Constructing Narratives of Kurdish Nationalism in the Urban Space of Diyarbakır, Turkey

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This article analyzes the making and remaking of Kurdish national identity in the absence of a Kurdish nation-state — specifically, the use of urban space to register claims to national belonging. Looking at Diyarbakır, the largest Kurdish city in Turkey, the article examines the political and social interaction between civil society and pro-Kurdish political parties to shed light on the invention of a "new" Kurdish identity and the dynamics of Kurdish nationalism there. It suggests that Kurdish nationhood "as a political and cultural form" is being institutionalized in Diyarbakır through the everyday practices of its residents, as pro-Kurdish parties prompt an agenda and vocabulary of Kurdish nationalism that recalls a traumatic past and imagines a common future. The article argues that Kurdish nationalism in Diyarbakır is being built through the urban experience of collectivity in diverse socio-spatial and political encounters, rather than solely through top-down interventions.

"Before, I didn't know that I was a Kurd. We were all Turks. As I have lived here, now I know that I am a Kurd. Kurd is my identity." These were the words of Havin, a twenty-year-old university student who I interviewed in Diyarbakır, Turkey, in 2007.[1] "I don't expect the municipality to collect the garbage or do any other service for us, but I want my Kurdish identity back; this is all I expect from the municipality."

During field visits to Diyarbakır between 2007 and 2011, I increasingly heard two comments from those I interviewed: "We want our own Kurdishness"; and "We want to live our own culture and speak our own language." Havin, who migrated to the city from a rural area to pursue a university education, was one such resident who wanted her "Kurdishness" back. But what may be most critical about her case, as well as those of many like her, is the rationale that has inspired her, in the absence of a Kurdish state, to "know" and "claim" she is a Kurd.[2]

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FIGURE 1. *Political map of Turkey. Based on http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/turkey_admin_2006.jpg.*

This article seeks to analyze the making and remaking of Kurdish national identity in the absence of a Kurdish nation-state. In the context of Diyarbakır, the largest Kurdish city in Turkey, it examines the political and social interaction between civil society and the succession of pro-Kurdish political parties in order to shed light on increasing Kurdish nationalism in Turkey.[3] With a population of more than 1.5 million, Diyarbakır is located near the headwaters of the Tigris River in southeast Turkey **(FIG.1)**.[4] Records show that settlement on the site in ancient Mesopotamia extends back to 3500 BCE. Exhibiting multiple histories, the city came under Hurrian, Hititian, Assyrian and Urartian rule, before being incorporated within the territory of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman empires.[5] In the early twentieth century Diyarbakır was established as a province of the Republic of Turkey, and subsequently became a site of modern nation-state building based on processes of Turkification. Government actions included bans on the use of the Kurdish language, the changing of village and street names from Kurdish to Turkish, and the forced displacement of Kurds.

Following the 1965 census, the Turkish government outlawed the publication of information about ethnicity and language across the country. However, it is presently estimated that Kurds constitute a majority (90 percent) of the population in Diyarbakır.[6] Since 1984 and the beginning of armed conflict between the state of Turkey and the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK, Partiya Karkêran Kurdistan), the city has been a crucial site of contestation between pro-Kurdish parties and the Turkish state.[7] Beginning in the 1990s Diyarbakır also experienced intensive urbanization and consequent political mobilization, which has led to a concentrated discourse of Kurdish nationalism, making the city a center for the movement in Turkey.

This article tries to understand the ways nationalism and national belonging are articulated in the absence of a nation-state. Focusing on urban space, it argues that Kurdish nationalism is being built in Diyarbakır through the urban experience of collectivity in diverse socio-spatial and political encounters. Rather than through top-down interventions, this has involved everyday practices of residents that recall a traumatic past and imagine a common future.

MAKINGS OF NATIONAL ATTACHMENT VIA URBAN SPACE

The relationship between urban space and nation-building has been studied at length.[8] However, most prior research has focused on the construction of national identity and the invention of national tradition as a top-to-bottom practice in the presence and through the active intervention of nation-states. Much less work has been done on the creation of national identity in the absence of a nation-state.[9]

Recently, in the context of debates on the future of statehood, theorists have questioned state-centered models of political space as the basis for national identity and begun to develop new understandings of the politics of space.[10] One reason is that, while effective in examining the structure of the state and its institutions, state-centered understandings remain inadequate to explain diverse political mechanisms and reciprocal socio-political practices. In particular, they

fall short when it comes to explaining the everyday dimensions of political space.

Most critiques of state-centered theory are devoted to rejecting its tendency to treat the state as an "isolated unit of analysis" — an organic, fixed entity and a cohesive actor driving society. As such, they argue against views of state and society as freestanding objects or domains.[11] In understanding major political and social transformation, such scholarship has instead focused on the reciprocal relations between state and society. In general, it has offered "new theoretical directions" integrating the political practices of state and society, where "the line separating the state from society is not given, but can be redetermined in different political contexts."[12]

Similarly, in their analysis of political mobilization and social change, Cedric De Leon, Manali Desai and Cihan Tuğal have focused attention on the critical role played by political parties.[13] In their view, rather than "absorbing or rechanneling popular pressure," parties may help constitute social formations.[14] They theorized the process of "political articulation" as one by which party activities naturalize class, ethnic and racial formation as a basis for social division by integrating disparate interests and identities into coherent sociopolitical blocks.[15]

Inspired by these critiques of state-centered models, I argue that the construction of Kurdish nationalism in Turkey is not merely a civil-society project; nor does it depend solely on top-down political and ideological intervention. Rather, the very making of Kurdish nationalism lies in the "articulating" role of the pro-Kurdish political party, where the party cultivates and shapes a new sense of imagined Kurdish identity via urban practices.[16] Channeling the activity of NGOs, civil society, and political society, the pro-Kurdish party has brought the "constituents of the social" together and articulated social formations with a new Kurdish nationalist discourse.[17]

Following Lisa Wedeen and Rogers Brubaker, I also take the position that the nation, "as a practical category and as a contingent event," is something "whose significance lies in its ability to reproduce the vocabularies of imagined community and popular sovereignty."[18] With this in mind, I argue that Kurdish nationhood "as a political and cultural form" may be institutionalized in the streets of Diyarbakır.[19] It emerges in the everyday practices of city residents — in parks, protests, hunger strikes, marches, funeral gatherings, house meetings, and so on — as the pro-Kurdish party prompts the agenda and character of social discourse.

