

POLITICS IN CONCRETE:  
SOCIAL PRODUCTION OF SPACE IN DİYARBAKIR, 1999-2014

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POLITICS IN CONCRETE:  
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Title: Politics in Concrete: Social Production of Space in Diyarbakır, 1999-2014

This study examines the processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014 so as to explore the conditions under which neoliberal urbanism, as a certain mode of politics of space, becomes hegemonic. Analyzing the material, institutional and ideological dimensions of both the urban regeneration process in the historic city center and the suburbanization and residential differentiation in the outskirts, it reveals the ways in which hegemony of urban neoliberalization is politically constructed, the grounds on which this construction is based upon, and the interaction of imaginations, values and desires that shape these grounds. Focusing on the struggles to reconfigure the city's physical, historic and cultural landscapes, it elucidates the encounters between the "post-war" hegemony project of the historical bloc represented by the AKP and the Kurdish political movement's "post-colonial" counter-hegemony project.

Recent political-economic dynamics that have reconfigured physical and social spaces of major cities in Turkey are often pictured as fixed policy packages which are disseminated from top to bottom and from center to periphery, put forward by the initiative of homogenous elites. Deployment of the notion of neoliberalism in such economic and state-centric manner underestimates the hegemonic character of neoliberal urbanism. Against this conventional understanding of contemporary urban processes, this dissertation demonstrates that neoliberal urbanism is a conflictual, politically-constructed, twofold process of commodification and depoliticization which intrinsically contains moments of destruction and creation.

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Başlık: Beton Siyaseti: Diyarbakır'da Mekânın Toplumsal Üretimi, 1999-2014

Bu çalışma, mekân politikasının belirli bir biçimi olarak neoliberal şehirciliğin hangi koşullarda hegemonik olduğunu ortaya koymak amacıyla, 1999-2014 döneminde Diyarbakır'daki mekân üretim süreçlerini incelemektedir. Tarihî kent merkezindeki kentsel yenileme sürecinin ve de kent çepelerinde gözlenen banliyöleşme ve konut farklılaşmasının maddi, kurumsal ve ideolojik boyutlarını analiz ederek kentsel neoliberalleşmenin hegemonyasının politik olarak nasıl inşa edildiğini, bu inşanın hangi zemine oturduğunu ve bu zemini biçimlendiren imgelemler, değerler ve arzular arasındaki etkileşimi ortaya koymaktadır. Çalışma, şehrin fizikî, tarihî ve kültürel peyzajlarını yeniden biçimlendirmek için verilen mücadelelere odaklanarak, AKP tarafından temsil edilen tarihsel bloğun "savaş-sonrası" hegemonya projesi ile Kürt siyasal hareketinin "sömürge-sonrası" karşıt-hegemonya projesi arasındaki karşılaşmaları açığa kavuşturmaktadır.

Türkiye'deki önemli kentlerin fizikî ve toplumsal mekânlarını yakın zamanda yeniden biçimlendiren politik-ekonomik dinamikler, sıklıkla, kendi içinde homojen seçkinler tarafından tasarlanan, yukarıdan aşağı ve merkezden çepere doğru yayılan sabit siyasa paketleri olarak resmedilirler. Neoliberalizm mefhumunun bu türden ekonomist ve devlet-merkezli kullanımı neoliberal şehirciliğin hegemonik niteliklerinin göz ardı edilmesine neden olur. Güncel kentsel süreçlere dair bu yaygın anlayışa karşılık bu tez, neoliberal şehirciliğin, çatışmalı, siyasal olarak inşa edilen, kendi içinde yaratıcı ve yıkıcı uğrakları içeren, metalaşma ve siyaset dışı kılma dinamiklerinden müteşekkil ikili bir süreç olduğunu göstermektedir.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In the last one and a half decade, the city of Diyarbakır, the heartland of military-political conflicts between the Turkish state and the Kurdish political movement, has undergone wide-ranging changes in terms of its physical environment, residential patterns, historic and cultural landscapes, and urban imaginaries. During the three terms of pro-Kurdish political parties in local governments, as circumspect peace talks and contested political negotiations gradually superseded armed conflicts and extralegal violations of the previous period of emergency rule, traces of long-lasting destitution, deprivation and repudiation the city has suffered for decades have not disappeared but began to vanish.

Change is palpable as it is controversial. Any observer of city parks ornamented with statues carrying the words of Kurdish national aspirations and named after prominent figures of past and current steadfast struggles, culture and social centers established by municipalities, luxurious apartment buildings and gated communities developed on green-field sites, historic commercial inns converted into tourist facilities, or wide boulevards penetrating into vast farm lands that surround the city would not be indifferent to the change the city has undergone. No matter what these signify, as imminent results of a normalization process that would reinstitute the state's authority in the Kurdish territory and would reintegrate Kurdish population to the imagined unity of

nationhood or the initial products of a cultural and political renaissance that the Kurdish people has long fought for, the change itself is real.

However, the restructuring of Diyarbakır is neither exceptional nor unrelated to the city's peculiarities in terms of its place within the longstanding conflict between the Turkish state and the Kurdish political movement. Its spatial story echoes neoliberal restructuring processes many cities across the globe have undergone in the last three decades or so; yet this story cannot be written without the vocabulary of multifaceted contestations termed the "Kurdish issue." On that matter, recent urban processes that characterize the city are both components of and complementary to the broader socio-spatial dynamics that have reconfigured the relation between center and periphery, urbanity and rurality in Turkey.

The city of Diyarbakır, once a multicultural regional center with its supranational networks of trade and command, and then a marginalized provincial town where economic capacity and structure were circumscribed due to absence of public investment, is changing its shell in a gradual but decisive manner. Physically, in less than two decades, the city has sprawled toward the West, as vast rural lands in Kayapınar have been turned into profitable urban land on which planned and regulated dwelling units, city parks and shopping malls have been developed. Such a sprawl has rendered the unlicensed and poor-quality housing stock in the dilapidated neighborhoods, where thousands of immigrants that had left their villages and towns in the 1990s due to the state's forced eviction policies found refuge, even more visible.

On the other hand, as accelerated urban development rearranged the city's residential geography, Suriçi, the historic city center, has entered into a cycle of depopulation and begun to evolve from a rundown but animated neighborhood into a

physically renewed and functionally redefined commercial area. This demographic trend has been empowered by extensive spatial interventions of both central state institutions and municipalities which, in accordance with their competing spatial conceptions and strategies, strive to reconfigure the physical, historic and cultural landscapes of Suriçi. Undertaking urban transformation projects and comprehensive restoration and renovation works, actors of various scales have triggered a process of regeneration in the area.

Consequently, Kayapınar has evolved from a former rural settlement into a populous district which symbolizes today for many “the new face” of the city; and Suriçi has taken decisive steps on its way to become a center of attraction, accommodating more commercial facilities and tourism-related activities than ever. However, change has had its own price, such as reinforcing the trend towards spatial segregation, fragmentation, homogeneity and hierarchy. While the middle classes of the city looked for ways to escape the gloom of the ‘90s behind walls of luxurious housing projects, those who stayed in the central city and *gecekondu* settlements in the outskirts manifested their anger, in mediated ways, even towards the former during the March 2006 riots.<sup>1</sup>

On the general level, the period under consideration corresponds to a timespan during which urban imaginaries, conceptions, strategies and policies that can be grasped via the notion of “neoliberal urbanism” have become not only dominant but also

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<sup>1</sup> For a comprehensive analysis of the March 2006 actions, see Onur Günay, “Political Debt and Development Discourse: Translating Incommensurable Worlds in Diyarbakır” (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2009). See also Cuma Çiçek, *Küreselleşme ve Yerel Demokrasi: Liberal Katılım Söyleminin Sınırları: Diyarbakır Örneği* (İstanbul: Vate Yayınları, 2011), pp. 192-5.

hegemonic in Turkey.<sup>2</sup> In the aftermath of the 2000-2001 economic crises, which evolved into an organic crisis that led to a total reshuffle of the political establishment,<sup>3</sup> restructuring of major cities in terms of their physical and social spaces has become one of the most crucial aspects of local and national politics.

As discussed in Chapter 2, critical urban studies, drawing mostly on the “urban political economy” approach and using the notion of “neoliberalism” as their primary analytical category, have produced a considerable volume of knowledge on the comprehensive urban processes Turkish cities have undergone in the post-2002 period. The research has shed light on different aspects of the political-institutional configuration formed by the AKP (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*) governments’ legal and administrative re-regulations, however, as argued throughout the study, has left to a great extent the problematic of hegemony outside the scope of analysis. Although it has elaborated on the coercive aspects of discourses and practices brought by the AKP’s politics of space, it is difficult to claim that the question of how these policies and mechanisms become legitimate and acceptable in the eyes of local decision-makers and residents has been correspondingly addressed.

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<sup>2</sup> Throughout the study I use the terms “hegemony,” “hegemony project” and “hegemonic” in their Gramscian sense in order to underline the importance of grasping widespread consent to contemporary urban processes. In Gramsci’s classical formulation, political and economic authority of a class over others in advanced capitalist formations is explained by the articulation of hegemony the dominant class exercises throughout society with direct domination exercised through the state. This argument suggests that hegemony, defined basically as political, intellectual and moral leadership of a historical bloc, necessitates the active consent of subaltern social classes and groups, hence resonance between a particular political-social project and everyday dreams, aspirations and values (common sense). Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: International Publishers, 1990).

<sup>3</sup> İsmet Akça, “Hegemonic Projects in Post-1980 Turkey and the Changing Forms of Authoritarianism,” in *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, ed. İsmet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (London: Pluto Press, 2014), p. 30.

Seeking to fill this analytical gap in the relevant literature, this dissertation centers upon the problematic of hegemony of neoliberal urbanism, and takes Diyarbakır as a case to further comprehend the operation of its inclusionary mechanisms, in the context of different social groups and power/domination relations, along with its exclusionary character in terms of its processes and results.

Locating processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014 within the twofold context of urban neoliberalization and of the longstanding and multifaceted struggle between the Turkish state and the Kurdish political movement, this dissertation asks principally why and in what ways the restructuring of the city in a manner that further fragmentizes, hierarchizes and homogenizes urbanscape has been accomplished. That is to say, the departure point of the study is to examine, from a sociological standpoint, processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014, the formative years of the pro-Kurdish municipal experience, within the framework of hegemony of neoliberal urbanism.

Accordingly, it seeks to elucidate economic, political and cultural dimensions of struggles to reconfigure the city's historic, cultural and physical landscapes, examining the encounters (articulations and dissociations, continuities and discontinuities at once) between the hegemony project ("authoritarian resolution of the Kurdish issue") of the historical bloc represented politically by the AKP and the counter-hegemony project ("democratic resolution of the Kurdish issue") developed by the Kurdish political movement. In that context material, institutional and ideological aspects of urban processes are examined empirically and analyzed elaborately through the cases of tourism-oriented urban regeneration undertaken in Suriçi and suburbanization process in Kayapınar.

## Motivation of the Study

In the last decade or so, a relatively vast literature of critical urban studies on comprehensive restructuring processes Turkish cities continue to undergo has accumulated. Exploring spatial processes in tandem with the dynamics of the relations of capitalist production and reproduction, these studies emphasize the relationship between the restructuring processes implemented all over the world through neoliberal policies and spatial restructuring, and astutely consider the urban space as the “privileged site” of neoliberalization.<sup>4</sup> Researchers cover various themes from shifts in geographies of production to increasing residential segregation, from the commodification of public spaces to the role of legal system and state violence in spatial interventions.

In a sense, this study can be viewed as part of this emerging literature. Yet, it also takes its motivation from its shortcomings. As elaborated in Chapter 2, research in the recent period has pointed to global, national and local dynamics that led to the emergence of competitive localities, the political-economic rationale behind the orientation of the economic elites to reconfigure geographies of production, consumption and accommodation of cities, mechanisms of urban transformation projects, role and motivation of central and local governments in the politics of urban renewal, and social and spatial outcomes for subordinated groups and so on. Nevertheless the question why and in what ways the recent urban processes have assumed not only a dominant but also hegemonic character was not answered

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<sup>4</sup> Ayfer Bartu Candan and Biray Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism: a Gated Town and a Public Housing Project in Istanbul,” *New Perspectives on Turkey* 39 (2008), p. 9.

satisfactorily. It would not be incorrect to claim that the inclusionary mechanisms established on the local level have been to a great extent underresearched.

For example, in the context of debates about urban transformation, which constitutes a significant sub-area of urban studies, the negative social consequences of these transformation policies for the people living in these areas have often been highlighted.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the nature and role of discursive tools (such as earthquake, crime, slums etc.), which surround the locations and population groups that are the target of these policies and which are employed to increase persuasiveness of the projects and to curb possible resistance against them, have been rightly pointed out.<sup>6</sup> However, the legitimacy attributed to urban transformation outside or even within these neighborhoods has not been problematized adequately in relation to different social

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<sup>5</sup> Among others see, Dikmen Bezmez, “The Politics of Urban Regeneration: The Case of the Fener and Balat Initiative,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 37 (2007), pp. 59-86; Nur Bahar Sakızlıoğlu, “Impacts of Urban Renewal Policies; The Case of Tarlabasi- Istanbul” (MA thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2007); Özlem Çelik, “The Pattern and Process of Urban Social Exclusion in Istanbul” (MA thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2008); Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;” Tuna Kuyucu, “Poverty, Property and Power: Making Markets in Istanbul’s Informal Low-Income Settlements” (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 2009); Tuna Kuyucu and Özlem Ünsal, “‘Urban Transformation’ as State-led Property Transfer: An Analysis of Two Cases of Urban Renewal in İstanbul,” *Urban Studies* 47, no. 7 (2010), pp. 1479-99; Ceren Kuşçuoğlu, “Relocation and Disempowerment: A Critical Approach to *Gecekondu* Resettlement Projects in Turkey through the Example of Bezirganbahçe Housing Project” (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2010); İclal Dinçer, “The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Historic Urban Space: Areas of Urban Renewal in Istanbul,” *International Planning Studies* 16, no.1 (2011), pp. 43-60; Asuman Türkün, “Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships,” *International Planning Studies* 16, no.1 (2011), pp. 61-73; Asuman Türkün ed., *Mülk, Mahal, İnsan: İstanbul’da Kentsel Dönüşüm* (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2014); Utku Balaban, “The Enclosure of Urban Space and Consolidation of the Capitalist Land Regime in Turkish Cities,” *Urban Studies* 48, no. 10 (2011), pp. 2162-79; Julia Strutz, “Yeni İstanbul İçin Eski İstanbul Tahayyülleri: Süleymaniye Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi,” *Toplum ve Bilim* 124 (2012), pp. 126-45; Neslihan Demirtaş-Milz, “The Regime of Informality in Neoliberal Times in Turkey: The Case of the Kadifekale Urban Transformation Project,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 2 (March, 2013), pp. 689-714; Ozan Karaman, “Urban Renewal in Istanbul: Reconfigured Spaces, Robotic Lives,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37, no. 2 (March, 2013), pp. 715-33.

<sup>6</sup> Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism,” pp. 17-19.

groups who are not always enthusiastic supporters of capital circles or the governing party. The hegemony of neoliberal urbanism has been directly addressed by a few studies.<sup>7</sup>

This analytical gap within the literature stems from certain epistemological and ontological premises and the methodological positioning of –surely not all but a significant part of– critical urban studies, as I discuss in detail in Chapter 2. My suggestion is that four basic tendencies can be discerned within the literature regarding modality, actors, site, and repercussions of neoliberal spatial restructuring in Turkey.

First, an economic approach to neoliberal urban restructuring, which understands neoliberalism not as a multifaceted class strategy but the sum total of the immediate demands of individual capitalists, would view neoliberal urbanism only as a means of transferring wealth from one societal group to another.<sup>8</sup>

Second, a considerable part of the literature, even though it draws on different theorizations of the state, would produce a state-centric analysis that presumes the state

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<sup>7</sup> Erbatur Çavuşoğlu, “Hegemonik Bir Süreç Olarak Türkiye Kentleşmesi” (Ph.D. diss., Mimar Sinan University, 2004) examines the building amnesties during the pre-AKP era in order to develop an analysis of urbanization in Turkey from the perspective of hegemonic politics. For the recent period, see Tarık Şengül, *Kentsel Çelişki ve Siyaset* (Ankara: İmge Yayınevi, 2009); Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;” Mehmet Penbecioğlu, “The Political Construction of Urban Development Projects: The Case of Izmir” (Ph.D. diss., Middle East Technical University, 2012); Erbatur Çavuşoğlu and Julia Strutz, “‘We’ll Come and Demolish Your House!’ The Role of Spatial (Re-)Production in The Neoliberal Hegemonic Politics of Turkey,” in *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, ed. İsmet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (London: Pluto Press, 2014), pp. 141-53; Erbatur Çavuşoğlu, *Türkiye Kentleşmesinin Toplumsal Arkeolojisi* (İstanbul: Ayrıntı Yayınları, 2014). For a more comprehensive study which similarly centers upon the hegemony problematic and traces the construction of political subjectivities within everyday life practices, see Cihan Tuğal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Türkün, “Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships.”

as a separate institutional entity outside or above social relations, rather than viewing it as a moment of power relations within and among social classes.<sup>9</sup>

Third, almost all studies focus on a few major cities and certain areas of these cities, which have been subjected to the state's spatial interventions through urban transformation projects, underestimating the explanatory power of the "ordinary and daily" metamorphoses of the rest.<sup>10</sup>

Fourth, social unrest that stems from certain urban policies, of which urban transformation projects are considered as an ideal-typical tool, are viewed as forms of integrated resistance, even as components of an urban movement *per se*, producing a blind spot regarding the hegemonic character of neoliberal urbanization.<sup>11</sup>

In consequence, despite their analytical advantages compared to mainstream studies, which aim at explaining urban processes with theoretical and methodological tools deriving from established paradigms such as modernization theory or neoclassical economics, the majority of the studies in this literature fall back to a problematical deployment of the notion of neoliberalism. In most cases, it is used as a self-explanatory key concept. In many examples, urban neoliberalization marks a series of policies,

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<sup>9</sup> John Lovering and Hade Türkmen, "Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul: The State-led Construction of Property Markets, and the Displacement of the Urban Poor," *International Planning Studies* 16, no.1 (2011), pp. 73-96; Türkün, "Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships;" Osman Balaban, "The Negative Effects of Construction Boom on Urban Planning and Environment in Turkey: Unraveling the Role of the Public Sector," *Habitat International* 36, (2012), pp. 26-35 and "Neoliberal Yeniden Yapılanmanın Türkiye Kentleşmesine Bir Diğer Armağanı: Kentsel Dönüşümde Güncelin Gerisinde Kalmak," in ed. Ayşe Çavdar and Pelin Tan, *İstanbul: Müstesna Şehrin İstisna Hali* (İstanbul: Sel, 2013), pp. 51-78; Dilek Özdemir, "The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no. 6 (2011), pp. 1099-117.

<sup>10</sup> For an exceptional study, see Jean-Françoise Pérouse, *İstanbul'la Yüzleşme Denemeleri: Çeperler, Hareketlilik ve Kentsel Bellek*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2011).

<sup>11</sup> Mehmet Baki Deniz, "Grassroots Action Against Gecekondu Renewal Projects: The Case of Istanbul Başibüyük and Ankara Dikmen Vadi" (M.A. thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2010).

which are disseminated from top to bottom and from center to periphery; put forward by the initiative of homogenous elites and violate unexceptionally the oppressed sections of the society.

Against this backdrop, the ultimate aim of this study is not to dismiss the notion of neoliberalism *in toto*, but to build an alternative approach towards the politics of space, which would provide us with tools to problematize, on higher levels of abstraction, the intrinsic link between hegemony formation and the urban. Accordingly, formulating key premises in line with a Lefebvorean-Gramscian approach, I reflect on the nexuses of hegemony-space, space-state and space-political, and seek to contribute to a non-static, relational and non-capital-logic theorization of neoliberal urbanism.

My suggestion is that an approach informed simultaneously by Lefebvre's theoretical insights on the vital role of urbanization processes for the survival of capitalism<sup>12</sup> and Gramsci's reflections on centrality of the political within the complex interplay between economic base, state and superstructure<sup>13</sup> would provide us a solid ground on which an analysis of hegemonic character of urban processes could stand.

A synthesis of epistemological, ontological and methodological conceptions elaborated by these prominent figures that represent undercurrents of Marxist thought would provide us with a ground on which the nature of state spatialities and of struggles

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<sup>12</sup> Beginning from the late 1930s Henri Lefebvre embarks upon reformulating the basic categories of Marxist thought in a spatialized manner, yet the main bulk of his spatial theory began to mature in the late 1960s and then culminated in four successive works published in the first half of the 1970s. English translations in the order of publication in original: *The Urban Revolution*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003); *The Survival of Capitalism: Reproduction of the Relations of Production*, (London: Allison and Busby, 1976); *The Production of Space*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

<sup>13</sup> Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*.

between classes, class fractions and other social and political groups on urban processes could be analyzed in a non-static, relational and non-capital-logic manner.

Throughout the dissertation I deploy the notion of neoliberalization as a conflictual and contingent, politically-constructed, twofold process of commodification and depoliticization.<sup>14</sup> Thus, I seek to avoid drawbacks of instrumentalist/functionalist understandings of neoliberalism that reproduce a mechanical and deterministic theorization of relations between the state and society, economy and politics, material relations and ideology. Such an approach also differentiates from a certain poststructuralist reading of neoliberalism that correctly identifies that neoliberalism can take different forms in the specific conditions of each locality, but omits the fact that capitalism intrinsically comprises of a dynamic of uneven and combined development.<sup>15</sup>

Revised in this way, neoliberal urbanism is a complex configuration of strategies which aim at commodifying urban space by disintegrating the political capacities of subordinate groups. Therefore, it must be conceived as a class strategy of depoliticization which intrinsically contains moments of destruction and creation, rather than simply a coherent plan to transfer land rents from the urban poor to the well-off, so as to analyze contemporary process of production of space through a dialectical unity of consent and coercion.

As Harvey points out, the foremost requirement to comprehend neoliberalism is based on the question of why and in which circumstances neoliberal policies, which

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<sup>14</sup> Jamie Gough, "Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City: Opposites, Complements and Instabilities," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002), pp. 405-26.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Aihwa Ong, *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations of Citizenship and Sovereignty* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006). For a critique of governmentality approaches to neoliberalization, see Neil Brenner, Jamie Peck and Nik Theodore, "Variegated Neoliberalization: Geographies, Modalities, Pathways," *Global Networks* 10, no. 2 (2010), pp. 182-222.

have devastating consequences for large segments of the society, become acceptable in the eyes of precisely the same segments.<sup>16</sup> That is, the question is also about how consent is produced for these policies and mechanisms. Harvey searches the answer in the ability of neoliberal policies and projects to resonate with the common sense in a given society, i.e., values and desires that are generally accepted and naturalized.

In this study I take this statement as a point of departure to grasp the processes of neoliberalization that include differences, contradictions and adaptations in themselves, beyond an understanding of neoliberalism as a uniform and coherent ideology or doctrine.<sup>17</sup> As Gramsci suggests, the notion of common sense does not denote fixity in the sense that those values and desires on which a certain hegemony project is based on are given and frozen.<sup>18</sup> On the contrary, common sense is constituted historically and politically as certain values, dreams and aspirations are reframed and naturalized within a political configuration the boundaries and parameters of which are determined by material conditions. On that matter, hegemony is not given, but constructed in an unmechanical and contingent way within political struggles. Thus, in analytical terms, struggles among competing hegemony projects designed and implemented by competing historical blocs of social and political groups (classes, class fractions, intellectuals and so forth) precede the formation of a particular hegemonic outlook.

In the light of this statement, throughout the dissertation, I focus on the struggles between local and non-local actors such as central state institutions, organizations that

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<sup>16</sup> David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>17</sup> Gough, "Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City;" Neil Brenner and Nick Theodore, "Cities and Geographies of 'Actually Existing Neoliberalism,'" in *Spaces of Neoliberalism: Urban Restructuring in North America and Western Europe*, eds. N. Brenner and N. Theodore (Malden: Blackwell, 2002).

<sup>18</sup> Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 12.

can be considered under the roof of the Kurdish political movement such as municipalities, NGOs and political parties, and business circles to redefine and reconstruct physical, historical and cultural landscapes of the city of Diyarbakır. Accordingly, my aim is to elucidate the ways in which hegemony of urban neoliberalization is politically constructed, the grounds on which this construction is based upon, and the interaction of imaginations, values and desires that shape these grounds, so as to produce an understanding of neoliberalism which would be analytically explanatory and politically creative.

Such an approach to the local dynamics of politics of space in Diyarbakır would bring up two interrelated and equally important research agendas. The first centers upon political subjectivities of local residents that experience the dramatic changes in the physical and social spaces of the city, and questions how discourses, policies and practices produced by local and non-local decision-makers are perceived, consumed and reproduced in their everyday lives. The second focuses on the struggles among institutional actors that conceive and implement spatial interventions into the cityscape, and seeks to reveal how everyday values, aspirations and dreams are appropriated and reframed as promises (*vaat*) by the very decision-makers within the processes of production of space. That is to say, while the former demonstrates the mundane aspects of consent formation, the latter traces the material, administrative and imaginary components of the political struggles that situate the very process of consent formation. As detailed in the following, I designed the research on which this dissertation is based in line with the second path. On that score, this study tries to delineate primarily the dynamics of political struggles among institutional actors in the city through which spatial conceptions and strategies are designed, challenged, negotiated and reformulated.

On the other hand, the first path, which needs further, comprehensive research based on fully-fledged ethnographic methods, would be complementary to the present study, demonstrating contingent articulations on the everyday level and revealing the interface between the institutional level and civil society.

### Research Design and Main Questions

The research and writing phases of this dissertation consisted of repetitive reformulations. When the project was initially conceived of, my original aim was to construct a comparative research on the diversified activities of TOKİ (Mass Housing Agency), which has been restructured through extensive legal and administrative changes during the three terms of AKP rule and refunctioned as a crucial component of the field of low-income housing. The vantage point was the suggestion that most of the studies in the emerging literature consider TOKİ, in an instrumentalist way, as the *symbol* of the coercive aspects of neoliberal urbanism, which is basically understood as a frozen set of policies that aims to transfer land rents from the urban poor to capital without any social and political considerations.

Commonly, urban transformation projects planned in cooperation of central government and municipalities and run by TOKİ in *gecekondu* neighborhoods and dilapidated quarters of city centers are viewed as the most exemplary cases that reveal tools, actors and outcomes of urban neoliberalism. Against this prevalent disposition, I aimed at focusing on other construction activities, projects designed and put on the market for middle-income groups, of TOKİ, so as to reveal its role as a decisive component of a redefined “social policy” that expands and deepens the commodification

of urban land and housing on one hand and regulates the field of low-income housing on the other. Accordingly, during the predissertation research, I searched for possible sites where dynamics and relations of spatial politics among central state institutions such as local branches of ministries and governorship offices, municipalities, TOKI and business organizations could be best observed in their multiplicity.

Already during the first field trips and initial interviews with contractors and TOKI officials, however, I became aware that designing a multi-sited comparative research centered solely on housing policies would impede me from comprehending the complex interplay between various actors wherein material and ideational dimensions of hegemony formation are formed, negotiated and reconfigured.

On the one hand, penetrating into the institutional mysteries of TOKI beyond manifest and already apparent relations between business circles and government agents was a practical obstacle to develop a solid ground; yet, more crucially, I soon realized that TOKI does not assume a unidirectional and fixed function, but responds to the positioning of actors within a configuration, the parameters and coordinates of which are redefined constantly within political struggles and in accordance to relations of power. Although my understanding of neoliberalization led me to be more cautious to the adaptations and reorientations of the state in its interventions into spatial processes, it soon appeared that I was not exempt, in epistemological and methodological terms, from a structuralist-functionalist approach to the state.

As the space of fieldwork narrowed from its originally conceived boundaries and the confines of the object of analysis expanded, the category of politics of space, as the focus of the project, was clarified. Therefore, rather than focusing on political negotiations around housing policies through an investigation centered upon TOKI's

activities in different sites, I decided to elaborate on the complex interplay within a particular political environment, of which TOKİ is a crucial component, to comprehend contingent and conflictual articulations of material, institutional and ideological dimensions of processes of production of space in a particular site.

Consequently, in tandem with the key premises that I derived from my theoretical readings, I formulated some propositions for a research that would help produce satisfactory answers to the question of why and how neoliberal urbanism and processes of urban restructuring have become hegemonic in Turkey in the AKP period.

Accordingly, such a research agenda takes into consideration that neoliberal urbanism is not a one-legged strategy of dispossession and eviction, but simultaneously involves multifold processes of commodification and depoliticization.

Secondly, the state's strategic interventions to urban space are neither unidirectional nor instrumental, but comprise of strategies of adaptation and dislocation, consent and coercion at once, in accordance to their character as a moment of political struggles.

Therefore, neoliberal urbanism in Turkey cannot be comprehended without analyzing its multi-locational dynamics that reconfigure the relation between center and periphery, urbanity and rurality.

Lastly, politics of space can only be understood through an examination of multidimensional encounters between the competing hegemony projects of different historical blocs which are not absolutely homogenous in themselves, but have internal contradictions and conflicts.

In the light of these propositions, the research was redesigned to examine the material, institutional and ideological dimensions of production of space in Diyarbakır in

the period 1999-2014. Diyarbakır provides us a productive case to observe both how the dynamics of urban governance, in a locality where relations of conflict between the center and the periphery are historically variegated, affect the implementation of national urban policies, and whether the actual functioning of neoliberal urbanization differentiates according to modality and level of incorporation to, and development of, the capitalist mode of production. Considering spatial peculiarities stemming from the historical development of capitalism in Turkey, which has been uneven and combined as in all cases, and shifting the lens of analysis to localities other than Istanbul and Ankara are essential in enhancing our understanding of alterations in physical and social spaces of cities, and rural areas of course, in the recent period characterized by boosted neoliberalization.

In that framework, examining various dimensions of politics of space in Diyarbakır, a particular locality where competing hegemony projects encounter each other in dramatic contrast, would contribute, I believe, to the literature in understanding the actual *modi operandi* of neoliberal urbanism. Thus, throughout the dissertation, I examine material, institutional and ideological aspects of the politics of space in Diyarbakır in their relation to the AKP's hegemony project and the Kurdish political movement's counter-hegemony project.

These opposite hegemony projects do produce substantially different spatialities, or more correctly, these conflicting projects are configured through two distinct spatialities: the state's "post-war space" and the Kurdish movement's "post-colonial space."<sup>19</sup> The point of departure here is the argument that the urban is not simply a site

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<sup>19</sup> I use the prefix "post" in both cases to describe the condensation of a particular conception and orientation within the parties' hegemonic projects. That is to say, these notions signify the

or container of social and political processes but “it is, in itself, a set of conflictual heterogenous processes which are producing spatio-temporalities as well as producing things, structures and permanencies in ways that constrain the nature of the social process.”<sup>20</sup> In other words, the spatial processes are not simply constituted by but are also constitutive of social processes. Therefore, as Lefebvre contends, the exercise of hegemony cannot be imagined and exercised without the inclusion of spatial processes.<sup>21</sup>

The reason that lies behind the periodization is twofold, in line with the “conjunctural analysis” derived from the Gramscian notion of conjuncture,<sup>22</sup> which analyzes historical situations as “a confluence of multiple, spatially mediated temporal

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vectors of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic projects, rather than settled historical-political configurations. Accordingly, the term “post-war” does not imply that military conflicts between the state and the PKK have ceased entirely, and that militaristic tools, methods and discourses have disappeared. Rather, it implies that such tools tend to become secondary, since the state undertakes novel strategies that aim to produce the active consent of the inhabitants in order to (re)institute its authority in the Kurdish territory. Özok-Gündoğan uses the same term in a slightly different manner to indicate the relative deceleration of armed conflicts after the mid-90s. See, Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, “‘Social Development’ as a Governmental Strategy in the Southeastern Anatolia Project,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 32 (2005), p. 104. Similarly, by the term “post-colonial” I aim to show the centrality of efforts within the Kurdish movement’s counter-hegemonic project to redefine the relations between Kurdish identity, the state and Turkish identity. Gambetti in her analysis of practices, methods and discourses used by the Kurdish movement to (re)appropriate urban space prefers not to use the term “post-colonial,” since Diyarbakır is a city “caught between the process of cultural decolonization and the simultaneous process of neoliberal (global) colonization.” I share Gambetti’s views on neoliberalization of the city, yet I do not see the postcolonial condition at odds with the neoliberal condition. Indeed, as elaborated in Chapters 5 and 6, I consider the post-colonial moment of the movement’s hegemony project as an unintended component of the neoliberalization of the urban space. See, Zeynep Gambetti, “Decolonizing Diyarbakır: Culture, Identity and the Struggle to Appropriate Urban Space,” in *Comparing Cities: The Middle East and South Asia*, eds. A. Kamran and M. Rieker (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 99.

<sup>20</sup> David Harvey, “Contested Cities: Social Process and Spatial Form,” in *Transforming Cities: Contested Governance and New Spatial Divisions*, ed. Nick Jewson and Susanne MacGregor (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 11.

<sup>22</sup> Stuart Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left* (London: Verso, 1988), p. 127.

rhythms.”<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, on the general level, I consider the AKP period as a distinct political conjuncture during which the organic crisis the Turkish political system experienced in the 1990s has been superseded under the leadership of a new historical bloc represented politically by the ruling AKP. Conjunctural analysis conceives of the constitution of hegemony within a particular national-social formation as not a mechanical reflection of structural conditions (i.e. economic base in Marxist terminology), but as a process emerging out of political struggles, the coordinates of which are determined by material conditions. In political-economic terms, the urban policies of the AKP and its strategic interventions in spatial processes comprise a crucial component of the restructuring that has rendered hegemony formation on national scale possible.<sup>24</sup>

On the particular level, the strategic turn of the Kurdish political movement and its redefined orientation in the political field following the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the leader of the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party), which as would be expected affected the form of pro-Kurdish parties’ presence in local politics and governments, makes it possible to depict substantial differentiations in the dynamics of the Kurdish issue. Thus, I limit the timespan of the research with the period 1999-2014.

Fieldwork was undertaken in two distinct sites: Suriçi, the historic city center of Diyarbakır, where an important and disputed urban transformation project is still being implemented by TOKİ and the metropolitan and district municipalities, and Kayapınar, which has become a populous district within a very short time due to intense

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<sup>23</sup> Stefan Kipfer, “City, Country, Hegemony: Antonio Gramsci’s Spatial Historicism,” in ed. Michael Ekers, Gillian Hart, Stefan Kipfer and Alex Loftus, *Gramsci: Space, Nature, Politics* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), p. 83.

<sup>24</sup> Çavuşoğlu and Strutz, “‘We’ll Come and Demolish Your House!’ The Role of Spatial (Re-) Production in The Neoliberal Hegemonic Politics of Turkey.”

suburbanization dynamics triggered and empowered by complex relations among local landowners, developers, municipalities and TOKİ. On the empirical level, this dissertation seeks to address four interrelated questions:

- i) How should one understand the tourism-oriented urban renewal plans and efforts in Suriçi and the suburbanization and residential segregation in Kayapınar within the context of the long-lasting conflict between the state and the Kurdish political movement?
- ii) What are the economic factors that configure the local and national actors' spatial conceptions and strategies? To what extent and in what ways do the economic motivations of local and non-local actors who possess various capacities in determining urban policies overlap?
- iii) In what ways does the institutional architecture, which is a crucial area of struggles over political sovereignty in the Kurdish territory, impact upon urban processes?
- iv) What are the urban imaginaries, desires and values that form the spatial conceptions of actors in state institutions, pro-Kurdish municipalities, and local business circles?

In methodological terms this study uses qualitative data obtained from three main sources. Between December 2012 and May 2013, I spent three months in total in the city and conducted semi-structured interviews with municipal officers, staff of municipal departments such as the planning bureau and social work, activists and local managers of the BDP (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*), the DTK (*Demokratik Toplum Kongresi*) and the AKP, managers and staff of the local branch of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, contractors, landowners, real estate agents, representatives of local business organizations and professional chambers, personnel of NGOs undertaking social work in *gecekondu* neighborhoods, and local architects and urban planners, lawyers specializing in real estate cases, and local journalists. Additionally, I supported these accounts with interviews conducted in Ankara and Istanbul with TOKİ managers responsible for the projects in Diyarbakır, personnel of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, and

urban planners that prepared the 2006 Master Plan of Diyarbakır and the 2012 Preservation Plan for Suriçi.

Secondly, I carried out an archival study of the newspaper *Gündem*, a national daily in line with the Kurdish political movement, *Söz*, a local daily owned by a prominent local family close to the AKP, and *Yeni Yurt*, a local daily in line with the Gülen Community, in addition to a survey of two prominent websites, *emlakkulisi* and *milliyetemlak*, specializing in real estate news.

Lastly, I surveyed literature on Diyarbakır, that is reports, periodicals and strategic plans produced by the Ministry of Development, Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Karacadağ Development Agency, regional agency responsible for Diyarbakır and Şanlıurfa, metropolitan and district municipalities, Union of Municipalities of Southeast Anatolia, professional chambers such as Chamber of Architects, Chamber of Urban Planners and Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and prominent NGOs such as TESEV and TEPAV.

### Plan of the Study and Arguments

Consequently, the overall aim of this dissertation is to contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of neoliberal urbanism, analyzing the moments of politics of space that form processes of production of space in Diyarbakır and encounters between distinct spatial conceptions and strategies. In that context, focusing on the struggles among central state institutions, organizational bodies within the Kurdish political movement and local business circles to reconfigure the physical environment and social space of Suriçi and Kayapınar, I examine spatial practices, economic motivations that lie behind

these practices, the structure of the institutional architecture through which urban policies are produced and implemented, the content of the knowledge produced within these institutions, and urban imaginaries that configure spatial interventions.

To do so, I take the period 1999-2014 as a particular conjuncture, and elaborate on encounters –articulations and dissociations, continuities and discontinuities– between the hegemony project developed by the historical bloc politically represented by the AKP and the counter hegemony project of the Kurdish political movement. My point of departure is the suggestion that content, modality and parameters of the politics of space in Diyarbakır are determined by the moments of these encounters. Ultimately, I seek to reveal and comprehend factors that render possible the prevalence of a certain mode of spatial politics in a way that deepens conflicts which already exist within the everyday life of residents.

Chapter 2 aims to elaborate theoretical and methodological foundations on which this study is based. In the first section I review the relation between neoliberal restructuring and the urban as a privileged site of these processes, introducing the cornerstones of the urban political economy approach. Discussing basic aspects of contemporary urban policies, I provide a working definition of the notion of neoliberal urbanism as conflictual and contingent, politically-constructed, a twofold process of commodification and depoliticization.

Then I move on to a detailed discussion on the recent literature of critical urban studies that has produced important research on Turkish cities in the last decade. In this section I argue that the question of why and in what ways the recent urban processes have assumed not only dominant but also hegemonic character was omitted by the majority of the studies in the emerging literature. Accordingly, I discuss certain

tendencies within the literature that have impeded many studies problematizing the operation of inclusionary mechanisms of neoliberal urbanism.

In the third and central section of Chapter 2, I formulate key premises on which an alternative theoretical and methodological approach that would enable us to fill this analytical gap in the literature could be based. Synthesizing Lefebvre's theorization of the link between space and hegemony formation and Gramsci's reflections on the centrality of the political within complex interplays between different instances of the social totality, I provide a detailed conceptual discussion on material, institutional and ideological dimensions of production of space, the state's strategic interventions into spatial processes, and temporality and spatiality of political struggles. Lastly, as a conclusion, departing from these theoretical and methodological foundations, I offer some key propositions for a research in line with a Lefebvrian-Gramscian approach.

In Chapter 3, I provide a historical account of changes in physical environment of the city of Diyarbakır. Starting with the first construction activities outside the city walls in the late nineteenth century, when the first spatial effects of multifaceted process of capitalist modernization that subjected Diyarbakır to successive waves of turbulent changes emerged, I trace the evolution of the city's geographies of production, consumption and accommodation in four distinct periods until the 1990s. Rather than building up a fully-fledged urban historical investigation, this chapter aims at contextualizing distinct phases of urbanization in relation to the local, regional and national dynamics. In this chapter I situate my account within two interrelated frameworks, and examine Diyarbakır's past urban forms in relation to processes of incorporation to the capitalist mode of production and the state's efforts to (re)institute its authority in the Kurdish territory.

Chapter 4 was designed not as a chapter *per se* but an interlude that aims at constructing political categories on which analysis in the subsequent main chapters is based. In this chapter I begin with the statement that changes in Diyarbakır's physical and social space in the post-1999 period have emerged in tandem with the changes in political processes that reconfigure the Kurdish issue, along with the effects of changes in broader capitalist relations of production and reproduction.

Accordingly, my argument is that the recent dynamics of the Kurdish issue can be grasped by examining two distinct hegemony projects conceived and gradually implemented by the state and the Kurdish political movement in the 2000s. Here I provide background information on the dynamics of the conflict between the state and the Kurdish political movement in the post-1999 period, and formulate the notions of "post-war space" and "post-colonial space" so as to encapsulate the spatiality of struggles for hegemony in a particular political conjuncture.

Then I discuss the economic, political and cultural dimensions of these projects in relation to certain spatialities they simultaneously produce and are formed by. The notion of post-war space denotes spatial processes that have emerged as a result of the state's employing discursive and non-discursive tools to reinstitute its authority in the Kurdish territory, within a context wherein militaristic methods are no longer the primary option. This strategic orientation, which aims basically at establishing hegemony over the Kurdish population by replacing the state's repressive face with its "benevolent" face, has economic, administrative and imaginary dimensions.

On the other hand, in the aftermath of the PKK's abandonment of the goal of a separate state, the Kurdish political movement has embarked upon redefining the nature of political relationships to be established both within the Kurdish population and

between the Kurds and the state. The decolonization of the Kurdish territory and constitution of “an alternative governmental presence”<sup>25</sup> are crucial components of this strategic reorientation which in turn produces a particular spatiality, the post-colonial space.

Drawing on the arguments outlined above, Chapter 5, one of the two main chapters of the dissertation, seeks to answer how and in what ways the encounters between post-war and post-colonial spatial conceptions and related strategies have made possible the restructuring of Suriçi in a manner that reproduces existing inequalities and urban segregation. Accordingly, in the first section, I describe the socio-spatial structure of the İçkale and Alipaşa-Lalabey neighborhoods where TOKİ and municipalities have implemented an urban transformation project, drawing on secondary sources on the location of the project sites, land and housing ownership structure, and demographic and socio-economic features.

Then I move on to distinguish the phases of the transformation projects, and examine the administrative and political positioning of the relevant actors within the restructuring process of Suriçi so as to reveal how and to what extent the political and institutional actors were involved in the regeneration process in the historic center.

Lastly, the main section of this chapter analyzes the dynamics behind the complex interplay between actors, putting the restructuring of the physical and social landscape of Suriçi in the context of encounters between distinct spatial conceptions and strategies of the state and the Kurdish political movement in the post-1999 period.

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<sup>25</sup> Nicole F. Watts, *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), p. 142.

My argument in this chapter is twofold. Urban regeneration plans and efforts in Suriçi reflect an implicit reconciliation around a tourism-centered perspective that envisages Diyarbakır as an attractive locality, on which the significant institutional and political actors that have various capacities to influence urban processes and governance –e.g. governorship office, municipal authorities, regional development agency, local business organizations and TOKİ– have converged in the course of time.

However, how and with what tools the upgrading of Suriçi will be undertaken is subjected to continuous struggles between the state and the Kurdish political movement in two main fields: struggles to redefine the contours of political sovereignty and struggles over the urban imaginaries to redefine Diyarbakır’s identity. On that score, while the AKP government strives to reinstitute the state’s political authority by expanding the administrative and legal capacities of the local branches and organizations of central state institutions, the Kurdish political movement fights to expand the boundaries of its alternative governmental presence by using the institutional capacity of the local governments it holds.

On the other hand, two distinct claims of authenticity, the Kurdish political movement’s imagination of Diyarbakır as “the capital of Kurdish identity”<sup>26</sup> and a pro-Islamic imaginary that conceives Diyarbakır as “the city of Sahabah,” confront each other in the vacuum that Kemalist Republicanism has left behind in the 2000s. In the end, the restructuring of Suriçi is incorporated into long-standing political aspirations, and thus the urban transformation projects and the overall goal of regeneration gain legitimacy in the eyes of local residents and municipal authorities, despite their severe negative impact on the urban poor.

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<sup>26</sup> Gambetti, “Decolonizing Diyarbakır,” p. 99.

