environmentalist appearance while promoting “unsustainable sales” “in order to enjoy the financial benefits” (Sailer et al., 2022, p. 12, 18). In other words, they only appear to care for the environment while nothing changes in practice since transforming their production process would be costly, resulting in decreased profits (Bryant & Budinsky, 2013, p. 223).

Thus, they usually allocate easy ways of greenwashing, such as awareness or educational campaigns (Steg et al., 2013, p. 224). Regarding greenwashing, I analyzed that no matter what strategy these campaigns take, a recurring theme of blaming individuals, especially those in the poorer segments of society, comes to the surface. However, when facing facts, the poor and those in underdeveloped countries use significantly less water than the rich and those who live in developed countries (Price, 2014, p. 25; Wapner & Matthew, 2009, p. 214; Steg et al., 2013, p. 16-17; Ökmen, 2003, p. 20-21). Whether through waste, virtual water transport, or extensive industrialization, developed countries hold the first place in water use and pollution (Ökmen, 2003, p. 20-21).

In this chapter, I have focused on Finish’s water footprint awareness campaign called Yarının Suyu as a case study. This campaign has become an advertising success as they have become leaders regarding the economy and global cultural production (Goldman, 2005, p. 104). However, I have argued that they failed to reduce water footprints and *save* the environment with their awareness campaigns despite the positive reports provided by the media. In fact, as mentioned in this

chapter, most of those statistics of positive change are generally exaggerated and over-advertised, whereas there is a common tendency to conceal adverse outcomes. Moreover, I also questioned the reliability of the data taken from the participants, as Hamilton states: “self-reports are only weakly related to actual changes in water consumption” (1985, p. 315), and Finish does not publish where their data comes from and how it is collected. In short, there is no way of knowing the details behind the information on consumption changes of the participants that Finish claims in their advertisements, which is why I think the campaigns’ effectiveness cannot be discussed safely.

These are worrying for their overall reliability since their whole campaign revolves around individual actions to prevent water scarcity. Considering that proven data is not collected and published regarding the actual effects of their water footprint awareness campaign and how much individual action affects water scarcity, a lack of trust occurs in terms of its effectiveness and motives. Although Finish’s campaign includes a documentary which mentions through the lead singer, Gökhan Özoğuz from the famous band Athena, that everyone should contribute to reducing waste in water on one occasion (National Geographic Turkiye, 2019), it primarily focuses on individual consumption and waste in the household and how important water is for survival, the lack of it causing distress and what people can do to save it. Thus, expecting proof that this can solve the water issue is only natural. The lack of this and environmentally friendly detergents by Finish cause one to question the motive and sincerity behind Yarının Suyu, as it comes out closer to greenwashing than environmentalism, which requires a genuine concern for the environment.

Briefly, how Finish tells the story of water scarcity has led me to argue that their water footprint awareness campaign *Yarının Suyu* is not sincere in their claims

of caring for the waters in Turkey, but rather is a form of greenwashing to make their brand more popular. Accordingly, I have pointed out that the framing of the campaign excludes various significant variables, the most important of which is information on water pollution. As this is an area where they can receive backlash due to them becoming one of the reasons for the pollution, Finish's commercials do not mention how pollution is as severe a threat to the future of the waters as scarcity, which has been referred to as the sin of hidden trade-off (TerraChoice, 2010). Another exclusion is the ambiguousness in how they provide information in their campaign, which has been referred to as the sin of vagueness and fibbing (TerraChoice, 2010). To these, I have added another sin, the sin of manipulation, to explain how they use "affect" (Ahmed, 2014) to manipulate the audience into feeling sad and responsible for changing their habits, mainly emphasizing becoming heroes for future generations.

In this chapter, I aimed to demonstrate that much as such campaigns as Finish's *Yarının Suyu* still create some awareness and attention on the water scarcity issue, the fact that they are advertised as the only solution to the global water problem is also highly problematic. First, I pointed out that Finish's campaign completely disregards water pollution, which is as threatening for water as scarcity since we may have water in the future, but it can be polluted, resulting in the same outcome: people struggling to find potable water. Secondly, I argued that if how much water individuals consume is so dependent on the virtual water (e.g., what we eat and buy) used in the production and supply of them, focusing on the water costs of production would help more to the sustainable use of water since the individuals' water footprint would reduce automatically and drastically (Hoekstra et al., 2011, p. 30). Most importantly, I argued that neither "green consumerism" nor individual

actions are the “final answer” to water scarcity since such an approach “does not challenge the concept of ‘resourcism’” (Evernden, 2985, p. 22) and does not recognize the environment's intrinsic value, something worth saving even if the human population were not under threat.