In the sections that follow I first examine the rise of pro-Kurdish parties and pro-Kurdish mayors who have played a pivotal role in constructing the pathway toward Kurdish nationalism and channeling the movement in Diyarbakır. I then examine the practices of pro-Kurdish party members, mayors, activists, NGOs, and civil society in the city. These have been aimed both at (de)nationalizing (from Turkishness) and (re) nationalizing (Kurdification) attributes of urban space.[20] From here I move to an examination of specific urban parks, installed between 2008 and 2010 by pro-Kurdish mayors, which produce narratives of collective pain and suffering, a traumatic past, and the imagined future of Kurdistan. In the final section, I examine these narratives as representatives of "nationness," as it is discussed and practiced among citizens in the everyday life of Diyarbakır.[21]

TOWARD A POLITICS OF KURDISH NATIONALISM IN TURKEY

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Republic of Turkey began a process of modern nation-state building through the invention of "Turkish identity" and practices aimed at homogenizing the population. While the assimilation and integration of some other Balkan and Caucasian ethnic minorities was settled smoothly, attempts to assimilate the Kurds encountered continuing resistance. In fact, between 1923 and 1980, around twenty organized revolts by Kurds against the state took place, all of which were quickly suppressed, with the exception of the longest, in 1938 in the Dersim area, which lasted seven months.[22] In the first 23 years of the Turkish Republic, state elites paid specific attention to the issuance and endorsement of reports calling for the absolute rejection of a distinct Kurdish identity.[23] Among the strategies that emerged to enforce these were the dislocation of the Kurdish population, increased efforts to force assimilation (i.e., changing village and street names from Kurdish into Turkish), and bans on the use of the Kurdish language.[24]

Beginning in the early 1980s, the rise of a regional Kurdish national movement along with armed conflict between the PKK and the state placed the "Kurdish question" at the center of Turkish politics.[25] In subsequent years, during a period of continual low-intensity conflict, Kurdish-dominated eastern and southeastern Turkey suffered from extensive internal displacement and forced migration. Indeed, under the "State of Emergency" (1987–2002), around one million Kurds were evicted from their rural villages and forced to migrate.[26] By the 1990s, following a dramatic escalation of violence by armed militias and intracommunal tensions, many more Kurds were obliged to flee their homes, primarily to urban centers like Adana, Diyarbakır, Istanbul and Mersin, where they sought shelter in chaotic urban shantytowns. Further, urban residence in itself, while making Kurdishness more visible, marginalized and politicized Kurdish society, leading to new political landscapes not only in the southeast region, but across the country.

The 1990s also marked a historical turning point in the development of the Kurdish nationalist movement. In June 1990 the first legally recognized Kurdish political party in Turkey, the People's Labor Party (Halkın Emek Partisi, HEP), explicitly committed itself to the advancement of Kurdish rights.[27] It was represented in the Grand National Assembly of Turkey with 22 deputies. After changing its name to the Democracy Party (Demokrasi Partisi, DEP), however, it was

closed by the Turkish constitutional court in 1993, and thirteen of its deputies were imprisoned. But in the years that followed, as each successive Kurdish party was outlawed by the Turkish constitutional court, a new party would succeed it. Thus, right after the closure of the Democracy Party in 1993, the People's Democracy Party (Halkın Demokrasi Partisi HADEP) was founded in 1994. It was closed by the court in 2003, but in the interim the Democratic People's Party (Demokratik Halk Partisi, DEHAP) had been founded in 1997. This was subsequently replaced by the Democratic Society Party (Demokratik Toplum Partisi, DTP) in 2005. And when the DTP was closed by the court in 2009, party officials immediately founded the Peace and Democracy Party (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, BDP), the current pro-Kurdish political party.

Diyarbakır, the central city for Kurdish politics, was also dramatically transformed in the 1990s, as large numbers of internally displaced people migrated there in a very short period of time. Diyarbakır experienced rapid urbanization and sociopolitical polarization, as Kurdish society was socially and politically marginalized and institutionalized. However, the formation of political parties and the electoral participation of pro-Kurdish voters provided a critical new institutional base for the development of Kurdish movement. As Nicole Watts has noted, it transformed the conflict from rural to urban, and "expanded the realm of Kurdish movement into mainstream political arenas."[28]

Elaborating on the relationship between political parties and social life, De Leon, Desai and Tuğal have argued that political parties do not merely reflect social divisions; rather, they actively construct them. Indeed, parties "are often central to the constitution of the social because they give a specific logic to the reproduction of social formations."[29] Moreover, "without this or a substituting articulating logic, constitutions of the 'social,' the heterogeneous terrain of social relations, do not necessarily hold together."[30]

In keeping with this analysis, since the late 1990s, pro-Kurdish party mayors in the cities of southeastern Turkey have played a major role in strengthening the discourse of Kurdish nationalism, uplifting the grassroots and channeling the political agenda of the Kurdish movement. They have established a vast network between different civil-society organizations (i.e., human rights organizations and various NGOs), and linked civil society to the political sphere through parliamentary and extra-parliamentary practices. For the most part, since 1999, when the pro-Kurdish parties began to take over local municipalities, they have played a pivotal role in setting the new Kurdish nationalist vocabulary and founding a diverse Kurdish identity discourse.

The critical urban practices of the pro-Kurdish mayors have thus created new opportunities to establish the agenda of Kurdish nationalism, not only in the closed rooms of politics, but in the streets of Diyarbakır. Since their arrival, Diyarbakir has been marked by the dominance of its Kurdish activist population, the strength of the pro-Kurdish parties, and widely publicized Kurdish nationalist aspirations.

THE GROUND OF URBAN POLITICS IN DIYARBAKIR

On September 20, 2010, thousands of Kurds marched from Cegerxwin Cultural Center to Koşuyolu Park in Diyarbakır to show their support for a school boycott campaign. The campaign, seeking to restore education in the Kurdish language, was organized by the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP) in collaboration with civil-society organizations such as TZP Kurdi (the Movement for Kurdish Language and Education). The campaign called on Kurdish-speaking citizens of Turkey's southeast region to hold their children out of school between September 20 and 25 (the first week of the school year). A week before the march, posters were placed on billboards by municipalities in Diyarbakır arguing for the right to education in these students' mother tongue (Kurdish). The official state reaction didn't arrive until later, but on September 16 the Diyarbakır court ordered the removal of the posters in the city. According to the court: "It has been decided that the statements in the banners are similar to the discourse of the PKK's supportive base, its sympathizers, and it is like a call for society to digest, accept and apply the organization's beliefs and thoughts."[31]

The protest against the state and the state's response, the court's order to remove the posters, is just one case among many showing the contentious relation between the Turkish state and Diyarbakır's pro-Kurdish mayors and party officials. In the case of Diyarbakır, spatial and temporal power over urban space has emerged as a critical feature of inclusion and exclusion practices. This is not only true with regard to the central power of the Turkish state, but also of the actions of multiple state agencies toward each other. Hence, as Henri Lefebvre has explained:

> *. . . each new form of state, each new form of political power, introduces its own particular way of portioning space, its own particular administrative classification of discourses about space and about things and people in space. Each such form commands space, as it were, to serve its purposes.*[32]

For pro-Kurdish municipalities, therefore, urban space is a key aspect in articulating Kurdish identity, conditioning freedom, and producing counter-narratives to those of the Turkish state. However, both municipalities and NGOs have encountered many obstacles to such practices, created by the state-appointed governorship and the military. These agents of the national state often intervene by banning organizations, militarizing land, and prohibiting citizens from using specific urban sites.[33] While an examination of these obstacles is important in cutting across boundaries between state and society, I have had to limit my scope of analysis here to understanding the practices of Kurdish nationalism in Diyarbakır.