In Chapter 6, following a similar mode of analysis undertaken in the previous chapter, I examine suburbanization processes and residential development in Kayapınar and focus on the field of housing. First, I describe the socio-spatial characteristics of Kayapınar, drawing on statistical data on the district's demographic background and the housing boom of the recent period.

The second section analyzes the political construction of the relations of housing provision, exploring, from a sociological point of view, the positioning of the actors –i.e. developers, landowners, TOKİ, municipal administrators and planners– at different phases of urban sprawl. In this section I reveal the contingent factors behind the persistent dynamic of suburbanization in Kayapınar, and demonstrate why demand-side incentives do not provide us with a solid base to comprehend the political economic relations forming the suburbanization process. Then I argue that recent residential development in Kayapınar expresses the emergence of a *de facto* pro-growth coalition which consists of local landowners, construction firms and municipal administrations. These actors have created appropriate conditions for extended real estate activity which is considered as one of the primary sites for further capital accumulation both by local business circles and municipal managers. Moreover, even though central state institutions cannot be regarded as a part of this local coalition, in practice, spatial interventions of the state via mass housing projects and land sales of TOKİ have reinforced the dynamics of the construction sector.

The last section analyzes the imaginary aspect of this process, putting the discussion on the ordering of Kayapınar's physical and social landscape in the context of encounters between the distinct spatial conceptions of the state and the Kurdish political movement. Here I basically seek to reveal what promises (*vaat*) one may find beyond

the efforts to build a new city, thus focus on the urban imaginaries of actors. My argument is that even though the spatial conceptions of the ruling AKP and the Kurdish political movement, which have produced radically different hegemony projects as regards the Kurdish question, vary at many points, it would not be incorrect to diagnose an alignment between the AKP's promise of stability and the Kurdish political movement's promise of leaving the city of the 90s behind and building a distinguished city. Kayapınar denotes an urbanscape where a dream of stability and urban pride, the will to control and will to self-manage, memories of the past and visions for the future are simultaneously inscribed on walls of gated communities.

Consequently, juxtaposing the reconfiguration of the historic center in tandem with a tourism-oriented economic growth perspective and the suburbanization in the outskirts as an inevitable result of the construction industry-based capital accumulation process, we can argue that recent developments in the city of Diyarbakır have assumed a neoliberal character. Despite the multifaceted and deep-rooted conflicts between the central state institutions and local political forces, unintended and intrinsically conflictual articulations of competing spatial conceptions and strategies of the AKP and the Kurdish political movement have rendered urban neoliberalism, as a certain mode of politics of space, both possible and hegemonic in the 2000s.

Flourishing urban middle classes and business circles within Kurdish society, their expectations of urban life and physical environment, the resonance between their demands, values and desires and the priorities and promises of pro-Kurdish municipal administrators on the one hand, and the AKP's strategic interventions into urban space to destabilize the institutional presence and political legitimacy of the Kurdish political movement on the other have rendered possible the adaptation of general features of

supra-local urban practices into a particular locality which has historically been comprised of multifaceted relations of conflict between the center and periphery.

At first glance, the recent spatial story of the city of Diyarbakır that I reconstructed in this study might seem as a simple illustration of a general trend that has produced similar phenomena and reinforced dynamics of segregation and homogeneity in many cities across the globe. Changes in the city's physical and social space might be considered as constitution of the inevitable reign of a market-led conception, which has had material and ideological superiority in the field of urban governance, in another locality distinctive to a certain extent in political terms. Even a certain outlook might regard this process as unfolding of the universal tendency towards a particular *telos* — capitalist rationalization.

However, that spatial conceptions, policies and projects which came to fore during the formative years of pro-Kurdish municipal experience reflect the hegemony of neoliberal urbanism should not conceal the fact that such hegemony has been an outcome of a hegemonic struggle. The crucial point that must be underscored here is that the material, administrative and imaginary components of the recent restructuring of the city of Diyarbakır have been determined within contingent political struggles. That is to say, in line with the argument that Tuğal makes in the context of rationalization of Islam in Turkey,<sup>27</sup> the incorporation of the city into urban neoliberalism cannot be viewed as a spontaneous and inevitable process.

Neoliberal urbanism, as a particular mode of politics of space, is not a fixed policy package, designed by a handful experts to respond to demands of individual capitals. Its actual functioning is configured by encounters between different political

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<sup>27</sup> Tuğal, *Passive Revolution*, pp. 2-3.

projects, spatial conceptions and strategies in a given conjuncture and locality. Thus, its hegemony depends on the actors' ability to respond to the moments of the conflicts and negotiations between different social and political forces. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 5, even the urban transformation projects are not fixed designs, and they are not necessarily applied from top to down, and disseminated from center to periphery. They undergo changes in relation to the capacities of actors within the processes of the political struggle. As I underline in the case of Kayapınar, the form and extent of the state's strategic interventions into space vary significantly in relation to the balance of power in a given locality. Experts and bureaucrats at state institutions such as TOKİ are receptive to local relations of force, and adapt their priorities on the basis of negotiations with local political actors. The dialectic between the space and the political is at work. Each moment of the politics of space is configured in tandem with moments of multidimensional hegemonic struggles, and in turn what makes a particular spatial moment hegemonic is the degree of articulations occurring within these struggles.

On the other hand, however, the specificity of the Diyarbakır case must not be ignored. Presence of a well-articulated counter hegemony project which includes constitution of a separate political geography on regional scale impedes us generalizing the arguments of this study. The dramatic confrontation between the state and the Kurdish political movement, which has matured discursive and practical tools to signify the city of Diyarbakır within a particular, post-colonial, imagination that has both national and supra-national repercussions, renders the city's spatial journey unique to a great extent. Therefore, the conceptual construction developed throughout the study should be considered not as an overarching model that can be applied to decipher intricacies of any locality, but as an approach that must be reformulated according to

peculiarities of each locality so as to reveal contingent and politically-constructed character of neoliberal urbanism. On that matter, a comparative case study which would expand the space of fieldwork to other localities where one could observe how different relations of power in the field of contentious politics effect spatial moments and depict in what ways non-presence of an articulated counter hegemony project impacts upon configuration of material, administrative and imaginary pillars of neoliberal urbanism might be fruitful to test both the arguments and approach proposed in this study.

CHAPTER TWO  
ANALYTICAL CONSIDERATIONS:  
HEGEMONY AND THE URBAN

This chapter consists of three main sections. First I review the relation between comprehensive economic, political, cultural, and spatial changes cities have undergone on a global scale in the last three decades or so and restructuring processes commonly conceptualized as neoliberalism, introducing the cornerstones of a particular approach to the urban and urbanization processes — namely, the urban political economy approach. Notwithstanding important methodological and theoretical differences within this approach, I discuss phenomena and processes that characterize urban neoliberalization which should be conceptualized as a conflictual and contingent, politically-constructed, twofold process of commodification and depoliticization.

Second, I discuss in depth common points made by, and the analytical advantages of, recent critical urban studies, which, employing the notion of neoliberalism as their primary analytical category, have produced a considerable wealth of knowledge on comprehensive changes the Turkish cities have undergone in the post-2002 period. However, most of the studies in the literature, due to certain theoretical and methodological tendencies they display, leave to a great extent the problematic of hegemony off the analysis. In this section I argue that the question why and in what ways recent urban processes have assumed not only a dominant but also hegemonic character could not be answered satisfactorily, and propose to problematize the

operation of inclusionary mechanisms of neoliberal urbanism in the context of different power/domination relations along with its exclusionary mechanisms.

In the third section, I formulate key premises on which an alternative theoretical and methodological approach that might serve to bridge this analytical gap in recent literature could be based. My suggestion is that an approach informed simultaneously by Lefebvre's theoretical insights on the vital role of urbanization processes for the survival of capitalism and Gramsci's reflections on the centrality of the political within a complex interplay between different instances of the social totality, which are schematically figured as base and superstructure in classical Marxist accounts, would provide us a solid ground on which an analysis of hegemonic character of urban processes can stand. Accordingly, three premises regarding nexuses of hegemony-space, space-state and space-political are formulated so as to construct an alternative approach towards the politics of space. Lastly, in the conclusion section, departing from these theoretical and methodological foundations, I offer some propositions for a research in line with a Lefebvorean-Gramscian approach.

### Neoliberalization and the City: An Overview

Neoliberalism, during the last twenty years or so, has become a key concept and a buzzword of academic and political debates on a global scale. The concept often signals an economic doctrine which can only be realized as a broader political project. It seeks to free markets and private property from collective rights and obligations, in particular those interventions associated with the state, while the state is ever more required to protect the free interplay of market agents from infringement by others. That is to say,

neoliberalism has developed as a particular strategy for shifting the political balance of forces and imposing market discipline on the working class and other subordinate social groups.<sup>28</sup> As a matter of fact, the initial ascendancy of neoliberalism was a political response of the capitalist class to break the social, economic, cultural and political forces of labor, which had posed constraints on capital accumulation and exacerbated the crisis tendencies of capitalism.<sup>29</sup>

At the level of ideology, neoliberalism has sought to undermine ideas of representation and those institutional structures that have historically been linked to collective action and organization, underscoring a strategy which James Ferguson astutely describes as “anti-politics,” which marginalizes and obscures spheres of political contestation.<sup>30</sup> Demands on public services are rejected on the ground that state spending should be reduced in order to “increase competitiveness,” while all other “historically accumulated forms of socialisation” are targeted to depoliticize the economy and society.<sup>31</sup>

The actual political practices of neoliberal transformation reflect a shift in political rationalities from the welfare state structuring which involved interventionist and protectionist economic policies to that of a neoliberal state which promotes competition and decentralization while calling for personal responsibility and self-help to keep under control socio-economic insecurity aggravated by the expansion of market relations. Thus neoliberalism embodies “a kind of operating framework”<sup>32</sup> that seeks to

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<sup>28</sup> Gough, “Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City.”

<sup>29</sup> Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

<sup>30</sup> James Ferguson, *The Anti-politics Machine: ‘Development’, Depoliticization, and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

<sup>31</sup> Gough, “Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City,” p. 410.

<sup>32</sup> Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell, “Neoliberalizing Space,” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002), p. 380.

emphasize the importance of competitiveness and abandonment of non-market arrangements between capital, labor and the state which possessed a potential to hinder accumulation.

If earlier research on post-Keynesian-welfare transformations of the economic and political structures had rested too heavily on the totalizing and homogenizing conceptualizations of neoliberalism, recent scholarship in geography, anthropology and urban studies has attempted to unpack the concept and survey its multifaceted manifestations in different local and spatial settings. This implied an orientation on “the indigenization of neoliberalism in different places, the spatial unevenness of its spread, and [...] its articulations and intersections with other political-cultural formations and governing projects.”<sup>33</sup>

Neoliberalism has grown as a deeply spatial phenomenon principally because, as Saskia Sassen pointed out in her classical account of global cities, geographic dispersal and concentration are key elements of organizational architecture of the global economic system.<sup>34</sup> The dynamics of dispersal and concentration, or the uneven development of the global capitalist system as Harvey put it,<sup>35</sup> require analyses of connections between neoliberalization processes and spatial and local transformations.

While earlier studies on the subject emphasized the global South-North divide in analyzing neoliberal restructuring projects, recent scholarship has drawn more attention to urban arrangements as constitutive of neoliberal modes of governance and regulatory

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<sup>33</sup> Catherine Kingfisher and Jeff Maskovsky, “The Limits of Neoliberalism,” *Critique of Anthropology* 28, no. 2 (2008), p.116.

<sup>34</sup> Saskia Sassen, *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 1991).

<sup>35</sup> Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

relations. From the early 1970s, major cities in advanced capitalist countries have become targets and laboratories of neoliberal policy experiments.<sup>36</sup>

As Gough argues, cities are strongly subject to capital mobility, a condition which poses the “discipline of value” with full force on both individual firms and urban governments.<sup>37</sup> This played an all the more decisive role in setting the rules of interlocal competition which compelled urban governments to compete for the creation of a “favorable investment climate” for private sector development.

The factors that created the conditions for interlocal competition are multifold. Deindustrialization, widespread unemployment, speculative movements of financial capital, global location strategies of transnational corporations, fiscal austerity at both national and local level, restructuring of local state services towards privatization and decentralization, fierce competition between workers for jobs organized at varied spatial scales, all coupled with an ideological climate characterized by the neoconservative critique of the welfare state and egalitarian public policies have determined and put constraints on local governments to adjust to uncertainties created by the expanding global economy.<sup>38</sup>

Moreover, the increasing economic importance of industries such as finance and specialized services, new multimedia sectors, and telecommunications services which are characterized by “cross-border networks and specialized divisions of functions

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* See also, Julian Brash, *Bloomberg’s New York: Class and Governance in the Luxury City* (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 2011).

<sup>37</sup> Jamie Gough, “Neoliberalism and Localism: Comments on Peck and Tickell,” *Area* 28, no. 3 (September 1996), pp. 392-8.

<sup>38</sup> Jamie Peck, Nik Theodore, and Neil Brenner, “Neoliberal Urbanism: Models, Moments, Mutations,” *SAIS Review* 29, no. 1 (Winter-Spring 2009).

among cities rather than international competition *per se*<sup>39</sup> has dramatically underpinned a new urban politics focused on the issues of local economic development and local economic competitiveness.

This reorientation of urban governance has been described by Harvey as a shift from a “managerial” approach to urban politics, with policies focused on social welfare and the democratic concerns of public participation and strategic planning to a new “urban entrepreneurialism,” which put more emphasis on cities’ capacities to mobilize strategies to enhance place-specific assets within their territories.<sup>40</sup> For instance, in the past three decades or so, “place branding” has transformed from a relatively amateurish and informal activity of local authorities to a fully-fledged strategy to encourage the tourism industry within cities.<sup>41</sup> Place branding, the use of imagery and theming, and the selling of place-related assets have become central components of the political economy of tourism and the revitalization strategies of cities.<sup>42</sup>

Another important dimension of neoliberal urbanism is what Neil Smith describes as “the generalization of gentrification as a global urban strategy.” Appropriation and generalization of gentrification as a strategic means of interurban competition in the 1990s was made possible principally by the strong penetration of financial capital and the intensification of partnerships between private capital and the

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<sup>39</sup> Saskia Sassen, “Global City: Introducing a Concept,” *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11, no. 2 (2005), p. 40.

<sup>40</sup> David Harvey, “From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism,” *Geografiska Annaler. Series B, Human Geography* 71, no. 1 (1989), pp. 3-17.

<sup>41</sup> Susan S. Fainstein and Dennis R. Judd, “Global Forces, Local Strategies, and Urban Tourism,” in ed. Dennis R. Judd and Susan S. Fainstein, *The Tourist City* (New Haven: Yale, 1999), pp. 1-20.

<sup>42</sup> Sharon Zukin, “Cultural Strategies of Economic Development and the Hegemony of Vision,” in ed. Andy Merrifield and Erik Swyngedouw, *The Urbanization of Injustice* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), pp. 233-242.

local state, and, according to Smith, found its most developed expression in urban regeneration.<sup>43</sup>

These transformations and new institutional arrangements also redefine a new mode of citizenship in which rights are distributed in accordance with entrepreneurial capacity and creativity. The good urban citizen is conceived as a person who can contribute to the economic vitality of the city. Creative workers are the core of “the knowledge economy” and account for the varieties in its geography. This makes it all the more important for local governments to invest in the “human capital” of their citizens if they are to become loci for innovation and growth.<sup>44</sup>

Entrepreneurial regimes are quite diverse and dependent upon local economic, social, political and cultural contexts. As Peck, Tickell and Brenner argued, the production of neoliberal projects are always “defined by the legacies of inherited institutional frameworks, policy regimes, regulatory practices and political struggles”<sup>45</sup> both at the local, national and supranational levels. The uneven development of global capitalism not only produces socio-spatial differences, but also underscores the self-destructive and contradictory character of neoliberalism that generates new meanings, practices and forms of subjectivity, including the formation of class identities.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the inherent contradictions and geographical contingency of neoliberalization processes provide openings for political struggles and democratic reappropriations of city space.

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<sup>43</sup> Neil Smith, “New Globalism, New Urbanism: Gentrification as Global Urban Strategy,” *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002), p. 443.

<sup>44</sup> See, Edward J. Malecki, “Cities and Regions Competing in the Global Economy: Knowledge and Local Development Policies,” *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy* 25, no. 5 (2007), pp. 638-54.

<sup>45</sup> Peck, Theodore, and Brenner, “Neoliberal Urbanism: Models, Moments, Mutations,” p. 50.

<sup>46</sup> Brash, *Bloomberg’s New York*, pp. 9-10.

Recent Studies on Turkish Cities:  
Commonalities, Advantages, and Shortcomings

In the previous section, I outlined the cornerstones of a particular frame, the urban political economy approach, which is commonly employed in making sense of the current spatial processes. In general terms, this approach begins with a call to discuss the relationships within and among urban spaces in a dual determination of the dynamics of capital accumulation and class struggle.

In this sense, it differs from neoclassical approaches, which regard the physical configuration of territories or the relations between territories, as a result of an equilibrium generated by the sum of the rational choices of individuals,<sup>47</sup> or ecological approaches, which read urban forms as simple reflections of the ongoing competitive relationship between individuals and social groups in order to effectively benefit from the resources.<sup>48</sup> It claims that spatial processes are not only reflections of broader social processes but also constitutive of these macro processes. In this respect, as frequently pointed out above, it emphasizes the relationship between the restructuring processes implemented all over the world through neoliberal policies and the spatial restructuring, and considers urban space as the “privileged site” of neoliberalization. Thus, the urban becomes at once a presupposition, a medium and an outcome of the changing social relations of capitalism.

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<sup>47</sup> For a leading figure of the neo-classical approach, see Allen J. Scott, *Metropolis* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).

<sup>48</sup> The classical ecological, or human ecology, approach to the city and urbanization has been exemplified by the Chicago School thinkers. See, Robert Park, Ernest Burgess and Roderick McKenzie, *The City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1925).

It would not be wrong to argue that this frame of description is often used to grasp the comprehensive restructuring that Turkish cities continue to undergo. In this sense, the notion of neoliberalism is the primary analytical category that the recently emerged literature of critical urban studies is built upon. The process of urban restructuring, which has been empowered by regulatory changes and institutional reorganizations that the AKP governments have implemented, in its broadest sense, is depicted as the establishment of “the neoliberal urban regime”<sup>49</sup> or the taking root of “neoliberal urbanism.”<sup>50</sup> From shifts in geographies of production to increasing residential segregation, from the commodification of public spaces to the role of the legal system and state violence in spatial interventions, a series of processes are evaluated within this common perspective based on the conceptualization of urban neoliberalism.

Taking into account the serious differences within the construction of conceptual categories, methodological approaches or research designs, I use the term critical urban studies, defined somewhat loosely, to show the accumulation of a literature which aims to account for the rapid and fundamental changes experienced in Turkish cities in the 2000s.

When we look at these studies which, at the most general level, do not interpret the dynamics of commodification, segregation and fragmentation that shape the phenomenon of urbanization and urban space as given and spontaneous reflections of social life, but, in the framework of this approach, aim at revealing the relations and

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<sup>49</sup> Kuyucu and Ünsal, “‘Urban Transformation’ as State-led Property Transfer.”

<sup>50</sup> Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism: a Gated Town and a Public Housing Project in Istanbul.”

mechanisms of power and exploitation that are inherent in each of these processes, we see a series of common themes.

The first is the efforts to historicize urban policies and their results, which have doubtlessly been implemented more effectively during the AKP period, in the context of globalization, which has radically altered the economic, social and cultural fields.<sup>51</sup> Post-2002 developments are regarded as the continuation and concentration of the restructuring orientation that aims to incorporate Turkish cities –especially Istanbul but also emerging industrial areas such as Gaziantep<sup>52</sup> and Kayseri<sup>53</sup>– to the networks of global finance, production, trade and consumption, whose first steps were implemented by the ANAP governments in the 1980s.<sup>54</sup>

Second, parallel to the shifts in geographies of production both at international and national level, the literature points to the increasing importance of real estate investments. On the one hand, the financialization trend, which had an enormous impact on a global scale after the 1980s, has directed large scale capital into real estate investments historically characterized by the actions of small-scale business actors. On the other hand, the shifts in the geographies of production within and between cities have made urban space, more and more, the target of these investments. Hence, while real estate activities gain a much more privileged position within processes of capital

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<sup>51</sup> Among others see, Çağlar Keyder, “Globalization and Social Exclusion in Istanbul,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 29, no. 1 (2005), pp. 124-34; Asu Aksoy, “Istanbul’s Choice,” *Third Text* 22, no. 1 (2008), pp. 71-83; Ozan Karaman, “Remaking Space for Globalization: Dispossession through Urban Renewal in Istanbul” (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 2010).

<sup>52</sup> Mustafa Bayırbağ, “Pro-Business Local Governance and (Local) Business Associations: The Case of Gaziantep,” *Business and Politics* 13, no. 4 (2011), Article 6.

<sup>53</sup> Ali Ekber Doğan, *Eğreti Kamusalılık: Kayseri Örneğinde İslâmcı Belediyecilik*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2007).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Çağlar Keyder and Ayşe Öncü, “Globalization of a Third-World Metropolis: Istanbul in the 1980s,” *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 17, no. 3 (Summer, 1994), pp. 383-421.

accumulation, urban space, in tandem with global trends, is posited at the center of neoliberalization processes.<sup>55</sup>

Thirdly, these shifts in investment put pressure on a more effective inclusion of urban spaces, such as old industrial facilities, workers' neighborhoods around industrial areas, and decrepit housing or workplace areas in urban centers, into market mechanisms. Here, it is possible to mention a strong dynamic of commodification acting in both horizontal and vertical directions. The commodification trend of urban land and housing areas, which emerged in a historical context conditioned by the existence of state-owned large urban lands and the role these areas played in meeting subordinate groups' need for affordable housing within the period of import substitution development, has been a dominant tendency in the 2000s.<sup>56</sup>

Fourth, this increasing tendency of commodification and the dynamic of market formation are made possible by the existence of an interventionist state, and through legislative changes and institutional reorganizations that directly affect urban processes. The large-scale development projects performed by national or transnational companies along the periphery or in attractive locations such as waterfronts, the transformation of old industrial facilities within urban centers or poor neighborhoods into hotels,

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<sup>55</sup> Osman Balaban, "Capital Accumulation, the State and the Production of Built Environment: The Case of Turkey" (Ph.D. diss., Middle East Technical University, 2008).

<sup>56</sup> Bezmez, "The Politics of Urban Regeneration;" Sakızlıoğlu, "Impacts of Urban Renewal Policies;" Çelik, "The Pattern and Process of Urban Social Exclusion in Istanbul;" Kuyucu, "Poverty, Property and Power: Making Markets in Istanbul's Informal Low-Income Settlements;" Kuşçuoğlu, "Relocation and Disempowerment: A Critical Approach to *Gecekondu* Resettlement Projects in Turkey through the Example of Bezirganbahçe Housing Project;" Dinçer, "The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Historic Urban Space: Areas of Urban Renewal in Istanbul;" Türkün, "Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships;" Utku Balaban, "The Enclosure of Urban Space and Consolidation of the Capitalist Land Regime in Turkish Cities;" Strutz, "Yeni İstanbul İçin Eski İstanbul Tahayyülleri: Süleymaniye Kentsel Dönüşüm Projesi;" Demirtaş-Milz, "The Regime of Informality in Neoliberal Times in Turkey: The Case of the Kadifekale Urban Transformation Project;" Karaman, "Urban Renewal in Istanbul: Reconfigured Spaces, Robotic Lives."

residential or office building complexes, or the emergence of new shopping malls and clusters of office structures are made possible by the facilitating intervention of the state at local and central level. The state employs a number of mechanisms, which include both incentive and coercive moments, so that cities can participate in competitive relations created by the globalization process. In this respect, a number of tools and mechanisms, ranging from penal codes, which obstruct *gecekondu* construction, to interventions in planning to render private sector investments more attractive, from new municipal laws, which centralize political authority, to institutional structures, such as TOKİ, which address the housing needs of lower middle classes, are examples of the interventionist nature of the state.<sup>57</sup>

Fifth, the increasing commodification in urban areas, and state interventions, which reinforce this dynamic, have an effect primarily on housing but also reproduction areas and possibilities of collective consumption, in a way that reinforces class divisions. Eventually, a binary housing geography is shaped: on the one hand, the housing areas of the urban poor are increasingly entangled with capital and state pressure; on the other hand, the number of prosperous enclaves increases.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Emphasis on the crucial role that the state has in urban neoliberalism is shared by many studies. Yet, for discussions that directly problematize the state-led character of market-making processes, see Tuna Kuyucu and Özlem Ünsal, "Urban Transformation as State-Led Property Transfer"; Helin Özge Burkay, "*Social Policy of Urban Transformation: Social Housing Policies in Turkey from the 1980s to Present*" (MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2006); Lovering and Türkmen, "Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul: The State-led Construction of Property Markets, and the Displacement of the Urban Poor;"; Özdemir, "The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009;"; Osman Balaban, "The Negative Effects of Construction Boom on Urban Planning and Environment in Turkey." For a rather different theoretical perspective on the state's role, see Özlem Çelik, "Changing Forms and Strategies of State Intervention in the Housing of the Poor in Istanbul" (Ph.D. diss., the University of Sheffield, 2013).

<sup>58</sup> Şerife Geniş, "Producing Elite Localities: The Rise of Gated Communities in Istanbul," *Urban Studies* 44, no. 4 (2007), pp. 771-98; Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, "Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;"; Orhan Esen and Tim Rieniets, "Fortress Istanbul: Gated Communities and the

Linked to this, the sixth point is the emphasis on the increasing fragmentation of urban life, the consolidation of divisions between social classes articulated with mechanisms of domination based on issues such as ethnicity or gender that facilitates spatial segregation.<sup>59</sup> Parallel to the dynamics of restructuring attempts or reforms implemented in other areas of social life, urban neoliberalism is about the increasing incorporation of living spaces and usage areas of those at the bottom into market mechanisms on the one hand, and represents suppressing the forms and possibilities of coexistence these groups have historically produced on the other.<sup>60</sup>

The last point is the inference that this dynamic of fragmentation and segregation in the social, and hence spatial field is kept under control by the power of state. Deployment of coercive laws, the markedly increased existence of policing and surveillance devices, attempts to keep public spaces under strict control, indicate the necessity of a deliberately ambiguous form for legal structures and mechanisms in order to implement neoliberal urban policies.<sup>61</sup>

Compared to mainstream studies, which aim at explaining urban processes with theoretical and methodological tools derived from established paradigms such as modernization theory or neoclassical economics, or critical but aspatial studies, which

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Socio-Urban Transformation,” in *Public Istanbul: Spaces and Spheres of the Urban*, edited by Frank Eckardt and Kathrin Wildner, (Verlag: Transcript, 2008); Pérouse, *İstanbul’la Yüzleşme Denemeleri*, pp. 133-230.

<sup>59</sup> Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism”; Ozan Karaman and Tolga İslam, “On the Dual nature of Intra-Urban Borders: The Case of a Romani Neighborhood in Istanbul,” *Cities* 29 (2012), pp. 234-43. For relatively earlier cases, see Hatice Kurtuluş, ed., *İstanbul’da Kentsel Ayrışma*, (İstanbul: Bağlam, 2005).

<sup>60</sup> Ozan Karaman, “Urban Renewal in Istanbul.”

<sup>61</sup> For an elaborated analysis of the deployment of law in the neoliberal urban regime, see Tuna Kuyucu, “Law, Property and Ambiguity: The Uses and Abuses of Legal Ambiguity in Remaking Istanbul’s Informal Settlements,” *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 38, no. 2 (March 2014), pp. 609-27.

center upon the notion of neoliberalism, these works, whose common points I have tried to outline, in the analytical sense, preponderate over others in a number of ways.

First of all, unlike mainstream studies within social science disciplines, which tend to depict spatial processes as naturalized, the studies in this group do not interpret the notion of urbanization and the dynamics of commodification, segregation and fragmentation that shape urban space as given and spontaneous reflections of social life. Rather, they aim at revealing the relations and mechanisms of power and exploitation inherent to each of these processes. For example, these works do not consider the notion of regeneration of decrepit areas and the resulting displacement of people living in these regions as a simple spatial result of the level of economic development or a spontaneous result of the housing demands of those whose cultural consumption demands grow in parallel to their purchasing power. From the selection of areas to be renewed to the establishment of a legal framework or institutional partnerships that will make the implementation possible, power relations contained within all stages of renewal practices are problematized.

Secondly, territories are not conceptualized as spatial units on which economic relations are simply reflected. The notion of urban neoliberalism is not a term that expresses the general name of neoliberal implementations in urban spaces. Rather, it demonstrates the centrality of urban processes in the establishment of relations that provide the institutionalization and entrenchment of neoliberalism. In this sense, it is assumed that there is a constitutive relationship between neoliberal processes and urban spatial processes.

Thirdly, in contrast to the frequent and sometimes perfunctory use of the notion of neoliberalism in the field of social sciences, these studies point out the constitutive

aspect of spatial processes and they are more open to the finding that neoliberal politics vary spatially and temporally. Due to the nature of the research unit that highlights specificities, spatial studies are inclined to question the generally accepted narrative, which suggests that neoliberal policies, i.e. practices of privatization, deregulation and liberalization in a number of fields, such as labor, social security, education and health, are implemented as a stable “policy package.”<sup>62</sup>

However, these general advantages do not eliminate the fact that, within urban studies, the notion of neoliberalism, in most cases, is used as a self-explanatory key concept. In many examples, urban neoliberalization marks a series of policies, which are disseminated from top to bottom and from center to periphery; put forward by the initiative of homogenous elites and unexceptionally violate the oppressed sections of the society.

Surely, at the level of empirical reality, this overall picture is not entirely invalid. Therefore, this does not mean that the notion of neoliberalism should be abandoned altogether. However, even though we designate the accuracy and necessity of the notion of neoliberalism, it is important to note that there are some analytical drawbacks within the literature of the recent period about the conceptualization of urban neoliberalism. In order to overcome these drawbacks, it is necessary to construct some of the problematics that have so far been ignored.

It can be claimed that this analytical gap that I refer to, which is about the insufficient problematization of the intrinsic links between production of hegemony and

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<sup>62</sup> For a literature review that critically evaluates the common and mostly ineffective employment of the notion of neoliberalism, and that discusses analytical advantages of geographical-spatial readings of neoliberalization processes, see Berna Yazıcı, “Güncel Sosyal Bilim Analizinin Sihirli Anahtarı: ‘Neoliberalizm’?” *Toplum ve Bilim* 128 (2013), pp. 7-31.

urban processes, is caused by the epistemological and ontological premises and methodological positioning of—surely not all but a significant part of—the aforementioned studies that I loosely described as a group. It is possible to read these analytical drawbacks via four basic tendencies: modality, actors, site, and repercussions of neoliberal spatial restructuring. In the following subsections, I describe these tendencies, which form a distinct pattern within critical urban studies. In this way, in the last section, I will discuss the premises upon which an alternative approach, that allows an understanding of urban processes within the framework of the problematic of hegemony, can be constructed.

### Modality

Advocates of recent urban restructuring policies disparage leftwing critiques of urban neoliberalization for picturing contemporary spatial processes one-sidedly as practices of displacement, dispossession and segregation. A typical argument suggests that such adverse outcomes of urban transformation projects are quantitatively inconsiderable and politically insignificant, since the majority of inhabitants of transformation sites are content with the prospect of becoming the owner of a formal dwelling unit, and with the idea of the physical and social regeneration of their neighborhoods. Correspondingly, critiques accurately underline the prevalence of relocations, decipher legal ambiguities and administrative uncertainties that reinforce the already unbalanced relations of force between dwellers and private developers, central and local state authorities, security forces and the media, and indicate the immense gap between the ideological promotion and the actual realization of projects.

Yet, despite the actuality of these asymmetrical power relations and existence of adverse outcomes for inhabitants, such projects gain acceptance both from the outside and inside of transformation areas. Besides the political implications of such disparity, a crucial question regarding the conceptualization of neoliberalism should be raised at this point: Is it possible to understand how consent for neoliberal urban policies and practices that do not mean anything but dispossession, segregation and displacement for subordinate social groups could have been produced so far, without recourse to simplistic explanations of strength and resilience of ideological –in the sense of “false consciousness”– apparatuses employed by politicians, state officials and the media?

A common tendency within the recent critical literature conceives of neoliberal urbanism as a single-legged strategy: that the recent urban policies and related legal and administrative changes are above all associated with immediate demands of individual capitalists to obtain more shares from urban land rent. Mostly referring to Harvey’s formulations of “spatial fix” and “accumulation by dispossession,”<sup>63</sup> urban transformation projects are viewed as both tool and representative case of a comprehensive plan to transfer land rents from the urban poor to the well-off.

Accordingly, the main pillar of neoliberal urbanism is considered as the transfer of wealth from one societal group to another. Urban regeneration is viewed as the imposition of business interests on the working class and other oppressed social groups without any social or political consideration. On that score, it is consistent that Lovering and Türkmen indicate commonalities between the Istanbul case and most cities around the world in terms of “the dominant approach to urban development in the institutions of

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<sup>63</sup> David Harvey, “The Spatial Fix: Hegel, Von Thünen and Marx,” in *Spaces of Capital: Towards a Critical Geography* (New York: Routledge, 2001), pp. 284-311; “The ‘New’ Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession,” *Socialist Register* 40 (2004), pp. 63-87.

urban governance and the accompanying official rhetoric,” which serve interests of capital, even though they refer to “an ostensibly Islamic approach to government and political culture” to explain the manifestly authoritarian character of urban governance in Turkey.<sup>64</sup>

Therefore, these studies, which accurately recognize the state’s role in making of markets through such policies and projects, restrict the analysis to revealing of the mechanisms and actors of processes of the relocation and dispossession of residents.<sup>65</sup> If urban regeneration policies are merely implemented to open up new fields wherein capital can overcome its problems of profitability stemming from its crisis-prone characteristics, then it would be understandable to focus the research and analysis on the actors and mechanisms of this process of dispossession so that capitalism’s nature can be displayed. Accordingly, research designs are based on revealing either the adverse effects of urban transformation projects on subordinate groups, or the state’s role in the planning and implementing of these projects. Yet, other crucial aspects and sites of neoliberal urbanism, for instance changes in patterns of housing for new urban middle classes, are underresearched due to a lack of interest on grasping the more “spontaneous” and “subtle” appearances of class struggles on urban space.<sup>66</sup>

This is an economic approach to neoliberal urban restructuring which confuses neoliberalism as a multi-faceted class strategy with the sum total of the immediate interests of individual capitalists. There is also another crucial aspect of neoliberalization

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<sup>64</sup> Lovering and Türkmen, “Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul,” p. 74.

<sup>65</sup> Türkün, “Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships.”; Ayşe Çavdar and Pelin Tan, “Sunuş: Müstesna Şehrin İstisna Hali,” in ed. Ayşe Çavdar and Pelin Tan, *İstanbul: Müstesna Şehrin İstisna Hali* (İstanbul: Sel, 2013), pp. 7-14.

<sup>66</sup> For a recent empirical research on middle class housing in Istanbul, see Hatice Kurtuluş, Semra Purkis and Adalet Alada, *İstanbul’da Yeni Konut Sunum Biçimleri ve Orta Sınıfların Sosyo-Mekânsal Yeniden İnşası* (Ankara: TÜBİTAK, 2012).

which cannot be explained by pure economic terms. It would be an analytical and political flaw to view neoliberal urbanism only as a means of transferring wealth from one societal group to another. Neoliberal urbanism is not only about imposing the interests of individual capitals, without any social considerations, on the urban poor that hold undervalued lands.

What makes it distinctive is the articulation of processes of “accumulation by dispossession,” as Harvey termed, with processes of depoliticization of conflicts in relations of production and reproduction. Following a particular strand of theorization of neoliberalism, it could be contended that urban neoliberalism is about instituting class discipline on labor, and the depoliticization of conflicts between capital and residents who are also part of the working class, thus disintegrating particular socializations that residents have historically constituted.

Gough defines socialization as “the coordination and cooperation of social actors other than through markets,” and suggests that socialization within capitalist society can take very different forms in political terms.<sup>67</sup> That is, socializations do not necessarily have a socialist, or even social democratic, nature, as it is the case in post-war West Germany and Japan where socialization of relations of production and reproduction have assumed a conservative character.

Neoliberalism as a class strategy has aimed at breaking up these ties and relations of socialization, because these “contributed to a wholesale politicization of waged production, reproduction relations and urban spaces,”<sup>68</sup> and hence increased the bargaining power of workers and spurred the demands of residents for enhanced

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<sup>67</sup> Gough, “Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City,” p. 406.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409.

collective consumption such as housing, and in turn raised costs of production and reproduction for capital as a whole.

In short, neoliberal urbanism is a complex and particular configuration of strategies which aims at commodifying urban space through the disintegration of the political capacities of subordinate groups. There is an intrinsic relation between the commodification of various realms of urban life and the disintegration of socializations embedded in urban space. Therefore, it must be conceived as a class strategy of depoliticization which has moments of destruction and creation, rather than as a coherent plan to transfer land rents from the urban poor to the well-off.

### Actors

The question of how the relation between state and capital should be defined within the context of urban restructuring is crucial for our discussion. Two different but analytically overlapping explanations for the state's role can be found within the field of critical urban studies. The first considers the state in an instrumentalist way as a tool in the hands of the ruling class, and reduces its function within urban processes to a mere facilitator of individual capitalists' demands for more lucrative investments. The second explanation attributes a more determining role to the state, and considers the field of law and administration as the primary source of power, drawing on the critical institutionalist theory of state.

In the end, both would produce a state-centric analysis that presumes the state as a separate institutional entity outside or above social relations, rather than viewing it as a moment of power relations within and among social classes. However, such narrow

analyses underestimating the state's multifaceted function within urban processes prevent us from seeing the contradictory nature of urban neoliberalization.

A first explanation would picture the state as an institutional expression of pure command logic: that the state is above all an apparatus, an executive committee, which exclusively serves for benefit of a handful of capitalists. This explanation is suggested by a strand of Marxist urban studies, which analyses the state's legislative and administrative role and power within urban transformation projects.<sup>69</sup>

This model rightly displays the emergence of an urban coalition that comprises of central and local government actors, bureaucrats, property developers, land owners, advisors, professionals, and the leading media which produce and disseminate a neoliberal discourse on urban regeneration. This coalition has enhanced its power and has rendered possible new urban policies, urban transformation foremost among them, with "changes in the existing laws and the enactment of new laws, together with the increasing initiative of some major state institutions."<sup>70</sup> Since the AKP has an overwhelming majority in both the national assembly and local governments and has considerable legislative and administrative power, it was able to produce plausible conditions for capital which seeks lucrative profits through real estate investments. TOKİ, with its expanded power and authorities in terms of land ownership, planning and project development, has a special role within this administrative configuration. Through the interventions of TOKİ, the government seeks to expand the boundaries of an efficient market mechanism on urban land and housing which had not been the case in previous eras, due to peculiar relations of reproduction during the import-substitution

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<sup>69</sup> Türkün, "Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships"; Lovering and Türkmen, "Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul."

<sup>70</sup> Türkün, "Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships," p. 62.

period. That is to say, urban transformation projects are correctly regarded as state-led market-making processes.<sup>71</sup>

Contrary to mainstream accounts drawing on neoclassical theory of economics, this narrative accurately indicates the role of the state in establishing economic relations. However, it reduces the state's role to that of clearing obstacles in the way of further capital accumulation, thus it does not satisfactorily explain why TOKİ has produced dwelling units in huge numbers for low-income groups under market rates in the same period. Such intervention into the field of housing comprises another crucial moment of neoliberal urbanism, simultaneously strengthening, and stemming from, popular urban imaginaries which make up the hegemonic ground of contemporary urban processes. Yet, this aspect of the state's role is underestimated due to the theoretical inclination that assumes a relation of command implicit in the state-capital nexus.

A second explanation, which proposes a neo-Keynesian political economic position in handling the acute problems of housing in Turkey, reverses terms of the framework developed by the instrumentalist approach, and considers the state as the foremost actor within neoliberal urban restructuring.<sup>72</sup> Accordingly, the Turkish case is explained by the strength of bureaucracy over capital. The state has created plausible conditions for capital to invest more in the construction sector through comprehensive legal changes and institutional reorganizations. Thus, "a legal and institutional

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<sup>71</sup> Kuyucu and Ünsal. "Urban Transformation as State-Led Property Transfer," Lovering and Türkmen, "Bulldozer Neo-liberalism in Istanbul."

<sup>72</sup> Balaban, "The Negative Effects of Construction Boom," and "Neoliberal Yeniden Yapılanmanın Türkiye Kentleşmesine Bir Diğer Armağanı: Kentsel Dönüşümde Güncelin Gerisinde Kalmak;" Özdemir, "The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009."

vacuum”<sup>73</sup> has emerged in which urban transformation projects have been implemented without any interference.<sup>74</sup>

As in the case of the instrumentalist approach, this explanation recognizes the constitutive role of state intervention in the formation of a capitalist economy and accumulation strategies that function in full accordance with the rules of the market. However, in contrast with the former explanation, it considers this form of marketization embodied in urban transformation projects as an outdated form of urban policies, characterized by the particular political goals of the AKP government.<sup>75</sup> Then the social and economic implications of such urban policy is evaluated in the face of normative principles highlighted by novel approaches to urban regeneration in developed capitalist countries, such as environmental sustainability, community participation and social integration of inhabitants.<sup>76</sup> That is to say, this explanation recognizes the politically-constructed character of the state-capital relation within the context of urban processes, yet, on the other hand, it assumes the state’s role as a perfectly autonomous entity which might act in violation of long-term interests of both the society as a whole and capital as a social class.

It would not be incorrect to argue that a particular historical-conceptual reading of the state-bourgeoisie relation in Turkey lies behind this explanation.<sup>77</sup> According to

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<sup>73</sup> Balaban, “Neoliberal Yeniden Yapılanmanın Türkiye Kentleşmesine Bir Diğer Armağanı,” p. 52.

<sup>74</sup> A similar emphasis on the coercive role of the law, from a theoretically different, Agambenian, position can be found in Çavdar and Tan, “Sunuş: Müstesna Şehrin İstisna Hali.”

<sup>75</sup> Balaban, “Neoliberal Yeniden Yapılanmanın Türkiye Kentleşmesine Bir Diğer Armağanı,” p. 51.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*; Özdemir, “The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009.”

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Ayşe Buğra, *State and Business in Modern Turkey: A Comparative Study* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994).

this critical institutionalist approach, since the bourgeoisie in Turkey has failed to become a dominant class in a proper sense, it could not augment its own economic-political class project, and thus it has been subjected to the project of state actors. The AKP's particular political inclinations to create clientelistic relations with a group of business people, that is to say a Turkish-type crony capitalism, have characterized recent urban policies, and thus urban transformation projects have assumed a socially unjust, environmentally unsustainable, and economically inefficient character.<sup>78</sup> A macroeconomic structure precariously based on the construction sector could create opportunities for short-term economic growth, it is suggested, but in the long run it would impede the development of a productive, technology-induced private sector that would create a more robust and stable economic environment. Therefore, this approach emphasizes the possible negative outcomes of the current mode of urban regeneration policies, and suggests a neo-Keynesian model that would reposition the public sector in housing provision in a manner that creates more egalitarian and participatory relations.<sup>79</sup>

Despite the important differences in their normative and political propositions, these two explanations share similar analytical flaws in theorizing the state. They start with a taken-for-granted separation of economy and the state. External causality is set up between these two separate fields. Accordingly, the state is regarded as an institutional entity above or outside social relations. However, as proponents of a particular strand within debates on state theory suggest, the very separation of economy and state is constructed out of contradictions in capital accumulation and class relations.<sup>80</sup> That is,

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<sup>78</sup> Balaban, "Neoliberal Yeniden Yapılanmanın Türkiye Kentleşmesine Bir Diğer Armağanı."

<sup>79</sup> Özdemir, "The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009."

<sup>80</sup> Simon Clarke, *The State Debate* (New York: Palgrave, 1991).

the state is not a thing in itself to be possessed by a particular social group or class, nor a unified subject acting in one way or another. Rather, the state is both a social relation and an institutional ensemble; it is “a form-determined condensation of class relations, a relationship of forces, or more precisely the material condensation of such a relationship among classes and class fractions.”<sup>81</sup>

Hence, the spatial interventions of the state could only be grasped as formed historically from the development of these relations which are contradictory and contingent in nature. Although it cannot overcome them entirely, the state aims to respond to the contradictions and conflicts through its interventions which are unstable and vary between different localities.<sup>82</sup> Such a theorization of the state provides us with entry points to understand the contradictory nature of urban neoliberalization that has moments of destruction and creation, dispossession and depoliticization at once, as discussed in the previous subsection.