Undoubtedly, Finish’s campaign raised significant awareness of water scarcity. With a there-is-no-such-thing-as-a-bad-advertisement perspective, some argue that whatever the cause, in the end, there is an increase in green products and services, which creates a positive effect on the environment (Yılmaz Güntay, 2020, p. 508). While I agree that such awareness of water scarcity helps the overall goal of making the water scarcity problem heard, I claim that awareness campaigns usually only work in the short term when people are hyped up about the issue, even if they do at all, but the longer-term effectiveness is yet to be seen (Syme et al., 2000, p. 542). Still, even if people keep up sustainable actions in the long term, I find it necessary to talk about the means to that end, of solving the water crisis, in that the responsibility should not solely be the individuals. Instead, I argued, responsibility should be directed towards those who can achieve meaningful change, starting with the companies that seem environmentally friendly on the surface but harm the environment more than their audience, the individuals. We can solve the global water crisis only when everyone, as the campaigns state, and I mean everyone, including the corporations like Finish and the governments, starts taking measures. Therefore, it is safe to say that the biggest sin of greenwashing, as discussed in this chapter, is redirecting the responsibility to the extent that the most effective and needed solutions of systematic change stay behind the curtains.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

When I started thinking about water footprint campaigns, my main question was why and how sustainable performances to protect water are weighed on the individual while modifications in the other causes of water scarcity and pollution can lead to more effective solutions. The research and writing part, however, took me on an academically inspiring journey of discovering how water, the object of overlooked and underappreciated daily encounters, can be so complex. With such excitement, throughout this thesis, one of my main goals has been to establish water's intrinsic value apart from its advantages to humankind, which I have ironically explored with an analysis of its relationship with the human. This has been possible with the use of the socio-natural hybridity that water embraces, which indicates that society and water create and are created in their relations, not as separate entities but as internally related, born in their interaction or in the hydrosocial cycle (Linton & Budds, 2013, p. 4). As such, I have explored the subject position of water in shaping culture, politics, economy, environment, and environmental campaigns while it can be seen to be used as an object in these areas from an anthropocentric perspective. I believe it is in these complications that the notion of hybridity can be explored, as one is born out of the shifting subject and object positions of it (i.e., in its changing positions of transforming and being transformed).

Water is full of different meanings and associations in various cultures, which "connect every aspect of human life" (Strang, 2015, p. 54), as I have explored in Chapter 2. Such meanings "provide metaphors that enable us to articulate how we think and feel" as well as represent and reflect significant cultural transformations

(Strang, 2015, p. 65). In this chapter, I have analyzed water's importance as the subject of power with positive as well as destructive qualities in Turkish proverbs. Such an analysis further supported the idea of water being an abstract hybrid that combines such different and contrasting connotations. Moreover, through discussing water fountains, I have argued that water embraces practical and social qualities (e.g., as meeting spots). I have also discussed the entertaining qualities of water, especially in the tourism sector, and how it once again brings people from different cultures and groups together. Lastly, I have uncovered how water takes up the role of cleansing in religion prior to discussing drinking water and its unifying effect not only among humans but among all living beings. Such communality of water, however, has transformed with modernity, best observed with the arrival of bottled water. I have argued that though water has a unifying effect, the individuality that increased in the recent century has created a new meaning of water that is more individual than communal. However, I have argued that this has not changed the existing qualities of water but created another environment in which water has embodied new connotations in a political and economic setting.

Chapter 3 takes off with the question raised in Chapter 2: How has the meaning of water changed so drastically? To provide the answer, I have taken up providing a historical timeline of the transformation of water in the political and economic environments. I have argued, once again, that water is a hybrid while touching upon the discussion on whether it is a right or a commodity. I have presented water as being valued mostly as a source of profit, referred to as an "uncooperative commodity" (Bakker, 2005, p. 542) in the modern order of the world. The natural qualities of water mostly go unrecognized as we have been alienated from the source, only to realize potable water at home or in bottles while assuming

water in nature to be always salty and undrinkable, something good only for swimming in. I have further talked about the inequalities that are brought about as consequences of water being viewed as a commodity, whether as bottled water or as a resource for energy, as well as how it has become the symbol of modern individuality through advertising.

Uncovering such changing meanings and subject/object positions of water has also been the right approach to answer my original question regarding water conservation campaigns since greenwashing campaigns also make use of these cultural meanings of water to attract the attention of the public. After addressing the causes of water scarcity and pollution and what water means in an environmental discussion in Chapter 4, I have discussed how water is anthropocentrically viewed as a resource not only to survive but also as an object with the use of which companies, politicians, and alike can gain financial profits as well as recognition and appreciation from the public. When it is scarce, as argued in Chapter 3, it is profited from both through privatizing its use and investing in such projects as well as marketing to care for water, as seen in politicians in Chapter 3 and corporations such as Finish in Chapter 4. Such positive associations with the brands and political parties assist them with increasing their image in the public eye, resulting in profits, votes, and overall likeability. Indubitably, the motives and whether they regard water as a resource to gain from do not matter so long as they work to end the water problem and so long as they act their part on the path to sustainable water use. Nevertheless, as I have argued, reducing household use is solely a partial solution because they are not the main contributors to the problem. Moreover, the problem also arises when such corporations as Finish engage in water conservation campaigns when they do not to this day apply sustainable means of production of their