Despite these barriers, the critical role of urban space in Diyarbakır is clear. As acted upon by pro-Kurdish mayors, it does not merely work to express power; it also constitutes the

grounds of social uprising, mobilization, and, more particularly, the makings of national attachments, as a main site of contestation and meaning-production for Kurdish identity.

(DE)NATIONALIZING THE CITY: BUILDING THE FRONTIER

During the early Republican period, Turkey, like many new nation-states and postcolonial governments, adopted modern architecture and urbanism as a form of expression. National independence meant embracing an image tied to "progressive" political ideals. By the mid-1930s, as elsewhere in Europe, in Turkey this initial embrace of modernity was replaced by a heavy emphasis on "nationalism," and thus by a subsequent rise of Turkification and its influence on architecture.[34] However, the development of such homogenizing practices of Turkification was also tied to political circumstances of Europe in the late 1930s. The development of such homogenizing practices of Turkification was also tied to an increasing number of revolts by Kurds in the southeast of the country. The result was a shift from "modern" to "national" architecture.

The rise of nationalism was further evident in the proliferation of images and emblems of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic. Beginning in the late 1930s and early 1940s (and particularly after his death in 1938), monuments, busts, and equestrian statues of Atatürk, along with plates inscribed with his epithets, appeared widely in the cities of Turkey. In addition to the new monuments, it also became common during this "nationalist climate" to rename streets and boulevards as Atatürk, Gazi [Veteran], or Cumhuriyet [Republic].[35] These architectural and urban practices, whose effect is still apparent, extended to Diyarbakır. However, unlike other cities in Turkey, statues of Atatürk are no longer common in Diyarbakır today, nor will one encounter many of his slogans endorsing Turkish nationalism. One reason is the activism of pro-Kurdish party officials and mayors, who have sought to transform urban space as a means of constructing Kurdish identity. This first necessitated erasing Turkish nationalist elements from urban space, a process I call (de)nationalizing the city. Only then could the (re)nationalization of the city begin.[36]

The removal of Turkish nationalist symbols from urban space has not always gone smoothly, as conflicts have arisen between the mayors, the state-appointed governor, and state laws. Frequently, the pro-Kurdish party and local mayors have been exposed to juridical and bureaucratic pressure.[37] At times, administrators from the pro-Kurdish parties and Kurdish activists have been taken to court, fined, and even jailed for their actions. However, between 1999 and 2011, pro-Kurdish mayors continuously and purposefully employed urban space to promote practices of "Kurdification." Particularly in 2004, following implementation of the new "Local Administrations Law," pro-Kurdish municipalities, as well as other

FIGURE 2. Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene *[How Happy Is the One Who Can Say He Is a Turk]. The sign proclaiming this slogan of Atatürk in Diyarbakır is veiled by a large ornamental tree. Photo by author, July 2009.*

municipalities in Turkey, gained increased access to resources they needed to intervene in the public realm.

As a result, in Diyarbakır today the only public proclamation of one of the most well-known of Atatürk's sayings, "Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene" ["How Happy Is the One Who Can Say He Is a Turk"], is veiled by a large ornamental tree (FIG.2). Beginning in the 1990s, the city's streets, boulevards, and urban parks instead began to bear the names of well-known pro-Kurdish authors, poets, activists and politicians. Among the most prominent examples are Musa Anter Boulevard (Musa Anter was a Kurdish activist killed in Diyarbakır in 1992); Ahmet Arif Boulevard (Ahmet Arif was a famous Kurdish poet); and Ayşe Şan Park (Ayşe Şan, a renowned Kurdish singer, died in 1996). Furthermore, some social mechanisms (e.g., festivals, funerals and prayers) have been critical tools for the removal of state authority from the city. While reappropriating the use of urban space, such practices have also blunted the application of counter-narratives by the Turkish state.

A particularly important instance of the latter occurred on April 15, 2011, when, instead of going to mosques, some 2,000 Kurdish Muslims attended Friday prayer in Dağkapı Square as a way to protest the state's mandate to use Turkish during sermons (FIG.3). The protest, referred to as Civil Friday Prayer, was organized by the pro-Kurdish party (BDP) and by civil-society organizations as an act of civil disobedience.[38]

The choice of Dağkapı Square was spectacular. Located at the entrance to the city's historical quarters and market, the square had been remade in 1931 after the foundation of the Turkish Republic. At that time, the governor of Diyarbakır had decided to demolish a section of the city's surrounding wall because "the city could not breathe."[39] Subsequently, like many other public spaces in Turkey, Dağkapı Square came to be adorned with a clock tower and a statue of Atatürk (FIG.4). Installed on the western side of square, the statue depicts Atatürk holding children under his arms. It

FIGURE 3. *Aerial view of Dağkapı Square. Source: Google Maps.*

FIGURE 4. *Clock tower and sculpture of Atatürk at Dağkapı Square. Photo by author, March 2011.*

has since attracted considerable attention and criticism from Kurdish residents of the city. Indeed, in January 2011 it was burned by protesters, only to be immediately replaced. And in April 2011, during a protest for imprisoned pro-Kurdish politicians and activists, the face of Atatürk was covered with the poster of Abdullah Öcalan, founder of the PKK, who has been in jail since 1999.

The statue is not the only prominent representation of Atatürk on display in the square. At one end, a massive mural painted on the side of an eleven-story building shows Atatürk in military apparel. An inscription below reads: "Those from Diyarbakır, Van, Erzurum, Istanbul, Thrace, and Macedonia are the children of the same race, the veins of the same one" (FIG.5). And at the other end, a picture of Atatürk surveys the square from atop the citadel, with a Turkish flag to its right (FIG.6). All three of these monumental emblems stand as powerful reminders of a Turkish nation-state imbued by Kemalist doctrine.