### Site

The recent literature on urban restructuring in Turkey has a limited scope in terms of the geographical distribution of case studies. A persistent trend deserves to be mentioned at this point: Almost all studies have focused on a few major cities and certain areas of these cities, which have been subjected to the state’s spatial interventions through urban transformation projects or where the segregated and fragmented nature of contemporary urbanism could be best detected as in the case of gated communities. However, while

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<sup>81</sup> Nicos Poulantzas, *State, Power, Socialism* (London: Verso, 2000), p. 128.

<sup>82</sup> Çelik, “Changing Forms and Strategies of State Intervention in the Housing of the Poor in Istanbul,” p. 1.

such one-sided emphasis on certain localities underestimates the role of the “ordinary and daily” metamorphoses of the rest, on the other hand, in most cases these two representative *foci* of neoliberal urban configuration would not be considered within a relational manner. Research agendas are generally designed in a manner that best pictures the already apparent legal and administrative mechanisms and social and political outcomes of the state’s spatial interventions, causing a methodological gap and producing in most cases normative political propositions.

A quick survey of the literature would show that case studies mostly cover Istanbul, Ankara and İzmir, and focus on the field of housing to investigate urban transformation projects in historic central areas or informal squatter neighborhoods, and to a lesser extent the formation of gated communities and enclosed residential areas in the fringes of urban areas. Focusing on economic background, social consequences and political implications of such spatial processes, these studies principally aim to problematize the exclusionary character of emerging geographies of housing.

The main pillar of the literature consists of research on neoliberal regeneration policies by public-private partnerships in working class neighborhoods formed and developed as *gecekondu* areas such as Ayazma-Tepeüstü,<sup>83</sup> Başbüyük,<sup>84</sup> Derbent,<sup>85</sup> Tozkoparan<sup>86</sup> and Aydınlı<sup>87</sup> in Istanbul, and Ankara Highway<sup>88</sup> and Dikmen Valley<sup>89</sup> in

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<sup>83</sup> Burkey, “*Social Policy of Urban Transformation*”; Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;” Kuyucu, “Poverty, Property and Power.”

<sup>84</sup> Kuyucu, “Poverty, Property and Power;” Kuyucu and Ünsal, “Urban Transformation as State-Led Property Transfer;” Karaman, “Urban Renewal in Istanbul: Reconfigured Spaces, Robotic Lives.”

<sup>85</sup> Çelik, “Changing Forms and Strategies of State Intervention in the Housing of the Poor in Istanbul.”

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> For a comprehensive research on six different sites, including Aydınlı, of urban transformation projects in Istanbul, see Türkün ed., *Mülk, Mahal, İnsan: İstanbul’da Kentsel Dönüşüm*.

<sup>88</sup> Burkey, “Social Policy of Urban Transformation.”

Ankara; and in dilapidated historic central areas where various (ethnic, social class and gender-based) relations of domination are expressly articulated such as Fener-Balat,<sup>90</sup> Tarlabası,<sup>91</sup> Sulukule<sup>92</sup> and Süleymaniye<sup>93</sup> in Istanbul, and Kadifekale<sup>94</sup> in İzmir.

A second group, which covers high-income urban compounds such as those in Göktürk, Beykoz and Çekmeköy,<sup>95</sup> is exclusively limited to Istanbul cases. Apart from a few exceptional studies,<sup>96</sup> these two axes displaying an exclusionary residential pattern in major cities, which paves the way for social and spatial segregation in urban space, are not considered in a comparative way which would enhance our analytical capacity to grasp the relational character of urban imaginaries underpinning such a fragmented cityscape. However, as Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu contend, it would be more relevant in analytical terms to consider seemingly separate spatial processes in their mutually constitutive character, since

in contemporary cities new groups and forms of wealth and poverty grow and reproduce in an interdependent manner and feed into one another. The same socio-political and economic processes create new groups of concentrated wealth and resources, concentrated forms of economic vulnerability and poverty, and new urban spaces catering to and harboring these groups, all of which then reproduce this social architecture. More importantly, contemporary cities are increasingly defined through these

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<sup>89</sup> Deniz, “Grassroots Action Against Gecekondu Renewal Projects.”

<sup>90</sup> Bezmez, “The Politics of Urban Regeneration.”

<sup>91</sup> Sakızlıoğlu, “Impacts of Urban Renewal Policies;” Kuyucu and Özlem Ünsal. “Urban Transformation as State-Led Property Transfer.”

<sup>92</sup> Karaman and İslam, “On the Dual nature of Intra-Urban Borders.”

<sup>93</sup> Dinçer, “The Impact of Neoliberal Policies on Historic Urban Space;” Strutz, “Yeni İstanbul İçin Eski İstanbul Tahayyülleri.”

<sup>94</sup> Demirtaş-Milz, “The Regime of Informality in Neoliberal Times in Turkey.”

<sup>95</sup> Ebru Firidin Özgür, “Sosyal ve Mekansal Ayrışma Çerçevesinde Yeni Konutlaşma Eğilimleri: Kapalı Siteler, İstanbul, Çekmeköy Örneği,” *Planlama* 4 (2006), pp. 79-95; Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;” Esen and Rienets, “Fortress Istanbul: Gated Communities and the Socio-Urban Transformation;” Pérouse, *İstanbul’la Yüzleşme Denemeleri*.

<sup>96</sup> Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, “Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism;” Pérouse, *İstanbul’la Yüzleşme Denemeleri*.

social groups and spatial forms on either margin of contemporary urbanism.<sup>97</sup>

Given the demographic patterns, character of continuing migratory flows and the degree of incorporation to global networks of production, consumption and circulation, the fact that cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and İzmir have drawn more attention is understandable to a certain degree. Undoubtedly, analyzing these localities provide us with opportunities to trace the marks of the increased commodification of urban land and housing, to depict the role and consequences of the state's interventions into market-making processes, and social and political implications of emerging spaces of neoliberal urbanism. Yet, this would be a partial analysis which leads to the underestimation of crucial questions regarding the hegemonic nature of neoliberal urbanism, unless novel social and spatial processes characterizing the middle-class neighborhoods, the government's housing policies regarding vast population that do not inhabit transformation sites or luxurious urban compounds, and the resonance of the public policies with common sense urban imaginaries would be incorporated into analysis.

Such methodological shortcomings could be associated with prevalent premises of the field regarding the actors and modality of urban neoliberalization discussed in the previous subsections. State-centric conceptualizations of urban processes and the depiction of neoliberalism as a single-legged strategy would cause an overemphasis on urban transformation projects as the foremost tool and case of urban restructuring.

Yet, urban neoliberalization has moments of both destruction and creation at once. Its multi-faceted character necessitates analyzing different localities of urban restructuring in their relationality and thus in a comparative manner. If not, the

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<sup>97</sup>Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, "Emerging Spaces of Neoliberalism," p. 9.

discrepancy between an overemphasis on apparent cases which are thought to be “representative” of neoliberal urban restructuring and the underestimation of localities, processes and mechanisms which in fact constitute the “regularity” of the recent physical and social spatial configurations would produce an analytical pitfall in comprehending the hegemonic nature of the contemporary urban processes. This is due to the fact that urban research that aims at problematizing the production of consent in the context of social production of space must provincialize the field of urban studies, and must include into its research agenda the questions of how, in what ways and to what extent, actors, processes, imaginaries, strategies and tactics of urban restructuring differentiate in cities other than the three metropolitan centers and in territories where state-led spatial urban transformation projects do not exist.

### Repercussions

The last tendency that I would describe as an analytical flaw within the recent literature involves the way in which the repercussions of urban transformation projects are considered. Both in academic and leftwing popular accounts of neoliberal urban restructuring, it is common to view social unrest that stems from certain urban policies, of which urban transformation projects are considered as an ideal-typical tool, as forms of integrated resistance, even as components of an urban movement *per se*.<sup>98</sup>

Undoubtedly, these projects which generally come to fore as top-down decisions of central and local government authorities create uncertainties for inhabitants, hence cause social and political disquiet. However, the transformation of such disquiet into organized

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<sup>98</sup> Deniz, “Grassroots Action Against Gecekondu Renewal Projects.”

resistance is bound by several factors. Putting aside these factors and conceiving a one-sided relation between dwellers and transformation projects would prevent us from understanding how and on what ground consent for urban neoliberalization is produced.<sup>99</sup>

As discussed above, neoliberal restructurings are never pre-determined, but politically-constructed processes.<sup>100</sup> Interactions between state authorities, developers and residents render these processes contested and contingent.<sup>101</sup> The state's interventions vary according to local relations of power, adapting to political configurations that have emerged in particular territories. That is to say, how inhabitants conceive of and respond to urban policies planned and implemented in a top-down manner determines the practicability of these projects.

However, repercussions of these policies are not pre-determined either. In all cases, the inhabitants of urban transformation neighborhoods have internal divisions in terms of property ownership, legal rights, ethnic and religious identities, and political affiliations. Such diversity expectedly creates different aspirations from, and oppositions to, urban transformation projects, opening up areas of maneuver and adaptation for TOKİ, municipal authorities, corporations and security forces. Axes of conflict among inhabitants, such as between homeowners and tenants, between rightful owners with title deeds and squatters, between founders of neighborhoods and newcomers, between

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<sup>99</sup> For a detailed and nuanced discussion on urban dissent politics in Turkey, see Murat Cemal Yalçın and Erbatır Çavuşoğlu, "Kentsel Dönüşümü ve Kentsel Muhalefeti Kent Hakkı Üzerinden Düşünmek," in *Kentsel Dönüşüm ve İnsan Hakları*, ed. Turgut Tarhanlı (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2013), pp. 87-106. For a critique of various deployments of the notion of 'right to the city', see Margit Mayer, "The 'Right to the City' in the Context of Shifting Mottos of Urban Social Movements," *City* 13, no. 2-3 (June-September 2009), pp. 362-74.

<sup>100</sup> Peck and Tickell, "Neoliberalizing Space."

<sup>101</sup> Kuyucu and Ünsal. "Urban Transformation as State-Led Property Transfer," p. 1481.

groups affiliated politically to the government party and political dissidents, determine possible forms of contentious politics.

Furthermore, as Kuyucu accurately suggests, “legal ambiguities and arbitrary administrative rules play[ed] direct causal roles in the making of the new markets and in the transfer of the (informally owned) property of certain groups to stronger public and/or private actors who command[ed] more economic, legal and administrative resources.”<sup>102</sup> That is, form and strength of possible resistance is directly linked to asymmetrical relations between project implementers and inhabitants in terms of legal and administrative resources.

In short, repercussions that neoliberal restructuring projects would cause can not be conceived as uniform, integrated and steady forms of resistance that emerge unexceptionally in each case. Considering every sign of social unrest that emerges in the aftermath of the announcement of projects in an idealistic way as a hotbed of contentious politics through which residents of neighborhoods as a whole would articulate with other social and political groups and demands is analytically and politically misleading. In analytical terms, it is more crucial to reveal over what economic motivations, political inclinations, cultural values and urban imaginaries the neoliberal restructuring produces consent for such exclusionary practices than to depict moments of discontent which are mostly apparent.

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<sup>102</sup> Kuyucu, “Law, Property and Ambiguity,” p. 625.

## Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of a Lefebvrian-Gramscian Approach to the Politics of Space

Having pointed out the significance and absence of questioning neoliberal urbanism in relation to the problematic of hegemony and identified analytical tendencies within the recent critical urban studies on the comprehensive restructuring that Turkish cities have undergone in the post-2000 period, in this section I formulate key premises on which an alternative theoretical and methodological approach that might be productive to cope with this analytical drawback could be based.

My suggestion is that an approach informed simultaneously by Lefebvre's theoretical insights on the vital role of urbanization processes for the survival of capitalism and Gramsci's reflections on centrality of the political within the complex interplay between economic base, state and superstructure would provide us a solid ground on which an analysis of hegemonic character of urban processes could stand. I aim to display how Gramsci's problematic of hegemony has been extended and repositioned within Lefebvre's theorization of the urban and urbanization in dialectically understanding physical, institutional and imaginary aspects of contemporary capitalism.

Accordingly, in this section, first I focus on the intrinsic link between the production of space and the production of hegemony. The second subsection deals with the relation between state spatialities and hegemonic struggles. Third, I focus on ways of examining the political in a manner that would include multiple spatialities and temporalities of political struggles into analysis.

## Hegemony and Space

My first premise is that social production of space and production of hegemony are intrinsically linked to each other under late capitalism, and that one must identify and examine moments of this multidimensional articulation so as to analyze sites, mechanisms, forms and tools of both inclusionary and exclusionary aspects of urban neoliberalization.

In *The Production of Space* Lefebvre asks “Is it conceivable that the exercise of hegemony might leave space untouched? Could space be nothing more than the passive locus of social relations, the milieu in which their combination takes on body, or the aggregate of the procedures employed in their removal?”<sup>103</sup> As would be expected, his answer is negative. His vantage point is that capitalism has survived despite its internal contradictions that Marx astutely revealed, since social relations of production that capitalism entails could be reproduced constantly in a creative manner. On that matter, the urban is the linchpin of the problematization of the survival of capitalism.

Lefebvre’s critique of capitalism gives primacy to the concept of reproduction along with the Marxist conception of production, which is understood at three distinct levels of biological reproduction, reproduction of the labor force and reproduction of social relations of production. It is the social space that maintains these levels and processes within a totality.<sup>104</sup> Lefebvre deploys Marx’s model of commodity production in an extended manner to explain how space is produced and how it contributes to the

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<sup>103</sup> Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 11.

<sup>104</sup> Mark Gottdiener, “Mekan Kuramı Üzerine Tartışma: Kentsel Praksise Doğru,” *Praksis* 2, (2001), p. 253.

reproduction of the social relations of capitalism.<sup>105</sup>

Lefebvre proposes to view space as a product of heterogeneous, historically specific social practices, and rejects the conceptualization of space as a natural, inert, pre-given thing in itself, understood either as mental or physical entity. On the contrary, the physical, mental and social dimensions of space are conceived as internally related within an open totality.

In order to unravel the processes through which space is socially produced Lefebvre develops a conceptual triad, three dialectically interconnected moments, namely, spatial practices, representations of space and representational space. In Lefebvre's words:

*Spatial practice*, which embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation. Spatial practice ensures continuity and some degree of cohesion. In terms of social space, and of each member of a given society's relation to that space, this cohesion implies a guaranteed level of *competence* and a specific level of *performance*.

*Representations of space*, which are tied to the relations of production and the 'order' which those relations impose, and hence to knowledge, to signs, to codes, and to 'frontal' relations.

*Representational spaces*, embodying complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life, as also to art (which may come eventually to be defined less as a code of space than as a code of representational spaces).<sup>106</sup>

These three moments work in concert (albeit never "simple or stable") to produce space, a continuum physical, natural and mental at once. These moments refer to the realms of the perceived, conceived and lived accordingly.

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<sup>105</sup> For a discussion of the implicit spatial core of Marxism's fundamental categories and concepts, see İbrahim Gündoğdu, "Jamie Gough ile Söyleşi," *Praksis* 15 (Summer 2006), pp. 21-3.

<sup>106</sup> Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 33.

Lefebvre applies this triadic conceptualization to the analysis of different material environments, departing from the argument that “any activity developed over (historical) time engenders (produces) a space, and can only attain practical ‘reality’ or concrete existence within that space.”<sup>107</sup> While the social-spatial processes are historicized, the historical course of modes of production is spatialized, in a manner that acknowledges that the production of space is bound with the social constellations, power relations, and conflicts given in a specific historical situation.

In Lefebvre’s vocabulary it is “abstract space” that defines the spatiality of the capitalist mode of production. In contrast to “absolute space” (social space), a condition of direct and organic relationship between social life and natural forces wherein lived experiences predominate the representation of space, “abstract space” denotes a social organization where representation of space prevails.

Although the capitalist mode of production is defined by the dominance of abstract space, it has a contradictory nature and thus cannot exert a total control and regulation on lived spaces. Lefebvre’s account acknowledges both that this relation changes according to transformations in modes of production, and that all three levels of spatial experiences coexist invariably in every social organization, although in varying degrees.

Abstract space is the fragmentary space that emerges from the imperatives of an economy based on commodity production and the capitalist state’s involvement in the ordering and controlling of space. Gottdiener suggests that three characteristic tendencies under capitalism define abstract space: fragmentation, homogeneity and

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

hierarchy.<sup>108</sup> Evidently, these features characterizing abstract space are linked to the basic distinction between use value and exchange value.

In this context, the fragmentation of space denotes a twofold process. This is the disintegration of space both physically and mentally so as to privatize and trade space as a commodity on the market. On the one hand, land is parceled and put into exchange dissociating its use value from its exchange value for instance. On the other hand, on the level of ideology, by the help of legal and economic knowledge for instance, space is fragmented into distinct disciplinary interests in a manner that paves the way for fetishism of space in its Marxist sense.

For Lefebvre homogeneity of space is not related to the multiplicity of commodities and life styles that have flourished exponentially under post-war capitalism. In other words, what is homogenous under capitalism is not space itself, but “its goal, its orientation, its ‘lens.’”<sup>109</sup> The transformation of space into an exchangeable asset in commodified form produces a trend that likens diverse forms and experiences of lived spaces to homogenized functions and styles in a manner that erases the meanings of particular places.

Lastly, the tendency of hierarchy is related to the distribution of economic wealth, power, material and ideational resources between territories which Lefebvre conceives as a relationship between center and periphery. This relationship is determined by the strategic interventions of the state into spatial processes so as to maintain and regulate the center-periphery relation. Due to economic, political, geopolitical and ideological reasons and through various tools such as infrastructural

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<sup>108</sup> Mark Gottdiener, *The Social Production of Urban Space*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), p. 126.

<sup>109</sup> Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, p. 287.

investments, military expenditures, planning processes, subsidizing and incentive policies and so forth, modern states intervene in space, and thus actively configure the production of abstract space. Consequently, this tendency leads to the dominance of the urban over the rural, the city center over the suburb, the metropolitan over the colony, and the global and national “North” over the “South.” Yet, such dominance does not mean an external relation between these categories, but dissolves and blurs the very distinction between them, as Lefebvre cautiously underlines in his discussion on the planetary character of neocapitalist urbanism.<sup>110</sup>

In Lefebvre’s open and integral conception of totality, on the higher level of abstraction, the urban assumes a role of mediation between the general level of the social order and the private level of everyday life.<sup>111</sup> That is, it is urban space that binds the lived experience of the everyday to the power structures of state and capital. Therefore, hegemony of capitalist social organization cannot be conceived without considering the role and function of space. To the extent that processes and strategies of producing conceived and perceived space resonate with the lived space of the everyday, hegemony would be constituted. For, as Kipfer contends, “[a]lthough structurally violent, abstract space [the dominant form of produced space under capitalism] is hegemonic to the degree that it envelops and incorporates the daily aspirations, desires, and dreams of subaltern populations.”<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> Lefebvre, *The Urban Revolution*.

<sup>111</sup> Stefan Kipfer, “How Lefebvre Urbanized Gramsci: Hegemony, Everyday Life, and Difference,” in ed. Kanishka Goonewardena, Stefan Kipfer, Richard Milgrom and Christian Schmid, *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), p. 200.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

This argument is akin to Harvey's suggestion, as I noted in passing in Chapter 1, which presumes a resonance between promises of any political-economic class strategy and the common sense in any given society.<sup>113</sup> Common sense is not frozen and fixed in its Gramscian sense, but constituted historically. The very process of this constitution is a crucial dimension of political struggles. Therefore, an analysis of urbanization processes must situate the field of spatial politics in its center. To formulate another premise of the alternative approach that I aim to rebuild, I will come back to the mode of analysis of spatial politics in the last subsection. But before that, the state's role in the social production of space must be taken into consideration.

### State Spatiality and Hegemonic Struggles

Following the above discussion, my second premise is that the state's strategic interventions into space are crucial in the production of abstract space under capitalism, and that one must analyze modes and mechanisms of these interventions in a way that considers the state as a moment of political struggles which manifest themselves in different hegemony and counter-hegemony projects.

In the last three decades, we witness a process of power transfer from centralized national states to novel administrative and legislative bodies at transnational and local levels. A series of neoliberal regulatory reforms, which rearranges the nature of the relationship between public and private sector, accompany this process that transfers the decision-making and executive authority from the national state to regional and local governments. Therefore, we witness a spatial reconfiguration of the authority and

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<sup>113</sup> Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*.

responsibilities of traditional state structures in accordance with capital's geographical mobility.

Observing erosion in the national state's spatial integrity and a transition to a process of "denationalization," "destatization," and "internationalization," scholars from the Regulation School underline a rescaling in territorial and political economic government in the post-Fordist era.<sup>114</sup> This differs from the diffusion of state power over different territories within the national borders. The state itself, according to the Regulationist approach, as a spatial entity, is transforming itself so that the dimensions of its political, economic and ideological power become effective and operative at different and novel geographical scales. Horizontally, the state continues to intervene in different geographical regions differently, depending on the needs of accumulation and the contradictions that emerge from the capital accumulation process. At the same time, vertically, we see constantly changing scales of the state apparatus, governance, collaboration, regulation and limitation. Internationalization of policy regimes, public private partnerships at the regional level, close economic ties between entrepreneurial cities and growth coalitions at the urban level contribute to the erosion or transformation of national state sovereignty.<sup>115</sup>

The Regulationist scholars are correct in spotting the rescaling tendencies of state power and the relation of this tendency with the structural problems of capitalism, which is historically prone to crisis and restructuring. However, I observe a fundamental problem in terms of the conceptualization of capitalism in the structuralist vein of the

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<sup>114</sup> Bob Jessop, "Liberalism, Neoliberalism, and Urban Governance: A State-Theoretical Perspective," *Antipode* 34, no. 3 (2002), p. 452-72; Gordon Macleod and Mark Goodwin, "Space, Scale, and State Strategy: Rethinking Urban and Regional Governance," *Progress in Human Geography* 23, no. 4 (1999), 503-27.

<sup>115</sup> Macleod and Goodwin, "Space, Scale, and State Strategy," p. 509.

Regulation School. For them, in the last analysis capital is always successful in instituting new regulation and accumulation regimes and comes up with spatial fixes to the intrinsic contradictions of economic system. The state's interventions into space and state spatialities are conceived by their functions that respond and regulate cyclical fluctuations of capital accumulation processes, rendering dynamics of class struggles secondary in analytical terms.<sup>116</sup>

I argue that conceptual classifications differentiating between the economic and the political modes of hegemony are less than adequate.<sup>117</sup> An exclusive and privileging focus on the internal and mechanical dynamics of capital and its accumulation strategies ignores the contribution of counter-hegemonic forces in the formation of spatial regimes. Stressing the vantage point of the Open Marxist approach and arguing for the constitutive presence of the labor in the capital, Gough writes:

I understand capital organisation and class relations respectively as internally related: capital is ultimately nothing but a relation to labour, but class relations are always constrained by the forces of production owned and organised by capital. In this way one can avoid the implication of some writing in a capital-logic mode, that class relations are merely *effects* of prior rescaling of capital (and state). Capital's (re)organisation is always formed *in relation to* labour. This class struggle is played out not just within production but within the state and the heterogeneous

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<sup>116</sup> Gough, "Neoliberalism and Localism."

<sup>117</sup> The target of my criticism is mostly the literature produced by the Regulationist approach until the late '90s. In fact, most of the Regulationist scholars have revised the shortcomings of their conceptual framework and enriched the debate in the 2000s giving more ample space to class struggles within and around the state. Thus, it is difficult to talk about a Regulationist School *per se*. For more nuanced analyses that have emerged out of the Regulation School but also influenced by an alternative reading of Lefebvre's writings on the state, see Neil Brenner, "The Urban Question as a Scale Question: Reflections on Henri Lefebvre, Urban Theory, and the Politics of Scale," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 24, no. 2 (2000), pp. 361-378; Neil Brenner, "Urban Governance and the Production of New State Space in Western Europe, 1960-2000," *Review of International Political Economy* 11, no. 3 (2004), pp. 447-88; Neil Brenner and Stuart Elden, "Introduction: State, Space, World – Lefebvre and the Survival of Capitalism," in ed. Henri Lefebvre, *State, Space, World: Selected Essays* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), pp. 1-48.

forms of the reproduction of labor power, and is a moment of gender and ethnic struggles.<sup>118</sup> (Emphasis in the original)

The socialization, organization and processes of struggle materialized especially by the oppressed and working classes contribute a great deal in the culmination of capitalist crises and the formation of subsequent regimes.

Accordingly, scales should neither be conceived as abstract concepts nor as concrete geographical entities. They should be understood as spatial moments through which the class relations and contradictions of capitalism manifest themselves and state intervention into them takes place.<sup>119</sup> The neoliberal state performs continuous interventions to overcome obstructions that spawn from the internal contradictions of capitalism. However, since state is also formed and re-formed within capitalist class relations, it does not persist as a frozen institutional entity. It constantly rescales itself in order to fix accumulation problems.<sup>120</sup>

As moments of hegemonic struggles, scales represent the conflict between the capitalist and the consumer, between genders, ethnic dimensions of exploitation and so on. Such an approach does not establish a hierarchy between various forms of domination and exploitation.<sup>121</sup> All forms of exploitation, including capitalist class

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<sup>118</sup> Jamie Gough, "Changing Scales as Changing Class Relations: Variety and Contradiction in the Politics of Scale," *Political Geography* 23 (2004), p. 189.

<sup>119</sup> Çelik, "Changing Forms and Strategies of State Intervention in the Housing of the Poor in Istanbul," p. 71.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

<sup>121</sup> Gough writes: "[...] in capitalist societies gender and 'racial' oppression are strongly internally related to the fundamental structures of capitalism through both production and reproduction spheres, though not reducible to them." See Gough, "Neoliberalism and Socialisation in the Contemporary City," p. 424.

domination, are articulated in a particular manner peculiar to capitalist social organization, and sustained in specific spatial moments in the form of scales.<sup>122</sup>

The hegemonic intervention of the state in one spatial moment is always accompanied by a counter-hegemonic strategy. For example, local governments with social backing can shift scales to resist the national state's power. They can gather political, economic and ideological resources by cooperating with transnational NGOs, international institutions and agencies. They increase their infrastructural capacity by obtaining international funding, education and consultancy. Central government can try to concentrate power but at the same time uses novel mechanisms of governance such as regional development agencies to limit the capacity of local governments. State power and local governments may constantly shift scales of influence, alliances and resources to gain leverage in a contentious and conflictual setting.

Thus, in order to analyze three (economic, administrative and ideological) dimensions of politics of space in Diyarbakır it is crucial to assess both the Turkish state's urban conceptions and strategies and those developed within the Kurdish political movement's counter-hegemony project.<sup>123</sup> As a new urban space to be developed there

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<sup>122</sup> Gough, "Changing Scales as Changing Class Relations," pp. 185-211. Gough's comprehension of class struggles in the city resonates with Lefebvre's theory which stands against Manuel Castells' reading of urban opposition in the 1970s. Basically, Castells observes a factory-based working class movement, while urban struggles are understood as struggles for collective consumption which belongs to the sphere of reproduction of labor force. Hence, urban movements are constituted outside the factory floor and are by definition inferior to workplace organization. For Lefebvre, this is another artificial hierarchy between various forms of resistance — a hierarchy between the fields of production and reproduction. For the Open Marxists, spatial resistance is not merely a struggle for collective consumption confined to the field of reproduction. It is integral to the labor-capital conflict. For a detailed discussion of different conceptualizations of urban praxis in Lefebvre and Castells, see Gottdiener, "Mekan Kuramı Üzerine Tartışma."

<sup>123</sup> See Chapter 4 for a broader discussion of these dimensions in the context of competing hegemony projects, and Chapters 5 and 6 for a detailed analysis of the encounters between the state' and the Kurdish movement's spatial conceptions and strategies.

are overlaps between hegemonic and counter-hegemonic strategies, however, there are also various issues of struggle, contention and conflict. In order to be able to analyze these spatial moments of articulation and dissociation, which constitute the main driving force behind urban restructuring, we need a comprehensive conceptual framework that can capture the everlasting process of domination, struggle and resistance, as they are articulated at the urban scale.

Having clarified the cornerstones of a relational understanding of state spatiality, which conceives of scales as spatial moments through which class relations and contradictions of capitalism manifest themselves and state intervention into them takes place, now we can continue to formulate our third premise. The following shifts the lens onto the mode of analysis of political struggles to underline some methodological points that will enable us to conceive particular political conjunctures as multidimensional interactions of competing temporalities and spatialities.

### Conjunctures, Temporalities, and Spatialities

In the light of the first two premises elaborated above, my third premise is that political conjunctures must be analyzed as a multidimensional configuration of multiple temporal rhythms and spatialities so as to situate the hegemony problematic in a non-static, relational and conflictual understanding of the social production of abstract space and the state's strategic intervention into spatial processes. Accordingly, it is suggested that the method of conjunctural analysis might be useful to identify and explore actors engaged in struggles, conceptions formulated by actors, strategies and tactics employed

in relation to these conceptions, moments of articulation and dissociation among these strategies, and finally alliances among actors.

The Gramscian conjunctural analysis, built upon Marx's political analysis in *The Eighteenth Brumaire* to capture the dialectics of continuity and discontinuity that shape social reality, is basically a way of examining the social, political, economic and cultural contradictions in any particular period of political settlement, and aims at understanding in what ways these contradictions are articulated to produce that settlement.<sup>124</sup>

Stuart Hall describes a conjuncture in its Gramscian sense as “the complex historically specific terrain of a crisis which affects –but in uneven ways– a specific national-social formation as a whole.”<sup>125</sup> The emphasis here is on the notion of crisis, since it denotes how Gramsci conceives of the course of history. Accordingly, history is not the sum total of diachronically ordered instances that move linearly towards social development and progress. For Gramsci, crisis and political defeats are not secondary and incidental phenomena that emerge within the course of history that moves along a particular *telos*.

What is more crucial for our discussion is the suggestion that political phenomena must be analyzed, in accordance with this kind of conceptualization of history, not as simple reflections of the economic base as vulgar strands of Marxism tend to understand them, but as constitutive elements of particular conjunctures.

Gramscian conjunctural analysis, which privileges the political and particular moments of political struggle analytically, comprises space as a crucial item of analysis

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<sup>124</sup> Stuart Hall, “Gramsci’s Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity,” in ed. David Morley and Kuan-Hsing Chen, *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 411-15.

<sup>125</sup> Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal*, p. 127.

as well. His analyses on the nature of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution and on the changing strategic orientations of communist parties in various geographical-political contexts (East and West), exploration of economic, political and ideological interactions between Italy and developed capitalist countries in the periods of Risorgimento and Fascism, and reformulation of relations between southern and northern Italy in the context of united political strategy reveal that his political and social theory has an intrinsic spatial aspect.<sup>126</sup>

His key concepts such as historical bloc, common/good sense, passive revolution and transformism employed to deal with the problematic of hegemony and to explore the processes of hegemony formation were developed through their historical and geographical specificity, thus differentiate from orthodox, vulgar and economist currents of contemporaneous Marxist thought in terms of comprehension of space and time. In that regard, Gramsci has a more nuanced conception of social organization and human agency which simultaneously captures continuities and discontinuities. Linking Gramsci's analytical superiority to his method that helps him comprehend particular moments in their multidimensionality, Kipfer writes:

Rather than counterposing time, history, and diachrony to space, geography, and synchrony, Gramsci analyzed historical situations as a confluence of multiple, spatially mediated temporal rhythms. Gramsci's peculiar and contingent (neither generic nor absolutely relativist) historicism was directed against aspatial and ahistorical conceptions of society alike and wanted to grasp both the temporal and the 'geographical conditions of social processes.'<sup>127</sup>

Conjunctural analysis conceives of the constitution of hegemony within a particular national-social formation as not a mechanical reflection of structural conditions (i.e.

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<sup>126</sup> Kipfer, "City, Country, Hegemony," p. 83.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 86-7.

economic base in Marxist terminology), but as a process emerging out of political struggles, the coordinates of which are determined by material conditions. In other words, hegemony is not a term used to name a context of mere domination wherein the ruling class imposes a political project that serves best its immediate benefits onto subordinate classes through the institutional power of the state which represents nothing but the role of execution of the capitalists' interests.

Rather, the Gramscian analysis of hegemony aims at understanding the state as an “integral state,” that is, in its inclusive sense, and conceptualizes the state as the total of political society and civil society, or “hegemony protected by the armor of coercion,” as in his famous formulation.<sup>128</sup> It is presupposed that struggles among competing hegemony projects designed and implemented by competing historical blocs of social and political groups (classes, class fractions, intellectuals and so forth) precede the formation of a particular hegemonic outlook. Hegemony, which is defined basically as political, intellectual and moral leadership of a historical bloc, necessitates the active consent of subaltern social classes and groups, hence resonance between a particular political-social project and everyday dreams, aspirations and values (common sense). For sure, the notion of common sense is not frozen and fixed, but is constituted historically and politically. The very process of this constitution is a crucial dimension of political struggles.<sup>129</sup>

In the previous subsections I emphasized that in Lefebvre the urban, the site and condition of hegemony, is understood, on a higher level of abstraction, by the notion of mediation. Similarly, for Gramsci, hegemony is built on the links between popular

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<sup>128</sup> Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, p. 263.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

culture and relations of power among social-political forces. That is to say, hegemony is conceptualized as the mediation of relations between these two realms. For Lefebvre hegemony is built on the connections between everyday life, the state, capital and dominant knowledge produced by them. In short, “hegemony is a contingent fusion of macro- and micro-dimensions of reality, a condensation of base and superstructure.”<sup>130</sup>

In Lefebvre’s approach, everyday life is the realm of the dialectical unity of mechanisms of the social structure and voids left by these mechanisms, of domination and resistances, of regularity and festive subversions at once. The everyday, in Lefebvre’s reading, is the site of both relations of exploitation and domination of the capitalist social organization and possibilities of subversion of and emancipation from these relations.<sup>131</sup>

Both Gramsci’s non-teleological conception of history and his method of analysis that underscores moments of political struggles and spatiality of political processes, and Lefebvre’s framework of analysis on the intrinsic political character of everyday life and the privileged status of the urban in this framework could lead us to a certain position in analyzing the relation between spatial and political processes.

Accordingly, the main goal is not to map out given political groups and identities in an isolated manner, but to identify moments, forms and rhythms of encounters between strategies conceived and implemented by social and political actors. This approach would differ from both the (economistic) interpretation that considers political actors and their actions as unmediated results of imperative laws of social structure and

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<sup>130</sup> Kipfer, “How Lefebvre Urbanized Gramsci,” pp. 126-7.

<sup>131</sup> Kanishka Goonewardena, “Marxism and Everyday Life. On Henri Lefebvre, Guy Debord, and Some Others,” in ed. by Kanishka Goonewardena, Stefan Milgrom and Christian Schmid, *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

the (voluntarist) interpretation that formulates the political realm as the cumulative sum of initiatives free from material conditions. It would not simplistically describe political actors' declared positions regarding the urban life, urbanization and planning, but examine and then analyze the spatial aspects of all sorts of conceptions and strategies of political actors. Therefore, the vantage point is not ideologies and formally defined political identities, but encounters between conceptions and strategies formulated in relation to these identities and ideologies.

In methodological terms, the approach developed in this study suggests to distinguish a particular conjuncture that posits distinctive characteristics in terms of political-economic and spatial relations; identify hegemony and counter-hegemony projects developed in this particular conjuncture; detect elements of alliances behind these competing hegemony projects; investigate the spatiality of these projects, and reveal spatial conceptions and strategies involved in them; identify the material-economic, political-institutional and cultural-ideological items of these spatialities; and analyze encounters between these items, focusing on moments of articulation and dissociation.

Thus, employing conjunctural analysis to understand the “strengths, limits, and contradictions of bourgeois hegemony [...] as a confluence of multiple temporalities (articulations of continuity and discontinuity in particular conjunctures [...]) and a multiscalar and unevenly developed set of spatial relations”<sup>132</sup> we could investigate the urban and urbanization processes, in a Lefebvorean-Gramscian fashion, “as material

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<sup>132</sup> Kipfer, “City, Country, Hegemony,” pp. 85-6.

grounds of historical blocs, products of the interaction of sociopolitical forces, and cultural-ideological component parts of hegemonic claims.”<sup>133</sup>

Conclusion: Propositions for a Research on  
Hegemony of Neoliberal Urbanism in Turkey

The emerging critical urban studies, which, drawing mostly on the urban political economy approach and using the notion of neoliberalism as the primary analytical category, have produced considerable knowledge on comprehensive urban processes the Turkish cities have undergone in an accelerated and intensified manner since the 2001 organic crisis and within the political-institutional configuration formed by the AKP governments’ legal and administrative re-regulations, have left to a great extent the problematic of hegemony outside the scope of their analysis.

In other words, although the exclusionary character of urban neoliberalism has often been elaborated in terms of its processes and results, the operation of its inclusionary mechanisms, in the context of different social groups and power/domination relations, have not been problematized adequately.

In order to fill this analytical gap in recent literature, the political processes within which the hegemony of neoliberal urbanism is formed must be integrated into the analysis so as to comprehend the processes of neoliberalization that include differences, contradictions and adaptations in themselves, beyond an understanding of neoliberalism as a uniform and coherent ideology or doctrine. Thus, in order to understand neoliberalism, it is essential to elucidate the ways in which consent to urban

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<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 98.

neoliberalization is politically constructed, the grounds on which this construction is based upon, and the interaction of imaginations, values and desires that shape these grounds.

Such a problematic could be best developed and elucidated within an approach that is compatible with a non-static, relational and non-capital-logic comprehension of the nexuses of hegemony-space, space-state and space-political. The following three premises would provide us a theoretical and methodological ground on which that alternative approach towards the politics of space can be based:

i) Social production of space and production of hegemony are intrinsically linked to each other under late capitalism, and one must identify and examine moments of this multidimensional articulation so as to analyze sites, mechanisms, forms and tools of both inclusionary and exclusionary aspects of urban neoliberalization.

ii) The state's strategic interventions into space are crucial to the production of abstract space under capitalism, and one must analyze the modes and mechanisms of these interventions in a way that considers the state as a moment of political struggles which manifest themselves in different hegemony and counter-hegemony projects.

iii) Political conjunctures must be analyzed as a multidimensional configuration of multiple temporal rhythms and spatialities so as to situate the hegemony problematic in a non-static, relational and conflictual understanding of the social production of abstract space and the state's strategic interventions into spatial processes.

Accordingly, departing from these theoretical and methodological foundations, some key propositions of a research that would produce satisfactory answers to the question why and how the neoliberal urbanism and processes of urban restructuring have become hegemonic in Turkey in the post-2001 period can be formulated. Such a research agenda takes into consideration:

i) that neoliberal urbanism is not a one-legged strategy of dispossession and eviction, but involves multifold processes of commodification and depoliticization simultaneously;

- ii) that the state's strategic interventions to urban space are neither unidirectional nor instrumental, but comprise of strategies of adaptation and dislocation, consent and coercion at once, in accordance to its character as a moment of political struggles;
- iii) that neoliberal urbanism in Turkey cannot be comprehended without analyzing its multi-locational dynamics that reconfigure the relation between center and periphery, and urbanity and rurality;
- iv) that politics of space can only be understood through an examination of the multidimensional encounters of the competing hegemony projects of different power blocs which are not absolutely homogenous in themselves, but have internal contradictions and conflicts;
- v) that analyzing these encounters between competing spatialities necessitates examining the material, institutional and imaginary dimensions of competing spatial conceptions and strategies simultaneously.

In the light of these propositions, this dissertation aims to analyze processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014 within the context of longstanding and multifaceted political struggles between the state and the Kurdish political movement. Therefore, it seeks to elucidate economic, political and cultural dimensions of the struggles undertaken to reconfigure the city's historical, cultural and physical landscapes, analyzing the encounters (articulations and dissociations, continuities and discontinuities at once) between the "post-war" hegemony project of the historical bloc represented politically by the AKP and the "post-colonial" counter-hegemony project developed and maintained by the Kurdish political movement.

## CHAPTER THREE

### LOCATING DİYARBAKIR IN SPACE AND TIME

This dissertation confines itself to the processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014. The reason that lies behind the periodization is twofold. On the general level, deploying the method of conjunctural analysis derived from the Gramscian notion of conjuncture, as elaborated in the previous chapter, I consider the post-2002 period as a distinct political conjuncture during which the organic crisis the Turkish political system experienced has been superseded under the leadership of a new historical bloc represented politically by the ruling AKP. In political-economic terms, urban policies of the AKP and its strategic interventions in spatial processes comprise a crucial component of the restructuring that has rendered hegemony formation on national scale possible.

On the particular level, the strategic turn of the Kurdish political movement and its redefined orientation in the political field following the capture of the PKK's leader Abdullah Öcalan, which as would be expected affected the pro-Kurdish parties' presence in local politics and governments, make it possible to depict substantial differentiations in the dynamics of the Kurdish issue. The local government experience of political parties directly representing the Kurdish political movement begins with the 1999 local elections. Before then, independent political figures with similar political

aspirations had been in office.<sup>134</sup> Yet, this does not minimize the fact that the 1999 elections denote a genuine turning point. At that point the Kurdish political movement undertook a different strategic path which developed until today.

On the other hand, more importantly, this period overlaps with a time span during which the physical and social space of the city of Diyarbakır has undergone substantial transformations. The macro-form of, and settlement patterns in, the city have changed extensively. The dynamics of the housing market have diversified; approaches of various social groups towards city space in general and housing in particular have varied. As a result, novel built-areas –segregated in class terms to a certain degree– emerged, and existing neighborhoods were affected by various conversion dynamics.

In chapters 5 and 6, which comprise the main part of the study, I will examine the material, administrative and ideological aspects of the struggles to reconfigure the urbanscape in the post-1999 period. Yet, before that, it is crucial to put the discussion into a historical context. Accordingly, using secondary sources, this chapter aims at tracing the changes in the physical environment of the city in tandem with the broader dynamics that characterize particular contexts.

The current spatial configuration of Diyarbakır is the fruit of a history of complex social, political, economic and cultural interactions that date back to the nineteenth century. The physical and social space of the city evolved in the field of interaction of such interrelated structures. The economic transformation from a regional trade center to an “underdeveloped” big city or the physical evolution from a surrounded inner-city with a multi-ethnic population structure at the turn of the century to a

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<sup>134</sup> Mehdi Zana, from the illegal Socialist Party of Kurdistan, PSK, held office between 1977 and 1980. Zana was imprisoned during the coup d'état.

destination for the constant influx of rural immigrants indicates the different layers of this multifaceted field. The present phase of Diyarbakır's urban history can only be grasped in this wider context. However, this is not a history of unconflicted and unobstructed accordance. The uneven and combined character of capitalist modernization is at work. Diyarbakır, a magnet city on regional scale, has experienced its fate in the face of overall capitalist modernization processes within a course interwoven by lags and leaps, stillness and dynamism at once.

My account in this chapter, rather than being a comprehensive analysis, is essentially a brief, theoretically-informed description of urbanization processes in Diyarbakır. I do not seek to investigate the long history of Diyarbakır. Instead, I basically recount the spatial evolution of the city to get closer to the period under consideration. While summarizing changes in physical space, I will also occasionally touch upon the question of production and reproduction of symbolic space.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the Lefebvrian notion of "abstract space" as the defining feature of the capitalist mode of production, and argued that modern states intervene into space, and thus actively configure production of abstract space, due to economic, political, geopolitical and ideological reasons and through various tools such as infrastructural investments, military expenditures, planning processes, subsidizing and incentive policies. Building on Lefebvre's theoretical tools, Gregory suggests an analytical model to investigate the production of abstract space. Gregory's model comprises of the double process of commodification and bureaucratization:

*Abstract space* is produced through two major processes, each of them "doubled." First, modernity is shaped by an intensified *commodification of space*, which imposes a geometric grid of property relations and property markets on the earth, and an intensified *commodification*

*through space*, which involves the installation of economic grids of capital circulation by means of which abstract space inscribes abstract labor and the commodity form. Second, modernity is shaped by a heightened *bureaucratization of space*, whereby each administrative system “maps out its own territory, stakes it out and signposts it,” and a heightened *bureaucratization through space*, which involves the installation of juridico-political grids by means of which social life is subject to systematic surveillance and regulation by the state. These processes reinforce each other to constitute abstract space as preeminently the space of *exchange value*.<sup>135</sup> (Emphasis in the original)

In the following I begin with the late nineteenth century, departing from the basic idea that the “urban” has a peculiar meaning under capitalist social formations which put cities on a substantially different ontological and epistemological ground.<sup>136</sup>

Accordingly, I trace the formation of the city’s morphology and settlement patterns in relation to the double determination of commodification and bureaucratization.