detergents while voicing how water is under threat of scarcity. They present, as I have shown in Chapter 4, water as a right in their campaigns while solely seeking profits through the sale of their detergents, which are claimed to clean the dishes without rinsing, hence using less water and solving as they claim, the global issue of water. Yet, I have pointed out in this chapter that they hide the fact that the same chemical detergents contribute to the problem of water pollution, making little potable water we have unusable.

Such insincerity and inconsistency in the actions and remarks of a corporation regarding environmental issues are called greenwashing, as I have discussed in Chapter 4 through a close analysis of Finish's campaign Yarının Suyu. Such are observable in the use of language, imagery, affect, and the placement of famous people in the campaign, as explained in Chapter 4. Despite "many exciting new technologies that enable more efficient water and resource use" that can be employed in water conservation, water is wasted in various sectors for material financial gain, which has been "immensely costly for less powerful people and the non-human beings equally dependent on water" (Strang, 2015, p. 162). By shifting the focus on individual use instead of such more responsible actors, a greenwashing campaign regards people as "consumers" that are not included in the powerful positions of decision-makers while putting stones on the path to solving the global water crisis (Budinsky & Bryant, 2013, p. 209). As such, I have argued that Finish's campaign participates in and even encourages water scarcity and pollution by disguising actual solutions to the water crisis behind blaming and, at the same time, heroizing individuals while not doing the bare minimum of changing its practices in the production of its detergents.

What water means to different sets of people is important precisely for these reasons. Rather than a subject with intrinsic value, or a right for all living beings, I argued that water is seen in the capitalist order as an "uncooperative commodity" due to its liquid qualities, and “perhaps water [truly] resists commodification” (Price, 2014, p. 231). Lucky for large corporations and authorities, they have found ways to commodify water and get away with it by putting an environmentalist umbrella on themselves and the blame the global water problem on individuals. To achieve this, I have argued that greenwashing campaigns use virtual water in the water footprints of individuals as a disguising cover, as well as gaining recognition from the public by using various connotations of water that are possible through its hybridity (e.g., water as a source of life, its unifying qualities, and a legacy for our children). This is why understanding the methods by which greenwashing campaigns make use of the cultural meanings of water is significant, for which I have analyzed the hybrid agency of water in various network relationships it has (i.e., cultural, political, economic, and environmental). Such hybridity, I have argued, has created a narrative for greenwashing and environmentalist campaigns in general. Though they cannot be generalized to discuss all the environmentalist campaigns, such methods of greenwashing I have analyzed using the example of Finish’s campaign can be used to look at and discuss other environmentalist campaigns. In that sense, I believe this thesis can form a framework to analyze how the hybrid and abstract positions of an element are allocated by placing it as culturally significant for people to care about.

To answer the two main questions that I had starting this thesis: first, water is an abstract hybrid with various meanings, which brings about the answer to the second question: because water conservation campaigns regard water as a commodity, they regard individuals as responsible for the global water scarcity issue.

By holding individuals accountable, I have argued, they redirect the attention from the actual causes of and solutions to the problem, sell more of their products (e.g., detergents), and people feel good when they purchase these items, thinking they live sustainable lives. Indubitably, the brands and corporations are not evil actors that secretly want waters to dry out and forests to disappear, at least not most of them, if I were to refrain from generalizations, and it is only natural that they care about making profits as it is literally their job. Nevertheless, I find understanding the mechanisms and reasonings behind such campaigns to be valuable in terms of understanding the power dynamics in these relationships, which is why this thesis focused on the meanings and agency of water as well as methods of greenwashing.

Before concluding this thesis, I want to point out, as Hoekstra et al. (2011) state, that "the concern should be the total water footprint of humanity" (p. 105). We need to understand and remind everyone that the global water problems of scarcity and pollution cannot go ignored anymore, not only for us as humans but also for the environment, nature, and nonhuman animals. In other words, as Strang (2015) elucidates, "Societies need to remember what water really is, what it means, and *why* it matters" (p. 173). Waters are far too threatened for humanity to take an anthropocentric worldview and care about financial gains. Fortunately, we are not far too late to acknowledge Nature's subject position and treat it with such respect. I want to conclude this dissertation with a reminder to those with anthropocentric and capitalist ideologies by quoting Val Plumwood (2002), who beautifully sums up the problem, stating: "If the world of nature dies, Wall Street dies too" (p. 236).

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