On April 15, as the crowd was gathering in the square for the Civil Friday Prayer, however, a municipal officer standing at the back voiced to me the notion that Kurdish historical figures might someday also be represented in the city.[40] "We are planning to install the sculpture of Sheik Said right in the middle of this square, and there is another project for Salahaddin Ayyubi, pride of our nation," he said.[41] Shortly after the sit-in in front of the Atatürk statue, the Civil Friday Prayer then began, under tight police surveillance. Demanding cultural freedom and the right to use the mother tongue, the entire sermon was conducted in Kurdish (FIG.7). Transforming Dağkapı Square into an arena of prayer, the event not only provided a religious challenge to the Kemalist secular nation-state, but it was also an act of eradicating state power. In defiance of state emblems (the statue and images of Atatürk and the police ringing the square), the protest proclaimed the existence of Kurdish identity. Furthermore, it enacted a "civil" form of national solidarity, in which the crowd was united in opposition to the state.

I will now turn to an examination of how the pro-Kurdish BDP Party (successor of the DTP) has utilized urban parks

FIGURE 5. *Mural of Atatürk in military apparel. Photo by author, March 2011.*

FIGURE 6. *The image of Atatürk, installed atop the citadel, with a Turkish flag to its right, surveys Dağkapı Square. Photo by author, March 2011.*

to represent Kurdish identity and facilitate free speech. In the everyday life of Diyarbakır, urban parks are sites of political debate, where issues of identity, the "Kurdish question," and culture can be negotiated. They provide the occasion for a broad range of discursive construction and interaction among Kurdish citizens. In urban parks, residents exchange opinions, argue about recent developments in the country, criticize politicians, and discuss questions such as "what shall the pro-Kurdish party or the central government do?"

Today there are more than two hundred urban parks in Diyarbakır, ranging in size from 1,500 to 60,000 square meters. More than 80 percent of these have been opened since the election of pro-Kurdish mayors in the city. For instance, the Kayapınar municipality, which was only established in 2004,

FIGURE 7. *Crowds conducting Civil Friday Prayer at Dağkapı Square. In the background are the clock tower and the picture of Atatürk atop the citadel. Photo by author, April 2011.*

opened 43 parks between 2004 and May 2010 alone.[42] Today, urban parks are one of the central nodes for everyday politics in the city. They are where elected pro-Kurdish mayors politicize and construct a "new" imagined Kurdish identity. Associated with particular uses — such as gathering before and after marches, protesting state actions, commemorating past Kurdish rebellions and activists, and organizing public sermons and festivals (i.e., "Newroz") — they have become a key ingredient in the manufacture of a new Kurdish tradition and the making and remaking of Kurdishness.

MAKING KURDISH NATIONAL ATTACHMENTS VIA URBAN PARKS

Traumatizing the Past. The first park I will discuss, Koşuyolu Park, has been a center for hunger strikes, proclamations, anti-state marches, and funeral demonstrations (FIG.8). It is located in the Bağlar district in Diyarbakır, where many people who have been forced to migrate to the city reside. The foundation of the park was laid in 1996, and it was completed in 1999 by the pro-Kurdish municipality. Since then, Koşuyolu Park has been a destination point for almost all the marches in the city opposing state agendas. These marches, organized collectively by party officials and civil-society organizations, generally begin in front of the party building, with the gathering of a crowd, continue through the streets of Bağlar, where Diyarbakır's prison is located, and end at Koşuyolu Park. Such events are usually accompanied by a press release from party officials which emphasizes a vocabulary of "Kurdish rights" and the "diversity of Kurdish culture and nation."

Koşuyolu Park is also distinctive because it seeks to memorialize state oppression and violence through monuments that recall an array of historical events. In this way it allows the pro-Kurdish party to prominently "interpellate" the subject of the oppressed Kurd.[43] Building on Louis Althusser's

FIGURE 8. *Aerial view of Koşuyolu Park. Source: Google Maps.*

FIGURE 9. *"Human Rights Declaration" depicted on a tablet, at Koşuyolu Park. Photo by author, July 2009.*

concept, De Leon, Desai and Tuğal have defined "interpellation" as "a process of imaginary identification with a cause (and parties, institutions, and leaders associated with that cause), which gives coherence and unity to the multifaceted and potentially contradictory or politically meaningless life histories and experiences of individuals."[44] First, in 2002, in an act which sought to strengthen the discourse of Kurdish rights, the pro-Kurdish municipality erected a "Human Rights Monument" in the park, presenting the articles of a "Human Right Declaration" on an ornamented tablet (FIG.9). Then in 2008 another memorial, the "Right to Life" (Yaşam Hakkı), was installed by the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. On September 12, the dedication of this memorial was accompanied by a large public ceremony, which included the participation of children, activists, and pro-Kurdish party members.

"Right to Life" commemorates seven children (out of eleven total people) killed when a bomb exploded along the wall of Koşuyolu Park on September 12, 2006.[45] During city council meetings right after the blast, the memorial was given its name by Osman Baydemir, mayor of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. Located at the entrance to the park, "Right to Life" comprises three separate artworks: a cast-metal sculpture and two wall panels facing each other (FIG.10).

One of the wall panels features sculptures in relief of the wounded heads of people killed by the blast. Scattered over the surface of the panel, the heads frame the handwritten names of the children, carved as if on the pages of a book. Beneath, two white pigeons represent "the hope for the peace," according to Fırat Erdoğan, sculptor of the wall panels (FIG.11).[46]

FIGURE 10. *The "Right to Life" monument. At left, the cast metal sculpture; at right, the wall panel depicting victims of the bomb blast. Photo by author, July 2009.*

FIGURE 11. *The wall panel depicting victims of the bomb blast. Photo by author, July 2009.*

FIGURE 12. *Second wall panel of the "Right to life." Photo by author, July 2009.*

According to Erdoğan, the opposing wall features an eye, "crying for the Kurdish society," carved "over integrated Kurds performing a traditional dance" (FIG. 12). This panel thus does not simply narrate pain and hope, but represents the united Kurdish nation in solidarity. The upper portion of the panel bears a sun, representing "hope and peace for the future." "I added the figure of the sun because I didn't want to end this memorial solely with the representations of pain," Erdoğan said. "Hence, the sun is also an important symbol for the Kurdish culture."

The cast-metal sculpture between the two panels depicts "the dead body of a mother in pain trying to reach eternity and free her children from torture," according to the artist Genco Cebe, who produced it, and who was living across the park when the bomb exploded (REFER TO FIG.10).[47] This is the representation of the "frozen moments of violence," he said. "I couldn't stop myself designing the first draft of this memorial when I saw the mother, whose legs were ruptured by the blast, creeping on the ground and looking for her children."

"Right to Life" was installed at the very place where the bomb blast occurred. As such, it represents an explicit narrative of death and has become a powerful acknowledgment of the perpetuation of oppression and violence against Kurds. Mehmet Demir, a father of four children who died in the blast, said in an interview: "I die five times, each time I pass in the front of the park."[48] While building a discourse of Kurdish identity among citizens of the Diyarbakır through an imagined "future of hope and peace," "Right to Life" thus also embodies a critical memory that helps establish the sense of a (collective) traumatic history.