Following simultaneously the course of capitalist development in Turkey and the state’s attempts to (re)institute its authority in the Kurdish territory, I seek to demonstrate spatial dynamics that have characterized contexts in which current urban processes are molded.

Last but not least, a narrative limited to the Republican era would be insufficient, since Diyarbakır bore, during and after the transition period, the direct effects of economic and political dynamics that had begun to mature in the pre-Republican era.

Thus, I begin the account from the Tanzimat reforms.<sup>137</sup> Afterwards, I follow the

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<sup>135</sup> Derek Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994), pp. 401-2.

<sup>136</sup> David Harvey, *The Urbanization of Capital*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985), p. 1.

<sup>137</sup> Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij, “Introduction,” in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 2-3 states that it has been a common tendency “to view the period [late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries] as a kind of pre-history of later developments, largely caused by the tremendous changes associated with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and birth of nation-states across its territories. The foundation of the Republic of Turkey was certainly one of these, with 1923 as its

substantial moments of change in the way capitalist modernization evolves at national scale, detailing, in each section of this chapter, alterations in Diyarbakır's physical space in relation to this broader context.<sup>138</sup>

### Urban Reforms, First Steps

Emergence of the first fractures in Diyarbakır's shell, that is initial signs of the slow process of change in the city's macro-form date back to the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The first steps were modest attempts such as the construction of a few state buildings outside the city walls and then, in the first decade of the twentieth century, the rehabilitation of the main streets around which commercial facilities had intensified. Before the first interventions in this period, the city of Diyarbakır had a relatively stable physical environment.<sup>139</sup> The settlement pattern had been kept mostly untouched since the capture of the city by the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century. Despite regular modifications, the overall structure of the city walls and system of main roads were kept

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'year zero', and many studies look at the preceding period simply as the pre-history of the Republic (and into which Diyarbakır may be incorporated)."

<sup>138</sup> For the periodization employed here, see Ayda Eraydın, "Sermaye Birikim Sürecinde Kentler" DeFTER, no. 5, (1988), pp. 133-53; İhsan Bilgin, "Modernleşmenin ve Toplumsal Hareketliliğin Yörüngesinde Cumhuriyet'in İmarı," in *75 Yılda Değişen Kent ve Mimarlık*, ed. Yıldız Sey (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı yayınları, 1998), pp. 255-72, Tarık Şengül, "On the Trajectory of Urbanization in Turkey: An attempt at periodization," *IDPR* 25, no. 2 (2003), pp. 153-68.

<sup>139</sup> For Diyarbakır's history from an urbanistic perspective, see Rıfki Arslan, *Diyarbakır ve Çevresinde Şehirleşme Hareketleri* (Ankara: Ziya Gökalp Derneği, 1979); "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihi ve Bugünkü Konumu," in *Diyarbakır: Müze Şehir*, eds. Şevket Beysanoğlu, M. Sabri Koz and Emin Nedret İşli (İstanbul: YKY, 1999), pp. 80-107. For architectural analyses, see Metin Sözen, *Diyarbakır'da Türk Mimarisi*, (İstanbul: Diyarbakır'ı Tanıtma ve Turizm Derneği Yayını, 1971); D. Türkân Kejanlı, "Anadolu'da Kale Kentler ve Koruma Sorunları: Diyarbakır Kale Kenti" (Ph.D. diss., Yıldız Teknik Üniversitesi, 2002); "Sur İçi Dokusunun Planlama Süreci ve Koru(nama) Sorunları," *TMMOB Diyarbakır Kent Sempozyumu: Bildiriler Kitabı*, (Diyarbakır: TMMOB Diyarbakır İl Koordinasyon Kurulu, 2009), pp. 12-25. For an encyclopedic summary, see *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

intact since Byzantine times. With its 5.5 kilometers long protective walls, it displayed the ideal-typical appearance of a pre-modern era town.

It was located on the eastern edge of the vast Diyarbakır plane that is surrounded by the Tigris River, thus the city had fertile gardens on the river bank and more ample agricultural lands on the western plane. Four main gates located in main directions connected the two-tier inner-city road system to primitive land routes outside the walls. Administrative buildings, temples, residential units, neighborhoods mostly organized on a religious basis, commercial buildings such as inns and bazaars, and artisanal manufacture sites were dispersed, in accordance to their functions and hierarchies, around this main road system.

Most commercial facilities were located on the vertical axis. Relatively more affluent segments of merchants and artisans were on both sides of the northern part of the vertical axis, around Dağ Kapısı. The southern section of the axis and market places in the western part of the city hosted secondary commercial units where the rural population from surrounding villages exchanged a limited surplus of goods in their possession with basic tools to meet their needs.<sup>140</sup> The İçkale area, close to Dağ Kapısı, was a fortified area in which administrative units and the military garrison were settled. The most grandiose of temples were close to main roads.

Neighborhoods that were composed of enclosed residential units with their inner courtyards, and alleys that connected them to main roads were generally organized on religious basis. Muslim, Armenian, Syriac, Jewish and Greek communities resided in their secluded neighborhoods, close to their temples. However, although most of the neighborhoods were religiously homogenous, almost one-third of them were religiously

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<sup>140</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. “Diyarbakır.”

mixed.<sup>141</sup> Even though it is difficult to state an absolute spatial segregation in class terms peculiar to modern urban settlements, nevertheless, more affluent segments, state elites and notables resided in areas close to main axes and İçkale, while the rest were in interior parts of the neighborhoods. The first impacts of novel urbanism of the Tanzimat era occurred, relatively late and in a modest manner, in such a stable physical environment.<sup>142</sup> Before illustrating initial signs of this novel urbanism in Diyarbakır, it would be useful to picture the economic and political circumstances that surround the city in the period.

Diyarbakır was experiencing strained economic and social circumstances in the first half of the century. A long wave of fatal diseases such as plague and cholera had begun in the second half of the eighteenth century and reappeared on more scores than one until the end of the nineteenth century. Like in many Ottoman cities in the period, these epidemics decreased the population level dramatically both in the city and

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<sup>141</sup> İbrahim Yılmazçelik, “Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Süresince Diyarbakır Şehrinde Mahallelerin Tarihî ve Fizikî Gelişim Seyri,” in *Diyarbakır: Müze Şehir*, eds. Şevket Beysanoğlu, M. Sabri Koz and Emin Nedret İşli (İstanbul: YKY, 1999), p. 195.

<sup>142</sup> Major economic transformations following the 1838 Anglo-Ottoman free trade agreement on the one hand, and modernization attempts in governmental apparatuses following the 1839 administrative reforms (*Tanzimat Fermanı*) on the other, had direct repercussions on urban structures in Ottoman cities. A series of legal regulations and administrative restructurings –we can mention, among many others, the 1848 Building Directory (*Ebniye Nizamnamesi*), the foundation of Building Ministry (*Ebniye Nezareti*) in 1849, attempts to substitute traditional institutions responsible for city administration with modern municipal bodies, first in İstanbul in the 1850s and then in provinces after the proclamation of the 1877 Provincial Municipal Law– might be considered as steps of Tanzimat era urbanism that had long-term but uneven consequences for different localities in the Empire. For the legal background of Tanzimat urbanism, see Stefan Yerasimos, “Tanzimat’ın Kent Reformları Üzerine,” in *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, eds. Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), pp. 1-18. For detailed analyses on reforms in some singular cases, see Zeynep Çelik, *The Remaking of İstanbul* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986); Paul Dumont and François Georgeon eds., *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996); Sevilay Kaygalak, *Kapitalizmin Taşrası: 16. Yüzyıldan 19. Yüzyıla Bursa’da Toplumsal Süreçler ve Mekansal Değişim* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2008); İlhan Tekeli, *İstanbul’un Planlanmasının ve Gelişmesinin Öyküsü* (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2013).

surrounding villages,<sup>143</sup> substantially diminished production levels, and led to temporary migration from towns to rural areas.<sup>144</sup> Nevertheless, the only factor that adversely affected the city's prosperity and social order was not such epidemics and demographic instabilities.<sup>145</sup> More wide-ranging social dynamics were at work.

For centuries the city of Diyarbakır had some advantages due to its locational position. First of all it was the most significant trade center of the region. Unsurprisingly, the majority of the population lived in rural areas of the province.<sup>146</sup> Nomadic tribes and settled peasants in the region met their needs in the markets of the city. Moreover, what was more important is Diyarbakır's position within the networks of long-distance caravan trade. Its locational advantage due to its position as the hub of long-distance trade routes that extended to Tehran via Van and Tabriz, Ankara via Kayseri, Damascus via Aleppo, and Tiflis via Harput and Kars<sup>147</sup> made Diyarbakır a primary scene for long distance trade-related facilities and spatial units such as inns and bazaars. Especially the custom fees on goods transported from the south to northern

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<sup>143</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 91.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Paul Dumont, "Yahudiler, Araplar ve Kolera: 19. Yüzyıl Sonunda Bağdat'ta Cemaatler Arası İlişkiler," in *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, eds. Paul Dumont and François Geogheon, trans. Ali Berktaş (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), pp. 136-52.

<sup>145</sup> See Table 1.

<sup>146</sup> Within the Empire's administrative structure the name Diyarbekir or *Diyar-ı Bekr* in Ottoman refers both to the city and province (*vilayet*) which was divided to sub-provinces and districts (*sancaks*). As during its first constitution in the sixteenth century, the province of Diyarbekir encompassed the modern provinces of Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Elazığ, Tunceli, Mardin, Bingöl, Batman and Şırnak. Yet, its boundaries changed many times in the nineteenth century. See, Suavi Aydın and Jelle Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron: Some Notes on the Ethno-Religious Groups, Local Powers and the Ottoman State in Diyarbekir Province, 1800-1870," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 16-9.

<sup>147</sup> İbrahim Yılmazçelik, "Osmanlı Hakimiyeti Süresince Diyarbekir Eyaleti'nin İktisadî ve Sosyal Durumu," in *Diyarbakır: Müze Şehir*, eds. Şevket Beysanoğlu, M. Sabri Koz and Emin Nedret İşli (İstanbul: YKY, 1999), p. 505.

ports or eastern provinces had a significant share in Diyarbakır's prosperity.<sup>148</sup> It had a privileged status to command inter-regional trade of precious goods such as silk. While the majority of the region's rural population were occupied with subsistence farming or animal husbandry, the city was an important trade and command center in which significant wealth accumulated in the early-modern era.

However, the city was not immune to gradual shifts in trade routes which had begun in the seventeenth century and culminated in the nineteenth century. Its wealth stemming from command power on the effortful caravan trade deteriorated in parallel to this encompassing shift.<sup>149</sup> The openly adverse effects of the novel dynamics of world trade had come to the fore by the nineteenth century. Contemporaries witnessed the conversion of some long-time affluent commercial buildings specialized in caravan trade into military barracks.<sup>150</sup>

Admittedly, changes in the city's locational advantage are closely linked to more wide-ranging transformations which upgraded or downgraded many Ottoman cities' place within the capitalist trade system. However, it would be misleading to arrive at a general statement that assumes an absolute economic regression in the case of Diyarbakır. For, despite decreases in revenues of command on long-distance trade, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the strong point of economic life shifted to manufacture production and exports.<sup>151</sup> The loss in the share of the raw silk trade, for

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<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 490-1.

<sup>149</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "17. Yüzyılda Diyarbekir'de Ekonomik Hayat," in *Evliya Çelebi Diyarbekir'de*, eds. Martin van Bruinessen and Hendrik Boeschoten, trans. Tansel Güney (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003), pp. 76-8.

<sup>150</sup> Quoted in Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 92.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

instance, was compensated for with increases in the export of local woven fabrics and processing of metals that were abundant in the northern parts of the provinces.

In other words, Diyarbakır's economic life experienced a decisive recovery in the latter years of the century. Specialization in weaving and metal works opened up a new phase of exportation and created a substantial level of wealth. Novel trade relations were constituted with foreign (e.g. France) and domestic (e.g. İzmir and Kayseri) markets. Such links strengthened the economic position of the rising social classes who had adequate trade capital, knowledge of business networks and skills of manufacture in their possession. Among those, Armenian and Syriac merchants also held a certain economic power. Yet, it would be a mistake to picture non-muslim communities of the province as a homogenous group that consisted solely of urban middle classes. The majority of the Armenian and Syriac population lived in surrounding rural areas, dependent on subsistence agriculture, whereas urban communities consisted of humble artisans in addition to well-to-do merchants and bankers.<sup>152</sup>

However, the effects of the incorporation process, which entered into a critical stage after the 1838 free trade agreement signed with Great Britain, on Diyarbakır cannot be comprehended solely by a simple narrative of economic deterioration and recovery. This process had multifarious social, economic and cultural repercussions. Diyarbakır is in the middle of intersecting effects that came to the fore with growing capitalist relations of production, circulation and trade on the one hand, and related legal and administrative reformation movements by the state on the other.

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<sup>152</sup> Jelle Verheij, "Diyarbakır and the Armenian Crisis of 1895," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakır, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 85-145.

Contradictions between different social groups stem from the double determination of the socio-economic context within which Diyarbakır stands. In the late nineteenth century, dynamics of capitalist development caused substantial changes in relations of force between ethnic and religious groups on the one hand, and the Tanzimat reforms, which implied the formation of a modern state, changed relations between the center and periphery, the palace and the Kurdish tribes on the other. In fact, what is at stake here is a chain of struggles between the palace, local state officials, tribes, settled muslim and non-muslim peasants, and urban notables. According to Klein, at the heart of these struggles stand contestations between the state and local power groups to capture authority, resources, power, loyalty, and ultimately identity.<sup>153</sup> These contestations were closely interwoven by material-based issues such as appropriation of land and surplus; hence, conceiving them forces us to go beyond particularistic explanations that highlight the specific features of the region's social organization or geography.<sup>154</sup>

Historically speaking, this is the general context in which the city of Diyarbakır witnessed a period of change, a change modest in terms of physical environment but profound in terms of economic and social structures. For this peripheral region of the Empire in which non-Turkish muslim groups (e.g. Kurds) and non-muslim communities (e.g. Armenians and Syriacs, divided into Orthodox, Catholic and later Protestant denominations) had population majority, the primary meaning of the nineteenth century reforms was an attempt to (re)constitute the state's authority in accordance with the goal

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<sup>153</sup> Janet Klein, "State, Tribe, Dynasty and the Contest over Diyarbekir at the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbekir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), p. 147.

<sup>154</sup> Uğur Bahadır Bayraktar, "Tanzimat'ta Devlet ve Aşiretin Ötesinde: Diyarbakır'da İktisadi Mücadele ve Aktörlere Bir Bakış," *Toplum ve Kuram*, no. 4 (Sonbahar 2010), pp. 219-36.

of centralization. Towards this end, the Ottoman state strived to redefine sovereignty relations in a more direct way in the region.

As underlined in the relevant literature, the political and social geography entitled as Kurdistan had autonomy to a varying degree in terms of its administrative system since its incorporation to the Empire in the sixteenth century.<sup>155</sup> In terms of social organization, Kurds were mostly organized along tribal lines which included a differing number of households of nomadic groups and also settled peasants.<sup>156</sup> The state accepted the autonomous power of the Kurdish emirates (e.g. confederation of tribes) and chieftains which had sovereignty over weaker tribes. The fragile and fluctuating balance between tribes, involving both a conflict of interests and material/military companionships with each other, provided these actors with suitable conditions to pursue power. Within such a power structure, critical issues like taxation or soldiery functioned in ways different than those in the other regions of the Empire, in which central authority had been instituted more directly.

The Ottoman state took steps for centralization in the region as early as the first quarter of the nineteenth century, yet, from the state's perspective, this process did not work in an uninterrupted and harmonious way. The actual implementation of the Tanzimat reforms were delayed and limited in the region.<sup>157</sup> The dissolution of the Botan Emirate in 1847 was a decisive step to institute the state's authority; however, this

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<sup>155</sup> Hakan Özoğlu, *Kurdish Notables and the Ottoman State: Evolving Identities, Competing Loyalties, and Shifting Boundaries*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), pp. 43-68.

<sup>156</sup> Picturing tribes as homogenous social organizations would be incorrect, since they consisted of muslim and non-muslim groups, settled and nomadic population. On the other hand, there was also a part of the Kurdish population that did not have tribal networks. See, Martin von Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh, and State: The Social and Political Structures of Kurdistan* (London; New Jersey: Zed Books, 1992).

<sup>157</sup> Bayraktar, "Tanzimat'ta Devlet ve Aşiretin Ötesinde."

did not result in the overall substitution of emirates with state officials. In many cases the governors' sphere of influence was limited to towns and surrounding rural areas, whereas the overwhelming majority of the population was spread over vast rural areas.

Even though they were delayed and limited in implementation, regulations in the Tanzimat era provided the legal and institutional framework in which these struggles and conflicts evolved. For instance, the Land Law of 1858, which was implemented in the region in 1870, resulted in legalizing already existing private land uses on the one hand, and the grabbing of weaker peasant groups' lands and communal lands by tribe chiefs and rising urban notables on the other.<sup>158</sup>

On the other hand, the constant redefinition of relations among tribes as a result of the dissolution of emirates' authorities was crucial in terms of inter-community relations in the Abdulhamid II period. In the absence of a superior authority of emirates, which could minimize inter-tribal rivalries and constitute a forced balance of power, the conflicting tribes came up against each other more frequently. Attacks on rival tribes' herds and to peasants' –particularly non-muslim communities' – land and products became regular.<sup>159</sup> Ethnic tensions and violent attacks, which were to be expressed through more nationalist and identity-centered discourses in the latter years of the century, had economic incentives (e.g. unfair and extra-legal "taxation"), as well as

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<sup>158</sup> Janet Klein, *The Margins of Empire: Kurdish Militias in the Ottoman Tribal Zone* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011).

<sup>159</sup> Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "A 'Peripheral' Approach to the 1908 Revolution in the Ottoman Empire: Land Disputes in Peasant Petitions in Post-revolutionary Diyarbakir," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 179-215.

being politically motivated (e.g. rising anxiety against the state's reforms of religious equality and Russia's aggressive foreign policy).<sup>160</sup>

In the case of the city of Diyarbakır, violence directed to the Christian communities turned into a pogrom during the November 1895 events.<sup>161</sup> Mobs organized and led by muslim urban notables and government officials targeted the Armenian community of the city, killed hundreds of people and plundered their properties. While the apparent political motivation of the local elites was the alleged cooperation of the Armenian community with the Russian Empire, the underlying causes of the ethnic violence were related to local power struggles regarding economic resources. Rising urban notables, who held swathes of land in the vicinity of the city as well, obtained the political backing of the Hamidian regime against the non-muslim communities which had prospered in the late nineteenth century.<sup>162</sup>

Inter-community tensions and violence did not come to a halt in the post-Hamidian period, indeed culminated as a result of the war time policies of the Committee of Union and Progress which led to the massive destruction, starvation and deportation of Armenians, Syrians and Chaldeans in 1915-1916. Following orders from the CUP's leadership, the governor Dr. Reşid and his fellows from the local organization of the CUP, which comprised some of the prominent notables of the city, organized and led systematic persecutions of urban and rural non-muslim population of the province and the confiscation of their movable and immovable properties. In demographic terms,

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<sup>160</sup> See, Aydın and Verheij, "Confusion in the Cauldron," p. 39.

<sup>161</sup> For a detailed account, see Verheij, "Diyarbakır and the Armenian Crisis of 1895."

<sup>162</sup> For political motivations of and struggles among different factions of muslim notables at the turn of the twentieth century, see Joost Jongerden, "Elite Encounters of a Violent Kind: Milli İbrahim Paşa, Ziya Gökalp and Political Struggle in Diyarbakır at the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakır, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 55-84.

the total of people victimized ranged between 120,000 and 157,000, in other words the Christian population of Diyarbakir province was almost eradicated.<sup>163</sup>

To sum up, in almost a century preceding the First World War, economic, political and administrative relations changed substantially in the Kurdistan region. The administrative unit at the center of which Diyarbakır stood was defined repeatedly. Land property system and structure changed mostly at the expense of muslim and non-muslim settled peasants. Sovereignty ties between the Kurdish tribes and the Ottoman state not only changed but also diversified, while the end results of these novel relations complicated inter-community conflicts.

On the other hand, as a result of the shifts in trade routes and production relations, Diyarbakır became a locality specializing in some branches of manufacture production and related export facilities. The regional commanding center of the past evolved into a still fervent trade and artisanal city. Admittedly, changes in economic relations had consequences on social class structure. A novel group of urban notables that included affluent landlords holding vast lands outside the city, and merchants who possessed skills and means of exportation began to mature. The contradictions between factions of urban notables drew the contours of political conflicts in the city. The first urban reforms came to order in the last quarter of the century in such social, political and economic circumstances.

Initial construction activities of the period began by orders of energetic government officials. First, Governor İsmail Paşa ordered the construction of a military barracks, mosque, hospital and state office, *Mülkiye Dairesi*, in Seyran Tepe, a rural area

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<sup>163</sup> Uğur Ümit Üngör and Mehmet Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction: The Young Turk Seizure of Armenian Property*, (London and New York: Continuum, 2011), p. 149.

adjacent to the land route that connects the city to Elazığ, in the 1868-1875 period.<sup>164</sup>

His main purpose was to spread the influence zone of the central administration, rehabilitating the units physically. Thereby, for the first time, the city went beyond its walls, and an axis of development that was to mature in the Republican era emerged.

A second focal point, which was to be less crucial in the latter periods, occurred in Fis Kayası, an area adjacent to Dağ Kapı and on the bank of the Tigris River. By orders of another governor, Sırrı Paşa, a civilian hospital was built in 1884. Same year a civilian secondary school and a vocational public school were built in the area.

Afterwards, in 1899, *Hamidiye Sanayi Mektebi*, a prestigious educational facility built to commemorate the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sultan Abdulhamid's reign, was opened.<sup>165</sup>

Marshal Semih Paşa ordered the construction of a military secondary school, *Askerî Rüştiye*, which was built in 1899, outside the Urfa Kapı. Lastly, during the period of Commander Ferik Cemal Paşa, a command headquarters and a court house were built in İçkale.<sup>166</sup> Thereby, fractures on the shell began to spread, and a loose net of public schools and hospitals developed in the northern and western zones outside the city walls.

After the promulgation of the Provincial Municipal Law in 1877, a municipality with two offices with authority over the western and eastern parts of the city was established in 1880.<sup>167</sup> Thus, long after the first developments outside the walls chiefly run by the central state administrators, the road rehabilitations and redevelopment projects in commercial zones came to order at the turn of the century. The point was to

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<sup>164</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 93.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

modernize the physical infrastructure that could no longer meet the requirements of recently expanding facilities of commerce and artisanal manufacture.

Yet, apart from daily municipal duties, such a redevelopment program did not start in the first decade of the century. Only as late as in 1916, during the war years, and just after the violent incidents and massacres that aimed at the Armenian and Syriac communities both in the city and villages, a limited program was started to improve the central business district. Two important roads that connect İkale to the main commercial center and Dağ Kapı to Urfa Kapı were added to the existing inner-city road system.<sup>168</sup> Thus, the sphere of influence of the primary commercial center of the city specialized in inter-regional trade markets (Dörtyol) was expanded, and Dağ Kapı became a beginning point of a transportation network that connects Diyarbakır to Harput-Elazığ.

These initial activities manifest lagged and modest examples of urban reform attempts that came to order in the Tanzimat era. Their modest and limited character will become clearer if we compare them with development activities in major cities of the Empire, such as Istanbul, İzmir, Thessaloniki, or secondary centers such as Mersin and Bursa, where the process of incorporation to capitalist world markets began earlier and needs for novel production and transportation systems came to the fore more acutely.<sup>169</sup>

Nevertheless, it would not be misleading to conceive these attempts within the framework of the Tanzimat urban reforms. Tekeli indicates five main problems that urban reformers aimed to deal with: restructuring of central business districts of cities

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<sup>168</sup> Kejanlı, “Sur İi Dokusunun Planlama Süreci ve Koru(nama)ma Sorunları,” p. 12.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. Çağlar Keyder, Y. Eyüp Özveren, Donald Quataert, eds., *Doğru Akdeniz’de Liman Kentleri*, trans. Gül Çağalı Güven (İstanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994).

that witnessed novel requirements in production and transportation systems; diversification of residential areas in line with emerging patterns of social stratification; development of new zones to meet housing demand of newcomers; rehabilitation of physical infrastructure; and transformation of building type to prevent widespread city fires.<sup>170</sup> As summarized above, the first developments in Diyarbakır correspond mainly to the first item on this list. The primacy for governors and local muslim notables, who had opportunities to represent their interests in municipal bodies, was to rehabilitate the existing structure of commerce zones, develop a more suitable transportation system, and spread public buildings outside the walls to strengthen the administrative and military facilities of the city.

Despite the attempts, even limited in scope, to increase the standards of business and manufacture, the residential pattern of the city did not change substantially until the genocide. Urban dwellers, muslim or non-muslim, affluent merchants or poor porters, continued to settle within the city walls, even though architectural properties and basic allowances of units differed noticeably. As noted in the beginning, neighborhoods were not perfectly divided in ethnic lines. Yet, the eastern Hançepik neighborhood was overwhelmingly dwelled by the Armenian community, while Syrians mostly resided in the Lalabey neighborhood, close to the western gate of the city. In the aftermath of the 1915-1916 events, many dwelling units, workshops, stores, schools and churches were confiscated by the state so as to use as public buildings or to accommodate muslim refugees, whereas seizure of properties by local prominent figures was widespread.<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> İhan Tekeli, "19. Yüzyılda İstanbul Metropol Alanının Dönüşümü," in Paul Dumont and François Georgeon, eds. *Modernleşme Sürecinde Osmanlı Kentleri*, trans. Ali Berktay (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1996), p. 20.

<sup>171</sup> For a detailed account, see Üngör and Polatel, *Confiscation and Destruction*, pp. 133-64.

On the other hand, muslim notables of the city who had accumulated economic and political power in their hands in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had large mansions located along the main axes of the city. For instance, as Üngör and Polatel state, the Cizrelizade and Ekinçi families lived near the main square of the city, whereas the Ocak family lived near the Melik Ahmed Mosque. The infamous Pirinççizade family, which were influential in the local organization of the Young Turks from the Committee of Union and Progress to the Kemalist period, and played an important role during both the 1895 pogrom and the 1915 genocide lived near the Great Mosque (*Ulu Camii*). Mustafa Bey, the chieftain of the Cizrelizade, Yasinzade Şevki Bey of the Ekinçi family and the İskenderpaşa family lived around İskender Paşa mosque, close to the Dağkapı gate. Important Kurdish dynasties such as the Cemilpaşazade, Hevedan and Zazazade, and major chieftains from surrounding sub-districts of Hazro, Kulp and Lice lived in the Alipaşa neighborhood, on the southern side of the city.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 135.



Figure 1. Urban Development of the City of Diyarbakir

## Building the Nation on Ruins

The transition from empire to Republic, which was characterized by successive military conflicts and wars, ethnic confrontations and cleansings, demographic homogenization and deep social tensions, started a second term in the history of Diyarbakır's urban development. In the decades following the proclamation of the Republic, while previous trends of change in Diyarbakır's macro-form became more profound, physical and symbolic aspects of nation-state formation inscribed themselves more explicitly on its built environment. Its demographic structure had substantially changed due to ethnic massacres during and after the World War. On the other hand, the physical and social space of the city began to change in the 1930s mostly with the construction of the newborn Republic's institutions. Before illustrating the evolution of the physical environment, it would be useful to describe the economic and political context that framed the Republic's interventions to space, within the dual-fold perspective outlined in the introduction of this chapter. Then, I will point out the main spatial policies of the period to emphasize both communalities and differentiations in Diyarbakır.

To begin with, the demographic transformation of the war years on the one hand and the new international configuration in the Middle East that emerged as a result of inter-state treaties on the other, signified a straitjacket for Diyarbakır, in terms of its social and economic dynamics. In addition to a dramatic decrease in its productive capacity due to demographic changes, the ties with its economic and social hinterland also fell apart in the face of less permeable national borders.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> İnan Keser, *Diyarbakır: Sosyolojik Bir İnceleme* (Adana: Karahan Kitabevi, 2012), p. 7.

Table 1.  
Population of the City of Diyarbakır

Year	Population
1830-40	54,000
1844	60,000
1890	35,000
1912	38,000
1927	30,719
1935	34,642
1940	42,555
1945	41,087
1950	45,053
1955	61,224
1960	79,888
1965	102,653
1970	149,566
1975	169,535
1980	235,617
1985	305,940
1990	381,144
2000	545,983
2005	777,064
2011	875,069
2013	963,457

Source: Cem Behar, *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun ve Türkiye'nin Nüfusu* (Ankara: DİE Yayınları, 2000); TURKSTAT, Population Statistics, 2014.

This historical shift cannot be conceived by considering only the ideological-political effects of the division of a cultural and political entity, Kurdistan, which has deep historical roots. Indeed, Diyarbakır, a regional trade center that commanded a larger geography in previous periods, was deprived of a part of its historical trade ties as a result of the crumbling of inter-regional economic networks, and became, at least in economic terms, a marginal city of a newborn nation-state.

Diyarbakır, in the coming decades, lost its position as an economic stronghold that once, thanks to trade of specialized manufacture products, had a certain degree of vitality. The state's macroeconomic policies, and the law and order-oriented strategies towards the Kurdish population, which were to procreate an "Eastern" issue in the

imaginaries of both Kemalists and Kurdish nationalists in the course of time,<sup>174</sup> give us a common ground by which we can approach the urban processes in Diyarbakır in the early Republican period.

As underlined in the relevant literature, the state's priorities in the Kurdish region progressively took a law- and order-oriented path, in response to revolts that occurred after the substantial shifts in policies regarding Kurdish national aspirations.<sup>175</sup> The state's policies towards Kurds brought less indulgent practices, against the backdrop of novel international configuration and legal regulations that provided the new state its legitimacy.<sup>176</sup> The distinct change in relations between Kemalist cadres and Kurdish political elites, or more concretely, the dissolution of temporary political alliances formed during the Independence War,<sup>177</sup> delivered a main dynamic that was to have a direct effect on future policies towards the region: to control popular-based Kurdish revolts that hold a nationalist-religious discourse and demands.<sup>178</sup>

In truth, these revolts are part of widespread contestations that emerged in various localities in Anadolu following the proclamation of the Republic, having several demands and discourses, and taking the form of a non-violent resistance or violent

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<sup>174</sup> Jordi Tejel Gorgas, "The Shared Political Production of 'the East' as a 'Resistant' Territory and Cultural Sphere in the Kemalist Era, 1923-1938," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 10, (2009), p. 4.

<sup>175</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Osmanlıcılıktan Ayrılıkçılığa: Şeyh Sait Ayaklanması'nın Dini ve Etnik Arka Planı," in *Kürdistan Üzerine Yazılar*, trans. Levent Kafadar, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1992), pp. 123-72. For an evaluation of the pre-republic roots of the state's stance towards the Kurdish population, see Uğur Ümit Üngör, "Disastrous Decade: Armenians and Kurds in the Young Turk Era, 1915-25," in *Social Relations in Ottoman Diyarbakir, 1870-1915*, ed. Joost Jongerden and Jelle Verheij (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 284-90.

<sup>176</sup> Gorgas, "The Shared Political Production," p.4.

<sup>177</sup> Mesut Yeğen, *Müstakbel Türk'ten Sözde Vatandaş: Cumhuriyet ve Kürtler*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2006) suggests that Kemalist cadres conceived their relations with the Kurdish community during the Independence War in the light of political and military need to secure temporary unity in Anatolia, and put aside this strategy afterwards, as sealed by the 1924 Constitution.

<sup>178</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, *Türkiye'nin Modern Tarihi*, (İstanbul: Avesta, 2004), pp. 61-5.

dissent.<sup>179</sup> Gorgas counts at least sixteen uprisings that the Turkish army had to deal with in the Eastern provinces between 1923 and 1938, and suggests that only three of them (Sheikh Said, 1925; Ağrı Dağı, 1927-1931; Dersim, 1936-38) had explicitly Kurdish nationalist claims and were organized by the Kurdist committees or individuals.<sup>180</sup>

These revolts that caused significant military and political trouble for the Kemalist regime paved the way for the formulation of more fundamentalist measures, and for the constitution of special, security-based administrative mechanisms specific to the Eastern provinces.<sup>181</sup>

According to Çiçek, the state's regional policies, the content of which was developed partly with the help of reports written by prominent political figures of the period, İsmet İnönü (1935), Cemal Bayar (1936), and Abidin Özmen (1936), consisted of five main strategies: Turkification, that is assimilation of Kurds to "proper citizens" who identified in full terms with Turkish culture; resettlement of leading Kurdish political figures to western cities with their families to disperse their organizational capacity within Kurdish dissident mobilizations; improvement of the poor transportation system by building land routes and railroads to increase the accessibility of the region, especially in the case of Dersim; diminishing the permeability of national borders in terms of the mobility of goods and people; and establishment of administrative units with obligations and authorities specific to the Kurdish region.<sup>182</sup>

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<sup>179</sup> Gorgas, "The Shared Political Production," p.5.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

<sup>181</sup> For an elaborated analysis of the demographic, cultural and educational policies implemented in Diyarbakır during the nation-state formation period, see Uğur Ümit Üngör, *The Making of Modern Turkey: Nation and State in Eastern Anatolia, 1913-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>182</sup> Cuma Çiçek, "Devlet Kudretinin İnşası ya da Şark'ın Islahı: Kürt Bölgesinde Cumhuriyet'in İlk 10 Yılı," in *Diyarbakır Tebliğleri: Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi*

One of the most important of these mechanisms was the general inspectorates which aggregated civilian and military authorities in one hand.<sup>183</sup> The First General Inspectorate, with Diyarbakır as its center, was established in 1928, under the leadership of İbrahim Talî, and was authorized with exceptional administrative, political and military power to restore order in Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Urfa, Bitlis, Van, Hakkari and Siirt.<sup>184</sup>

The establishment of the First General Inspectorate has an explicit significance also for the present discussion on Diyarbakır's urban processes, since, as I detail below, roots of the relative primacy of the service sector and public employment in the city's economy lie here on the one hand, and the presence of state institutions gave a certain direction and form to the spatial development of, and housing types in, the city in the 1930s and afterwards on the other.

The meaning of being an administrative center was the establishment of regional directorates of state institutions such as public water works administration, highway administration, postal services, ministry of labor, ministry of development and housing, army corps, and a military airport. Therefore, the building of the regional directorates' organizational units, military facilities and residential units of high-rank state officials determined, in the first place, the way and form of the city's expansion to new zones between the 1920s and 1950s. On the other hand, the increase in the number of state

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*Konferansı*, ed. Bülent Doğan, (İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2013), pp. 337-45. See also, Mesut Yeğen, *Devlet Söyleminde Kürt Sorunu*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 1999). For detailed accounts of reports prepared during the single party period, see Belma Akçura, *Devletin Kürt Filmi: 1925-2009 Kürt Raporları*, (İstanbul: New Age Yayınları, 2009); Tuğba Yıldırım, ed., *Kürt Sorunu ve Devlet: Tedip ve Tenkil Politikaları, 1925-1947*, (İstanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2011).

<sup>183</sup> Cemil Koçak, *Umumi Müfettişlikler (1927-1952)*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2003).

<sup>184</sup> Gorgas, "The Shared Political Production," p.5. See also, Ercan Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası (1923-1950)* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2002), pp. 71-109.

officials caused a quantitative change in housing demand, and then led to a qualitative diversification in housing provision and settlement patterns. Lastly, it should be underlined that the excessive power of the Inspectorate facilitated the nationalization of urban land necessary for developing a planned city outside the walls in accordance with the 1932 city plan.<sup>185</sup>

The state's law and order-oriented policies were in constant interaction with the macroeconomic policies of the period. Considering the low levels of capital accumulation, the importance of the imbalanced distribution of public investments as a consequence of security priorities would become more visible.<sup>186</sup> In the case of Diyarbakır, the shift, following the 1929 economic depression, from an economic growth model based on the relatively liberal export of agricultural products and mines to a substantially different model that consisted of state-led industrialization for capital accumulation and more integrated domestic markets, had contradictory economic effects.<sup>187</sup>

Even though it had already lost a major part of its population that had productive skills, capital and trade relations on the one hand and ties with its historical hinterland on the other, Diyarbakır still had a certain industrial capacity in the beginning of the period. Using official figures of the 1927 industry census, Diken suggests that Diyarbakır had a leading position after Istanbul, İzmir and Bursa in terms of productive capacity, which

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<sup>185</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," pp. 94-5.

<sup>186</sup> Harun Ercan, "Türkiye'de Ulus Devlet Oluşumu, Kürt Direnişi ve Dönüşüm Dinamikleri," *Toplum ve Kuram*, no. 1 (Mayıs 2009), p. 30.

<sup>187</sup> For specific implications of this shift on Diyarbakır's economy, see Şeyhmus Diken, "Cumhuriyet Diyarbakır'ında İktisadi Hayat," in *Müze Şehir*, eds. Şevket Beysanoğlu, M. Sabri Koz and Emin Nedret İşli (İstanbul: YKY, 1999), pp. 512-9.

was wasted due to the state's apparent neglect in the following decades.<sup>188</sup> In more precise terms, it had specialized in weaving and metal processing. However, public policies for spreading industrialization to small-scale localities and integrating domestic markets by investing mainly in railroad constructions, Diken argues, did not improve Diyarbakır's productive capacity.

Indeed, the only state enterprise in Diyarbakır until the 1950s was the Tekel distillery that was established in 1932.<sup>189</sup> Even though it was the leading enterprise in terms of employment figures, due to its weak backward and forward ties, Tekel's impact on the city's overall productive capacity was feeble.<sup>190</sup> The number of public and private enterprises that could benefit from industrial incentives after the 1941 Law for Industrial Incentives show a decrease rather than an increase in Diyarbakır's industrial capacity. By that year, the total number was eight, one of which was the Tekel distillery, and the others were small-scale producers of ice, flour, silk and lumber.<sup>191</sup>

Diyarbakır witnessed indirect effects of improvements in mining, which were reorganized with the establishment of state enterprises and banks such as Etibank, and had a certain degree of economic significance in Ergani, a northern district, and Elazığ.<sup>192</sup> One of the primary purposes of railroad construction in the region, one line of which was extended to Diyarbakır in 1935, was to improve transportation facilities in mining. However, the railroad network in Diyarbakır was now improved, except a line extended to Kurtalan in 1940. Diyarbakır was not linked to the southern main line,

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<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 513-4.

<sup>189</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

<sup>190</sup> Diken, p. 516.

<sup>191</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

<sup>192</sup> Mustafa Sönmez, *Doğu Anadolu'nun Hikâyesi: Ekonomik ve Sosyal Tarih* (Ankara: Arkadaş, 1990) pp. 113-5.

which had been built in 1910, and so was deprived of greater transportation opportunities that would connect it directly to a broader geography.<sup>193</sup>

In short, Diyarbakır, with stagnant demographic figures and a shrinking economic structure, was in strained circumstances between the 1920s and 1950s. Economic activity was limited to a few small-scale industrial enterprises, a relatively larger agricultural sector that provided industrial production with raw material, and subsistence agriculture. Thereby, state officials with regular salaries had a considerable weight in the city economy.

Above, I noted that the interaction between the political and economic context and the Republic's spatial policies. According to Şengül, who underlines the state's fundamental motivation for defining territorially "the homeland," there are three key areas of national spatial policies in this period: The first policy is the creation of regional administrative centers, which finds its climax both in material and symbolic manners in the transfer of the capital to Ankara. The second policy is the locating of the state economic enterprises in accordance with novel orientations in macroeconomic policies. The third policy is the creation of a transportation network that is deeply linked with the priority of integrating domestic markets and rendering the Eastern provinces more "accessible" in military terms.<sup>194</sup>

On the particular level, fields of urban planning, urban design and architecture were considered by Kemalist cadres as both a symbol and tool of the aspired radical

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<sup>193</sup> For an account of the economic importance of the railroad system for the region, see Sönmez, pp. 106-10.

<sup>194</sup> Şengül, "On the Trajectory of Urbanization in Turkey," p. 156. For a discussion on the state's railroad investments in Diyarbakır, see Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası*," pp. 225-45.

break with the Ottoman past.<sup>195</sup> To this end, state institutions commissioned prominent architects, some from Germany, to design glamorous public buildings such as university campuses, museums, train stations, opera houses and so on in major cities. In a similar vein, Bilgin underlines the weight of the state's spatial policies against relatively weak interventions of private capital in forming urban processes in general and built environment in particular in the single-party era.<sup>196</sup> Yet, the end result of these spatial policies on the urban scale is paradoxical. Despite the ambitious role the state defined for itself, the imprints of these spatial policies were limited to visible-but-inadequate interventions into cityscape. Due to insufficiencies in terms of resources and qualified personnel, and inconsistencies in terms of economic and political priorities, these policies did not open the way to deal with major problems of cities such as housing shortage or infrastructural shortfalls.

Major political decisions taken in the aftermath of the 1930 Municipal Law, such as establishing local government units in localities with populations over two thousand in order to increase the central state's control, or carrying out extensive planning activities in many of these localities resulted in a quite restricted housing policy that dealt principally with high- and middle-rank state officials' housing needs instead of solving the increasing shortage in affordable residential units especially in big cities on the one hand, and in strictly defined politics of urban design that manifested itself in interventions to public spaces on the other.<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>195</sup> Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001).

<sup>196</sup> İhsan Bilgin, *Konut Üretiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi* (İstanbul: YÜMFED, 1992), pp. 92-101.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 93-4.

After having summarized the economic and political context, and the spatial policies of the newborn nation-state, we can continue with detailing changes in Diyarbakır's built environment, which express both the results of general inclinations on the national scale and repercussions of the state's multifaceted policies towards the Kurdish region. As would be expected, the Kemalist regime's approach to urban planning and design and its architectural preferences had decisive imprints on Diyarbakır's urbanscape.<sup>198</sup>

One of the most important urban ventures of the period that shaped the further development of the city in the succeeding periods is the partial demolishing of the city walls around Dağ Kapı. Actually, debates on the destruction had a history, even the missionaries in the city wrote about their adverse effects on public health.<sup>199</sup> Yet, the physical integrity of the walls had been preserved until the partial destructions carried out in 1931. In that year the western part of the Dağ Kapı gate was knocked down, and the already existing opening was expanded. As a result, the Elazığ-Diyarbakır road was completely connected to the city via Dağ Kapı. Similar interventions to the walls were made in southern and western parts as well.<sup>200</sup>

In the early Republican period the urban development plans of major cities like Ankara, Istanbul, İzmir and Mersin were commissioned to foreign experts. One of them, the German urbanist Hermann Jansen, who was responsible for Ankara's plan, visited

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<sup>198</sup> Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası*, pp. 250-62.

<sup>199</sup> Barbara J. Merguerian, "Amerikalılar'ın Gözünden 19. Yüzyılda Diyarbekir, 1830-1860," in *Diyarbakır Tebliğleri: Diyarbakır ve Çevresi Toplumsal ve Ekonomik Tarihi Konferansı*, ed. Bülent Doğan, (İstanbul: Hrant Dink Vakfı Yayınları, 2013), p. 47.

<sup>200</sup> Kejanlı, "Sur İçi Dokusunun Planlama Süreci ve Koru(nama)mama Sorunları," pp. 13-4.

Diyarbakır in 1931, and gave advice for Diyarbakır's first city plan in order to shift the development outside the walls.<sup>201</sup>

The plan envisaged an undeveloped area called Yenişehir as the new site of expansion. Accordingly, the city, which was limited by topographic barriers in the East, was to expand towards the vast area between the İstasyon Avenue that connects the railroad station to Urfa Kapı and Elazığ Avenue that extended to Dağ Kapı. Two roads that connect these avenues to each other were built, and the area in the middle of this road network was designed as the new administrative center. In order to encourage residents to settle outside the walls, the Diyarbakır municipality undertook the sale of public land at a reduced price in Yenişehir.<sup>202</sup> Similarly, there had been some suggestions to build new residential neighborhoods in Bağlar, a green area used historically for recreational purposes. However, the Bağlar area hosted only some 400 summer houses until the 1940s. In 1945, almost the entire city population, that is forty thousand residents, were settled within the city walls.<sup>203</sup>

The state-led development of Yenişehir was in accordance with the dominant principles of urban design of the era which considered train stations, Republic square-monument-government house units and ample avenues that form a grid between them as the core of physical expansion.<sup>204</sup> Thus, the headquarter and residence of the General Inspectorate, the residence of the Seventh Army Corps, the organizational units of the Tekel distillery factory and the Ministry of Public Developments and Housing, a public

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<sup>201</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 95.