Bringing the Culture Back In. Etienne Balibar has remarked that "a social formation only reproduces itself as a nation to the extent that [it can operate]. . . through a network of apparatuses and daily practices."[49] In fact, national attachments of Kurdishness are made and remade in the city through everyday practices, facilitated by a network of activists, citizens, and pro-Kurdish party officials. These practices attempt to reestablish old traditions of Kurdishness with an emphasis on diversity and oppression.

Ayşe Şan Park, located between the Kayapınar and Bağlar districts in Diyarbakır, is an example of how such a sense of Kurdish culture may be represented in urban space (FIG.13). The park covers 7,500 square meters and includes a free-speech square and a café, along with walking paths, children's play areas, ornamental pools, waterfalls, and a maze of plants.

FIGURE 13. *Aerial view of Ayşe Şan Park. Source: Google Maps.*

FIGURE 14. *A black-and-white photo of Ayşe Şan, installed on the roof of a cafe in the park. Photo by author, July 2009.*

However, the park's primary symbolic importance lies in its recognition of the Kurdish language via the commemoration of the *dengbej* singer Ayşe Şan, who died on December 18, 1996. Events organized within the park also aim to honor the *dengbej* culture via Ayşe Şan. In Kurdish culture, *dengbej* meetings, at which local artists and poets sing about such concepts as love, aspiration, nationalism and war, are a way of producing and transforming oral history. Yet, as memorialized in the park, the figure of Ayşe Şan is represented not just as a *dengbej* singer, but as a symbol of Kurdish activism and resistance, challenging the oppressed subject of Kurdish identity. With a black-and-white portrait of Ayşe Şan installed on the roof of its café narrating Kurdish culture, the park thus invokes a discourse of Kurdish nationalism (FIG.14).

The park was opened on December 18, 2008, the twelfth anniversary of Ayşe Şan's death. Hundreds of people attended, including local mayors, Kurdish activists, and representatives of civil-society organizations. The event was thus typical of the practice by which the pro-Kurdish party brings members of NGOs and civil-society organizations together in different contexts to mold a sense of popular "grievance."[50] Hence, the opening of the park was also publicized months in advance, allowing merchants, coffeehouse workers, and common citizens in the streets to talk through the summer of 2008 about Ayşe Şan, her songs, and her life.

Before the opening ceremony, on December 16, 2008, an introductory meeting for the commemoration of Ayşe Şan events was staged at the Burhan Karadeniz Cinema by a joint organization of the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality and the Mesopotamian Cultural Center (MKM). Participants included Mayor Osman Baydemir, DTP Diyarbakır Provincial Chairman Nejdet Atalay, and Bağlar Mayor Yurdusev Özsökmenler. A group of Kurdish women activists and artists also spoke about Ayşe Şan's Kurdish identity, her exile, and her symbolic role in the Kurdish movement. In one speech, the Kurd-

ish artist Silan Dora described Ayşe Şan as follows: "Ayşe Şan is revolutionary. She is the voice and the heart of the people whose language is banned." Mayor Osman Baydemir noted:

> *Ayşe Şan, with her identity as a woman, represents the resistance to exist. She suffered greatly. In her residences in Istanbul, Germany, Baghdad, Hawler [Erbil] and Izmir, she amassed her agony. There was no doubt that, one day that exile would come to the end. Today is that day.*[51]

Throughout the speeches, the figure of Ayşe Şan was presented as embedded in a discourse of oppression and Kurdish identity, a symbol of Kurdish suffering. During another panel, organized by the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, the Bağlar municipality, and the Mesopotamia Culture Center (Mezopotamya Kültür Merkezi), one speaker, the author Zeynep Yas, said, "Ayşe Şan is smashed into bits like the territory of Kurds."

It is important to note that Ayşe Şan Park, like many other parks in Diyarbakır, is not only visited by BDP supporters, but by Kurds who are not affiliated with the party. Indeed, the park prominently embraces all visitors with its "Kurdish" environment. This is how one person I interviewed there, who identify himself "as an apolitical, pious persona" unaffiliated with the party, expressed his interaction with urban Kurdish identity in the park:

> *I come to Ayşe Şan on a regular basis, almost every night. Sometimes we come here with my sisters in-law and brothers. We love it here because we listen to Kurdish music, sit in a traditional way on mattresses and divans. Ayşe Şan is ours! I like it here because this place reminds me I am Kurdish.*[52]

Through such urban practices the articulating logic of the pro-Kurdish party succeeds in bringing different segments of society together. In fact, the "Kurdish culture" injected into the park by the pro-Kurdish party is a critical factor in bringing a pious person and a BDP supporter together.

Imagining the Kurdish Nation. Medya Park, located in Kayapınar (Peyas), Diyarbakır, is another park which has highlighted the politically contentious subject of Kurdishness (FIG.15). Constructed by the Kayapınar municipality, it created immediate conflict between the municipality and the state-appointed governorship because of the shape of its ornamental pool, designed to resemble an imagined map of Kurdistan (FIG.16). In fact, during construction, the governorship of Diyarbakır forbid the park from being opened, and filed suit against the Kayapınar municipality for promoting seperatist ideals. After settling several lawsuits and distorting the shape of the pool, the park was finally opened on June 5, 2007, with an event attended by many pro-Kurdish members of parliament, party officials, and representatives of civil society organizations. Once again, the opening speeches were heavily publicized and built on ideas of Kurdish identity and freedom. Furthermore, even though the shape of the pool was changed, residents of Diyarbakır still refer to it as having the shape of a map of Kurdistan, an indication of its continued symbolism.[53]

FIGURE 15. *Aerial view of Medya Park. At right, ornamental pool in the distorted shape of imagined map of Kurdistan. Source: Google Maps.*

However, what has made Medya Park most distinctive is not the shape of its pool, but the connotation of its name. The Medes, an ancient horde alive during the sixth century BCE, were the possible ancestors of present-day Kurds.[54] Thus, for some, the name "Media" ("Medya" in Turkish) seems also to connote the territory of the Medes, therefore the territory of the Kurds.

In fact, the Medes are already present in contemporary accounts of Kurdish history, especially political ones. Recently in Diyarbakır, ground has been broken for a one-hundred-acre entertainment center named "Medland." Plans call for it to be completed by mid-2012 and for it to include recreational

FIGURE 16. *The ornamental pool at Medya Park. Photo by author, April 2011.*

FIGURE 17. *Nameplate for the park reads: "The Municipality of Kayapinar . . . Park." Note: The name "Rosna" was given to this park on October 7, 2008, according to ruling 64 by the parliament of Kayapinar municipality. The name was rejected by ruling 7194 of Diyarbakır governorship on October 19, 2008. Photo by author, April 2011.*

areas and sport facilities as well as a lunapark representing diverse Kurdish symbols. Another example is that of MED TV, the name of the unofficial television station of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Broadcasting from Europe, it is well known for its views on an independent Kurdistan. The PKK anthem, sung by guerillas, also contains the words, "We are the sons of the Medes. . . . Our god is Kurdistan."[55] However, since the name "Medya" directly translates in Turkish as "media" (the means of mass communication), no other opposition or legal action was taken against the opening of the park other than that provided by the design of its ornamental pool.