<sup>202</sup> Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası*, p. 252.

<sup>203</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 95.

<sup>204</sup> Bilgin, "Modernleşmenin ve Toplumsal Hareketliliğin Yörüngesinde Cumhuriyet'in İmarı," p. 258.

high school, a teacher's house, and twenty lodging units were built in this part of the city in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>205</sup>

The new cadres governing the city attributed a particular meaning to city parks, thus built new parks both outside and inside the walls. For instance, in 1927, the vacant area in front of the Ulu Camii was rearranged and named as the Municipality Park. Similarly, Dağ Kapı Square that I will touch upon in Chapter 5 as regards its particular meaning in the Kurdish nationalist imaginary was converted into a public park during the governorship of Hasan Nizamettin Bey (1927-31).<sup>206</sup> Before 1927, the historic cemetery outside the walls was demolished, and the vacant land between Dağ Kapı and Urfa Kapı was marked as a development area. Thus, an arch that stretches between Elazığ Avenue in the North and the future İstasyon Avenue in the West began to emerge.

In the second half of the 1940s, another group of public buildings –a city movie theater, an officer's club, a community center (*Halkevi*), a CHP building, and a vocational school building– were erected alongside Elazığ Avenue which was to become a prestigious commercial area. A large primary school building and the city stadium were the new buildings along the other axis, İstasyon Avenue. The Tekel distillery, a public hospital, a teacher training school, and an open air cinema were built in the area between Dağ Kapı and the Tigris River, close to school buildings constructed before the turn of the century.

In the inner-city the primary aim was to rehabilitate the existing central business district. Accordingly, a new inner-city road that connects Dağ Kapı to Urfa Kapı was

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<sup>205</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 95.

<sup>206</sup> Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası*, pp. 252-3.

developed. In accordance with the 1932 city plan, the commercial facilities on the İzzet Paşa Street, which connects Dört Yol to Saray Kapı, were redeveloped. Before 1935, four hotels, thirty shops and fifteen houses were constructed on the street.<sup>207</sup> Similar development can be observed in the case of the commercial units on the newly built İnönü Avenue. Thus, the primary business center of the city was expanded.

Until the 1950s, the overwhelming majority of residential units were in the inner-city. The housing pattern began to change only after the relative easing in 1954 in laws to regulate private flat ownership and after the introduction of housing credits by the Bank of Real Estate and Credit in 1955, which exclusively benefited the upper-middle classes. Yet, in the 1930s and 1940s a quite limited number of residential units, occupied by state officials, began to emerge in Yenişehir.

Regarding the housing provision of the single party era, one can state three distinct types. The first is the traditional houses which were located entirely within the city walls. These one- or two-story family houses, built mostly with basalt stone, accommodated almost all of the city population until the 1940s. After that point, as a result of the housing needs of newcomers like public officials and military officers, homeowners began to rent their rooms. The architectural properties of these family houses, which have separate rooms lined around a courtyard, helped the introduction of this model.<sup>208</sup> Hence, a population increase from 41,087 in 1945 to 45,053 in 1950 could be absorbed.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>207</sup> Kejanlı, “Sur İçi Dokusunun Planlama Süreci ve Koru(nama)ma Sorunları,” p. 14.

<sup>208</sup> Arslan, “Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu,” p. 96.

<sup>209</sup> M. Sami Zümrüt, “Toplu Konut Uygulamalarının Kentsel Gelişim Etkileri ve Kullanıcıların Memnuniyet Düzeylerinin Araştırılması: Diyarbakır Örneği” (M.A. thesis, Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi, 2002), p. 135.

However, the increase was not restricted to public officials. A slow but stable immigration from villages began during World War II, and continued afterwards. These migrants that did not have adequate income to rent rooms in the city generated the second type, *gecekodu*, built by traditional village techniques, mostly on the vacant lots between existing neighborhoods and the city walls. The first seeds of neighborhoods such as Ali Paşa, Kore, Kıbrıs and Abdaldede,<sup>210</sup> some of which are subject to the ongoing urban transformation project today, were sown after the War.

The third group is new residential units built by contemporary construction techniques for upper-segments of public officials in Yenişehir. These one- or two-story single-family houses were designed in accordance with garden-city principles prevalent in the early Republican era, and met a quite limited part of housing demand in the city.

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<sup>210</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. “Diyarbakır.”

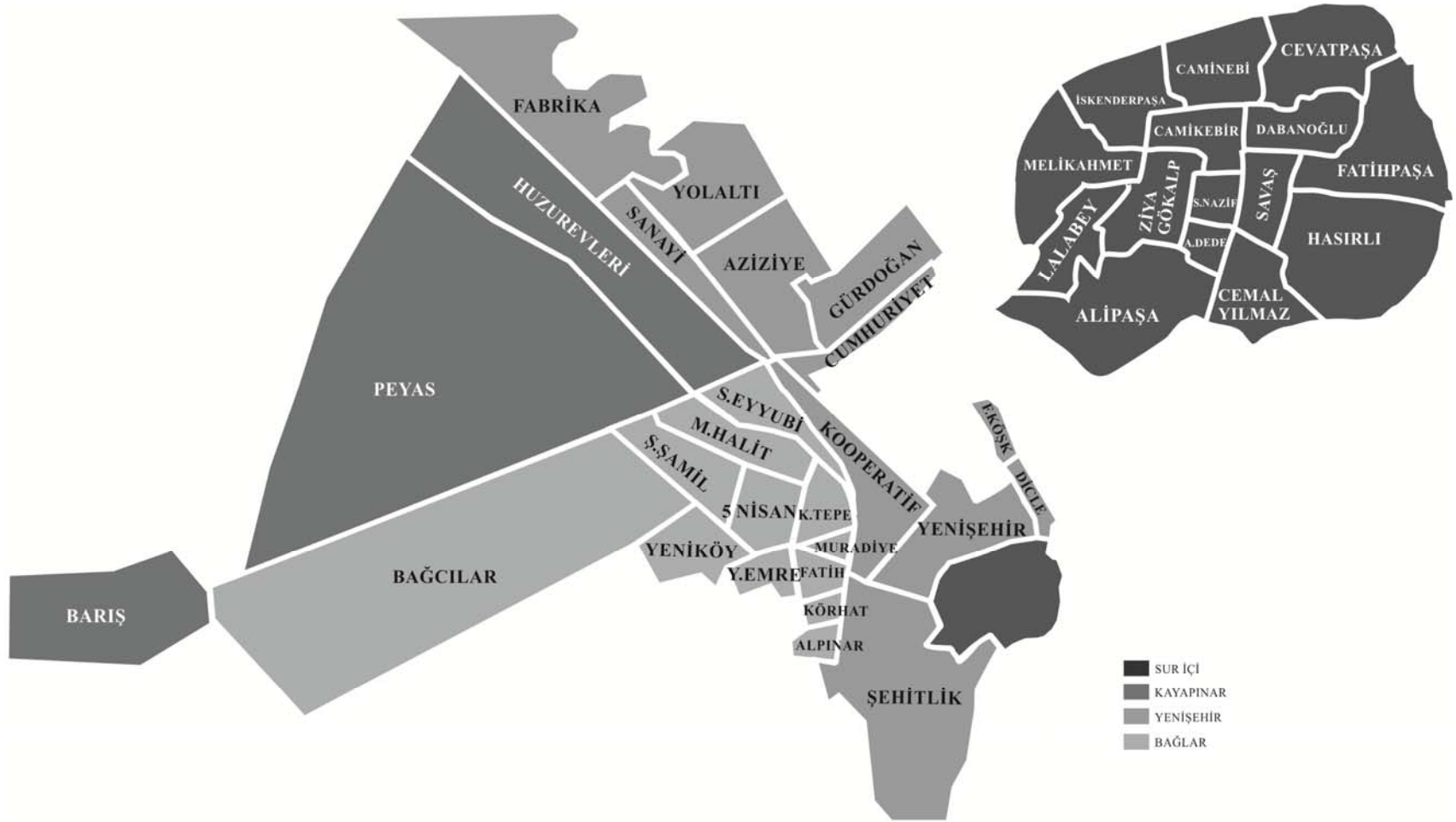


Figure 2. Neighborhoods of the City of Diyarbakır

## Flux to the City

In the previous sections, I detailed changes in Diyarbakır's physical environment from the last quarter of the nineteenth century to the 1950s, linking particular urban processes to broader political and economic dynamics and national spatial policies. As summarized, in the period considered, the determinant factor molding urban processes in Diyarbakır had to a greater extent been the state's interventions. While the housing stock was not subject to considerable transformation, changes in settlement pattern and land uses were caused mainly by public investments. As noted above, the explanation behind stable housing structure in the early Republican era is closely linked to stagnating, even decreasing, population figures. Before the 1950s, slightly increased demand for affordable housing could be met by the available stock. The state's interventions were limited essentially to the construction of official administrative buildings and lodgings for high-elbow public officials. Diyarbakır, it might be argued, had a relatively stagnant physical environment, in contrast to the dramatic shocks in its economic and political circumstances.

However, this steady urban outlook began to change after the 1950s, as in other major localities of Turkey. Both the pace and sources of changes in space began to differentiate. It would be more reasonable, after that point, to search the sources of changes in collective needs and solutions of an expanding population, instead of in state interventions principally manifested in public building constructions or infrastructural investments. Admittedly, the foremost cause of this shift is, as underlined frequently in the literature, the constant influx of rural population to cities as a result of the changes in

capital accumulation regime in general, and technical improvements in the field of agricultural production in particular.<sup>211</sup>

The mechanization trend in the agricultural sector transformed rural land uses and production patterns. Increase in the areas of cultivation and the volume of commercialized production, and shifts in the property structure, created a potential of surplus labor force in rural areas.<sup>212</sup> Yet, this surplus could not be absorbed in agricultural employment, and triggered a constant influx to cities. Increasing investments in industrial sector began to alter both employment and consumption patterns. During the 1950s, while the share of agriculture in GNP decreased (from 49 per cent to 43 per cent), that of industry increased (from 10 per cent to 14 per cent).<sup>213</sup> In the mid-1970s the shares were respectively 37 per cent and 22 per cent.<sup>214</sup>

In addition to these structural shifts, another factor, widespread public investment in the highway system to further the integration of domestic markets, played a defining role on migration and urbanization dynamics. Thus, comprehensive population mobility started. Between 1950 and 1980 the share of population in urban areas (settlements above 10,000 people, according to official assessment models) rose from 20 per cent to 45 per cent.<sup>215</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the overall effects of this rapid urbanization on various aspects of urban life were tremendous. Constant population mobility caused an increase in housing demand that could not be met with the preceding mode of housing provision. The

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<sup>211</sup> Eraydın, pp. 144-9; Şengül, pp. 158-9.

<sup>212</sup> Bilgin, *Konut Üretiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi*, p. 102.

<sup>213</sup> Çağlar Keyder, *State and Class in Turkey: A Study in Capitalist Development* (London; New York: Verso, 1987), p. 134.

<sup>214</sup> Eraydın, pp. 146-7.

<sup>215</sup> TURKSTAT, *Statistical Indicators, 1923-2004* (Ankara: TURKSTAT, 2006), in cd format.

housing system, according to Bilgin, was transformed radically as a result of the shifts in demographic, economic, political and cultural sub-systems.<sup>216</sup> After the 1950s, different segments of the urban population began to reside in new types of houses which were produced and provided through differentiated economic, political, and cultural processes.

On the economic plane, novel provision and building types, such as apartments built by building-cooperatives or builder-sellers (*yap-satçı*) and *gecekondu*, emerged or began to spread to meet exponentially rising housing demand in lower and middle segments of the market. New actors and new roles complicated the structure of housing markets

On the political plane, the introduction of novel legal and institutional instruments rendered possible these differentiations in terms of actors and processes. For instance, small-scale housing production organized by *yap-satçı* contractors could only be viable within the legal framework of the 1965 Law on Condominium Ownership (*Kat Mülkiyeti Yasası*).<sup>217</sup> On the other side, the unwritten agreement between municipalities-central authorities and low-income immigrants who could attach to cities through *gecekondu* settlements was reflected in several amenities that provided these newcomers an area of maneuver. Public institutions like the Bank of Real Estate and Credit, and the Institution of Social Securities provided some segments of middle-income groups with

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<sup>216</sup> Bilgin, *Konut Üretiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi*, p. 104.

<sup>217</sup> As noted in the previous section, the first legal changes allowing the buying and selling of individual housing units were made in 1954. In other words, market relations between constructors and owners had already been legalized before the 1965 Law. Yet, the latter opened the way for a crucial shift in housing provision in urban areas, especially as a result of increased demand for affordable housing by the urban middle-classes. Oğuz Işık, “Yap-satçılığın Yazılmamış Tarihi: Türkiye’de Konut Kesiminde Küçük Üreticiliğin Varlık Koşulları ve Gelişimi Üzerine Gözlemler,” *Mimarlık*, 261 (January, 1995), pp. 43-5.

available credit opportunities to finance cooperative housing in a national economic system that had no defined private financial instruments for housing.

In total, the cumulative effect of these sub-systems in the field of housing was to create relatively favorable conditions for the state, the working poor, middle classes, and industrial capital in order to solve the housing problem in line with the prevalent development strategy based on the import-substitution model.

The already existing lines of inequality in Diyarbakır's spatial structure began to mature against the backdrop of this nationwide migration and urbanization dynamics. Rural immigration that started during World War II accelerated. The city's population rose from 45,053 in 1950 to 61,224 in 1955, 79,888 in 1960, 102,653 in 1965, 149,566 in 1970, 169,535 in 1975, and 235,617 in 1980.<sup>218</sup> The net rate of emigration during these three decades was positive, that is emigration of urban population from Diyarbakır to western cities was overreached by the immigration from its countryside. The effects of mechanization and production increases in the agricultural sector caused mobility in rural population, principally that of the most propertyless and plebian segments of them. Underlining high levels of property concentration and widespread presence of landless employee status, Arslan explains the acute level of rural immigration to Diyarbakır with the general property structure and relations of production in the region's agriculture system.<sup>219</sup>

However, Diyarbakır did not have an adequate industrial infrastructure to absorb this potential labor force. Although a series of public enterprises were started during the era of import substitution development, the primary economic resources of Diyarbakır

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<sup>218</sup>TURKSTAT, *Statistical Indicators*. See also Table 1.

<sup>219</sup> Arslan, "Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu," p. 98.

were related to its role as the regional center of trade and service sectors. Given the inadequacy of large-scale industrial investments, its past advantages in certain industrial products continued to deteriorate.

A national increase in the volume of available consumption goods produced by domestic industries, and a novel highway system built during the Democrat Party governments made Diyarbakır a nodal point for distributorship in the region.<sup>220</sup> Yet, the city's industrial production and employment could not develop to an extent to absorb increasing population. In the 1950s, exactly in 1952, only one public enterprise, Sümerbank serge factory, was established in the vicinity of the railroad station. The factory produced apparel for the army. Only after the proclamation of Diyarbakır as a priority area of development in 1968, in accordance with the first five-year development plan of 1963, the volume of public investments increased to a modest degree. Two extra branches of Sümerbank started to function in 1972 and 1975. A meat processing factory was established in 1974, and a factory for dairy products in 1976, both under state economic enterprises. The Tekel tobacco factory was established in 1978.<sup>221</sup> Yet, in the end, large-scale production was limited to few agriculture-based enterprises owned by the state; on the other hand, small-scale private manufacture specializing in metal works and food products were inadequate to absorb labor force. By 1978, there were eleven public and three private enterprises active in the manufacturing industry, employing 1750 persons in total.<sup>222</sup> In the same period, seven-tenth of all public investment in Diyarbakır was in energy sector.<sup>223</sup> In short, Diyarbakır, with its few public hospitals

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<sup>220</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

<sup>221</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

<sup>222</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. "Diyarbakır."

<sup>223</sup> Diken, p. 516.

and education facilities, distributors and state's regional headquarters, was a city of limited-salary employees and widespread unemployed in the 1960s and 1970s.

Marks of this economic and demographic structure can be traced on Diyarbakır's physical environment. In the previous section I noted that a meagre increase in housing demand in the War years could be met by a large extent within the existing stock. Civil servants and military officers with regular incomes could be accommodated in inner-city family houses, while rural migrants had to build village-type houses on available lots close to the walls.

Yet, in the post-war period, while the inner-city's population intensified, new units, authorized or non-authorized, were built outside the walls, in planned or unplanned zones. The outward expansion of the city continued producing a segregated population in terms of housing and settlement.

Relatively affluent groups residing in the inner-city, tradesmen for instance, began to settle in Yenişehir, where the upper segments of servants had built their one- or two-story family houses in the 1940s. During the 1950s, the population density of the area increased with the construction of new garden houses in addition to modern-style headquarter buildings of public organizations like the regional directorate of highways.

In the following decade, with the introduction of the Law on Condominium Ownership in 1965, the garden houses were converted into five- or six-story apartments. The establishment of financial institutions that provided middle-classes with necessary credit instruments paved way to the building of cooperative houses especially in the Ofis area. It might be argued that by the help of land stock in the state's hands, lands nationalized in accordance with the 1932 city plan and by the facilitation of the over-authorized General Inspectorate, housing demand of the upper and middle class groups

could be met relatively easily in the 1950s. Yet, as the 1964 plan proved to be inadequate, the housing problem could not be solved by the help of regular tools in the latter years.

In the absence of a public program for affordable housing, two types of unauthorized, low-income housing provision type developed, as in many major cities in the period: *gecekondu*s and unlicensed apartment buildings constructed on divided parcels (*hisseli tapu*). The first inner-city *gecekondu* neighborhoods that emerged in the 1940s, like Ali Paşa, began to flourish in the latter period. Moreover, after 1955 new inner-city *gecekondu*s like in the Kore, Kıbrıs and Abdaldede neighborhoods emerged, and starting from the 1960s, spread towards the vacant lots adjacent to the walls.<sup>224</sup> By the first half of the 1970s almost two-thirds of the city population, that is more than one hundred thousand residents, lived in the inner-city, mostly thanks to these *gecekondu*s.<sup>225</sup>

Meanwhile, new *gecekondu* neighborhoods were built outside the city walls. The Ben-u-Sen, Şehitlik and Dicle neighborhoods, accommodating even today an important section of low-income groups, emerged on gardens or vacant areas surrounding the walls. In Seyrantepe, Sanayi and Huzurevleri, *gecekondu* neighborhoods were built after the establishment of industrial facilities in adjacent areas. Thereby, a new axis composed of industrial enterprises and workers' neighborhoods emerged on distant zones alongside the Elazığ road.<sup>226</sup>

On the other hand, in addition to these new neighborhoods, historical family houses in the inner-city were being demolished, and replaced by unauthorized –meaning

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<sup>224</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. “Diyarbakır.”

<sup>225</sup> Arslan, “Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu,” p. 99.

<sup>226</sup> Zümrüt, p. 140.

unqualified in legal and architectural terms— apartments during the 1970s. But the genuine dramatic expansion was in Bağlar, a green-field area that historically hosted summer resorts of the city notables until then. The area was developed mainly after 1963, and in only two decades more than 100,000 people settled there.<sup>227</sup> In contrary to *gecekondu* areas developed outside the walls, which are partly built on public land, the development activity in Bağlar was exclusively operated within market dynamics. Five to six story apartments, without adequate architectural features, were built on private urban lands that were typically divided and sold by a builder-seller.

Thus, Diyarbakır became a city where economic inequalities and social stratification complicated by rural migration was inscribed onto the physical space, as testified to by the clear cut line between Yenişehir on the one hand, and *gecekondu* and unplanned districts of Bağlar and Suriçi on the other. Although the commercial axes of Suriçi continued to be major business districts of the city despite the new commercial developments on Elazığ Avenue in the 1950s and in Ofis in the 1970s, in residential terms it became a bed of stigmatized poverty. As public investment in productive sectors and collective consumption proved to be insufficient, the cityscape was more and more inscribed by poverty and negligence.

### Traumatic Urbanization

As noted in the introduction section, this chapter aims to illustrate changes in the physical space of the city of Diyarbakır, while exposing the outlines of the broader context these changes have interacted with. By doing so, it seeks to reveal the

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<sup>227</sup> *Yurt Ansiklopedisi*, s.v. “Diyarbakır.”

configuration of social and spatial relations out of which the recent urban political processes in the 2000s, that deserve, I argue, to be conceived within a distinct period, were born. Accordingly, my general purpose throughout the chapter was to picture the broader factors that have had determining effects on the formation of the city's physical space, beginning from the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the first spatial effects of the multi-faceted process of capitalist modernity, that has put Diyarbakır within successive waves of turbulent changes, emerged.

Previous sections of this chapter covered the period from the 1860s to 1980. In these sections I demonstrated, on the one hand, in what ways the relations of production, circulation and exchange –which were substantially redefined as the Empire's incorporation to the world capitalist system matured, and then evolved throughout the Republican era in parallel to changes in capital accumulation processes– have had effects on urbanization in Diyarbakır. Furthermore, I demonstrated that a second dimension of capitalist modernization experience, that is to say, particular political and administrative mechanisms designed for, and implemented on, the Kurdish population, within the course of the state's attempts at (re)instituting its authority, have had direct and indirect consequences on spatial structures. Briefly, previous sections sought to situate spatial changes the city of Diyarbakır witnessed until the 1980 military coup within a context defined by these dual aspects of capitalist modernization process — commodification and bureaucratization.

This last section examines two decades after the coup. These years –especially the 1990s– preceding the period on which this study is based deserve closer attention, since conceiving the major spatial processes of these years would give us the opportunity to approach questions such as what imaginations have formed urban

politics, how conceptions regarding urban problems and solutions have evolved, and in what ways the physical and imaginative topography of the city has changed in the 2000s.

To repeat one of the main arguments of this study, this latter period, that is to say, the period that opened up with the 1999 local elections when the political party, cadres and figures organically representing the pro-Kurdish political aspirations took over the city's administration, overlaps with a timespan during which both the physical and symbolic aspects of production processes of space have diversified.

The following narrative revolves around a crucial topic –forced migration, and its impacts on the city's demographic structure and housing patterns– so as to picture the urban processes in the 1980s and 1990s, years that were to define the sources, contours and boundaries of the Kurdish movement's spatial politics in the 2000s. First, I describe the phenomenon of forced migration, the pure expression of coercive aspect of the state, and examine the demographic consequences of this strategy designed and implemented to respond to the military and political mobilizations developed by the PKK in the mid-1980s and afterwards. This type of migration should be conceived in a different way than the previous waves of rural immigration, due to substantial differences both in terms of its motivations and actualization. Secondly, I illustrate the changes that the dramatic increase in urban population created, focusing, as in the previous sections, on housing patterns and the city's macro-form.

My argument is that it is crucial to understand the state of affairs in housing in the 1980s and 1990s, inscribed by deprivation and destitution, in order to analyze the distinctive surge in construction sector in the 2000s. Such a state of affairs consists of not only economic but also non-economic aspects that had effects on the formation of urban imaginaries of dwellers, administrators, local politicians, and non-local observers.

Two characteristics of the state of affairs that I demonstrated regarding the pre-1980 period, deprivation and denial, have escalated to a dramatic extent in the aftermath of the military intervention. Poverty, political repression, cultural denial and assimilation, and spatial segregation escalated after the military coup, reaching their height in the first half of the 1990s, when the political and military challenge of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) found popular support, and created a genuine threat against the state.

If we take the 1980 coup as a turning point, one may contend that, after that point the aggregated consequences of two major determinants, national neoliberalization policies on the one hand and politico-military conflicts between the Turkish armed forces and PKK on the other, opened up a new period in respect of urban processes in Diyarbakır, intensifying the consequences of previous national policies towards the city and the region. One of the most apparent results of the composition of these determinants was the inscription of destitution onto physical space of Diyarbakır, in the face of shocking immigration from rural areas which rigidified the conditions of poverty for the majority of residents.

During the 1990s, especially between 1991 and 1995, in the course of armed conflicts between the Turkish state and Kurdish militants organized under the PKK, several hundred thousand people were displaced from villages, hamlets, and townships of the Kurdish-populated southeastern and eastern provinces.<sup>228</sup> Diyarbakır, as the most

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<sup>228</sup> Out of many academic and non-academic studies covering the legal, political and social aspects of the internal displacement of ethnic Kurds, I basically used the following works: Bilgin Ayata and Deniz Yüksek, "A Belated Awakening. National and International Responses to the Internal Displacement of Kurds in Turkey," *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 32 (2005), pp. 5-42; Rıfat Dağ, Atilla Gökçürk and H. Cengiz Türksöy, eds., *Bölge İçi Zorunlu Göçten Kaynaklanan Toplumsal Sorunların Diyarbakır Kenti Ölçeğinde Araştırılması* (Ankara:

prominent city of the region, faced the severe demographic, economic and social impacts of this extraordinary mobilization. While in- and out-migration substantially changed its demographic structure; conditions of poverty and economic insecurity deepened, as the limited productive capacity of the city deteriorated further in parallel to neoliberal policies implemented on the national scale. This double straitjacket had defining effects on the form of physical expansion of the city until the 2000s.

The internal displacement of Kurds in the 1990s was carried out in extra-judicial ways. That is to say, unlike the resettlement laws put in action in the aftermath of the 1925 Sheikh Said Rebellion, or in Dersim after 1938, the aim, form and scope of the latter displacement practices were not explicitly defined in legal and administrative terms, and thus evacuations were implemented within ambiguous legal boundaries of the framework drawn by the State of Emergency Governorship (*Olağanüstü Hal Valiliği* or *OHAL*) created in 1987.<sup>229</sup>

Thanks to this legal ambiguity, the exact figures regarding displaced persons and evacuated settlement units are still disputable. The official figure of the displaced, as announced by a parliamentary investigation committee in 1998 using data provided by the OHAL Governorship, was around 378,000.<sup>230</sup> The committee also stated that 905 villages and 2523 hamlets in fourteen provinces (Adıyaman, Ağrı, Batman, Bingöl,

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TMMOB Yayınları, 1998); Melih Ersoy and Tarık H. Şengül, eds. *Kente Göç ve Yoksulluk: Diyarbakır Örneği* (Ankara: ODTÜ Kentsel Politika Planlaması ve Yerel Yönetimler Anabilim Dalı Yayınları, 2000); Dilek Kurban et al., “Zorunlu Göç” ile Yüzleşmek: Türkiye’de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın İnşası (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2006); Kalkınma Merkezi, *Zorunlu Göç ve Etkileri: Diyarbakır* (Diyarbakır: Kalkınma Merkezi, 2006); Rüstem Erkan and Mazhar Bağlı, Göç ve Yoksulluk Alanlarında Kentle Bütünleşme Eğilimi: Diyarbakır Örneği, *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 22, no. 1 (2005), pp. 105-24; İnan Keser, *Göç ve Zor: Diyarbakır Örneğinde Göç ve Zorunlu Göç* (Ankara: Ütopya, 2011); Dilek Kurban and Mesut Yeğen, *Adaletin Kıyısında: ‘Zorunlu Göç Sonrasında Devlet ve Kürtler / 5233 Sayılı Tazminat Yasası’nın Bir Değerlendirilmesi-Van Örneği*, (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2012).

<sup>229</sup> Kurban and Yeğen, *Adaletin Kıyısında*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>230</sup> Quoted in Ayata and Yüksek, “A Belated Awakening,” pp. 14-5.

Bitlis, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Hakkari, Mardin, Muş, Siirt, Şırnak, Tunceli, Van) were evacuated.

On the other hand, figures provided by several domestic and international human rights organizations range between one and three million.<sup>231</sup> One of the visible reasons behind this clear discrepancy is the official method of calculation which was based on the 1990 general population census figures for units completely evacuated, despite the strong challenge by NGOs for the inclusion of the settlement units partially evacuated into calculations.<sup>232</sup>

A similar discrepancy is discernible in explaining causes of the forced migration. While the official stance of the state is based on the argument that the displaced persons had to leave their homes due to open threats by PKK militants and economic difficulties caused by the terrorization of the region, explanations of humanitarian organizations principally indicate the novel strategic orientation of the state by the turn of the 1990s as a response to the increasing political and military strength of the PKK forces, and give a more balanced explanation that consider different motivations.<sup>233</sup> According to the latter, people were “forced or compelled to leave their homes because of feelings of insecurity, armed clashes, military-imposed food embargoes as well as threats by the security forces, the PKK and government-employed village guards (*köy korucuları*)”.<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>231</sup> Deniz Yüksek, “Diyarbakır’da Yerinden Edilme Sorunu: Geri Dönüş, Kentsel Sorunlar ve Tazminat Yasası’nın Uygulamaları,” in Dilek Kurban et al., “*Zorunlu Göç*” ile *Yüzleşmek: Türkiye’de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın İnşası* (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2006), p. 150.

<sup>232</sup> Ayata and Yüksek, “A Belated Awakening,” p. 15.

<sup>233</sup> Deniz Yüksek, “Türkiye’de Yerinden Edilme Olgusu Hakkında Yapılan Bazı Araştırmaların Bulguları,” in Dilek Kurban et al., “*Zorunlu Göç*” ile *Yüzleşmek: Türkiye’de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın İnşası* (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2006), pp. 125-35.

<sup>234</sup> Ayata and Yüksek, “A Belated Awakening,” p. 15.

Although displacement practices started in the end of the 1980s and lasted until 1998 when the official stance shifted in parallel to developments in the relations between the Turkish State and the European Union, the peak of the evacuations was between 1992 and 1994. For, in the end of the 1980s, the PKK could maintain a considerable military strength in the mountainous areas of the region and begun to spread its political power towards townships and cities through popular insurgencies called *serhildan*, a Kurdish word equivalent to the Palestinian term *intifada*.<sup>235</sup>

In the face of this new military and political conjuncture, the state responded by shifting its strategy from more regular military tactics carried out by larger units to a more effective one of permanent domination in rural areas. The forced migration and evacuations came to the fore as a new undeclared tactic to supplement this strategy by intervening directly into the logistic and popular support of the PKK in areas geographically located between cities and mountains. So, it would not be incorrect to argue that the motivation of internal displacement of the Kurdish-populated rural areas was nothing but a part of the novel military campaign which had close ties with another tactic mostly implemented in major cities both in the west and the region—extra-judicial killings of prominent activists, journalists and politicians.

The evacuations paved the way for a massive flux from the rural areas to regional and national urban centers. The rural migrants rushed to Diyarbakır and Van, the prominent regional centers, in the first hand. While some of them stayed in these centers, the majority started a second wave, and went to city centers whose economic opportunities were more suitable: Mersin, Adana and Antalya in the South, Istanbul and

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<sup>235</sup> Aliza Marcus, *Kan ve İnanç: PKK ve Kürt Hareketi*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2009), pp. 209-34.

Kocaeli in the North, İzmir and Manisa in the West, as well as the capital Ankara.<sup>236</sup>

Due to a lack of official records and inadequacy of reliable population data between 1990 and 2000,<sup>237</sup> it is impossible to state exactly the extent of the migration from rural areas to domestic urban centers. Calculations based on the 1985, 1990 and 2000 official population censuses state that at least around 628,000 people out-migrated from fourteen provinces that were included in the Return to Villages and Rehabilitation Project (RVRP or *Köye Dönüş ve Rehabilitasyon Projesi*) between 1990 and 2000.<sup>238</sup>

However, these figures do not give a clear idea on the extent of intra-regional migration, although it is clear that Diyarbakır's demographic structure has been directly affected by the internal displacement. By 2000, the population figures for Diyarbakır province, urban areas, and the city of Diyarbakır were, respectively, 1.362.708, 817.692 and 545.893. The share of urban population rose from 43 percent in 1975 to 55 percent in 1990 and to 60 percent in 2000. Between 1980 and 1990, the city's population rose from 169.535 to 381.144. In 2000 it was 545.983, despite the mass emigration from the city to western cities.<sup>239</sup>

In short, one might say that in the twenty years between 1980 and 2000, the city of Diyarbakır attracted a considerable portion of the rural population from its surrounding villages and townships<sup>240</sup> due to forced migration, while a considerable

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<sup>236</sup> In addition to the internally displaced and those who migrated to western European countries, more than 13.000 people fled to northern Iraq. Ayata and Yüksek, "A Belated Awakening," pp. 14-6.

<sup>237</sup> Turkish Statistical Institute did not conduct a population census in 1995.

<sup>238</sup> Turgay Ünal, Ayşe Betül Çelik and Dilek Kurban, "Türkiye'nin Yerinden Edilme Sorunu: Sorun, Mevzuat ve Uygulama," in Dilek Kurban et al., "*Zorunlu Göç*" ile Yüzleşmek: *Türkiye'de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın İnşası* (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2006), p. 75.

<sup>239</sup> TURKSTAT, *Statistical Indicators*.

<sup>240</sup> In the province of Diyarbakır, the primary sites of displacements were the districts of Lice, Çınar, Dicle, Kulp, Hazro, Hani and Silvan.

portion of city dwellers migrated to western cities. The population of the city more than tripled, creating a cityscape strongly defined by unemployment, poverty, housing shortage, spatial segregation, and inadequacy of basic public health, education and social security facilities, which mean, in total, social exclusion.<sup>241</sup>

The migrants did not have opportunities that would have let them integrate into urban life in a relatively gradual manner. Villagers from the areas evacuated as a result of the open violent threats of armed forces, state officials and paramilitary groups, and under extra-legal conditions had to leave their material belongings behind. Given the absence of adequate economic preparations, migrants were deprived of material conditions that would have provided them with basic refuge, in contrast to migrants that followed a gradual pattern in previous periods. In such circumstances, where the only mechanism of protection was restricted to familial relations, a state of unprecedented poverty and deprivation emerged as would be expected.

On the economic plane, the rapid increase in urban population did not have an equivalent augmentation in opportunities that would make possible the integration of the newcomers to urban life at least in economic terms. The neoliberal programs of ANAP (*Anavatan Partisi* or Motherland Party took office in 1983) and subsequent governments, which succeeded in devaluating Turkish currency and minimizing import tariffs to facilitate foreign trade, privatizing state-owned economic enterprises, abolishing controls on prices, especially those of basic goods and services, pushing

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<sup>241</sup> Deniz Yüksek, “Yerinden Edilme ve Sosyal Dışlanma: İstanbul ve Diyarbakır’da Zorunlu Göç Mağdurlarının Yaşadıkları Sorunlar,” in Dilek Kurban et al., “*Zorunlu Göç*” ile Yüzleşmek: *Türkiye’de Yerinden Edilme Sonrası Vatandaşlığın İnşası* (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2006), p. 220.

wages down, and liberalizing financial tools, worsened further Diyarbakır's economic opportunities in the 1980s and 1990s.

Whereas the city had never attracted private capital to invest, the post-1980 public investments were limited to energy sector and infrastructural works related to the GAP. Apart from a generator factory that was established by a state enterprise, TEMSAN, there was no industrial investment in the city during the 1980s.<sup>242</sup> By 1996, there were eighty-seven private enterprises in Diyarbakır's manufacture industry, the food industry having the leading position with twenty five firms.<sup>243</sup> Yet, the employment capacity of these enterprises was quite low. In actual figures the total employment in these enterprises was 2690 in 1996. These figures prove that in the mid-1990s, when the influx of rural migrants was at its height, Diyarbakır was deprived of adequate economic opportunities that would include the newcomers into the labor force.

Given the absence of adequate public or private investments in the industrial sector, and the rapid dissolution of the agricultural population, the migrants had no chance but to work in service sector jobs, which were composed of informal, unskilled and mostly daily jobs such as construction workers, drivers, porters, groceries, agricultural workers, and waiters&waitresses.<sup>244</sup>

Few contemporary surveys on internally displaced persons in Diyarbakır indicate that average household income levels were much lower than national average, and

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<sup>242</sup> Sönmez, *Doğu Anadolu'nun Hikâyesi*, p. 197.

<sup>243</sup> Rıfat Dağ, Atilla Göktürk and H. Cengiz Türksoy, ed. *Bölgeiçi Zorunlu Göçten Kaynaklanan Sorunların Diyarbakır Ölçeğinde Araştırılması* (Ankara: TMMOB Yayınları, 1998).

<sup>244</sup> Keser, *Diyarbakır*, pp. 29-31, using the data of a comprehensive survey conducted in 2008-2009, gives a full picture of the jobs available to displaced persons in Diyarbakır.

unemployment rates reached extreme levels such as sixty percent.<sup>245</sup> As these figures show, the double straitjacket of forced migration and neoliberal economic policies resulted in a shocking wave of change regarding Diyarbakır's demographic, economic, social, and, of course, political structure.

Unsurprisingly, the sudden increase in population led to a housing shortage at first, and then paved the way for a surge in building construction which was carried out almost exclusively in informal and unauthorized ways. We know from personal accounts that migrants sought to overcome their immediate housing problem by sharing rooms with other families with which they had kinship ties.<sup>246</sup> A few surveys conducted in the mid-90s provide data supporting these observations. Dağ, et al., for instance, mention extreme cases of households composed of more than thirty persons.<sup>247</sup> However, room sharing and familial solidarity networks played a temporary role at best; and as a part of the migrants became permanent dwellers in the city, more enduring ways of dealing with housing problem started to emerge.

Official figures of the Turkish Statistical Institute's 1984 and 2000 building censuses display the magnitude of this surge.<sup>248</sup> In sixteen years, within the boundaries of the Diyarbakır province, the number of buildings increased from around 50,000 to around 90,000, while the number of dwellings increased from around 75,000 to around

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<sup>245</sup> Melih Ersoy and Tarık Şengül, ed. *Kente Göç ve Yoksulluk: Diyarbakır Örneği* (Ankara: ODTÜ Kentsel Politika ve Yerel Yönetimler Anabilim Dalı Yayınları, 2002).

<sup>246</sup> Rojin Canan Akın and Funda Danışman, *Bildiğin Gibi Değil: 90'larda Güneydoğu'da Çocuk Olmak*, (İstanbul: Metis, 2011).

<sup>247</sup> Dağ et al., *Bölgeyi Zorunlu Göçten Kaynaklanan Sorunların Diyarbakır Ölçeğinde Araştırılması*.

<sup>248</sup> State Institute of Statistics, *Bina Sayımı 2000*, (Ankara: State Institute of Statistics, 2001). Building censuses, which were conducted four times, in 1965, 1970, 1984 and 2000, count all types of buildings and dwellings within the boundaries of municipalities, regardless of whether they were built with or without necessary construction/occupation permits, located on registered or unregistered land. For this reason, the figures issued by the censuses illustrate the entire dwelling stocks of the locales.

200,000. As regards to the latter, which is more telling for us, the rate of increase was 165 percent, much higher than the national average (129 percent).

Years between 1983 and 1993 were a time of constant growth for the Turkish construction sector which was to be followed by a long recession between 1994 and 2003.<sup>249</sup> That is, the figures of the first half of the period were already higher than the previous eras. Yet, the construction activity was much higher in relative terms in Diyarbakır. After Antalya, Mersin, Kocaeli and Bursa, it was one of the five main locales where the construction activity in dwellings was most dynamic.<sup>250</sup>

As for the legal status of this increased construction activity, it might be contended that the overwhelming majority of new buildings were either informal or unauthorized in terms of legal obligations. Using the data of Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, Zümrüt states that, between 1965 and 2009, only around 12,000 buildings could receive construction permits, and only 2249 of them had occupancy permits issued by the relevant municipalities.<sup>251</sup> The extreme discrepancy between actual and formal numbers figures that the prevailing forms of Diyarbakır's housing market that became discernible after the mid-60s –that is, the dominance of *gecekondu* constructions on vacant lots on the one hand, and unauthorized apartment constructions on divided parcels in neighborhoods such as Bağlar on the other– continued to have an open superiority over formal construction activity in the following decades.

In terms of the geographical distribution of these new units, we can detect two main dynamics: while the existing sites of informal housing intensified and hosted a

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<sup>249</sup> Osman Balaban, "Capital Accumulation, the State and the Production of Built Environment," p. 156.

<sup>250</sup> State Institute of Statistics, *Bina Sayımı 2000*.

<sup>251</sup> Zümrüt, p. 157.

much higher number of dwellers, former villages surrounding the main roads that lead to the city center became urbanized as the new migrants built *gecekondus* on either public or private land. As for the former, Bağlar and Suriçi continued to be primary sites for hosting newcomers.

In Suriçi the old family-houses were replaced by multi-story apartments in the majority of neighborhoods, whereas former *gecekondu* neighborhoods like Kore, Abdaldede or Lalabey became crowded as the migrants built new *gecekondus* on empty lots.<sup>252</sup> In adjacent neighborhoods outside the city walls, for instance, in Dicle, Ben-u-sen and Şehitlik, overcrowded units covered completely the areas in the southern side outside the walls. By 2000, the population of the Sur district had reached to 91,000.<sup>253</sup>

In Bağlar, where unauthorized multi-story apartments spread on private land after 1963, either the new apartments were erected in empty lots or additional floors were added to already existing buildings. For instance, the whole Beş Nisan neighborhood of the Bağlar district emerged as new and unregistered multi-story apartments were erected in the 1990s. According to the 2000 census, population of the Bağlar district was 291,000.<sup>254</sup> On the other hand, former *gecekondu* neighborhoods like Seyrantepe, Sanayi and Huzurevleri, built around industrial facilities that began to operate in the 1970s continued to draw newcomers, and turned into sizeable neighborhoods along the northwestern axis of the city, alongside the Elazığ road.

In addition to these former neighborhoods, completely new sites began to emerge as the migrants built their *gecekondus* either on public or private lots, transforming villages into quasi-urban areas where infrastructural facilities could not be maintained

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<sup>252</sup> See, Figure 2.

<sup>253</sup> TURKSTAT, *Statistical Indicators*.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

almost until the 2000s. İplik and Şilbe alongside the Elazığ road, Aziziye and Gürdoğan alongside the Silvan road, and Yeniköy adjacent to the airport are neighborhoods which were converted from villages to *gecekondu* neighborhoods during the 1990s, as displaced migrants settled in there.<sup>255</sup>

Local governments of the Diyarbakır city<sup>256</sup> could confront neither infrastructural nor social challenges created by rapid urbanization, because they were deprived of adequate monetary resources and political capacity to mobilize social networks. In 1985 a new city plan was completed, but it proved inefficient as it was announced. Development activities of the period were limited to a few attempts to rehabilitate trade activity in Suriçi. The bus terminal and market hall within the city walls were closed down, and two underground bazaar places were built around Ulu Camii and Dağ Kapı.<sup>257</sup> Then, in accordance with the GAP master development plan, an industrial zone that would specialize in agricultural industry was built alongside Elazığ road.

During the period, the municipality could not produce a satisfying response to the acute need of affordable housing. Only after the establishment of the Mass Housing Agency, in 1994, a social housing project that consisted of around a thousand units was started in Seyrantepe, which eventually served the middle-classes that had regular salaries to afford them.

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<sup>255</sup> Zümrüt, p. 150.

<sup>256</sup> As in the other cities of Turkey, Diyarbakır was run by local military authorities after the coup. In 1984, the candidate of ANAP was elected. During the 1989 elections, pro-Kurdish deputies were still organized within SHP (Social Democratic Popular Party), the social democratic party, thus its candidate took over office. In 1994, as a result of the efficient election boycott organized by the pro-Kurdish party (HADEP), Ahmet Bilgin, candidate of the pro-Islamic Refah Partisi (Welfare Party) took over the administration of central districts which had been redefined as a metropolitan municipality in 1993.

<sup>257</sup> Arslan, “Diyarbakır Kentinin Tarihî ve Bugünkü Konumu,” p. 102.

Consequently, during the two decades before pro-Kurdish political parties took over the city's municipality, Diyarbakır changed substantially both in demographic and spatial terms. While the city's population more than tripled and the former residents were replaced to a considerable extent by rural migrants who were forced to leave their homes under extra-judicial conditions, the macro-form of the city changed as the newcomers both intensified and expanded the residential areas of the city.

The existing neighborhoods in Suriçi, Bağlar, and Yenişehir were flooded with migrants, as each available lot was occupied by unauthorized buildings which did not have any architectural and infrastructural properties to accommodate such increased population. On the other hand, the city began to sprawl, as the former villages alongside the main roads transformed into *gecekondu* neighborhoods hosting displaced persons.

In consequence, given the clear inadequacy of economic and social resources of the city to accommodate them, the lives of the migrants were heavily dominated by strong feeling of destitution, in addition to the openly violent political climate of the city which was terrorized by the state and paramilitary groups via extra-judicial assassinations and kidnappings. During the 1990s, as the political atmosphere grew heavier and social circumstances became bitter, the city changed physically as well.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### INTERLUDE:

#### HEGEMONIC STRUGGLES IN DİYARBAKIR

This dissertation is based on a certain periodization, and seeks to shed light on spatial changes the city of Diyarbakır has undergone in the post-1999 period. Focusing on two main sites, Suriçi and Kayapınar, which illustrate most overtly the moments of recent spatial processes, and problematizing complex interplays between actors of various scales, I aim at revealing the material, institutional and ideological aspects of production of space in the city. Therefore, I examine spatial interventions designed and implemented by central state institutions, political and institutional organizations that can be considered under the roof of the Kurdish political movement such as municipalities, NGOs and political parties, and business circles, economic motivations and urban imaginaries configuring these interventions, and their implications.

In the last one and a half decade, Diyarbakır, the economic, political and cultural center of the Kurdish territory, has undergone a substantial transformation. Apart from broader structural factors, behind this transformation lies a series of contingent factors which have necessitated reconfiguring of the relations between actors in the context of the Kurdish question. Put differently, changes in Diyarbakır's physical and social space have emerged in tandem with changes in the political processes centered upon the Kurdish issue. In this interlude, I provide background information on the dynamics of

these processes, and construct categories on which analysis in the subsequent main chapters are based.

Throughout the study, one of my main arguments is that such changes regarding the Kurdish issue should be associated with two distinct hegemony projects conceived and gradually implemented by the state and the Kurdish political movement in the 2000s. Both parties have reconsidered their strategic orientations and stances vis-à-vis each other, and conceived fundamentally different hegemony projects in the period, as a result of the alignment of certain factors, which have military, geopolitical, ideological, political and organizational dimensions.

Within the context of negotiations for the resolution of the Kurdish issue, these projects can be labelled as “authoritarian” and “democratic.” In the first case, it would be convenient to depict a substantial reformulation of the state’s traditional stance, which is based on total repudiation and militaristic repression, against the Kurdish people as a distinct ethnic group. Yet, this project, which is best represented by the ruling AKP at present, is still authoritarian in character since it intrinsically involves circumscribing opportunities and channels for political mobilization from below and outside the institutional boundaries of the political sphere.

On the other hand, the Kurdish movement has developed a political program based on a reconceptualization of democracy, renouncing its original main strategic line that envisaged the establishment of an independent nation-state for unified Kurdistan. The very existence of these hegemonic projects display that a novel, albeit contingent,

era is being constructed in terms of state-society relations in the context of the Kurdish issue.<sup>258</sup>

However, more crucial for the present discussion is that these opposite hegemony projects do produce substantially different spatialities, or more correctly, that these conflicting projects are configured through two distinct spatialities: the state's post-war space and the Kurdish movement's post-colonial space.<sup>259</sup>

Accordingly, the notion of post-war space denotes spatial processes that have emerged as a result of the state's employing of discursive and non-discursive tools to reinstitute its authority in the Kurdish territory, within a context wherein militaristic methods are no longer the primary option. This strategic orientation, which aims basically at establishing hegemony over the Kurdish population by replacing the state's repressive face with its "benevolent" face, has economic, administrative and imaginary dimensions. Conceptions and strategies placed on each of these dimensions aggregately produce a particular spatiality, and in turn are formed by this spatiality.

On the other hand, in the aftermath of the PKK's abandonment of the goal of a separate state, the Kurdish political movement has embarked upon redefining the nature of political relationships to be established both within the Kurdish population and between the Kurds and the state. As a crucial component of this strategic reorientation it has undertaken efforts to decolonize the Kurdish territory and to constitute "a separate

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<sup>258</sup> Although frameworks of explanation vary substantially, it has been often stated in the literature that the post-1999 period should be considered as a distinct era. Among others, Watts uses the term "post-exceptionality," and describes the period as "a new, post-exceptional phase of state-society relations." Nicole F. Watts, "Re-Considering State-Society Dynamics in Turkey's Kurdish Southeast," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [Online] 10, (2009), p. 9.

<sup>259</sup> For the deployment of the prefix "post" throughout the study, see Footnote 17.

political geography,<sup>260</sup> and in consequence a particular spatiality, the post-colonial space, has become more expressed.

Following Kipfer's proposition to analyze "particular conjunctures as a confluence of multiple temporal rhythms and spatialities"<sup>261</sup> we can reach the conclusion that two distinct spatialities coexist in the city of Diyarbakır in the post-1999 period, being in constant interaction with each other. Therefore, I propose to analyze the processes of production of space in the city of Diyarbakır within the context of encounters between these competing spatialities.

In this vein, in the following Chapters 5 and 6, I seek to identify the spatial conceptions and related strategies of the state and the Kurdish political movement, to explore the economic, administrative and imaginary aspects of these conceptions, and to grasp the moments of articulation and dissociation within their encounters. Within this framework, I analyze both efforts for the restructuring of the Suriçi area through reconfiguring its historical and cultural landscape and the persistent dynamic of residential differentiation in Kayapınar in a manner that reinforces existing trends of urban segregation and fragmentation in the city. Accordingly, I discuss and scrutinize the reciprocal positions and roles of local and non-local actors within the context of the encounters between these two competing spatialities.

Such an approach differentiates from "political" readings in the strict sense of the word, since it does not restrict the analysis of historical shifts in political processes to the examination of parties' discursive changes and programmatic reshuffling. It does not

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<sup>260</sup> Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, "Reassembling the Political: The PKK and the Project of Radical Democracy," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [Online] 14, (2012), p. 11.

<sup>261</sup> Kipfer, "Urbanization, Everyday Life and the Survival of Capitalism," pp. 135-6. For a detailed discussion, see Chapter 2.

ignore the fact that ideological or theoretical reorientations would form in interaction with other political actors' reorientations within a universe characterized by past material-historical processes. To put it simply, instead of taking political actors' programmatic statements as frozen and coherent, it regards them as intrinsically conflictual which have and will be formed within a series of interactions. Thus, it would be possible to comprehend the actors' roles in, and impacts on, the spatial changes Diyarbakır has undertaken, not being confined to their declared political positions.

To do so, we have to include into our analysis the question of how and to what extent the actors' spatial conceptions and strategies have become intertwined in the course of time, rather than to reproduce apparent political propositions, so as to comprehend the political nature of spatial processes. For, only with such an approach, I believe, we can reach satisfactory explanations for the question of why and in what ways phenomena characterizing contemporary urban processes across the world, such as urban restructuring, branding of local assets in accordance with a tourism-centered growth perspective, residential differentiation, and urban segregation and fragmentation could have become possible and even hegemonic in a politically distinctive locality such as Diyarbakır.

### Post-colonial Space

The renewal of the Kurdish political movement in terms of its ideological, political and organizational structure began with the PKK's strategic reshuffling after the capture of its leader in 1999. The relative decline in its combative strength against the state, novel geopolitical balances settled after the USA's intervention in Iraq, and the severe quarrels

and splits within its leadership and cadres<sup>262</sup> led the PKK to elevate the ideological searches that had already begun after the mid-90s to another level.<sup>263</sup> The organization had a period of “impasse and reconstruction”<sup>264</sup> first, and then embarked upon forming a new line based on the defense texts written by Öcalan and submitted to different courts at home and abroad.<sup>265</sup>

The main thesis in these texts was that the movement has renounced its target for a socialist state of unified Kurdistan and would aim to reach a comprehensive democratization of political entities through which the Kurdish communities in four parts of Kurdistan would have greater autonomy in administrative terms. As would be expected, this reorientation has played a determining role across all sections of the Kurdish political movement, because the PKK, as Bozarslan suggests, has become “the primary reference point of the Kurdish contestation” since the 1990s and obtained a decisive power over the legal sectors of the movement to determine the outer boundaries of the struggle.<sup>266</sup>

The cornerstone of the new strategy was a redefinition of the Kurdish population’s political relationships within itself and with other ethnic groups, and jurisdictional entities, in accordance with a reconceptualized principle of democracy.

This meta-program, defined by Akkaya and Jongerden as “a project of radical

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<sup>262</sup> Aliza Marcus, *Kan ve İnanç: PKK ve Kürt Hareketi*, trans. Ayten Alkan (İstanbul: İletişim, 2009). For a detailed chronology of the events regarding the PKK after 1999, see “Kürt Hareketinin Kronolojisi: 1999-2010,” *Toplum ve Kuram* 5, (Spring-Summer 2011), pp. 21-51.

<sup>263</sup> Cengiz Çandar, *Dağdan İniş-PKK Nasıl Silah Bırakır? Kürt Sorunu'nun Şiddetten Arındırılması*, (İstanbul: TESEV Yayınları, 2011).

<sup>264</sup> Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, “Reassembling the Political,” p. 8.

<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2. For a brief but useful compilation of Öcalan’s line of thought between 1999 and 2009, see Express, “Bu Lanetli Tarihten Kopalım,” *Express* 97, (August 2009), pp. 13-23.

<sup>266</sup> Hamit Bozarslan, “Between Integration, Autonomization and Radicalization. Hamit Bozarslan on the Kurdish Movement and the Turkish Left,” *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [Online] 14, (2012), p. 11.

democracy, based on the rejection of the state,<sup>267</sup> outlined three political projects. The first project, labelled the “democratic republic,” implies a redefinition of Kemalist Republicanism based on the repudiation and assimilation of the Kurdish identity toward a democratic republic based on constitutional citizenship instead of cultural terms.

However, in terms of the movement’s political discourse and organizational structure, theses of “democratic confederalism” and “democratic autonomy” have been more determining than this general emphasis on democracy.<sup>268</sup> The former was formulated to shed light on how the subjectivities of the Kurdish struggle would be defined and in what ways the endogenous relations of the Kurdish community would be organized with a political program that dismissed state-making.<sup>269</sup> Accordingly, the Kurdish people, which has never possessed a modern nation-state in history and thus has not lost its liberating communalist traits stemming from ancient times, would be organized within communes and assemblies of various scales. There are four levels of organization: communes and assemblies at village, district, town and city levels; independent organizations of social groups such as women and youth; assemblies of ethnic-religious-cultural groups; and congresses of nongovernmental organizations.<sup>270</sup>

On the other hand, the democratic autonomy thesis basically aimed at redefining the relationship between the state and the Kurdish community and its political

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<sup>267</sup> Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, “Reassembling the Political,” p. 2.

<sup>268</sup> For a detailed analysis of the Kurdish political movement’s conception of democracy and political models developed in the post-1999 period, see Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, “Confederalism and Autonomy in Turkey: The Kurdistan Worker’s Party and the Reinvention of Democracy,” in Cengiz Güneş and Welat Zeydanlıoğlu ed., *The Kurdish Question in Turkey: New Perspectives on Violence, Representation and Reconciliation*, (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 186-204.

<sup>269</sup> Joost Jongerden and Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, “Democratic Confederalism as a Kurdish Spring: The PKK and the Quest for Radical Democracy,” in Michael M. Gunter and Mohammed M.A. Ahmed ed., *The Kurdish Spring: Geopolitical Changes and the Kurds*, (Costa Mesa: Mazda Publishers, 2013), pp. 163-185.

<sup>270</sup> Mustafa Karasu, *Radikal Demokrasi*, (Neuss: Mezopotamya Yayınları, 2009), pp. 84-5.

organizations.<sup>271</sup> The democratic political resolution of the Kurdish question was directly linked to a constitutional reform that would recognize the collective rights of the Kurdish people as a distinct ethnic group. In this vein, twenty to twenty five autonomous regions covering the whole country were to be established on the basis of ethnically non-homogenous classifications. Even though they were to be under the jurisdiction of the unitary state, regions were entitled with administrative and legal authorities to be transferred from the center to the local. However, crucial points regarding the boundaries of the local authority or the relationships between the regions and the central state were not neatly defined, thus the democratic thesis has been rather a proposition of method and principle.

It should be emphasized that in the context of these political initiatives pro-Kurdish municipalities have undertaken a major role in, for instance, the organizational restructuring of the movement or in the undertaking of comprehensive political campaigns such as the one for the right to mother tongue in 2007. Although independent political figures with similar political aspirations had held office (Mehdi Zana, for instance, from the illegal Socialist Party of Kurdistan, *PSK*, was elected in 1977), the local government experience of pro-Kurdish political parties began with the 1999 elections, and since then they have steadily increased both the number and coverage of the municipalities under their control. In consequence, as Watts argues, the municipalities have provided the Kurdish political movement with crucial resources in

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<sup>271</sup> Cuma Çiçek, “Demokratik Özerklik Üzerine,” *Birikim* 261 (January 2011), pp. 45-53. For a detailed analysis of different political models of democratic autonomy developed by various actors within the Kurdish political movement, see Mesut Yeğen, *Son Kürt İsyanı*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2011).

terms of material infrastructure and political legitimacy for the construction of an “alternative governmental presence” in the Kurdish territory.<sup>272</sup>

Analytically, within the process of production of post-colonial space, it is possible to depict three distinct dynamics of reconfiguration which occasionally move in different directions even though they are entangled: decentralization of political-institutional power, decolonization of urban space, and constitution of an alternative economic field.

The democratic autonomy thesis, based on the recognition of the Kurdish people’s collective political rights, consists of the institutionalization of collective rights through the devolution of historically over-centralized political sovereignty to the local scale.<sup>273</sup> In other words, the conception of post-colonial space implies relocation of political power to political mechanisms defined within the Kurdish community, without the mediation of the territorial state. In that sense, such a conception of localization of sovereignty differs fundamentally, as Çiçek rightly indicates, from the perspective posited by the ruling AKP.<sup>274</sup>

Accordingly, while the Kurdish political movement’s demand for localization denotes *decentralization* of the political power, the government’s project implies *deconcentration* of the power by expanding administrative and legal capacities of the local branches and organizations of central state institutions.<sup>275</sup> The movement,

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<sup>272</sup> Watts, *Activists in Office*, p. 142.

<sup>273</sup> Cuma Çiçek, “Demokratik Özerklik Üzerine,” p. 48-50.

<sup>274</sup> Cuma Çiçek, “Seçimler, Özerklik ve Yerelleşme,” *Radikal İki*, 13 April 2014.

<sup>275</sup> The difference between the terms “decentralization” and “deconcentration” is conceived as a matter of quantitative degree within the terminology of global governance institutions. While decentralization is usually defined as the transfer of powers from central government to lower levels in a political-administrative and territorial hierarchy, the latter is basically understood as the lowest form of administrative decentralization of state institutions — the other two being

following the principle of stateless community, envisages the management of legal, economic, political and cultural relationships through non-state regulatory mechanisms, and defines the *de facto* constitution of these mechanisms as a political duty to be pursued by its different sectors.

Even though the political implications of this strategy have been deprived of a legal framework recognized by jurisdictional entities, and the outer boundaries of this orientation have not been clearly defined by the Kurdish political movement, it is still possible to trace it in fundamentally different cases such as resolution of feuds in the rural region by local committees, or diplomatic initiatives with prominent NGOs and institutions on the international level.

Lastly, within popular debates, the demand of localization is often associated with the cases of the Spanish State and Northern Ireland with reference to the liberal democratic principles in general and the European Charter of Local Self-Government in particular.<sup>276</sup> However, even if ambiguous in its content and form (mostly due to different conceptions of various actors within the movement) it can be argued that the democratic autonomy thesis has been defined against the liberal conception of democracy, at least within the programmatic texts produced by different actors of the Kurdish movement. On that score, the democratic autonomy thesis implies a certain kind of localization which renders possible the institutionalization of radical democracy.<sup>277</sup>

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delegation and devolution. However, I use these terms as antinomies, as Çiçek does, to denote the fundamentally different character of hegemony projects developed by AKP and the Kurdish political movement. Even though both conceptions refer to a certain degree of reform in the ways in which the state's institutions would be organized on lower scales than the national, however, more importantly, the very content of such reform is subject to severe political contestation which has to do with the modality of exercise of state power.

<sup>276</sup> Cuma Çiçek, "Demokratik Özerklik Üzerine," p. 48-50.

<sup>277</sup> Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya and Joost Jongerden, "Reassembling the Political."

Secondly, the other main pillar of the Kurdish movement's counter-hegemony project is the decolonization of space, urban space particularly, through discursive and non-discursive interventions.<sup>278</sup> The integration of the Kurdish territory to the nation-state is conceptualized as "colonization" within the political imaginary of various strands of the Kurdish contentious politics.<sup>279</sup> Considering the spatial results of the incorporation process of the Kurdish territory to the nation state, which consisted of policies of purification and Turkification,<sup>280</sup> spatial interventions to the cityscape can be read as the (re)appropriation of the urban space by a claim reconfigured by the Kurdish movement.<sup>281</sup> In that sense, the cityscape is considered as a political stage on which the Kurdishness, and the relationships between the Kurdish community and the state are reconfigured.

However, what should be emphasized is that this employment of urban imaginaries cannot be restricted to the substitution of old (i.e. Kemalist) symbols with novel (i.e. Kurdified) ones. Such spatial interventions have both negative and positive moments. Therefore, they denote the efforts to (re)appropriate the city of Diyarbakır and to reconstruct it as the political, commercial and cultural metropolitan center of the

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<sup>278</sup> Gambetti, "Decolonizing Diyarbakır."

<sup>279</sup> For a genealogy of the thesis of "Kurdistan is a colony" see, Hamit Bozarslan, "Türkiye'de Kürt Sol hareketi," in ed. Murat Gültekinçil, *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Sol* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2007), pp. 1169-2007; Ahmet Hamdi Akkaya, "Kürt Hareketinin Örgütlenme Süreci Olarak 1970'ler," *Toplum ve Bilim* 127 (July 2013), pp. 88-120. İsmail Beşikçi has been one of the champions of this thesis in the academic field. See, İsmail Beşikçi, *Devletler Arası Sömürge Kürdistan*, (İstanbul: Alan Yayıncılık, 1990).

<sup>280</sup> Kerem Öktem, "Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic Other: Nationalism and Space in Southeast Turkey in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," *Nations and Nationalisms* 10, no. 4 (2004), p. 559-78; Joost Jongerden, "Crafting Space, Making People: The Spatial Design of Nation in Modern Turkey," *European Journal of Turkish Studies* 10 [Online], (2009); Ercan Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyetin Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası (1923-50)*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2014).

<sup>281</sup> Zeynep Gambetti, "Decolonizing Diyarbakır." Kerem Öktem, "Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic Other."

Kurdish identity and of the whole Middle East. In consequence, the decolonization of Diyarbakır includes a certain claim of authenticity and a promise (*vaat*) to reverse all kinds of losses brought on by the incorporation to the modern capitalist system.

The third and the least conceptualized component of the counter-hegemony project is the projection of constituting an alternative economic field. Three points can be depicted as the source of this vagueness: First, a balance of force between the state and the Kurdish political movement, it can be contended, has deterred the implementation of concrete policies. In that sense, in comparison with the other two pillars of democratic autonomy, schemes regarding the production and consumption fields have been confined to general principles instead of a model to be implemented.

Second, on the political plane, the Kurdish movement's main tactic has been to announce and propagate democratic autonomy in the rest of Turkey and abroad, rather than to undertake an alternative, *de facto*, construction of economic models, except a few limited initiatives in rural areas. Yet, on the other hand, recent public speeches of pro-Kurdish politicians and mayors, particularly in the wake of the 2014 local elections,<sup>282</sup> and past and ongoing initiatives of the DTK (Democratic Society Congress) to organize conferences and workshops on the economic dimension of democratic autonomy can be viewed as there is an inclination within the movement to renounce the previous tactic.

Third, and more crucially, the presence of different social groups from various class backgrounds within the movement and the power relations among them can be stated as an exemplary point. It would be convenient to presume that there are differing conceptions regarding the economic policies within the Kurdish political movement,

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<sup>282</sup> Among others, see *Radikal*, 12 April 2014; *Taraf*, 28 April 2014.

which has become as of today a national movement with a constituency from the urban poor, middle classes and business circles.

Nevertheless, some defining points can be depicted at least in programmatic texts and on the level of general principles. First of all, in accordance with Öcalan's critique of civilization and capitalism elaborated in his defense texts, the fields of production and consumption are viewed through an anti-developmental, localistic and ecologist lens.<sup>283</sup> Rural and urban production, organized through cooperatives of production and consumption, on the level of self-sustaining economic units, are highlighted. Accordingly, democratic autonomy is presented as a system that aims at "building an anti-monopolist, egalitarian and solidarity-based economic system in which everyone is self-employed, female labor participation is privileged, the main objective is not profit but use-value."<sup>284</sup>

Such an economic system designed in reference to Murray Bookchin's communalist philosophy<sup>285</sup> is supposed to have two long term consequences: First, the colonization of the Kurdish territory by the Turkish state in terms of its natural resources and labor force would cease, and thus the decolonization process would be complemented without the establishment of an independent state. Relatedly, this would be an alternative economic system wherein the Kurdish society would be kept apart from the double straitjacket of capitalist modernity and real socialist experiments, preserving

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<sup>283</sup> Abdullah Öcalan, *Bir Halkı Savunmak*, (İstanbul: Çetin, 2004).

<sup>284</sup> Quoted in Erdem Yörük, "Neoliberal Hegemony and Grassroots Politics: The Islamist and Kurdish Movements," in *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, ed. İsmet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (London: Pluto Press, 2014), p. 244.

<sup>285</sup> TATORT Kurdistan, *Democratic Autonomy in North Kurdistan: The Council Movement, Gender Liberation, and Ecology — in Practice: A Reconnaissance into Southeastern Turkey*, trans. Janet Biehl (Porsgrunn, Norway: New Compass Press, 2013).

its communalistic values descended from the ancient times, in a harmonious relation with the nature.

Yet, it should not be ignored that such principles have been received in quite different ways. Therefore, the post-2000 experiments include small scale, collective agricultural production organized within village cooperatives on the one hand, and projects of business circles for cooperation ventures in order to undertake larger enterprises on the other.

### Post-war Space

Another essential reason behind considering the post-1999 period as a distinct conjuncture in the context of the Kurdish issue is that there have been substantial changes in the state's policies on the Kurdish population and territory. By all means, as in all historical shifts, these changes have been characterized by both ruptures and continuities. In this section I sketch the political motivation behind the hegemony project the state has embarked upon establishing against the Kurdish political movement's counter-hegemony project, and then discuss its economic, administrative and cultural dimensions.

This hegemony project that I would name as the "authoritarian resolution of the Kurdish issue," and which aims to regulate the historical-political conflicts between the Turkish state and the Kurdish society by rendering military options ancillary, has formed in tandem with regional, national and supranational political and economic dynamics that were characterized in the early 2000s. Phenomena such as novel geopolitical balances emerged in the aftermath of the US invasion of Iraq, a reformist agenda linked

to Turkey's integration process with the European Union, the role of these reform initiatives within political contestation between military-civil bureaucracy and novel political forces that emerged within the Islamic political tradition, and the effective economic-administrative restructuring that followed the 2000-2001 economic crises have determined, to varying extent, coordinates and parameters of the novel strategic orientation.

I will not elaborate in detail on developments in Turkey's recent political history. To sum up, it would not be incorrect to claim that the AKP's choice to deal with the Kurdish issue by means other than open military methods and to take steps (governmental projects named "Kurdish opening," "resolution process," or "the project for national unity and fraternity") in this direction had to do with its efforts to build a new power bloc against the old one that comprised of military authorities and their supporters within state bureaucracy and political parties.<sup>286</sup> A political program based on the discourse of civilianization against military tutelage and empowered by the integration negotiations with the EU was seen by the AKP as a condition to preserve the party's political power against this power bloc.<sup>287</sup> Especially in its first term in power, more specifically until 2006, during which armed conflicts temporarily ceased and the PKK had severe internal conflicts and carried out a comprehensive reorganization, the AKP aimed at expanding and strengthening the new power bloc by placing the "demilitarization" of the Kurdish issue in the center of its political discourse.

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<sup>286</sup> Akça, "Hegemonic Projects in Post-1980 Turkey and the Changing Forms of Authoritarianism," pp. 30-7.

<sup>287</sup> Ümit Cizre ed., *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey. The Making of the Justice and Development Party*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008).

In the 1980s when the PKK launched and then expanded its offensive campaign built on guerilla warfare, the state's response was to disdain this mobilization as a limited terroristic activity. That approach, which basically aimed at the physical extermination of militants, regarded the PKK movement as a rootless insurgency that obtained a restricted field of maneuver due to foreign powers' support. Therefore the state's counter strategy was deprived of any reflexivity to see the link between the movement and the Kurdish society's protest and demands.<sup>288</sup>

It could be claimed that this approach has been subjected to a limited critique within both state bureaucracy and political circles starting in the late 1980s.<sup>289</sup> Even though these critiques did not produce any reform attempt regarding the Kurds' political and cultural claims in this period, the fact that the Kurdish territory was dealt within a discourse of underdevelopment in various reports prepared by different public institutions and political parties pointed at a tacit acceptance of the interaction between the PKK and the Kurdish society.<sup>290</sup> However, considering the widespread human rights violations and military methods such as forced evictions used to deprive the PKK of its logistic and popular resources during the 1990s, it would be clear that this tacit acceptance did not produce any democratic reform or a meaningful change in the state's strategic orientation in this period.<sup>291</sup>

The post-1999 period has not been exempt from ruptures, fluctuations and inversions. The primary political motivation behind the AKP's hegemony project that

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<sup>288</sup> Bozarslan, *Türkiye'nin Modern Tarihi*, pp. 110-115.

<sup>289</sup> Cengiz Çandar, *Mezopotamya Ekspresi: Bir Tarih Yolculuğu*, (İstanbul: İletişim, 2012).

<sup>290</sup> Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "'Social Development' as a Governmental Strategy in the Southeastern Anatolia Project," p. 99.

<sup>291</sup> See, Evren Balta Paker and İsmet Akça, "Askerler, Köylüler ve Paramiliter Güçler: Türkiye'de Köy Koruculuğu Sistemi," *Toplum ve Bilim* no. 126 (2013), pp. 7-34.

targets to redefine the relations among Kurds and the state was to reinstitute the state's authority in the Kurdish territory by destabilizing the PKK's referential position within the Kurdish population. Accordingly, methods of open violence and discourse of repudiation/assimilation were to be substituted with the state's "benevolent" face, and thus links among the Kurdish population and political-social organizations established around the PKK were to be broken.

It is possible to define this novel strategy as a hegemonic attempt, since it envisages producing active consent within Kurdish society. As noted above, the goal of producing active consent does not nullify the state's coercive presence and does not remove the employment of legal and militaristic tools of repression. In other words, the AKP's efforts to redefine the state's presence in the Kurdish territory through a hegemonic project do not necessarily annul the possibility that political power would assume an authoritarian character.

Quite the opposite, my argument is that the post-war hegemony project includes Kurdish identity within the field of institutional politics on the one hand, and excludes the question of how political relations within the Kurdish population and between the state and Kurds would be defined out of possibilities of bottom-up political mobilization on the other; and thus paves way to an authoritarian modality of power built on a more solid base. In that regard, the notion of the "authoritarian resolution of the Kurdish issue" is not an oxymoron, but denotes substantive differences between political projections represented by the AKP and the Kurdish political movement.

The post-war hegemony project has two distinct moments: The state aims at absorbing the Kurds' claims and demands within a very narrowly-defined reform program of individual cultural rights on the one hand, and abolishing the Kurdish

political movement's areas of political representation and sovereignty within the Kurdish society on the other. Accordingly, the political relation between the Kurdish movement and the Kurdish population is conceived as provisional, strained and negatively-motivated. Therefore, if state violence on civilians vanishes and cultural rights are recognized within a minimal reformist program, it is assumed, then the *raison d'être* of the PKK will disappear. Ultimately, individuals, groups, communities and circles that had no choice but to support and participate in the Kurdish political movement in the past will shift to different channels of political representation. Then the void that appears in the political field will be filled by a conservative and developmentalist political line represented by the AKP.

After having defined the contours of the particular conjuncture under examination and described the motivation behind the state's novel hegemony project, now I have to clarify the spatiality produced by the conceptions and strategies involved in this hegemony project. The tripartite schema that I used in the previous section to elaborate the spatiality of the Kurdish political movement's counter-hegemony project would be useful here as well. Accordingly, in analytical terms, we can depict three distinct dynamics on which this project is built: deconcentration of political power, redefinition of cultural bonds between Kurds and the state by the help of a discourse of religious fraternity, and incorporation of the Kurdish territory to national and regional economic networks.

After the Helsinki Summit in the last days of 1999, the integration process of Turkey with the EU gained new momentum, and afterwards a series of legal and

administrative reforms came to the fore.<sup>292</sup> One of the main thrusts in this reform agenda was the problem of localization, that of partial transfer of political power and authorities from central state institutions to local institutions. It would not be more than a truism to state that there is an exclusive relation between the problem of localization and political contestation around the Kurdish issue. The way in which various currents in the political society and state bureaucracy understand and assess the issue of localization has been determined to a great extent by their approach to the Kurdish issue.

Above, I noted that the Kurdish political movement benefited politically from the process of EU integration in general and the topic of localization in particular to create a field of maneuver for itself. A similar comment could be made for the case of the AKP which has benefited from this reform agenda in its struggle against the previous power bloc.<sup>293</sup>

However, despite this political convergence on the surface, the signification and operationalization of localization has been based on two opposite grounds. The democratic autonomy thesis developed by the Kurdish movement envisages a substantial devolution of authorities and powers to emerging and existing local organizations (decentralization). Accordingly, public services like finance, defense and foreign relations would be undertaken by the central state, public security and judicial services

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<sup>292</sup> See, Ali Resul Usul, "The Justice and Development Party and the European Union: From Euro-skepticism to Euro-enthusiasm and Euro-fatigue," in ed. Ümit Cizre, *Secular and Islamic Politics in Turkey. The Making of the Justice and Development Party*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 175-97.

<sup>293</sup> Evren Balta Paker, "AKP'nin Kürt Sorunu Politikası: Bir Adım İleri, Bir Adım Geri," *Perspectives* (March 2013), pp. 12-5.

would be undertaken by the partnership of local assemblies and central state institutions, and other public services would be transferred to local assemblies.<sup>294</sup>

Correspondingly, the AKP's understanding of localization envisages an extension of authorities and powers to the institutions directly representing the central state (deconcentration). The target is to increase the state's authority in locales by strengthening organizations and institutions like governorship, local branches of ministries, and TOKİ in terms of their legal and administrative authorities. What this disparity means for the Kurdish territory is revealed in the competitive relationship between the governorship offices and the municipalities which have been one of the key institutional pillars of the Kurdish political movement's efforts to establish an "alternative governmental presence"<sup>295</sup> in the last fifteen years.

As I will elaborate in the context of the renewal of Suriçi in Chapter 5, the redrawing of boundaries of political sovereignty is a crucial matter of political confrontation and continuous negotiations; scalar hierarchies are constantly redefined within these struggles. On the one hand the state is rescaled downward in order to render its interventions effectual, on the other hand the Kurdish movement strives to establish new institutional relations on national, regional and supranational scales in order to increase its area of activity. By these processes of rescaling both the Kurdish territory and the city of Diyarbakır, which is its political, cultural and economic epicenter, procures new connections in upward and downward directions. Thus, Diyarbakır becomes a reference point alongside Ankara within the process of EU integration. Moreover, novel geopolitical configurations in the Middle East render more conceivable

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<sup>294</sup> Cuma Çiçek, "Demokratik Özerklik Üzerine," p. 45.

<sup>295</sup> Nicole F. Watts, *Activists in Office*, p. 142.

a fundamental shift from a provincial town on the margins of a territorially-defined nation-state to a regional metropolitan center.

The second aspect of the post-war hegemony project regards the relation between Turkish and Kurdish identities. It would not be incorrect to state that the main current of Turkish nationalism based on a total repudiation of Kurdishness as an ethno-political identity has been modified, if not abandoned at all. This current that Somer defines as “defensive” treats ethnic and cultural diversity within the question of the survival of the state, and considers the very presence of diversity, in accordance with a certain reading of historical-political facts, as a source of vulnerability and jeopardy for the state and nationhood.<sup>296</sup> Accordingly, losses of land and power during the transition from empire to republic are evaluated as the result of centrifugal dynamics of non-muslim and non-Turkish groups guided and encouraged by foreign forces. In other words, the very presence of diversity is seen as a threat, and thus regulation of the diversity by various social-political tools is considered as a condition of the state’s well-being.

On that score, as Yeğen elaborates, during the Republican period different variants of Turkish nationalism have defined and kept Kurdish identity and Kurdish society within an ambiguous and tension-ridden field.<sup>297</sup> Kurds, as a muslim community, have been kept within the boundaries of the nation in contrast to non-muslim communities, but on the other hand they have been seen as a group to be incorporated into the Turkishness through assimilation.

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<sup>296</sup> Murat Somer, “Defensive- vs. Liberal-Nationalist Perspectives on diversity and the Kurdish Conflict: Europeanization, the Internal Debate, and Türkiyelilik,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 32 (2005), pp. 73-91.

<sup>297</sup> Mesut Yeğen, “Banditry to Disloyalty: Turkish Nationalisms and the Kurdish Question,” in ed. Ayşe Kadioğlu and Fuat Keyman, *Symbiotic Antagonisms: Competing Nationalisms in Turkey*, (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2010).

It could be stated that Turkish nationalism's traditional methods of regulation of Kurds and Kurdishness have begun to change in the current conjuncture. Coşar in her article, which analyzes changes in Turkish nationalism on the ideological plane, describes this modification as a transition from nationalist liberalism to liberal nationalism.<sup>298</sup> The Kurdish political movement's struggle to render visible Kurds' demands for political and cultural rights on the one hand, and the disempowerment of the traditional Kemalist power block on the other, have paved the way for such modifications in the field of identity politics.<sup>299</sup>

Within the framework of the AKP's ideological position, links between the Kurdish identity and other ethno-political identities are defined by the notion of Islamic fraternity. That is, the existence of Kurds as a distinct ethnic group is not denied. Kurds are not conceived as a population which could not be assimilated into Turkishness due to their backward position in the course of modernization or political interventions of foreign forces, as argued by traditional Kemalist ideology. Rather, Kurdish identity is recognized within a narrative of companionship redefined in reference to Islam. Conditions of the co-existence of Turks and Kurds are signified within a certain, Islamized, historical imagination.

For sure, this imagination has to do with current political configurations and relations of force. The popular-intellectual narrative championed by the AKP posits religious groups and Kurds as components of a front against modernizing elites which

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<sup>298</sup> Simten Coşar, "Miilliyetçi Liberalizmden Liberal Milliyetçiliğe," *Modern Türkiye'de Siyasi Düşünce: Milliyetçilik* (İstanbul: İletişim, 2002), pp. 718-30.

<sup>299</sup> For an account of hegemony struggles between different nationalisms, see Güven Gürkan Öztan, "The Struggle for Hegemony Between Turkish Nationalisms in the Neoliberal Era," in *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, ed. İsmet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (London: Pluto Press, 2014), pp. 75-91.

are imagined as unchanged since the last century of the Ottoman Empire. This positioning aims to expand the alliances and political legitimacy of the novel power bloc against the vanishing one.

In accordance with this discourse of Islamic fraternity, an alternative imaginary for Diyarbakır has occurred and been juxtaposed with the Kurdish political movement's post-colonial city conception. This alternative imagination, which conceives of Diyarbakır as “the city of Sahabah,” has been championed by various Islamic circles and promoted occasionally by the central state institutions, especially after the mid-2000s. Relations of Diyarbakır with both the rest of Turkey and Middle East are reformulated in accordance with this certain claim of authenticity. The AKP's nationalism, which is based on a certain reconstruction of Ottoman history, envisages creating a novel balance of power both within Turkey and in the region in the light of an imagined Pax Ottomana. Accordingly, the resolution of the Kurdish issue over Islamic fraternity is crucial for both reinforcing social and political cohesion domestically and expanding the area of influence in Middle East politics.

The goal of reinstating authority in the Kurdish territory has an economic aspect in addition to its cultural and political aspects. In that regard, a crucial element of the state's post-1999 hegemony project is to incorporate the Kurdish territory more effectively into sub- and supra-national economic networks. It has been stated often that Turkey's southeast has long suffered from an acute condition of regional inequality.<sup>300</sup> I will not elaborate on the long-standing reasons behind this historical condition, but it

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<sup>300</sup> Mustafa Sönmez, *Yerel Odaklı Gelişim İçin Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu'da Sorunlar ve Çözüm Önerileri*, (Diyarbakır: Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi Belediyeler Birliği, 2013); Cuma Çiçek, “Etnik ve Sınıfsal İnşa Süreçleri Bağlamında Kürt Meselesi: Bölgesel Eşitsizlik ve Bölgesel Özerklik,” *Praksis* 28 (2012), pp. 11-41.

would be relevant to discuss briefly what role the discourse on the region's underdevelopment has within the state's policies on the Kurdish territory and how this role has evolved in the course of time. For, as Özok-Gündoğan astutely suggests, the discourse of underdevelopment and related governmental development practices have been “part of the ruling elites' strategies to establish their control and authority” over the Kurdish territory and population.<sup>301</sup> Therefore, in the context of our discussion it is critical to clarify in what ways the developmentalist discourse has changed and in what practices it has been concretized.

Even though it dates back to earlier decades in terms of its ideational roots and organizational structure, beginning in the late 1980s and especially in the 1990s, the state has appropriated a new conception on the “terror problem,” constructing the Kurdish territory as an object of governmental development efforts and practices. This developmentalist approach, which has been embodied in the Southeastern Anatolia Project (GAP), aimed at correcting the region's problems of economic and social underdevelopment by the help of comprehensive infrastructure projects invested and implemented by the state.

That political mobilization organized around the PKK is not confined to a matter of public security, but as articulations of the Kurds' social, economic and political rights and demands had become clear by the late 80s, and thus a particular governmentality regarding the Kurdish issue had begun to mature within governmental efforts and policies. Yet, the very notion of developmentalism has transformed in time in a manner

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<sup>301</sup> Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, “‘Social Development’ as a Governmental Strategy in the Southeastern Anatolia Project,” p. 95.

that responds to novel tendencies produced, encouraged and disseminated by global governance organizations such as the EU, the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF.<sup>302</sup>

This transformation can be described as a shift from a comprehensive “social development” in the center of which the state stands in financial, organizational and ideological terms to “sustainable human development” which is based ideologically on the notion of the market and which is to be materialized by more efficient and effectual collaboration and participation of business circles and NGO’s.<sup>303</sup> Accordingly, while the strategic priority of the former was to create employment opportunities through state-financed investments in order to cope with social and economic underdevelopment, the latter mainly aims to regulate and govern the population in accordance with the notion of “human capital” by the help of an institutional architecture that comprises organizations such as social centers, associations and foundations that have more effective interaction with local people on the base level.

It is possible to state that this transformation dates back to the mid-90s but has been institutionalized more effectively in the 2000s.<sup>304</sup> For instance, ÇATOMs, which best picture the cooperation of private sector, governmental bodies and NGO’s in the context of sustainable human development, first emerged in the region in the late 90s.<sup>305</sup> However, only after the establishment of regional development agencies (BKAs) in

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<sup>302</sup> Ali Çarkoğlu and Mine Eder, “Developmentalism à la Turca: The Southeast Anatolia Development Project (GAP),” in ed. Fikret Adaman and Murat Arsel, *Environmentalism in Turkey: Between Democracy and Development?* (Hants, Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 167-84.

<sup>303</sup> Nilay Özk-Gündoğan, “‘Social Development’ as a Governmental Strategy in the Southeastern Anatolia Project,” p. 104.

<sup>304</sup> For a discussion on the initial traces of this transformation in the context of developmental policies in southeastern Turkey, see Leila Harris, “Water and Conflict Geographies of the Southeastern Anatolia Project,” *Society and Natural Resources* 15, no. 8 (2002), pp. 743-59.

<sup>305</sup> See Hande Sözer, “ÇATOM Project: Field Supervisors In-between ‘the State’ and ‘the Social’” (MA Thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2004).

2006, did neoliberal developmentalism gain a more effective institutional structure and authority. The idea behind the BKAs is to depict, formulate and coordinate economic and social problems and necessities of localities through participatory mechanisms to be constructed among central state institutions, municipalities, business organizations and non-governmental bodies.<sup>306</sup>

This novel perspective of development and related institutional architecture have produced three results in terms of economic policies regarding the Kurdish territory in general and Diyarbakır in particular. First, in terms of physical infrastructure, investments in transportation have increased so that circulatory flows within the region and between the Kurdish territory and the rest of Turkey have become more effective.<sup>307</sup> Second, a comprehensive policy of social aid, which is conceived as a tool of regulating and governing poverty by the help of a complex configuration of allowances in kind and money, has been undertaken.<sup>308</sup> Third, in terms of economic growth, the main features of a particular approach, which aims at resolving the city's acute problem of employment and disinvestments, have become more manifest. At this point three lines can be depicted: accordingly, the state (i) encourages local entrepreneurialism through institutional bodies such as GAP-GİDEMs (Entrepreneur Support and Guidance Centers), organized under the coordination of the GAP Regional Development

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<sup>306</sup> For an account of inter- and intra-class struggles to determine the legal, administrative and financial boundaries of the BKAs, see İbrahim Gündoğdu, "Sermayenin Bölgesel Kalkınma Eğilim(ler)i: Kalkınma Ajansları Yasası Üzerine Tarihsel-Coğrafi Materyalist Bir İnceleme," *Praksis*, no. 19 (2009), pp. 267-302.

<sup>307</sup> For a brief summary of the AKP's socio-economic policies in the Kurdish territory, see Azer Kılıç "Identity, Interest, and Politics: The Rise of Kurdish Associational Activism and the Contestation of the State in Turkey" (Ph.D. diss., University of Cologne, 2013), pp. 78-80.

<sup>308</sup> İrfan Aktan, "The AKP's Three-Faceted Kurdish Policy: Tenders for the Rich, Alms for the Poor, Bombs for the Opposition," in *Turkey Reframed: Constituting Neoliberal Hegemony*, ed. İsmet Akça, Ahmet Bekmen and Barış Alp Özden (London: Pluto Press, 2014), pp. 107-21.

Administration and financed by the EU, especially in the field of agricultural production, in order to create more persistent and effective market mechanisms;<sup>309</sup> (ii) aims to increase industrial production through investment incentives in the region where high rates of unemployment are considered as a plausible condition for lowering production costs;<sup>310</sup> and (iii) envisages, in accordance with the notion “center of attraction,” the reconfiguration of cultural and historical landscapes of cities such as Mardin and Diyarbakır which have locality-related assets that would render possible tourism investments and thus help withdraw capital and an educated labor force.<sup>311</sup>

In this chapter, I have discussed the economic, political and cultural dimensions of hegemonic projects conceived and implemented by the state and the Kurdish political movement, and formulated the notions of “post-war space” and “post-colonial space” so as to grasp the spatiality of hegemonic struggles in a particular political conjuncture. After having constructed political categories on which the analysis of spatial processes in Diyarbakır are based, now we can continue, in the main chapters of this dissertation, to examine the material, institutional and ideological aspects of urban processes through the cases of tourism-oriented urban regeneration undertaken in Suriçi and suburbanization process in Kayapınar.

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<sup>309</sup> Ayşe Seda Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations: Neoliberal Experience in South-east Turkey,” *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 13, no. 4, p. 444.

<sup>310</sup> Although the Kurdish territory has been defined as an area of investment-priority by the state institutions such as the Ministry of Development, and thus has been privileged in the allocation of production incentives, it is not possible to suggest this policy has been successful and led to a production shift into the region. For a detailed account of investment incentives, see Karacadağ Development Agency, *TRC2 Bölgesi 2014-2023 Bölge Planı Mevcut Durum Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2013), pp. 134-6. On the other hand, recent investments in the region, condensed in areas such as mining, hydroelectric tribunes and shale gas, can be considered under extraction economy.

<sup>311</sup> Ayşe Çağlar, “Rescaling Cities, Cultural Diversity and Transnationalism: Migrants of Mardin and Essen,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 6 (2007), pp. 1070-95. See also, Kerem Öktem, “Faces of the City: Poetic, Mediagenic and Traumatic Images of a Multi-Cultural City in Southeast Turkey,” *Cities* 22, no 3 (2005), pp. 241-53.

CHAPTER FIVE  
PAST AND PRESENT:  
URBAN REGENERATION IN SURİÇİ

After fifteen years of pro-Kurdish local governments, Suriçi, the historic center of the Diyarbakır city, is now on the verge of significant changes. In tandem with the city's economic, political and cultural environment, this particular site, where traces of destitution and repudiation of decades can be most overtly observed, is changing its shell in a gradual-but-substantial manner. On the one hand, with the acceleration of urban development in other parts of the city, Suriçi has entered into a cycle of depopulation and progressively lost its residential character. As flights from the historic city increased, the inner-city slum character of the dilapidated residential areas has become more pronounced.