Infusing Resistance. Giving parks Kurdish names and/or names that commemorate particular events in Kurdish history is another practice that has infused Kurdish resistance into urban space. In 2008 the Yenisehir, Bağlar, and Kayapınar municipalities attempted to give Kurdish names to several parks within their jurisdictions, including Beybun, Silan, Berfin, Rojda and Rosna parks. But since the use of the Kurdish language is banned in public, the names were rejected by the state-appointed governorship. In response, however, the municipalities developed a strategy of "unnamed parks," and installed blank nameplates at the entrances to each, with notes explaining the obstacles imposed on the use of Kurdish iconography. In fact, the blank nameplates themselves hold the Kurdish names in their explanatory texts (FIG.17). During an opening ceremony in December 2008, the mayor of Kayapınar municipality, Zulkuf Karatekin, highlighted the conflict between different government authorities that led to the rejection of the Kurdish names as follows: "While one [government authority] broadcasts a Kurdish channel on one of the state's television channels, another bans the use of Kurdish in public space. How democratic is it?"[56]

However, not all the rejected names for the parks were Kurdish; nor did state officials prohibit all the names proposed for the parks. For instance, the name "33 Bullets" was rejected because it made the state an object of accusation and antagonism.[57] However, another park was opened without opposition, even though it was named Ceylan Önkol, after a Kurdish girl who was killed by a mortar shell while grazing sheep in Lice, Diyarbakır province, in October 2009 (FIG.18).[58] Önkol's death drew considerable attention from the municipality, local media, and human rights organizations. An official investigation concluded that she had detonated an unexploded device left in the area at a previous time. But local groups and human rights organizations, blaming state officials, asserted that such a device had to be fired from somewhere, and therefore must have purposefully targeted her.[59] Accordingly, with the organized collaboration of the BDP and human rights organizations, thousands in Diyarbakır participated in marches protesting state military practices in southeastern Turkey. The campaign, which began in October 2009, emphasized the state's violation of the "right to live" and culminated in the opening of the park to honor Ceylan Önkol in June 2010.

As part of the opening ceremony, the Kayapınar mayor, Zulkuf Karatekin, sent a note from prison, where he was being detained for membership in the KCK (Koma Civaken Kurdistan), an umbrella organization which includes the militant Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).[60] It stated, "We are opening this park in honor of every child who has been killed by the state's violation of right to live." And after the opening speeches there was a sit-in at the park — not for Ceylan Önkol, but to protest the arrests of pro-Kurdish politicians. The opening ceremony for the park thus once again merged two different events — the death of Ceylan Önkol and the arrests of politicians — into the narratives of collective violence, death and "tyranny."

FIGURE 18. *The view of Ceylan Önkol Park in Kayapinar district, Diyarbakir. Photo by author, April 2011.*

"NATIONNESS" IN EVERYDAY PRACTICES OF THE CITY

In the urban parks discussed above — Koşuyolu, Medya, Ayşe Şan, Ceylan Önkol, and the unnamed parks — the narratives of past experiences and historical figures are immanently rendered into the present experience of Kurdish trauma and oppression.

However, it is crucial to understand how the making of Kurdish nationalism via urban parks is less a matter of the physical mass of the parks than the narratives embedded in them. As discussed by Brubaker, events associated with these parks enact a sense of "nationness" as a contingent event. This crystallizes and spreads through the everyday practices of citizens, and takes shape as "collective or individual action" that manifests a sense of community.[61] For instance, even though the municipality was forced to distort the shape of the ornamental pool in Medya Park, it is still referred to everyday in Diyarbakır as representing a "map of Kurdistan." It is further instilled with a memory of political contention between the mayor and the governor. And despite the fact that they were never officially recorded, people still use the proposed Kurdish names for the unnamed parks in everyday practice.[62] The blank nameplates thus continually remind citizens of the ban on the use of "their" language, Kurdish.

The emotional experience of these narratives is also not limited to the parks, their opening ceremonies, or the panels of public figures convened to discuss them. Rather, it merges with the everyday practices of the urban, during which the narratives are discussed, interrogated and appropriated by citizens. The significance of Ceylan Önkol, "violations of human rights" by the state, the ban on Kurdish names, and the bombing that killed the children at Koşuyolu Park, like so many other events, are reported in local newspapers, presented on billboards, and, more importantly, conveyed from one person to the next in the everyday life of Diyarbakır via sermons, panels, *dengbej* meetings, funerals, mourning gatherings, Friday prayers, and even street conversations. Each narrative, each memory of oppression, spreads through the everyday practices of individuals, sets the experiences of "nationness," and creates a sense of belonging in which citizens imagine themselves as a "political" community, regardless of knowing each other.[63]

An important instance of these processes occurred on September 28, 2010. On this anniversary of Ceylan Önkol's death, protest marches were held both in Diyarbakır and Istanbul, which were attended by thousands of citizens holding pictures of the dead girl and carrying banners which read, "State the murderer of Ceylan Önkol." However, thousands of those in attendance were there not just to remember Ceylan Önkol but to express a Kurdish "right to live." As one activist from Istanbul, Zeynep Tanbay, noted: "The massacres in which all other Kurdish children have lost their lives have to come to an end. We will pursue the perpetrators of these deaths. Ceylan's eyes are still looking at us."[64]

These words from a Kurdish activist from Istanbul, far from Önkol's hometown, suggest that discursive practices such as public protests and street converstations are critical to constructing national identity. In the words of Lisa Wedeen, they "produc[e] shared conditions," in which "a community of anonymous fellow citizens can imagine itself into existence."[65]

WHAT MAKES A KURD?

This article has attempted to analyze the making and remaking of Kurdish national identity in the absence of a Kurdish nation-state. Examining the case of Diyarbakır, I have argued that the articulation practices of the pro-Kurdish party are significant because they prompt the agenda and vocabulary of Kurdish nationalism. In this vein, I have looked at the urban practices of the pro-Kurdish party, which construct grievances, channel the work of NGOs and civil-society organizations, bring different segments of the "social" together, and give coherence to the Kurdish nationalist movement.

In this light, I have examined the processes first of (de) nationalizing (from Turkishness), and second of (re)nationalizing (Kurdification). And I argued that the pro-Kurdish party prominently "interpellates" the subject of the "oppressed Kurd," creating an important element with which to build Kurdish nationalist discourse.[66] I then focused on urban parks in Diyarbakır, installed by pro-Kurdish mayors, and their roles in "traumatizing the past," "bringing the culture back in," "infusing resistance," and "imagining the Kurdish nation." In each park, nationalist discourse is built through narratives of a traumatic past, the oppressed Kurd, and an imagined future, which are prominently appropriated into space and publicized in everyday practices among Kurdish citizens.

Further, I have suggested that the sense of Kurdish nationalism is not constructed via the physical mass of the urban parks themselves, but emerges from the narratives embedded in them. I examined these narratives as representing "nationness," and argued that nationhood "as a political and cultural form" is thus institutionalized through everyday life in the streets of Diyarbakır.[67] This happens among citizens, in their everyday practices — in parks, protests, prayers, hunger strikes, marches, funeral gatherings, house meetings, and so on — where the pro-Kurdish political party prompts the agenda and character of Kurdish nationalist discourse.

What makes a Kurd a Kurd, I suggest, is thus the everyday experience of urban space, which transforms citizens and enables them to practice as a community and reinvent their identity and culture. Rather than the distanced experiences of imposed egalitarian structures or solely top-down interventions, I suggest that everyday practices of urban space and the urban experience of collectivity within socio-spatial and political encounters engender a sense of national identity and nationalism.

REFERENCE NOTES

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1. From a discussion with a group of university students at Dicle University, July 14, 2007.
2. In fact, the Kurdish people are probably the only community of more than 20 million people without their own nation-state; their present total population is estimated at between 20 and 30 million. See G. Chaliand, ed., *A People without a Country: The Kurds and Kurdistan* (New York: Olive Branch Press, 1993).
3. As I discuss later, pro-Kurdish parties in Turkey have repeatedly been closed by constitutional court orders. However, as each party has been closed, another, with a new name, has been founded by party officials in its place. For practical purposes, then, I will use the phrase "pro-Kurdish party" interchangeably with the actual names of pro-Kurdish parties to refer to the succession of parties holding a pro-Kurdish identity.
4. Based on the 2010 census. According to the census, more than half of Diyarbakir's population lives in the city center.
5. E. Isli and S. Beysanoglu, *Diyarbakir Muze Sehir* (Istanbul: Yapi Kredi Yayinlari, 1999).
6. See S. Mutlu, "Ethnic Kurds in Turkey: A Demographic Study," *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, Vol.28 (1996), pp.517–41.
7. In Diyarbakır there are eighteen district municipalities (Bağlar, Bismil, Eğil, Lice, Kayapinar, Yenişehir, Sur, Ergani, Silvan, Çınar, Dicle, Dicle/Kaygısız Beldesi, Kocaköy, Özekli, Kulp, Ağaçlı Beldesi, Hani, Kuyular) and one central Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. All have elected mayors from the pro-Kurdish BDP party. In addition, there is one governor, who is appointed by the state of Turkey. Thus, it is critical to note that, while pro-Kurdish mayors, NGOs, and civil-society organizations occupy one end of the political spectrum, a state-appointed governorship and a large military presence occupies the other. The diverse political practices that play out between these actors in the urban space of Diyarbakir reveals the city as a site of contestation.
8. See, for example, S. Bozdogan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); A. Kusno, *Behind the Postcolonial: Architecture, Urban Space, and Political Cultures in Indonesia* (London: Routledge, 2000); and L. Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* (New Haven, CN: Yale University Press, 2008 [1992]).
9. Furthermore, most of this work has relied on state-centered understandings, and has viewed states as the prime actors of social and urban transformation. In fact, state-centered literature, which emerged as a rejection of society-centered, pluralist, and class/capital theoretical accounts, has defined the state as an organization exercising "its autonomy in its own right and in pursuit of its own interests," where the political outcomes are strongly tied to state power. See L. Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions: Publics, Power, and Performance in Yemen* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
10. For instance, in her work on Yemen, Lisa Wedeen demonstrated that experiences of national belonging and identity can be generated by everyday practices of collective vulnerability rather than by state institutions and their representations, or through industrialization. She argued that "national solidarities and identities are not necessarily formed through top-down interventions, because they are not made once and for all." More particularly, she remarked that "national identity is not given by, nor are people born with, national attachment; rather, it can be made and remade through different sets