On the other hand, extensive spatial interventions of central state institutions and municipalities have both consolidated this demographic trend and triggered a process of regeneration in its physical and social space. Undertaking urban transformation projects and comprehensive restoration and renovation works, institutional and political actors of various scales have strived to reconfigure the physical, historical and cultural landscapes of Suriçi in accordance with their spatial conceptions and strategies. Thus, contrary to its demographic trend, Suriçi has become a center of renewed attraction, accommodating more commercial facilities and tourism-related activities. However, this change in character has had its own price. Low-income residents of the area, most of whom fled

the city due to the state's forced migration policies in the 1990s, are today at risk of displacement once again.

The restructuring of Suriçi can be viewed as constituting a crucial moment of the contemporary processes of production of space in Diyarbakır — the other being the suburbanization process in Kayapınar as analyzed in Chapter 6. Accordingly, the main goal of this chapter is to examine the restructuring of Suriçi, by putting the initiatives and plans of the relevant actors into the context of distinct hegemony projects that the AKP and the Kurdish political movement have developed in the 2000s. In Chapter 4, I contended that these two hegemony projects are composed of two competing spatialities: the state's "post-war space" and the Kurdish political movement's "post-colonial space." Elaborating this argument, in this chapter I seek to answer how and in what ways encounters between these spatial conceptions and related strategies have made possible the restructuring of Suriçi in a manner that reproduces existing inequalities and urban segregation.

My argument is two-fold: Current urban transformation projects in İçkale and Alipaşa-Lalabey neighborhoods and overall attempts for the regeneration of Suriçi reflect an implicit reconciliation around a tourism-centered perspective that envisages Diyarbakır as an attractive locality with the aim of overcoming its grave economic and social problems. In accordance with this perspective the significant institutional and political actors that have various capacities to influence urban processes and governance —e.g. governorship office, municipal authorities, regional development agency, local business organizations and TOKİ— have converged, in the course of time, on reconstructing Diyarbakır as a "center of attraction."

However, this reconciliation in the general aim does not necessarily undo deeper power struggles that are at work. As matter of fact, how and with what tools the upgrading of Suriçi will be undertaken is subjected to continuous struggles between the state and the Kurdish political movement. These struggles have two main sites: struggles to redefine the contours of the political authority in the region and struggles over the urban imaginaries to redefine Diyarbakır's identity.

On that score, while the AKP government strives to reinstitute the state's political authority by expanding the administrative and legal capacities of the local branches and organizations of the central state institutions, the Kurdish political movement fights to expand the boundaries of its alternative governmental presence by using the institutional capacity of the local governments it holds.

Furthermore, the economic and political aspects of the regeneration process are articulated with struggles over urban imaginaries. Accordingly, two distinct claims of authenticity –the Kurdish political movement's imagination of Diyarbakır as “the capital of Kurdish identity” and a pro-Islamic imaginary that conceives Diyarbakır as “the city of Sahabah”– come up against each other in the vacuum that Kemalist Republicanism left behind in the 2000s. In the end, the restructuring of Suriçi is incorporated into long-standing political aspirations, and thus urban transformation projects and the overall goal of regeneration gain legitimacy in the eyes of local residents and municipal authorities, despite their severe negative impact on the urban poor.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section describes the socio-spatial structure of the urban transformation project sites in comparison to the whole Suriçi area, drawing on secondary sources on the location of the project sites, land and housing ownership structure, and demographic and socio-economic features. The second

section examines the administrative and political positioning of the relevant actors within the restructuring process of Suriçi, distinguishing the phases of the urban transformation projects. Thus, it reveals how and to what extent the political and institutional actors have become involved in the urban renewal process in the historic center. Lastly, the main section of this chapter analyzes the dynamics behind the complex interplay between actors, putting the restructuring of physical and social landscape of Suriçi in the context of encounters between distinct spatial conceptions and strategies of the state and the Kurdish political movement in the post-1999 period. Following the discussion developed in Chapter 4, it explores the economic, political and imaginary aspects of these encounters which have had both moments of reconciliation and dissension.

### Socio-Spatial Structure of the Project Sites

As of 2014, there are two separate urban transformation projects proceeding in Diyarbakır's historic Suriçi.<sup>312</sup> These projects, which incorporate approximately one-sixth of the whole Suriçi area, include the removal of unlicensed constructions, relocation of its inhabitants to other housing zones, and redesigning of the land gained for new functions. A detailed analysis of these projects, which have followed an undulating course since their inception in 2007 and which are still in their implementation phase, is essential in order to understand the spatial strategies of the actors involved. But more important is to reveal the dynamics of a desire for a more extensive restructuring for the whole of Suriçi. In this sense, I propose discussing the

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<sup>312</sup> See, Figure 3.

urban transformation projects in Suriçi as a phase of the broader dynamics which aim at reconfiguring the physical, historical, and cultural landscape of the area as a whole.

As I will discuss in the last section of this chapter, the current urban transformation projects can be viewed as a part of the regeneration efforts formed around a discourse which focus on historical and cultural values, and which is gradually based on a reconciled, tourism-centered economic growth approach. Despite that general reconciliation, this is a process involving a series of economic, political, and cultural conflicts. The complex web of interplay between the actors who are active at local and central levels shapes how this model will be implemented. In what follows, I discuss each of the different aspects involved in this interplay. But first, I must make it clear that the restructuring of Suriçi is one of the two important moments of the immense spatial alterations that the city has witnessed in the 2000s — along with the suburbanization process that I discuss in the next chapter.

Before going into greater detail, in order to strengthen the observations, first of all, the socio-spatial structure of the project sites should be introduced. This is necessary to understand the strategies used by the actors involved in these projects on local and central scales, and the interplay resulting from such strategies. From this point of view, in this section I describe the two project sites in contrast with the whole Suriçi area. I present data compiled from secondary sources relating to the location of the project sites, their land and housing ownership structure, and demographic and socio-economic aspects, respectively. I argue that this first section will make it more intelligible for the discussion of the implementation phases of the projects in the following section.

## Location of the Project Sites

Presently there are two separate project sites in Suriçi. The first project, entitled “Historical City Wall Preservation Band Urban Renewal (*Gecekondu* Transformation) Project,” includes 352 unlicensed constructions which surround the İçkale (Citadel) area.<sup>313</sup> The second project, “Alipaşa and Lalabey Urban Renewal (*Gecekondu* Transformation) Project,” is designed for 850 unlicensed constructions in the southwest corner of Suriçi.<sup>314</sup> The two projects were officially initiated at different times by different actors. Yet, as of today, TOKİ (the Mass Housing Agency), the Governorship of Diyarbakır, Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality (DMM), and Sur Municipality officially collaborate on these two projects.

Thus, primarily for practical purposes, I think that it is more feasible to discuss the two projects as parts of a single project. Moreover, it is useful to think concomitantly about the spatial, social, and political effects of the projects and their infrastructure in order to better understand the desire to restructure Suriçi as it relates to the spatial production processes of the city.

Located in northeastern Suriçi, the İçkale project comprises an area of fourteen ha which surrounds the ancient city center of İçkale. This area contains historical structures that are part of archeological sites, religious structures which have a significant position in the cultural-political history of the city (such as Hz. Süleyman

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<sup>313</sup> Covering an area of approximately 14 ha, the first official steps of this project (hereafter the İçkale Project) were taken in 2007. In terms of official administrative divisions, the project incorporates the whole of the Cevatpaşa neighborhood and a small part of the north of the Fatihpaşa neighborhood.

<sup>314</sup> Initiatives for the second project (hereafter the Alipaşa-Lalabey Project), which covers an area of approximately 10 ha, started in 2008. It covers almost all of the Alipaşa neighborhood and a small part of the Lalabey neighborhood.

Mosque known as the Citadel Mosque) and nineteenth century Ottoman public buildings that were also used as public buildings during the Republican era. Historically, this area did not feature dense settlement. However, as a result of increasing immigration to the city, especially after 1980, unlicensed buildings surrounded these historical structures and the inner and outer city walls.

The fact that this site was incorporated within the first urban transformation project in the city is a direct result of its location. The İçkale area is located on a hill overlooking the Tigris Valley, and contains structures which are important for the cultural-political history of the city. As I elaborate in the last section of this chapter, since the beginning of the 2000s, renovation projects have begun which aim to reutilize the historic buildings of İçkale. In the year 2000, the Çekül Foundation (the Foundation for the Protection and Promotion of the Environment and Cultural Heritage), the Diyarbakır Governorship and DMM launched a joint project and have embarked upon a substantial restoration project for the city walls.<sup>315</sup> Such renewal efforts opened the way for the DMM to redesign the area as an archeo-park and observation deck.

In fact, the administrative managers of the city ascribe exceptional significance to the city walls in the ongoing urban transformation project, just as in the other areas and possible other transformation projects (for example in the Ben-u-sen neighborhood that surrounds the outside of city walls). This growing interest in elements, such as city walls, being accepted as a local asset of the city, and the role of reconfiguration of these elements in the spatial production processes of the city, are distinct features of the period that I examine.

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<sup>315</sup> The project entitled “Diyarbakır City Walls and İçkale Preservation Project” was launched in 2000. Accessed 1 October 2013, <http://www.cekulvakfi.org.tr/haber/Diyarbakır-surlari-ve-ickale-canlaniyor>.

The location has a decisive role in the selection of the Alipaşa-Lalabey project as well. Located on the southwestern Suriçi, this site surrounds the inside of city walls. In contrast to İçkale, it has been a housing area for decades. With only a small part of it included in the project, the Lalabey neighborhood, historically with its concentration of crafts related to silk production and densely populated by Syrians until the 1960s, is one of the historic neighborhoods of the city.

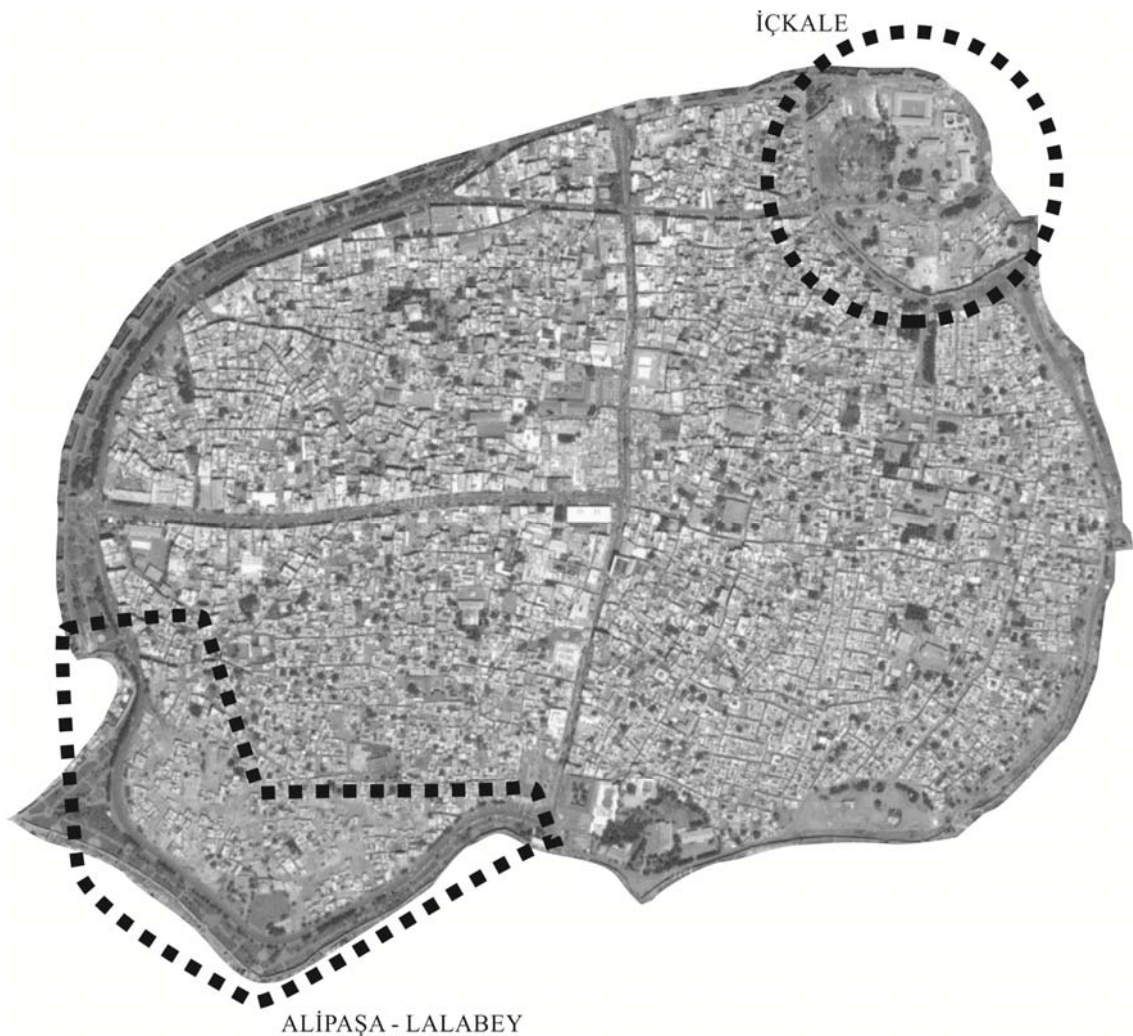


Figure 3. Urban Transformation Projects in Suriçi

The Alipaşa neighborhood spreads around the Alipaşa Mosque and extends towards the city walls. A predominantly poor migrant population emerged after the second half of the twentieth century when its population increased and housing replaced empty fields, gardens and silk production areas.

Moreover, its proximity to the city's west (Urfa Kapı) and south (Mardin Kapı) entrances, and the fact that it surrounds especially the historic buildings of Lalabey –for example, churches– and the inns and hotels in Mardin Kapı, make the Alipaşa neighborhood suitable for a tourism-oriented refunctioning. The absence of commercial functions in the area, unlike the more northern parts of Suriçi, and the existence of architecturally unqualified, unlicensed low-rise buildings built by poor immigrants make the transformation of the area both desirable and cost efficient. In this respect, the advantageous location of the neighborhood –its proximity to the city's outer reaching axes and qualified structures– has been decisive in its selection as one of the first transformation areas.

### Demographic Background of the Project Sites

As discussed in Chapter 3, Suriçi has been the primary site where immigrants from surrounding villages, towns and cities increasingly have settled in, since the aftermath of World War II. Even after the city expanded outside the walls in the 1950s, Suriçi continued to be the first destination for newcomers. It functioned, in a way, as a point of entrance to city life, which symbolizes a temporary site to be left behind as soon as one has adequate resources. Consequently, in time, especially after the dramatic rush to the city during the late 1980s and 1990s, when the forced migration strategy was

implemented by the state in rural regions, Suriçi happened to be regarded, in the eyes of more affluent residents and administrators of the city, as the apparent materialization of migration-related problems, physical and social blight. Yet, as more and more residents left Suriçi for other districts outside the walls, or for other cities, the district began to lose its residential population. While it continued to be one of the major commercial zones of the city, residential areas have become more and more depopulated.

Suriçi, with Bağlar, is a principal site directly influenced by various aspects of migration processes. As a detailed survey conducted in 2009 indicates, a division of labor between these two sites might be depicted in terms of their positions within migratory flows. While the first choice for immigrants that migrated due to security-related motivations is predominantly Bağlar, Suriçi has been the first home principally for immigrants seeking economic opportunities in the city.<sup>316</sup>

Yet, this does not reflect an absolute division. Suriçi hosts both types of immigrants, of which motivations and patterns are intermingled in their actual experiences. Whereas immigrants from war-torn regions have gathered predominantly in areas around Mardin Kapı, and, to a significant extent, in the Cevat Paşa and Fatih Paşa neighborhoods, one of the project areas; the share of migrants that declare economic-related issues as their principal motivation rises in small-scale, centrally located neighborhoods of Suriçi such as Süleyman Nazif and Camii Nebi.<sup>317</sup>

The availability of affordable housing, proximity to daily jobs, the presence of extended family members, and opportunities for animal husbandry in some cases are understandably primary causes for location choices. Similarly, population densities of

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<sup>316</sup>Inan Keser, *EKOSEP: Diyarbakır Saha Araştırması Raporu* (Unpublished Report, 2009), pp. 40-54.

<sup>317</sup> Keser, *EKOSEP*, pp. 43-54. See, Figure 2.

the Suriçi neighborhoods reflect the area's specific position within the Diyarbakır's geography of poverty. By 2009, Suriçi neighborhoods like Lalabey (911 people per hectare), Abdaldede (486 people per hectare) and Melik Ahmet (661 people per hectare) come just after the infamous neighborhoods –e.g. Körhat, Beş Nisan, Muradiye, Mevlana Halit, and Fatih– of Bağlar district, which has incomparable levels of population density as a whole district.<sup>318</sup>

On the other hand, Suriçi has entered into a cycle of depopulation in the recent period. As of 2013, fifteen neighborhoods, with almost 57,000 inhabitants, constituted slightly more than one-twentieth of the city's urban population.<sup>319</sup> In recent historical course, especially after 2000, Suriçi's population decreased in both absolute and relative terms. While the one-third of the city population resided in Suriçi in the mid-1980s, after the development of new areas in Bağlar and Kayapınar, and the outflow of residents from the dilapidated built environment of Suriçi, its share declined dramatically. More specifically, after 2005 the decrease accelerated, and almost all neighborhoods of Suriçi, with the temporary exception of the Melik Ahmet neighborhood, witnessed dramatic population falls.

The same could be said specifically for neighborhoods subjected to transformation projects. In contrast to a more moderate decrease in Cevat Paşa; Ali Paşa and Lalabey, historically two of the most crowded parts of the whole Suriçi area that hosted the least well-to-do dwellers, witnessed significant falls after 2005 — a continuing trend which could be only partly explained with project-related evictions. In

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<sup>318</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır Kentsel Alt Bölge Kalkınma Yaklaşımı* (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2012), p. 56.

<sup>319</sup> TURKSTAT, *Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi*, 2014. Here I refer to four districts –Sur, Yenişehir, Bağlar and Kayapınar– as the city of Diyarbakır. On the other hand, neighborhoods in Suriçi constitute only one half of the Sur district which was expanded administratively in 2008.

fact, the process of depopulation is chiefly linked to the extreme inconvenience of housing units and built environment. The evictions in project areas have a limited effect on the general depopulation process that had begun beforehand. Since 2005, within a constant trend, all neighborhoods of Suriçi have been experiencing a vicious cycle that increases the effects of dilapidation on remaining inhabitants.

The demographic background of both the project sites and the whole Suriçi area is telling in terms of the roots and course of urban transformation policy in Diyarbakır. Suriçi, which has been one of the main destinations for migratory flows, has been significantly losing its population since the 2000s. This fact is consistent with the vision the DMM and the Governorship have drawn for the district. On the other hand, the Sur district municipality has concerns about depopulation, because of possible losses in its financial resources. Depopulation means decrease in revenues from the central state which are calculated according to population figures. Consequently, as a municipal officer stated, while the Sur district municipality looks on the projects with favor, it demanded the displaced residents to be transferred to mass housing units within the district's boundaries.<sup>320</sup>

### Property and Housing Tenure

Apart from a small number of exceptions built on the land of the primary school in the Alipaşa neighborhood, or adjacent to the city walls of İçkale, all the buildings that would be demolished in both projects are unlicensed structures built on private land.

Considering the low ratio of regular housing in the whole city that have building and

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<sup>320</sup> Necati Bağpir, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

occupancy licenses, it would not be surprising to see unlicensed housings in both project sites. All of the 1252 buildings to be demolished are unlicensed. However, as historically common to Suriçi, these structures are built on split residential parcels, on empty fields or unused agricultural lands, or in place of old buildings. Thus, the dominant pattern in the project sites is private property.

However, although property owners have title deeds for the land, they do not have the necessary permits and documents for the buildings. For that reason, when determining the right holders and the cost of expropriation, TOKİ and the municipality came up with a separate pricing for the land and the buildings. In this respect, the obscure legal cases arising from tenureship issues common to a significant portion of *gecekondu* transformation projects in other cities are largely not the case in the two projects sites that I discuss. Rather than talking about taking over public or private property as squats, it is more appropriate to talk about unplanned and unlicensed structures built on private land which has been split over time. Regarding the legal characteristics of land ownership, the Suriçi area differs from other poor neighborhoods in outlying areas of the city, like Aziziye, that consist of unlicensed residences built on public land.<sup>321</sup>

However, this does not mean that the existing users are predominantly actual property owners. As is common to the whole of Suriçi, tenancy is very common in both project areas. In 2009, a comprehensive survey based on sampling method revealed that the tenancy rate in fifteen neighborhoods of Suriçi is more than fifty percent.<sup>322</sup> It

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<sup>321</sup> Hatice Kurşuncu, “Kentsel Yoksulluk: Diyarbakır Aziziye Mahallesi Örneği” (MA thesis, Ankara University, 2006).

<sup>322</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır Kentsel Alt Bölge Kalkınma Yaklaşımı*, p. 123.

reaches levels as high as 75 percent in the case of the small-scale Süleyman Nazif neighborhood located in the center of the region close to the commercial center, and drops to the lowest level in the southern neighborhood of Cemal Yılmaz. The tenancy rate in the Cevatpaşa neighborhood, which is the main part of the transformation project, is 68 percent. In the whole of the Alipaşa and Lalabey neighborhoods it is between 40-50 percent. However, municipal authorities stated that especially in the project area of Alipaşa, the tenancy rate is over 60 percent.<sup>323</sup> These rates are quite above the tenancy rates valid for the whole of Diyarbakır. According to the same research, Suriçi consists of crowded households which reside in units predominantly smaller than hundred square meters.<sup>324</sup>

TOKİ managers who carried out the two transformation projects reported that there is not a developed capitalist (in the words of respondents, “effective”) real estate market in Suriçi.<sup>325</sup> The structure of the housing property is composed mainly of tenancy in which property owners prefer renting out their neglected family properties for relatively less expensive amounts. Buying or selling second hand housing hardly exists.

This aspect of the real estate market led proprietors to adopt a relatively positive attitude towards the transformation projects. Likewise, it increases the attraction of the houses or the cash payments proposed to rightful owners. In contrast, the situation of the tenants who are primary users of the area is the exact opposite of this. It is clear that the majority of tenants in this area pay their rent irregularly which is extremely low compared to other neighborhoods of the city.

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<sup>323</sup> Necati Bağpir, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

<sup>324</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır Kentsel Alt Bölge Kalkınma Yaklaşımı*, p. 123.

<sup>325</sup> Mustafa Bakır, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

## Socio-economic Structure of the Project Sites

As for income levels and concentration of poverty, while almost one-third of households in the Sur district do not have any monthly income (the highest rate among four districts), households that declare a monthly income above 1000 TL constitute slightly above one-tenth of the district's population (the lowest rate among four districts).<sup>326</sup> The Cevat Paşa and Fatihpaşa neighborhoods, along with Cami Kebir and Süleyman Nazif, are in the first group wherein acute income deprivation prevails. More than one-third of the residents in these two neighborhoods sustain on official and non-official social aid networks. In Lalabey and Alipaşa the shares decline, yet in both neighborhoods the overwhelming majority of residents live on less than 500 TL a month.<sup>327</sup>

On the other hand, in contrast to the other three districts of the city, it is not possible to depict a clear income polarization, and hence spatial segregation within the Sur district, since the majority of the population experiences similar conditions of poverty. In other words, the whole Suriçi area is characterized by similar material conditions in terms of income deprivation and residential inopportuneness. Given the extremely low rates of labor force participation, employment structure concentrated in service sector, and high levels of unemployment in the city of Diyarbakır,<sup>328</sup> it would not be surprising to observe that the majority of the population in project areas are caught up in a vicious cycle of unemployment and low-paid, informal service sector jobs.

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<sup>326</sup> Keser, *Diyarbakır*, p. 45.

<sup>327</sup> Keser, *EKOSEP*, pp. 66-73.

<sup>328</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *TRC2 Bölgesi 2014-2023 Bölge Planı: Mevcut Durum Raporu* (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2013), pp. 110-4.

Keser lists construction workers, drivers, porters, grocers, daily farm laborers, coffee shop owners, waitresses, tailors, restaurant managers, painters, street vendors and doorkeepers as the most common crafts in the city in addition to civil servants and public teachers.<sup>329</sup> For project areas as well, it might be reasonable to claim that the majority of the households gain their income, if any, from such underpaid, irregular, daily occupations in addition to the social aid.

When considered as a whole, the data reveals that areas subject to urban transformation struggle with urban poverty characterized by continuous unemployment and income poverty, as in the whole of Suriçi. The overall socio-economic structure of Diyarbakır, in which one-fifth of the total number of households live by direct or indirect aid they receive mainly from government institutions, becomes more fragile in Suriçi.<sup>330</sup>

As a result, we face a Suriçi whose physical environment increasingly deteriorates, whose population is decreasing and therefore is left with the most vulnerable group of people struggling with poverty. In classic terms, this slum area, where property owners do not live and tenancy is common, increases the persuasiveness of the current transformation projects among the economic and political elites of the city. However, on the other hand, it limits to a large extent the possible resistance of people living in the project area.

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<sup>329</sup> Keser, *Diyarbakır*, p. 30.

<sup>330</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır Kentsel Alt Bölge Kalkınma Yaklaşımı*, p. 65.

## The Restructuring of Suriçi

Both projects (the İçkale Project and the Alipaşa-Lalabey Project) officially started a year and a half before the local elections in March 2009. Various institutions took the initiative to begin these projects. There were fundamental differences at the initial stage concerning the intended final objectives, which project would be implemented, and who would oversee the process.

However, after the 2009 local elections, we witness an established official coordination between local and central institutions. After this stage, we can see encounters, adaptations, and disintegration between the different strategies of the actors. The existence of such encounters shows us that urban transformation projects are not fixed designs, they are not necessarily applied from the top down, and they undergo changes in relation to the capacities of actors within the processes of political struggle. Surely, these capacities are shaped by the power of the actors and the possibilities or limitations of structural conditions.

Therefore, I think it is essential to examine the whole process from its initial stages up to the present time in order to understand the approaches applied by actors running urban transformation projects, the strategies they use and the dynamics between these strategies. For that reason, in this section, I elaborate upon how the process began and has evolved, its technical details, and the positions of the actors.

## Selection of the Transformation Areas

### The İçkale Project

At the end of January 2008, a news report was published concerning Fahrettin Çağdaş, secretary general of the DMM on a web site that compiles real estate news across the country.<sup>331</sup> The news report stated that a “*gecekondu* transformation project” was initiated in partnership with TOKİ in the İçkale area of Suriçi. It announced the clearance of unlicensed buildings in the area surrounding the historic structures and the archeological site, and a refunctioning of it by the DMM as a recreation area and archeopark. Çağdaş described the project’s aim as “opening the Sur area to religion and culture tourism” and said that the project was actually based on the Municipality’s Strategic Plan prepared in 2006. The main emphasis of the strategic plan was “protecting natural and cultural heritage.” According to this principle, unlicensed structures in the area were to be removed and the rightful owners were to be replaced in a new housing area that TOKİ would build.

The project Çağdaş mentioned became official after a preliminary protocol signed between TOKİ and the DMM in September 2007. Seven months after the local election, in October 2009, this preliminary protocol became the final protocol between the Governorship, the DMM, TOKİ and the Sur municipality. The protocol outlines the physical boundaries of structures involved in the project and proposes a commission to be formed to determine the rightful owners. It also states that the determined rightful

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<sup>331</sup> Emlak Kulisi web site, 31 January 2008, *TOKİ sur dibinde kentsel dönüşüm yapacak*, accessed 6 October 2013, <http://emlakkulisi.com/toki-Diyarbakir-sur-dibinde-kentsel-donusum-yapacak/2927>.

owners would be transferred to a housing area to be built by TOKİ in Çölgüzeli, an outlying area of Kayapınar district (approximately 13 km away from the city center). It describes the aim of the project as the clearance of an area “which had already lost its function and is covered with dilapidated structures” and to “create an urban area with contemporary standards and renovate the historic city walls for tourism purposes.”<sup>332</sup>

Apart from these statements reflected in official documents, it has also been emphasized many times by the municipal authorities that the aim of the project was the refunctioning of the area in accordance with the historic significance of the region and that the area would not be opened to housing development.<sup>333</sup> For the same reasons the DMM also considered this area as an urban transformation area. As I mentioned in the previous section, the location of the area is an important factor in the selection of the project.

However, when the project site was announced, there was no direct participation from people living in the area. Only after the idea was mooted and formal partnerships established, people living in the area were contacted. Ultimately, it is understood that the transformation policy was determined by a sense of urgency related to the restoration projects. To a certain extent, we could mention the consent of property owners in the process of determining the rightful owners and expropriation costs. However, it is not possible to say the same thing for tenants who form a significant portion of the residents of the area. In short, while determining the transformation policies, a partnership on the

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<sup>332</sup> *Diyarbakır-Tarihi Sur Koruma Bandı Kentsel Yenileme (Gecekondu Dönüşüm) Projesine İlişkin Protokol*, 14 October 2009.

<sup>333</sup> Murat Alökmen, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012; Fahrettin Çağdaş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013; Necati Bağpir, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

institutional level was established, but the dwellers were left in a position of passive recipients of the process of information flow.

### The Alipaşa-Lalabey Project

After the İçkale project came to the fore and before the 2009 local elections, further information concerning urban transformation was disseminated in the city. According to this news which was also covered in the press, 850 buildings located in the southwest of Suriçi were included in an urban transformation project.<sup>334</sup> But unlike the first project, this time the initiative came from the Diyarbakır Governorship. TOKİ became involved in the process by the invitation of the Governorship. The Sur Municipality was among the partners for the first protocols signed in March and December 2008.

However the DTP (the pro-Kurdish party's name at that time) and the DMM did not embrace the project even though the Sur Municipality belonged to the same party and had signed the protocol. For, in 2007 the Ministry of Internal Affairs had dismissed all the members of the municipal council of the Sur Municipality following Abdullah Demirbaş's decision –who was elected as mayor in 2004– to use the Kurdish language in municipal services as part of a campaign on the right to use native languages.<sup>335</sup> After this incident, Ahmet Aydın, who was the Provincial Special Administration Secretary General directly appointed by the central government, became the substitute mayor.

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<sup>334</sup> Emlak Kulisi web site, 23 September 2008, *TOKİ'den Diyarbakır'a Kentsel Dönüşüm*, accessed 6 October 2013, <http://emlakkulisi.com/tokiden-Diyarbakıra-kentsel-donusum/8764>.

<sup>335</sup> Kerem Öktem, February 2008, *The Patronising Embrace: Turkey's Kurdish Strategy*, accessed 11 March 2014, <http://www.sfst.ch/typo3/index.php?id=16>.

In contrast with the İkale project, at first, the DMM did not give political support to this project initiated by the governorship insofar as the political legitimacy of the Sur municipality was contentious. After a process of contention, the official representatives of the transformation project took its final shape in October 2009 when a protocol was signed on the same day the İkale project was signed.

Just like the other project, in official documents, the aim of the project was described by familiar generic expressions such as “the creation of housing areas according to contemporary standards” or “the development of cultural tourism.”<sup>336</sup> A similar priority is visible in Ahmet Aydın’s words to the press. Aydın said that the project was the first of five stages necessary to transform the whole of Surii. The news report said that the purpose was to clear the *gecekondu* from Surii and pave the way for investments for tourism.<sup>337</sup>

Apart from the contentious stories of the official representatives of the Alipaa-Lalabey project, there were also controversies around the content of the project. Both TOKİ officials who have direct authority over the area, and the municipal authorities stated that the first proposal of the Governorship that initiated the project was to refunction the emerging area as a park.<sup>338</sup> They were imagining this area as the future city center of Surii. However, both the TOKİ experts and the municipality officers who were left out of the process in the first phase of the project opposed the project on different grounds. TOKİ’s aim was to use the lands to be gained in a more profitable

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<sup>336</sup> *Diyarbakır-Alipaa ve Lalebey Mahallesi Kentsel Yenileme (Gecekondu Dönüüm) Projesine İlikin 2 Nolu Ek Protokol*, 14 October 2009.

<sup>337</sup> Emlak Kulisi web site, 23 September 2008, *TOKİ’den Diyarbakır’a Kentsel Dönüüm*.

<sup>338</sup> Mustafa Bakır, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014; Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014; Murat Alökmen, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012.

way. As the planner who prepared the KAİP (Preservation Oriented Development Plan) for the district and the municipal manager responsible for the regeneration projects stated, the DMM objected because such a design would not fit in with the future they had envisioned for Suriçi.<sup>339</sup> As a result, how to design this area has been the subject of a political struggle. The Governor Office's draft was swiftly shelved.

Thereafter, a negotiation process between TOKİ and the municipality began. A number of overlapping factors made it possible for TOKİ and the DMM to cooperate. First of all, legal regulations and legislation governing the functioning of the institution made it compulsory for TOKİ to work together with the local municipality for urban transformation projects. At the onset, the Alipaşa-Lalabey project met the formal requirements with the involvement of the Sur municipality. However, the political legitimacy of this involvement was in dispute insofar as central government officers were in charge of the municipality administration. In the 2009 local elections, support for DTP increased notably and it returned back strongly to administrative positions both in Sur and metropolitan municipalities. After that, a partnership with the DMM became a necessity for TOKİ.<sup>340</sup>

Secondly, unrest the transformation news created and uncertainty over the projects generated clear discomfort among residents of the area. This became evident in public information meetings. Commenting the words of the district mayor, it is possible to say that TOKİ's response to these administrative problems was to allow for the active involvement of local municipalities.<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>339</sup> Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014; Murat Alökmen, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012.

<sup>340</sup> Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

<sup>341</sup> Abdullah Demirbaş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

Third, due to a fear that the process of a desired physical transformation project could spiral out of control, and the belief that without the financial resources of TOKİ the project could not be actualized, the DMM and Sur municipality managers gave priority to work with TOKİ. As one of the senior managers of the DMM stated, “The main reason for working with TOKİ is economical.”<sup>342</sup>

Upon the DMM’s request and initiative, preparations began for a new KAİP (Preservation Oriented Development Plan) and the final protocol registered that TOKİ’s construction policy would be in accordance with this new plan.<sup>343</sup> I will discuss later how this plan functions and what role the issue of preservation has among the various strategies of the actors. But first, it would be useful to have a closer look at how this process was shaped for people living in the project area. In the end, although brought to the table by different actors, both projects led to the start of a transformation project which caused the relocation of the users. In this process, users, most of whom lived in the area as tenants, did not have the right to express their opinions. It was a process of a political struggle/negotiation between the municipality and central government agencies. However, for at least at the stage of selection of the project area, we cannot talk about a political struggle/negotiation at the level of users and the overall urban residents.

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<sup>342</sup> Murat Alökmen, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012.

<sup>343</sup> *Diyarbakır-Alipaşa ve Lalebey Mahallesi Kentsel Yenileme (Gecekondu Dönüşüm) Projesine İlişkin 2 Nolu Ek Protokol*, 14 October 2009.

### Determination of the Rightful Owners

Protocols between institutions regulated the determination of right holders in the transformation areas and the value of land and other structures. Accordingly, commissions formed by the participation of municipalities and TOKİ would determine the property owners, tenants and lands with or without deed titles. Moreover, a private real estate valuation firm bidding for TOKİ would be in charge of determining the values of the properties.

As I mentioned in the previous section, both project areas consist of unlicensed buildings built on private property. They were not built according to any development plans and did not have the necessary construction and occupancy permits. Other than a few exceptions, the lands on which buildings were erected belonged to individuals. The majority of house owners had the title deed of their land. In most cases, parcels were divided and title deeds were shared. There were also households which used a single structure that was physically divided. In determining the right holders, it is difficult to talk about legal ambiguities arising from the complexity of the tenureship structure, which occurred in projects in other cities. In this respect, both projects are outside of the general trend pertaining to urban transformation implementations. Problems arising at the stage of determining right holders did not cause a significant objection insofar as there was not a pattern of squatter housing in the sense of occupying public or private property land.

After determinations by the commissions for the 352 structures which would be demolished in İkale, 643 right holders were deemed eligible. In Alipařa-Lalabey for the 850 structures 1025 right holders were determined.<sup>344</sup>

The protocols offered right holders only two options. The first option allowed the right owners to receive cash money for their land and buildings, an amount determined by the commission. The other option would entitle them to buy an apartment paid for in installments in the housing project TOKİ would build in ölgüzeli. The amount determined for their property would be deducted from the value of the new apartment and they could pay the rest in 180 monthly installments. This is similar to TOKİ's routine practice in the transformation areas. The only difference is that at the request of municipalities and a direct decision by the Prime Ministry Erdoğan, the value of the new housing was reduced by thirty percent after their value had already been announced.<sup>345</sup> It seems that TOKİ managers had thought that such a fiscal compromise would increase their legitimacy in the eyes of residents, and give them a more ample area of maneuver. Although it is difficult to say that most of the tenants and some of the homeowners still residing in the project sites could have benefited from this compromise, it is nevertheless regarded by the TOKİ managers as a sign of goodwill and by the municipal officers as a tactical success.

The municipality was responsible for conducting consultations with the eligible right holders and demolishing the evacuated buildings. As of the writing of the dissertation, the DMM had reached an agreement with approximately sixty percent of the eligible right holders and still continues negotiations with the remaining ones. In

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<sup>344</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *unpublished report*, December 2012.

<sup>345</sup> Mustafa Bakır, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

İçkale, of the total 643 right owners, 231 of them demanded an apartment from the housing zone which would be built. Another 161 right holders preferred receiving a cash payment. In the Alipaşa-Lalabey project, of the total 1025 right holders, 293 of them requested housing whereas 295 chose cash payment.<sup>346</sup> There were other right holders who could not reach an agreement at the point of valuation and sued the project developers. Partly because of such cases, demolitions in the area have remained incomplete and some buildings remain on the demolition area under unfavorable conditions. The demolition process in İçkale is at a more advanced stage than the Alipaşa-Lalabey project. In the past, unfinished agreements and prolongation of demolitions caused disputes among the municipality and the ruling party MPs.<sup>347</sup>

Not all the eligible right holders live in the transformation area. As I mentioned in the previous section, in both transformation areas, tenancy rate remained between 50-60 percent. In other words, more than half of those living in the area were not entitled to rights of ownership. This situation in the project areas caused a series of debates and objections after the final common protocols were signed in 14 October 2009. On the one side, pressure from professional organizations such as the Chamber of Architects and NGOs gathered under the City Council; on the other side pressure from users had a

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<sup>346</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *unpublished report*, December 2012.

<sup>347</sup> In February 2011, a delegation consisting of Diyarbakır Governor Mustafa Toprak, and AKP Diyarbakır deputies Cuma İçten, Galip Ensarioğlu, Mine Lök Beyaz, Süleyman Hamzaoğulları and Oya Eronat visited the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism. The delegation complained that BDP municipalities were slowing down the process and asked the ministry to intervene to accelerate the transformation project. Cuma İçten's remarks were striking: "When the solution process [the negotiation process between the state and the Kurdish political movement] comes to an end, we know that Diyarbakır will be swarmed by people. When they come back, we want people to see a more liveable city. We are eager to open the city to domestic and foreign tourism after finishing particularly the environmental planning of our historical artifacts." See, Konut Haberleri web site, 18 February 2011, *Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı'nda Diyarbakır Sorunları Masaya Yatırıldı*, accessed 6 October 2013, [http://konuthaberleri.com/haber\\_yazdir\\_.php?detayID=31484](http://konuthaberleri.com/haber_yazdir_.php?detayID=31484).

partial effect on the municipality. The municipality then demanded from TOKİ the opportunity for tenants to have home ownership as well.

Accordingly, some apartments in Çölgüzeli devoted to the urban transformation projects were offered to tenants. Once again a thirty percent discount would be applied to the market value of the apartments that would be sold in 180 monthly installments. However, considering the poor living conditions of the tenants, it is not surprising that the proposal did not go beyond a gesture. As of the writing of the dissertation, in the İçkale project only 51 and, in the Alipaşa-Lalabey project only 128 tenants had agreed to this deal. Although the prices of the apartments were relatively affordable, paying installments for fifteen years plus residential fees is almost impossible for these families. Moreover, the fact that Çölgüzeli is at the far side of the city inevitably influenced decisions of people who live by irregular jobs in and around Suriçi or by livestock/agriculture. As a result, municipal authorities stated that tenants who were removed from the area moved mostly to other irregular housing areas around Suriçi such as Fiskaya, Dicle or Ben-u-sen neighborhoods.<sup>348</sup>

### Negotiations on the New Functions

As mentioned above, particularly in the Alipaşa-Lalabey project how to refunction the emptied space has become a subject for negotiation between institutions. Bringing forward security problems, especially on the basis of the sale and use of illegal drugs, the Governorship declared the area as a blighted zone that should be cleared off for

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<sup>348</sup> Murat Alökmen, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012; Necati Bağpir, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

security reasons. In addition, it proposed a large park which would turn the new and clean Suriçi neighborhood into a center of attraction. However, in a short time the Governor's design was discarded, for neither local administrators nor TOKİ officials approved a large area of ten hectares with an attractive location to be used entirely as a park. At this stage, on the one hand, there were TOKİ's financial expectations, and on the other hand, there was the dream of the district and metropolitan municipalities to build structures in suitable for culture-history tourism.

After this first phase, in 2009, TOKİ's project was announced before the common protocols were signed. TOKİ was obligated to obey the Suriçi Preservation Plan of 1990 which was in effect at that time. The plan would allow multi-story buildings although Suriçi was an urban protected area. Accordingly, TOKİ decided to plan a multi-story residential and commercial zone on the land it would gain. However, on the local level this decision sparked reactions from municipal administrators, professional chambers and NGOs. Hence, combined with some users' skepticism about the fate of their properties, a growing opposition came to light in public briefing sessions held in the neighborhood, as stated by the chair of the local branch of the Chamber of Architects.<sup>349</sup> It should be noted that, at that stage, the design TOKİ wanted to implement was not a formally validated project. This uncertainty further increased existing reactions and doubts, and the municipality's reluctance.

After the local elections in March 2009, we observe that the metropolitan municipality got more effectively involved in the process and tried to lead the new design. Rising dissatisfaction at local level made it impossible for TOKİ to move the

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<sup>349</sup> Necati Pirinçioğlu, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, December 2012; Abdullah Demirbaş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

process forward unilaterally which strengthened the hand of the municipality. At this stage, in order to increase its influence over the process, the municipality started preparation works for a new KAİP (which was actually an extensive revision of the previous one), as the 1990 version was considered to be insufficient. A private planning office in Ankara was appointed for planning through an invited tender procedure. The starting point was that the existing KAİP did not display an understanding of preservation suitable to Suriçi's unique conditions. Moreover a new plan would force TOKİ to prepare a design project accordingly. The final protocols signed in October 2009 registered the start of the work for this plan and stated that the new housing structure would be done according to that plan.<sup>350</sup>

It was only at the end of 2012 that the plan was completed and approved. As I mentioned above, the delay which the ruling party perceived as "reluctance" on the part of the municipality was related to this planning process. The finally approved plan necessitates a return to the cadastral pattern of pre-1950 Suriçi, preserving the street and parcel texture of that period and constructions appropriate to this texture.<sup>351</sup> The most direct result of this plan in terms of transformation areas was that TOKİ could not build the four-story buildings it intended.

Moreover, the plan necessitated building structures which would fit the characteristic of the entire region, even in areas that are outside of the traditional housing structure, or areas which were formed after the 1950s. Thus, as the author of the plan underscores, not only was TOKİ prevented from building four-story buildings on the

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<sup>350</sup> *Diyarbakır-Tarihi Sur Koruma Bandı Kentsel Yenileme (Gecekondu Dönüşüm) Projesine İlişkin Protokol*, 14 October 2009. *Diyarbakır-Alipaşa ve Lalebey Mahallesi Kentsel Yenileme (Gecekondu Dönüşüm) Projesine İlişkin 2 Nolu Ek Protokol*, 14 October 2009.

<sup>351</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Diyarbakır Kentsel Sit Koruma Amaçlı İmar Planı Plan Açıklama Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, 2012), p. 33.

lands it would obtain, for each parcel it also had to develop separate architectural designs and build structures fitting the traditional texture.<sup>352</sup> The plan did not oppose building residential and commercial structures together in this area. As stipulated at the outset, erecting tourism-oriented commercial structures such as hotels, cafes or restaurants was allowed. However costs were increasing as the plan necessitated unique designs for each parcel and as the construction area was limited quantitatively.