of practices." See also J. Agnew and S. Corbridge, *Mastering Space: Hegemony, Territory and International Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1995); J. Ferguson and A. Gupta, "Spatializing States: Towards an Ethnography of Neo-liberal Governmentality," *American Ethnologist*, Vol.29 No.4 (2002), pp.981–1002; N. Brenner, *New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); and Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions*.
11. See J. Migdal, *State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); T. Mitchell "Society, Economy, and the State Effect," in G. Steinmetz, ed., *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), pp.76–97; and B. Jessop, *State Power: A Strategic-Relational Approach* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2008).
12. C. Tuğal, "The Urban Dynamism of Islamic Hegemony: Absorbing Squatter Creativity in Istanbul," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, Vol.29 No.3, (2009), pp.423–37.
13. C. De Leon, M. Desai, and C. Tuğal, "Political Articulation: Parties and the Constitution of Cleavages in the United States, India, and Turkey," *Sociological Theory*, Vol.27 No.3 (2009), pp.193–216.
14. Ibid, p.194.
15. Ibid, p.195.
16. See reference note 3 above.
17. The terminology here derives from De Leon et al., "Political Articulation."
18. Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions*, pp.92–93; and R. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed: Nationhood and the National Question in the New Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). The first quote is from Brubaker, the second from Wedeen.
19. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p.16.
20. See Nicole Watts's presentation "Pro-Kurdish Mayors in As-If Democracy: Symbolic Politics in Diyarbakir," available at http://www.institutkurde.org/en/conferences/kurdish_studies_irbil_2006/?intervenant=Nicole%20F%20WATTS [accessed July 15, 2010].
21. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p.16
22. In addition to Dersim, another significant revolt was the Sheik Said revolt, which continued for four-and-a-half months. The length of the remaining revolts was between two days and two months. See I. Bozdağ, Kürt İsyanları (Truva Yayıncılık, 2004).
23. There were eleven publicly known investigation-research reports on the Kurdish issue between 1923 and the end of the single-party era in 1946. The term "assimilation" was used for the first time in 1935 in a report prepared by Umum Müfettişi Abidin Özmen. See M. Yegen, "The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse," *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.34 No.4 (1999), pp.555–68.
24. J. Jongerden, "Crafting Space, Making People: The Spatial Design of Nation in Modern Turkey," *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, 2010, available at http://ejts.revues.org/ index4014.html [accessed July 10, 2010]. Also see K. Oktem, "Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic 'Other': Nationalism and Space in Southeast Turkey in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Nations and Nationalism*, Vol.10 No.4 (2004), pp.559–78.
25. It is critical to note that the PKK has been active since 1978, began its armed struggle in 1984, and still continues to have at least 5,000 members under arms. See A. Marcus, *Blood and Belief: The PKK and the Kurdish Fight for Independence* (New York: New York University Press, 2007).
26. The U.S. Committee for Refugees (USCRI) has estimated the number of IDPs to be between 380,000 and 1 million. Human Rights Watch (HRW) has cited a figure of 2 million. The Turkish Human Rights Foundation (THRF), Human Rights Association (HRA), and Göç-Der have used estimates of between 3 and 4 million in their reports and declarations.
27. See M. Somer, "Turkey's Kurdish Conflict: Changing Context, and Domestic and Regional Implications," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol.58 No.2 (2004), pp.245–53; and N. Watts, "Activists in Office: Pro-Kurdish Contentious Politics in Turkey," *Ethnopolitics*, Vol.5 No.2 (2006), pp.125–44.
28. N. Watts, "Re-Considering State-Society Dynamics in Turkey's Kurdish Southeast," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* (2009), available at http://ejts.revues.org/ index4014.html [accessed July 10, 2010].
29. De Leon et al., "Political Articulation," p.194.
30. Ibid.
31. "Turkish Court Orders Removal of School Boycott Posters," http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/n.php?n=local-court-orders-seizure-of-banners-calling-to-boycott-schools-2010-09-16 [accessed September 28, 2010].
32. H. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), p.281.
33. It is also important to note that, at the national level, the legislative body, military, government and political parties also practice their divergent positions within different alliances and divisions. For instance, while one part of the state, the government, appears to align itself with a project called the "Kurdish initiative," which promises Kurdish rights (i.e., allowing the use of Kurdish language in public spaces), another state institution — the legislative body — has sentenced Kurdish mayors for condoning the use of Kurdish language. This paradoxical condition of the municipality cuts across the set boundary between Kurdish society and the state of Turkey by both destabilizing and reconceptualizing state and society relations.
34. See Bozdogan, *Modernism and Nation Building*, pp.240–41.
35. The word *gazi* simply means "war veteran" in Turkish. In Turkey Mustafa Kemal Atatürk is commonly referred to as "Gazi."
36. N. Watts, "Pro-Kurdish Mayors."
37. See also N. Watts, *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), pp.94–121.
38. This project of civil disobedience was launched by the BDP in collaboration with the Democratic Society Congress, an umbrella organization of Kurdish leaders and groups (Demokratik Toplum Kongresi) at the end of March 2011. It sought the immediate release of thousands of Kurdish politicians, the right to educate children in Kurdish, an end to military operations against the PKK, and the abolition of the 10 percent rule for parliamentary elections in Turkey, which has prevented pro-Kurdish parties from entering Parliament. In furtherance of the civil disobedience campaign, Kurdish activists in Diyarbakir, as well as several other cities, staged protests in front of government offices, occupied parks and roads, and erected tents where protesters could gather.
39. The present historical city was built inside defensive walls and bordered by the Tigris, with the Karacadag Mountains in the distance. The origins of the walls are unknown; however, it is assumed they were the work of the Hurris in the third century BCE. See S. Diken, *Sırrını Surlarına Fısıldayan Şehir: Diyarbakır* (Istanbul: Iletisim Yayinlari, 2002), pp.40–42,87–93. Also see S. Beysanoglu, *Diyarbakir Tarihi, Vol. III: Cumhuriyet Donemi, Diyarbakir* (Diyarbakir: Buyuksehir Belediyesi Yayinlari, 2001), pp.1035–37.
40. From a brief discussion with officers of the Diyarbakir Municipality before the prayer at Dağkapı Square on April 15, 2011.
41. Sheikh Said (1866–1925) was the leader of one of the most prominent Kurdish revolts during the Republican period. In September 1925 he and his followers were hung in Diyarbakir around Dağkapı Square. Salahaddin Ayyubi (1138–1193) was a famous Kurdish warrior and founder of the Islamic Ayyubid dynasty. His sultanate included Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia, the Hejaz, and Yemen.
42. Http://www.Diyarbakirkayapinar.bel.tr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=44&Itemid=61 [accessed August 10, 2010].
43. De Leon et al., "Political Articulation," p.198.
44. Ibid.

45. It is important to note that, while state officials marked this as an act of terrorism, pro-Kurdish party and civil-society organizations claimed it to be an act of state-orchestrated violence. During the opening ceremony the mayor of the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, Osman Baydemir, noted, "We made this monument not for antagonism and revenge, but for commemorating the ones who are the youngest, most children and civil society." See his speech at http://www.haber7.com/haber/20080912/Diyarbakır-Yasam-Hakki-Aniti-acildi.php [accessed July 15, 2010].
46. Interview with Firat Erdoğan in Diyarbakır, April 18, 2011.
47. Interview with Genco Cebe in Diyarbakır, April 9, 2011.
48. Interview with Mehmet Demir, http://www.yuksekovahaber.com/haber/kosuyolu-magduru-konustu-37243.htm [accessed September 29, 2010].
49. E. Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology," in E. Balibar and I. Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities* (London: Verso, 1991), p.93.
50. De Leon et al., "Political Articulation," p.194.
51. See http://www.ajansdogu.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=9641 [accessed September 21, 2010].
52. From an open-ended interview conducted with fifteen people in Ayşe Şan Park, July 2, 2009.
53. From a discussion with a group of merchants, July 1, 2009, in Diyarbakır, and from open-ended interviews with ten people in a coffee house in Diyarbakır, July 3, 2009.
54. See K. McKiernan, *The Kurds: A People in Search of Their Homeland* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2006).
55. Ibid.
56. Http://www.Diyarbakırkayapinar.bel.tr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=298&Itemid=2 [accessed December 21, 2008].
57. Jongerden, "Crafting Space, Making People," p.14.
58. Http://www.Diyarbakırkayapinar.bel.tr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=362&Itemid=2 [accessed July 11, 2010].
59. Http://www.kurdish-info.eu/News-sid-Human-Rights-Association-Press-Statement-on-Ceylan-Onkol-13950.html [accessed July 10, 2010].
60. On December 24, 2009, more than eighty members of the BDP (Peace and Democracy Party), mayors in Diyarbakır, human rights defenders, and members of NGOs were arrested across Turkey. They were detained for membership in the KCK (Koma Civaken Kurdistan), the umbrella organization that includes the militant Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK).
61. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p.19.
62. From a discussion with visitors of "Beybun Park" and "Şilan Park," June 29, 2009.
63. B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991 [1983]).
64. Protest march for the death of Önkol, http://www.xebatkar.com/news_detail.php?id=4868 [accessed September 29, 2010].
65. See Wedeen, *Peripheral Visions*, p.101.
66. De Leon et al., "Political Articulation," pp.192–94.
67. Brubaker, *Nationalism Reframed*, p.16.