It was clear that TOKİ faced a situation which was quite different from its routine way of working. However it would not be wrong to say that TOKİ adapted to this situation, risking potential financial damages. TOKİ administrators' own words made it clear that this was an "opportunity for the institution to fix its negative reputation" of developing projects which are executed from top to bottom that did not take into account local specificities. Moreover, again in their own words, they stated that their aim in Diyarbakır was not about making profit, but "giving the city the appearance it deserved," which was the direct request of the Prime Minister.<sup>353</sup>

There are other examples which show that the Prime Minister and the ruling party gave priority to Diyarbakır's urban development. One of the well-known examples is an extensive recreation project entitled "The Tigris Valley Project" which has become the measure of a contest between the DMM and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism. The DMM officials argued that public institutions often demurred the implementation of this project which they designed in the framework of work on the Master Zoning Plan, validated in 2006. In contrast, in his election campaign speeches

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<sup>352</sup> Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

<sup>353</sup> Mustafa Bakır, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

before the July 2011 general elections, the Prime Minister stated many times that his government would execute the project.<sup>354</sup>

This project has not yet been completed, and in April 2013 the Ministry declared this area as a reserved residential area. This decision led news report in the national and local media about the building of a new city with a population of half a million in Diyarbakır.<sup>355</sup> However, we should also take into consideration the view which argues that this move by the government was a technical trick that would increase investments in general by activating the market as well as create resources to develop the Tigris Valley Project.<sup>356</sup>

I will discuss in detail TOKİ's activities in Diyarbakır, the political dynamics behind this adaptation process, and also the meaning of preservation within the urban imaginary of the municipality front. To briefly sum up, the restructuring of Suriçi became possible as a result of partial overlapping of different motivations. For TOKİ, it was compulsory to cooperate with municipalities to enable the progress of their actions which was part of what they define as "a prestige project." In contrast, partly due to objections from local civil society, and partly due to their concern to ensure the integrity of a cultural-historical identity that they dreamed of for the city, municipalities also lead this new functioning of the projects. Doubtlessly, the area would transform from being a slum populated by poor people into a renovated tourism and residence area. While its old residents were being displaced, a process of reconfiguring Suriçi's physical and historical landscape would begin. However, how this would be done was determined

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<sup>354</sup> See, *Anadolu Ajansı*, 21 June 2011.

<sup>355</sup> Among others see, *Radikal*, 11 April 2013; *Star*, 1 July 2013; *Söz*, 26 September 2013.

<sup>356</sup> Mustafa Bakır, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014; Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

after a process of negotiation –which included deployment of technical expertise as well– spread over several years.

### Designation of Risk Areas and Urgent Expropriation Decisions

As I mentioned previously, the level of evictions and demolitions in the two project areas has become a source of tension between, on the one side the ruling party MPs and ministerial agencies, and the municipality on the other. Thus, on November 4, 2012, the Council of Ministers declared a total area of 167 ha land in Suriçi and approximately 9000 buildings as a risk area.<sup>357</sup>

“The Law on the Transformation of Areas under Disaster Risk” which necessitates reconstructing unqualified buildings likely to be affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes and explains how to deal with them had passed on 16 May 2012. The law required buildings at risk to be demolished. It was possible for individual bodies or municipalities to request risk assessment for single buildings. In addition, the law created a category of “risk area” determined directly by the ministry.

Diyarbakır’s Suriçi was included in this category along with several neighborhoods in Beyoğlu, Istanbul and Karabağlar, İzmir. It is understood that the declaration of risk area is based on a report prepared early in the same year by the Diyarbakır Provincial Directorate of Ministry of Environment and Urbanism. When talking about potential risk areas in all of the districts of Diyarbakır, Mehmet Sevmiş, the Provincial Directorate of the time, considered Suriçi “a risk area particularly in terms of security” and stated that “ongoing local transformation projects are not enough.” This

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<sup>357</sup> Republic of Turkey, *T.C. Resmi Gazete*, no. 28457, 4 November 2012.

news indicated that Diyarbakır was one of the three cities prioritized in terms of urban transformation, and that this was regarded by pro-government political circles as “a historic opportunity for Diyarbakır.”<sup>358</sup>

In the following months, the Council of Ministers decided upon an emergency expropriation.<sup>359</sup> In the legal sense, the emergency expropriation decision falls into a rather exceptional category which is different than the already implemented expropriation through the purchasing of private properties. It appears to be the case that, since 2004, the most direct aim of this exceptional method, which increasingly and frequently was applied in urban transformation projects across Turkey, is to expedite the negotiation and agreement process between right holders and institutions in urban transformation areas by the threat of law enforcement.

It is clear that the emergency expropriation decision was a step to accelerate urban renewal process, which caused tension between AKP cadres and municipality managers. However at the stage of the writing of this dissertation, the requirements of this decision had not been put into practice. In project areas, the transfer of land ownership to TOKİ continued to be carried out via the method of expropriation through purchase. However, in both the “urgent expropriation” decision and in the “risk area” announcement for the whole of Suriçi, the central government activated legal instruments as accelerating/facilitating mechanisms. Backed up by the coercive power of the law, this method reveals the increasing trend of centralization when considered together with the continual expansion of legal and administrative powers of government agencies such as TOKİ or the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism. This tendency

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<sup>358</sup> Sözü, 11 March 2012.

<sup>359</sup> Republic of Turkey, *T.C. Resmi Gazete*, no. 28540, 26 January 2013.

towards centralization in which central government agencies constantly restrict the domain of local government institutions is justified on the grounds of disentangling bureaucratic mess and efficiency in delivering service.

In conclusion, the legal and administrative overall appearance of initiatives to restructure Suriçi's two different areas covered by urban transformation projects is as following: The first steps of the İçkale Project were taken in 2007 by the initiative of DMM, and for the Alipaşa-Lalabey Project the first steps were taken by Diyarbakır Governorship. Both projects still continue. They are carried out by the legal collaboration of central and local governmental institutions. Both projects are still at an incomplete state: evictions continue and evicted buildings are being demolished. The recreation areas and archeo-park designed for the İçkale Project is yet to be built. Similarly, the proposed housing and commercial areas to be constructed by TOKİ in accordance with the traditional fabric of areas covered in the Alipaşa-Lalabey Project have not yet been implemented. A significant portion of property owners of unlicensed structures reached agreement with TOKİ and they either preferred cash money or buying an apartment paid for in installments in Çölgüzeli. However, the majority of the residents of the project areas who were tenants living in extensive conditions of poverty mostly moved to other irregular housing areas.

In this entire process, the government passed laws on "risk areas" and "urgent expropriation" due to project stages not moving at the desired speed. In particular, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism has become more powerful in legal and administrative terms and has become an active state institution along with TOKİ. However, in the course of the processes of production of space, the fact that efforts to restructure the whole of Suriçi will enter a new phase following the decision regarding

risk areas is as important as the competition between institutions to increase their influence. There are no concrete initiatives started for the rest of Suriçi at the current moment where implementations have slowed down due to existing urban transformation projects remaining incomplete, and the uncertainty created by the 2014 local elections and political conjuncture.

However, as I said above, all of these developments pinpoint the existence of a strong desire to physically and socially restructure the whole of Suriçi. Moreover, although the motivations and strategies of actors, who share this desire and who are active on urban processes vary to some degree, it is clear that there is a general reconciliation around this wish both on the side of the municipality and the government. The minimum common grounds of this convergence are: lowering the population of Suriçi from 70,000 to 40,000; rehabilitating the physical structure to render it suitable to the historical urban fabric; and lowering the density of residential areas and carrying out a refunctioning of the commercial areas with a focus on tourism.

At this point, it is useful to scrutinize in detail the claim of gradual reconciliation. In the next section, I will offer an analysis of how the spatial conceptions of the government and the Kurdish political movement –which I outlined in Chapter 4– meet in the context of restructuring of Suriçi. Accordingly, I will discuss the economic, political, and cultural dynamics behind the reconfiguring of the historical and cultural landscape Suriçi is said to possess. In this way, I think we can better understand the effects of developments, which I examined above, on the processes of production of space in Diyarbakır in the 2000s.

## Encounters in the Historic Center

In Chapter 4, I argued that recent processes of production of space in Diyarbakır should be read as result of encounters between two competing spatial conceptions that have come to the fore in the 2000s: the state's post-war space and the Kurdish political movement's post-colonial space. These two spatial conceptions and related strategies have developed in line with shifts within the historical course of the Kurdish issue.

According to this approach, we must ask then how one should evaluate the physical and social restructuring of Suriçi in the context of these distinct spatial conceptions. A suitable answer to this question must take into account the patterns that emerge as result of political confrontations between various actors and their spatial strategies.

In view of that, in the following sub-sections I illustrate and empirically analyze three major patterns through which we can explain the motivations, tactics and imaginaries of the local and non-local actors involved in the urban transformation projects in Suriçi: i) adoption of a tourism-oriented urban regeneration model as part of a local economic development approach; ii) redefinition of scalar hierarchies as result of struggles for political authority; iii) and reconfiguration of cultural and historical items within the contested field of urban imaginaries. These patterns, taken together, indicate different layers of the hegemonic struggle between the AKP and the Kurdish political movement.

## Tourism: Common Terrain

Current urban transformation projects and further plans for the regeneration of Suriçi should be associated with a tourism-centered perspective that treats Diyarbakır as an attractive locality with the aim of overcoming its grave economic and social problems. This is a shared perspective that goes beyond the simplistic distinction of central and local governmental bodies. In accordance with this perspective, the significant institutional actors that have differing powers to influence urban processes and governance –e.g. governorship office, municipal authorities, regional development agency, local business organizations and TOKİ– have reconciled, in the course of time, on reconstructing Diyarbakır as a “center of attraction” — a term with continuously changing content and meaning. In that sense I consider the İçkale and Alipaşa-Lalabey urban transformation projects as a further and more integrated stage towards the reconstructing of the historic city within the framework of this shared response to Diyarbakır’s acute question of “underdevelopment.” At this point I deliberately prefer the notion of reconstruction, since it implies both an act of physical building and that of symbolic reconfiguration.

Clearly, reasons behind this common favor for tourism-centered economic growth approach are related to local and regional economic conditions. Indeed, contemporary Diyarbakır has been characterized, in economic terms, by a deep-rooted lack of investment and limited productive capacity.<sup>360</sup> During the Republican era, governmental initiatives have not produced a solid economic environment for absorbing the influx of the rural population to the city. At present, Diyarbakır’s economic structure

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<sup>360</sup> See, Chapter 3.

is largely limited to a housing construction sector,<sup>361</sup> a domestic market for basic goods such as food products, and the exportation of marble and building materials to Middle Eastern countries (particularly to the Kurdistan Regional Government) and, to a lesser extent, Chinese markets.<sup>362</sup>

Against the background of limited productive capital, unsuitable conditions for private entrepreneurialism and low levels of employment, tourism-oriented restructuring has *progressively* been adopted as a favorable remedy by municipality administrators, central state institutions and local business circles. The main pillar of this approach is to reconfigure the historical and cultural landscape of the city to make it a favorable lieu for entrepreneurs and a more qualified labor force. As I elaborate in the following subsection, the reconfiguration itself is politically-contested, thus contingent in nature, yet we still observe common expectations. Mehmet Aslan, the former secretary general of the Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DTSO), states overtly that history is a valuable asset that would attract capital and qualified labor force that have left the city due to the unfavorable conditions of the war years:

In this process Diyarbakır has lost two things: First, its educated population; second, its capital, that is, its qualified money. Ali İhsan Kaya, for instance, bought Boğaziçi Electricity in partnership with İş Bankası. Tatlıcı family is from Diyarbakır as well. Likewise, the Özdemir family that undertook the construction of the Sabiha Gökçen Airport is from Diyarbakır. Karamehmet is from Çermik. Diyarbakır is at the top of both outmigration and immigration charts. It has lost its qualified inhabitants, but at the same time it has been the destination for rural migration. In sum, its metropolitan characteristics have been fading away. There is no specialization, no organization and no cooperation. [...] We want Diyarbakır's urban and historical fabric to be preserved. Because it is the city's historical fabric on which Diyarbakır will develop. History

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<sup>361</sup> See, Chapter 6.

<sup>362</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *TRC2 Bölgesi 2014-2023 Bölge Planı Mevcut Durum Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2013), pp. 120-5.

might be our main concept. There are ruins in İçkale from 7000 BC. Tens of different civilizations have been here. Such richness and diversity, but none of it is visible. Even some friends of mine from other cities still do not know Diyarbakır is an ancient city.<sup>363</sup>

However, the common points in the general orientation should not be exaggerated and taken as fixed. Rather, the institutional, political and cultural aspects of this shared perspective have evolved in time. In fact, it would be more precise to state that a reconciliation based on the tourism-centered growth approach has been maintained only after particularistic and ambiguous intentions of the relevant actors evolved into more systematic plans and mechanisms. In that sense, we should talk of a gradual convergence of strategies, which consist of overlapping aims and differing paths and tools, instead of a single full-fledged strategy designed and developed in collaboration from the very beginning.

During the first term of the pro-Kurdish party (HADEP then), under the mayorship of Feridun Çelik, one of the DMM's principal political aims was to gain ground before the central state institutions' hostile stance. After the capture of Abdullah Öcalan, the PKK declared an armistice and suffered severe internal splits. Within the relatively serene political environment following the abolishment of the OHAL in Diyarbakır in 2002, there appeared a limited area of maneuver for municipal cadres; yet they still faced political and institutional hindrances.

In this context the municipality embarked upon infrastructural projects for the city's extremely poor wastewater and sewerage systems, but faced bureaucratic deterrents in finding financial resources. The municipality had a serious budget deficit due to deep-rooted resource problems and financial mismanagement inherited from the

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<sup>363</sup> Mehmet Aslan, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

previous administration.<sup>364</sup> Moreover, it could not obtain credit from the Bank of Provinces (*İller Bankası*), a public institution principally responsible for providing local governments with financial resources, and applied for grants and soft loans from a German state-owned development bank.

The first particularistic attempts to highlight the city's cultural and historical assets came to agenda under these unfavorable political and economic circumstances. Two distinct projects deserve to be mentioned here. First, in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and ÇEKÜL (a prominent, Istanbul-based NGO specializing in cultural and environmental preservation) the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality came into a restoration program for the registered administrative edifices in the İçkale area in 2000. Considering that the buildings in İçkale had been used by state institutions such as the gendarmerie, the Ministry of Justice and the quasi-official intelligence service of the gendarmerie (JİTEM), this was a groundbreaking step in the local political milieu. Second, in the period 2002-3, the DMM took a more radical initiative to remove nearly five hundred unlicensed commercial units (restaurants, tea houses, kiosks and parking lots) located around the walls on the eastern wing of the city, from Dağkapı to Mardinkapı. Although thousands of people were working in this area, which mostly consisted of jerry-built facilities, the Feridun Çelik administration managed to implement such a non-populist project in the name of physical upgrading and preservation of cultural and historical assets.<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>364</sup> For instance, because of the weakly planned road improvement and development works undertaken during the period 1994-1999, the Çelik administration had to pay out compensation to residents who sued the DMM. Abdullah Sevinç, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

<sup>365</sup> In the last sub-section of this chapter I present a detailed discussion on the significance of historical preservationism in the context of struggles over the urban imaginaries.

However, these particularistic attempts did not evolve into a more comprehensive program until 2006. Furthermore, in contrast to the latter period, the local branches of central state institutions did not engage in proactive initiatives to highlight place-based assets, apart from the involvement of the Ministry of Culture in the İkale rehabilitation project, which was basically developed by EKÜL.

The DMM embarked upon a comprehensive planning study in the very beginning of the pro-Kurdish party’s second term, partly because of the obligations defined by the new Metropolitan Municipality Law (Law No. 5216). Between 2004 and 2006, a group of city planners under the supervision of Tarık Őengöl was commissioned to revise the 1985 city plan (this plan had already been revised in 1994),<sup>366</sup> which had become totally insufficient in catering for unexpected population increases, and produced multi-scale plans that have been effectuated to a greater extent until today.<sup>367</sup> Among other things, the new master plan also included further steps in the DMM’s efforts to increase the city’s attractiveness.

In accordance with the plan’s recommendations, a vast recreation project, named the Tigris Valley Project, which aimed at turning a land strip along the western and eastern banks of the Tigris River into an area with recreational facilities, appeared on the agenda in 2006. Under the official collaboration of the DMM, the Governorship and Dicle University, an architectural design competition was carried out in 2007. The chosen project, highlighting the ecologically valuable characteristics of the area and suggesting “sports facilities as a regional development strategy,” envisaged the

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<sup>366</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Diyarbakır Nazım İmar Planı Plan Açıklama Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, 2006), p. 2.

<sup>367</sup> See, Chapter 6.

construction of water regulators, artificial puddles, water sport courses, promenades, botanic parks and artificial beaches in the project area.<sup>368</sup>

This project has not been implemented yet, due to bureaucratic hindrances of the public institutions –for instance the Public Waterworks Administration (DSİ) among others– which were expected to become involved in the project by undertaking infrastructural works.<sup>369</sup> Nevertheless, it might be considered as a turning point after which more comprehensive works highlighting cultural and historical value of the city walls and the Suriçi area were carried out by the DMM.

Between 2006 and 2008, the DMM started three projects for renovating and rehabilitating street landscape and building façades along the major axes of the Suriçi area. Dağkapı Square, Melik Ahmet Street, Gazi Street and Yenikapı Street were redesigned as part of these projects that aimed at “revitalizing the cultural and historical street texture and creating a potential for tourism.”<sup>370</sup> These projects indicate a decisive moment whereby the DMM began to develop a strategic and more structured approach on tourism. Henceforth tourism has been seen as a privileged area of the DMM’s investment policies.<sup>371</sup> This approach prioritizes the preservation of the historical edifices. Accordingly, spectacular restoration projects appeared on the agenda for buildings that have particular significance in terms of the city’s historical and cultural

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<sup>368</sup> Duygu Canan Öztürk, “Socio-Spatial Practices of the Pro-Kurdish Municipalities: The Case of Diyarbakır” (MSc thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2013), p. 103.

<sup>369</sup> This is still a matter of controversy between the municipality and central state institutions, chiefly the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, because, as I noted in the previous section, the latter produced an alternative project to develop almost the identical area, in response to the Prime Minister’s direct request before the 2011 general elections.

<sup>370</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Bölgesel Kalkınma*, no. 2 (March 2012), p. 15.

<sup>371</sup> See, Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Stratejik Plan 2006-2009* (Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, 2006), p. 45. The strategic plan suggests focusing on Diyarbakır’s potential in the context of the tourism sector, in order to turn it into dynamic center of attraction of the region and generate employment opportunities.

landscape — such as the Surp Giragos Church, a prominent Armenian church, and the Cemilpaşa Mansion, the abandoned residence of the Cemilpaşazade family that has an important place within Kurdish national history.<sup>372</sup>

On the other hand, we must think of the DMM's local capital accumulation strategy in relation to the state's changing development policies. The state, in response to shifts in development strategies of international organizations such as the World Bank in the 1980s, gradually changed its developmental approach, discourse and policies. Starting from the late 1980s, but culminating in the 2000s, state-centered, comprehensive "social development" planning has been progressively replaced by a market-oriented strategy that emphasizes "social capital" under the guise of "sustainable human development."

As discussed in Chapter 4, what this meant for the Kurdish region has been, first of all, the redefinition of the Southeastern Anatolian Project in accordance with a novel model that foresees "increasing cooperation between the state, the private sector, and non-governmental organizations."<sup>373</sup> However, the further institutionalization of this novel perspective has only been realized after 2005. As underlined extensively in the relevant literature, the shift has not been unidirectional and uncontested.<sup>374</sup> Only after internal conflicts among different sections of the private sector were resolved could the Development Agencies Law (Law No. 5449) be enacted in January, 2006. Afterwards,

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<sup>372</sup> The economic rationale behind tourism policies should not be treated as if tourism-oriented projects are symbol-free. On the contrary, economic motivations and dynamics are always mediated through politico-symbolic elements that are embedded in actors' cultural and historical imaginaries. Yet, this mediation does not cancel out, but complicates the tourism-related orientation of the current administration. I analyze this aspect of spatial interventions in the final sub-section.

<sup>373</sup> Nilay Özok-Gündoğan, "'Social Development' as a Governmental Strategy in the Southeastern Anatolia Project," p. 107.

<sup>374</sup> İbrahim Gündoğdu, "Sermayenin Bölgesel Kalkınma Eğilim(ler)i," pp. 267-302.

twenty six regional development agencies were set up, one of which was the Karacadağ Development Agency, the agency with authority over Diyarbakır and Şanlıurfa.

Regarding tourism investments, the first initiatives suggested by the Development Agency and coordinated by the Governorship were weak and ineffective. The principal aim was to increase Diyarbakır's local competitiveness, a common theme in regional development discourse; yet what the state institutions focused on was limited to small-scale training programs and publicity activities which did not produce effective results.

On the other hand, the political atmosphere grew thicker once again in March, 2006. Following highly tense street clashes in Diyarbakır, the weak institutional collaboration between the municipalities and the governorship office almost came to a halt. The original and formal claim of regional agencies, that is bottom-up coordination of local investment decisions among state institutions, private investors and civil society organizations, was deprived of practicality.

However, after 2008 the state of affairs started to change in the context of tourism policies. That year Diyarbakır was proclaimed a “center of attraction” as part of the Support Program for Centers of Attraction. This was a pilot project started by the State Planning Organization in accordance with the ninth Development Plan (2007-13) and the GAP Action Plan (2008-12).<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>375</sup> The principal aim of the program, which was extended to Erzurum, Şanlıurfa and Van in 2010, was to give impetus to economic growth of the chosen cities by making them attractive centers for their surrounding localities, and thus channel migratory flows from the neighboring localities to the chosen cities instead of western provinces. The Program defined financial supports to increase the localities' competitiveness by investing in areas whereby comparative advantages are present. These were not necessarily tourism-related investments, but in practice tourism was a privileged sector.

Hereafter, we see that much more effective financial and organizational resources have been maintained by governmental institutions. In 2010, the Governorship took initiative to establish the Diyarbakır Tourism Platform, bringing together governmental institutions, municipalities, relevant NGO's, business organizations and tourism-related private firms to coordinate investments and prepare an action plan. Accordingly, a tourism-specific strategic plan was prepared by the Karacadağ Development Agency.<sup>376</sup> Following the plan, inclusive restoration programs –such as the restoration of Ulu Camii, Dört Ayaklı Minare, prominent inns, four towers on the city walls, and historic mansions in Suriçi– were undertaken by the Ministry of Culture, under the coordination of the Governorship.

After that point, it is possible to argue that gradual reconciliation among the municipality, the state and the private sector has been maintained. The central and local governmental actors, along with the representatives of business circles, reconciled upon a tourism-centered local accumulation strategy, and strived to reconstruct Diyarbakır's historical and cultural landscape, in order to turn them into assets that would help attracting capital and qualified labor force back to the city. Celalettin Birtane, one of the important figures of Diyarbakır's construction sector, who has also a seat in the recently elected board of the DTSO, emphasizes this common goal, indicating the link between this general aim and the course of the peace negotiations between the government and the Kurdish political movement:

If this process [peace negotiations] does not befall an accident, if it goes on in fair terms, the second most secure location in Turkey would be Diyarbakır. Capital both from the west [of Turkey] and the south

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<sup>376</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Diyarbakır Turizm Stratejisi ve Eylem Planı: 2011-2016*, (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2010).

[Southern Kurdistan] would come here. Tourism would be the source of economic vitality. And of course, demand for housing would increase. Capital would undertake direct investments here, partly in the tourism sector, and partly in the housing sector. Capital from Georgia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq and Syria would come here.<sup>377</sup>

In subsequent efforts to highlight the city walls –in addition to reconstructing “local pride”<sup>378</sup> on remnants of the glorious past, as discussed in the last sub-section– we see a further stage of this reconciliation on branding Diyarbakır as a unique historical landscape. The DMM’s wide-reaching and influential campaign, which aims to add the city walls to UNESCO’s World Heritage List, represents a decisive moment in the context of this common tourism-centered approach. The first steps regarding the candidacy process had already been taken, and the DMM had effectively contributed to the establishment of a new administrative unit in March, 2011 — the area management, a special unit responsible for determining preservation boundaries, preparing a five-year action plan for the restoration of the walls, and overseeing the pre-candidacy process. On January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2012, the mayor Osman Baydemir visited President Abdullah Gül at his office to present a list of twentyone demands regarding the city walls. The main point was to gain Gül’s effective support for the declaration of a three-year action plan for the restoration of the walls.<sup>379</sup> A few days later, Gül once again declared that the Diyarbakır’s walls would be under his aegis, and called for an extensive meeting with municipal authorities to supervise procedural details. One year ago, when President Gül visited Diyarbakır and declared his special interest in the restoration of the city walls, Abdullah Sevinç, the secretary general of the municipality overtly expressed their expectations:

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<sup>377</sup> Celalettin Birtane, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

<sup>378</sup> Gambetti, “Decolonizing Diyarbakır,” p. 109.

<sup>379</sup> *Sabah*, 4 January 2012.

If we fulfill our duties completely and manage to put Diyarbakır's walls into the culture heritage list, this would be a huge step in making the city to a center for trade, tourism and congress. The İçkale area which is located adjacent to the walls will be an archeology museum. It might be a site that millions of people visit, like the Louvre Museum in France. This would be a huge contribution to the city's economy. What we expect from Mr. President is to restore and regain our historical and cultural heritage and submit them to the service of the world.<sup>380</sup>

With the impetus of this development, an international symposium on the walls was organized on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Then the DMM, the Local Agenda 21 City Council, the Diyarbakır Industry and Business Association (DİSİAD) and the Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DTSO) started a petition campaign for the year 2013 to be declared the Year of Diyarbakır City Walls. Until the final application to the World Heritage Committee in February, 2014, local and central governmental bodies moved forward in formal collaboration. Although a recent decision of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism declaring the Tigris Valley as a reserved residential zone, a decision which endangers the candidacy process due to the possible degeneration of the wall's environs and thus creating strong disquiet among the municipalities and local NGOs,<sup>381</sup> this formal collaboration relating to branding the city walls has continued to a larger extent. Governor Mustafa Toprak's words on the restoration program resonate with this main idea:

Diyarbakır is one of the rising stars in the tourism sector. İçkale is an asset that would make Diyarbakır a brand. All we have to do recognize its value, look after it, and explain it to others. İçkale itself is the center of our country's unity. Nearly thirty civilizations have been here; and today we are restoring those civilizations' values. Human and cultural values

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<sup>380</sup> See, Emlak Kulisi web site, 29 January 2011, *UNESCO'nun Listesindeki Diyarbakır Surları Ahır Olarak Kullanılıyor*, accessed 6 October 2013, <http://emlakkulisi.com/unescoun-listesindeki-Diyarbakir-surlari-ahir-olarak-kullaniliyor/61708>.

<sup>381</sup> Söz, 26 September 2013.

converge here. İçkale is a center of cultures and beliefs. [...] What makes this place different is the coexistence of our values of faith and culture.<sup>382</sup>

As this brief chronology of initiatives and events indicate, the İçkale and Alipaşa-Lalabey urban transformation projects came to the fore in the context of a shared perspective which has become more pronounced in time. Both local and central governmental institutions took steps to highlight the locality-related features of Diyarbakır, since they have progressively led to the conclusion that tourism might be a suitable way to overcome its economic and social deficiencies.

In that framework, even though discursive elements and politico-symbolic configurations vary, spatial strategies of different actors have been articulated to reconstruct Suriçi in accordance with Diyarbakır's version of "branding the city." However, convergence in the general aim, that is presence of a common economic projection for creating out of Diyarbakır a center of attraction that appeals to capital and an educated labor force, does not mean that complete rapprochement, in terms of paths and tools, exists between the central and local governmental bodies. Contrarily, differing paths and tools employed by the actors indicate a more complex structure of encounters between the spatial conceptions of the state and the Kurdish political movement. Below, I focus on the redefinition of scalar hierarchies to further understand these encounters.

### Struggles over Authority

That the urban transformation projects in Suriçi are being implemented in accordance with a tourism-centered economic growth approach does not mean that an absolute

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<sup>382</sup> *Anadolu Ajansı*, 21 February 2012.

accord is present between central state institutions and pro-Kurdish municipal administrations. In other words, stating that the plans and projects for restructuring Suriçi take their economic motivation from a future attractive business environment that tourism investments would bring is simplistic, if we do not take into account the political power struggles between institutional actors.

My argument, at this point, is that the regeneration of Suriçi is a field of struggle between the government and the legal components of the Kurdish political movement to expand their respective spheres of authority. Accordingly, two main dynamics confront each other: On the one hand, the AKP government strives to promote the “benevolent” face of the state by undertaking spatial interventions, which cannot be merely assessed in terms of short-term economic expectations, in order to reinstitute the state’s political authority in the region in a more effective manner. To do so it expands the administrative and legal capacities of the local organizations of central state institutions — the Mass Housing Agency (TOKİ) being the foremost in the case of Suriçi. On the other hand, the municipalities endeavor to institutionalize their popular political power and to strengthen their control on local government mechanisms by establishing inter-scalar links with prominent NGO’s, national and international experts, educational institutions and international governance bodies. The immediate consequence of confrontation between these broader political strategies is the redefinition of a hierarchy of scales.<sup>383</sup> In this framework, the articulations and conflicts that have emerged out of the confrontation between these dynamics can be analyzed by focusing on the reconstruction of Suriçi.

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<sup>383</sup> Chapter 4 discusses in detail how the question of localization of the state’s administrative powers is conceived within the AKP’s hegemony project (deconcentration) and the Kurdish political movement’s counter-hegemony project (decentralization).

As discussed in the previous section of this chapter, the course of the implementation of urban transformation projects has changed in time due to the political and technical maneuvers of the municipalities. On that score, one of the most important factors has been the preparation of the 2012 Preservation Plan after the request and initiative of the Metropolitan Municipality. Zoning and building ordinances the plan brought led TOKİ to reconsider its redevelopment projects.

Since the evictions have not come to an end and constructions in the Alipaşa-Lalabey neighborhoods have not started yet, we cannot be perfectly sure at the present time if TOKİ will redevelop the evicted areas in accordance to the plan. Yet, given the vulnerable political legitimacy of TOKİ in the eyes of local residents and administrators and its broader perspective that I discuss below, it is reasonable to expect that the current consensus of the relevant institutions on the plan will continue, and TOKİ will build one- or two-story residential and commercial units with courtyards, instead of four-story detached apartments as envisaged in the previous stages of the project. If this assumption holds true, it is equally reasonable to suggest that TOKİ risks suffering short-term economic losses, since the possible profits to be gained from the project will most likely not recover the extra expenses such as undertaking individual architectural designs for each unit. At this point, it is telling that one of the top directors of TOKİ refers to the institution's prestige and indicates its adaptive capacity:

These are “image projects” for us. They will have good results at home and abroad. It is not economically reasonable, of course. Perhaps, we will make a loss at first. Yet, we put an extra emphasis on this project. It is not about making profit. Reaching break-even point is more than enough for us. Our priority here is sociological. We want to excel ourselves. I think this project is very important for rehabilitating the whole Suriçi area. But

in the end, it will serve the whole of the city, and the country, particularly in the field of tourism.<sup>384</sup>

What these words imply by the notion of prestige is consistent with the government's broader perspective to increase and reinforce its political hegemony within the Kurdish population by replacing the repressive face of the state with its "benevolent" face. For sure, this is not saying that the state is being stripped of its authoritarian character and coercive features in the region. On the contrary, this historical shift in using public financial and organizational resources might be better understood as strengthening the regime's authoritarian character with the help of hegemonic injections (authoritarian resolution of the Kurdish issue, as I named it in Chapter 4).

In this context, the involvement of TOKİ and other central state institutions in upgrading the physical structure of the Suriçi area might be evaluated in terms of the attempts to redefine the state's presence in a more hegemonic fashion in the Kurdish region, rather than those of short-term economic gains. Unlike the regular implementations of TOKİ's urban transformation projects in other cities, profits to be gained from transfer of the land property to the private sector seems secondary in Suriçi. However, this does not cancel out the fact that in the long run the projects are expected to serve to constitute an "efficient" real estate market in the area. On the contrary, one of the main aims of TOKİ in the long run is to create plausible conditions in which a fully-capitalist market for land and buildings will operate. The above quoted director expresses this further aim:

In this area title deeds have a long standing. But fathers and grandfathers have passed away. Grandchildren are living in other cities. For this reason they are not using these houses; they are not taking care of their buildings.

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<sup>384</sup> Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

They have tenants, but they cannot get proper rents. The proportion of tenants is above fifty percent in this area. People want to get rid of these houses. They do not take an interest whether these buildings are registered historical edifices or not. Even though they have memories about them, they do not care deeply about them. Nobody is buying-selling real estate here, since there is no market for it. Maybe only in the northern, commercial part of Suriçi. In the rest of the area, there is no market, no buying-selling, but only tenants. And you cannot be sure if you can get your rent from them.<sup>385</sup>

What we witness here is that TOKİ in Suriçi is putting short-term benefits behind to reach two long-term achievements: constituting a fully-capitalist real estate market while consolidating the government's political authority. In this context, TOKİ's role cannot be understood with an instrumentalist perspective that reduces the state's role to an intermediary mechanism that merely facilitates the transferring of land rents to the private sector. The reality is much more complex, since the political and economic motivations of the institutions are interwoven. This is the reason why the central state institutions, the Governorship above all, have worked in Diyarbakır after 1999 as if they are municipal bodies. They have been positioned as rival institutions against the DMM, and operated as the government's local representatives that have undertaken public works that are normally expected from municipalities. Consequently, out of the tense relation between the state institutions and the municipalities, the Kurdish political movement has nuanced its demands to redefine the boundaries of the political authority. Words of the DMM's secretary general reveal the main axes of this political conflict:

I think that BDP municipalities have been very successful in the field of social policy. However, there is a conflict between local institutions of the central state and the municipalities' social policies. The foremost responsibility of the municipalities is to be the local umbrella organization. The central state should not have any social organizations in the localities. Local units of the Ministry of Family and Social Policies

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<sup>385</sup> Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

must be handed over to municipalities, in terms of their budgets, spatial facilities and cadres. The same holds true for cultural policies and institutions as well. In Turkey, municipalities have been defined as local institutional bodies of the central government. They have not been provided with political authority. [...] The European Charter of Local Self-Government is about transferring authority from central to local. Yet, this is not enough. I approach the subject through the lens of the Kurdish issue. This is not only about administrative responsibilities, but also about political responsibilities.<sup>386</sup>

As is very clear from this interviewee's comments, the redefinition of political authority on the local scale and establishment of "an alternative Kurdish governmental presence"<sup>387</sup> have an important place in the Kurdish political movement's post-1999 orientation built upon the democratic autonomy thesis.

The urban transformation projects in Suriçi cannot be grasped without considering this broader political strategy. In that respect the DMM's efforts to constitute alternative links on national and international scales are necessary tactics for expanding the political legitimacy of the movement and institutionalizing its effective, alternative governmental mechanisms. The collaborations with national and international experts, NGOs, educational institutions and governance bodies have served to open up an area of maneuver against increasingly centralizing state institutions. Preparation of the Preservation Plan, the urbanism workshops and field works carried out in collaboration with the Berlage Institute from Holland in 2010 and 2011 and with Les Ateliers from France in October 2011, and most importantly the candidacy process for the UNESCO's World Heritage List might be regarded as various tools of this tactic. Deployment of the Preservation Plan by the DMM in particular and its approach towards

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<sup>386</sup> Fahrettin Çağdaş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

<sup>387</sup> Nicole F. Watts, *Activists in Office: Kurdish Politics and Protest in Turkey* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2010), p. 142.

the issue of cultural and historical preservation in general are particularly telling regarding our discussion on the regeneration of Suriçi.

Why then has the DMM taken an openly preservationist stance, if it is aspiring for reconstructing Suriçi as an attractive center for private investors as part of a capital accumulation strategy, whereby the immediate demand of both TOKİ and majority of the property owners in Suriçi is denser construction permits? How has the DMM managed to create consent for a more preservationist stance?

My argument is that answers of these questions are strictly linked to the Kurdish political movement's immediate political necessities on the one hand, and broader searches for alternative economic models by some components of the movement on the other. The first aspect of the question is rather evident. The orientation of the DMM stems from the necessity for opening up an area of maneuver before TOKİ's incomparable legal and administrative authority in the first hand. The Preservation Plan has been used to circumscribe TOKİ's institutional capacity in order not to lose control over urban processes. In the end this initiative has worked through, and the DMM has expanded its influence on the processes of production of space in Suriçi. However, the second aspect of the question is more intriguing. The deeper roots of the DMM's preservationist stance lie in intra-class relations on the local level.

As would be expected, the ordinances of the 2012 Preservation Plan, which foresees the reconstruction of the whole Suriçi area in accordance with the 1950s cadastral structure and building fabric, caused discontent among individual property owners in Suriçi, especially those owning flats in multi-story apartments built in the 1990s and afterwards. Their expectation was to maintain, at least, existing construction density in the area. However, the DMM took the hard path and risked tempting the

political displeasure of the property owners which would create a serious political burden for any municipality. The director of the planning bureau that prepared the plan touches upon this point, and states that this general hindrance has been overcome relatively straightforwardly in Diyarbakır:

For sure, the municipality was under pressure. Since the previous plan envisaged constructing four- to six-story buildings, some circles with such expectations put pressure on the municipality. But the municipal administration did not echo these expectations to us so much. This is not an easy ride. If it was another municipality, the plan would not pass. [...] They could overcome them relatively more easily. If we were in the Aegean region or somewhere else, the mayor would buckle under the council's pressure. The preservationist stance has prevailed here. In the latter stages of this project Diyarbakır will acquire more; first of all, there will be more tourists. Even after the restoration of two inns, we saw this happen. Even those who had never set foot in Suriçi are having breakfast in Hasanpaşa inn now. Tradesmen over there are seeing this as well, for this reason there is a demand from them.<sup>388</sup>

As is very clear from this quotation, the possible returns of an expanded tourism sector have been very influential in maintaining consensus on such a preservationist position. At this point, the projection for strong and persistent local capital accumulation has overbalanced the short-term land rent expectations of the property owners.

The DMM has invested its political will in a perspective that envisages creating possibilities for local private firms that are expected to act in collaboration. If Diyarbakır manages to become an attractive locality with its reconstructed historical and cultural landscapes, this perspective assumes, then local entrepreneurs would have the chance to increase their investments and the capital that has fled from the city in previous decades would return. In order for this model to work, local capital circles are expected to act in coordination and cooperation with each other. Feridun Çelik, the former mayor of the

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<sup>388</sup> Necati Uyar, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

Metropolitan Municipality and one of the members of the Democratic Society Congress (DTK) put, the primary aim of this in-making model is to create an effective cooperation:

There is no business culture here. Individualistic inclinations prevail. Our main goal is to bring them together, and then to accomplish larger enterprises and increase employment level in the city. It is not that we do not have any capital accumulated in Diyarbakır; we have some serious money especially in the form of land rent. Our efforts did not prove useful back in the early 2000s. But now if this Blue List [the list supported by the DTK in the DTSO elections held in June 2013] succeeds... Sometimes they tell me about some people who have hundreds of million dollars in bank accounts. If we gather them together, then they invest and create employment possibilities.<sup>389</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 4, this model is still in the making, and thus does not comprise of specified plans but general inclinations. Yet, it might be argued, under the guidance of the DTK, important steps were taken to give a more articulated form to this model. For instance, the DTK has organized workshops and symposia since May 2012 to elaborate the economic aspect of the democratic autonomy model. In a similar vein, during the last elections for the DTSO in June 2013, the DTK declared its open support for one of the three lists. This was the first time that the Kurdish political movement has expressed its presence so overtly in the field of local business circles, and in that matter this moment symbolizes its increased engagement. In this regard, we can assess the DMM's preservationist stance as an element of a long-term orientation to constitute a solid economic base by creating a plausible environment for private sector investments.

In this sub-section I focused on the political aspect of the restructuring of Suriçi, and argued that although we observe an indistinct reconciliation among central state institutions and municipalities to reconstruct the historical and cultural landscape of the

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<sup>389</sup> Feridun Çelik, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

city in accordance with a tourism-centered economic approach, this reconciliation in the general aim does not necessarily undo deeper power struggles that are at work. As a matter of fact, how and with what tools the upgrading of Suriçi will be undertaken is bound to the dynamics of struggles to redefine the contours of political authority in the region.

On that score, a dialectic of two dynamics configures the course of the urban transformation projects: on the one hand, the AKP government strives to reinstitute the state's political authority in the region by expanding the administrative and legal capacities of local branches and organizations of central state institutions; on the other hand, the Kurdish political movement fights to expand the boundaries of its alternative governmental presence by using the institutional capacity of the municipalities it holds. The confrontation of these dynamics that I discussed in Chapter 4 as two different conceptions of localization of central state powers (deconcentration versus decentralization) has led to a redefinition of scalar hierarchies.

Thus, the restructuring of Suriçi becomes a matter of complex interplay among conflicting interests that operate on local, national and regional scales. However, such complexity is not peculiar to the politics of scales. A similar moment of confrontation might be traced in the field of urban imaginaries as well. The last sub-section concerns this dimension of the production of space in Suriçi.

### Reimagining the Place

Since the regeneration of Suriçi in physical and social terms is strictly linked to the reconfiguration of its cultural and historical landscape, as stated in the previous sub-

sections, any account of spatial interventions in the area must include struggles over urban imaginaries. The latter is not limited to pure ideational confrontations among political and institutional actors, but also constitutes a primary site where different layers of competing hegemony projects articulate with each other.

As discussed in Chapter 4, during the post-1999 years both the state and the Kurdish political movement have undertaken substantial strategic shifts in their struggles vis-à-vis each other, and have developed alternative hegemonic projects which consist of distinct spatial conceptions and strategies (post-war space vs. post-colonial space).

Accordingly, one of the main pillars of this hegemony struggle stands upon the question of which historical and cultural items would define Kurdishness as a collective identity, and hence determine the character of the relation between the Kurds and the Turkish state. In other words, which political and cultural elements drawn from the past would define Kurdish ethnic identity is not given, but subjected to a continuous political struggle. The disintegration of hegemonic power of the traditional position regarding the Kurdish issue, which is basically composed of the total repudiation of the Kurds as a distinct ethnic group and of their collective demands, has crystallized the terms of this political struggle, and paved the way for a reshuffling in the strategic orientations of the ruling AKP and the Kurdish political movement.

Hereafter the Kurdish political movement's demands have not been limited to the recognition of the Kurdish identity, but also comprised of legitimization and institutionalization of their collective rights. For sure, the terms of this legitimization is an issue of dissension between the AKP/state and the various sectors of the Kurdish political movement. While the former has approached the Kurdish issue with a political program (it might be described as an authoritarian resolution of the Kurdish issue) that

conceives collective rights as limited to minimal cultural rights, the problem of localization within the framework of the deconcentration of administrative authorities and the bond between the Kurds and other groups as a matter of religious fraternity, the latter has developed a counter-project (democratic resolution of the Kurdish issue) that consists of collective political rights, decentralization of administrative authorities and identification of the Kurds as a constituent power of the Republic.

In the context of production of space in Diyarbakır, the (re)appropriation of cityscape through the reconfiguration of its historical and cultural landscape is a primary site of encounter between these hegemony projects. On that score, particular spatial interventions in Suriçi might be read as both manifestations and tools of the struggle to (re)appropriate the cityscape. Such interventions into the built environment bear traces of particular historical and cultural imaginaries. Therefore, two questions should be raised at this point: What are the claims in, and components of, this struggle over urban imaginaries? And secondly, how can one assess the relationship between these imaginary claims and the tourism-centered regeneration of Suriçi?

As for the first question, my argument is that two distinct claims for authenticity have come up against each other in the vacuum that Kemalist Republicanism left behind in the 2000s. The Kurdish political movement's imagination of Diyarbakır as "the capital of Kurdish identity"<sup>390</sup> has gradually become a matter of policy as pro-Kurdish municipalities have increased their institutional power and political legitimacy. On the other hand, these efforts of the movement have not gone unanswered, and paved the way for a reactive and relatively futile counter-narrative. In the absence of the Kemalist spatial conception that had imagined and ordered the city of Diyarbakır as a marginal

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<sup>390</sup> Zeynep Gambetti, "Decolonizing Diyarbakır," p. 99.

and provincial town of the nation-state, a pro-Islamic conception, based on a narrative of the glorious Islamic past, has emerged to oppose the Kurdish movement's post-colonial space. This alternative imagination, which conceives Diyarbakır as "the city of Sahabah," has been championed by various Islamic circles and promoted occasionally by central state institutions, especially after the mid-2000s.

The integration of the Kurdish territory to the nation-state, which has been conceived as "colonization" by the Kurdish political movement, has had long-term effects for Diyarbakır in spatial terms as well, as discussed in Chapter 3. The transition, characterized by the broader dynamics of capitalist modernization and the state's efforts to (re)institute its authority against centrifugal dynamics, has reconfigured the city's spatial structure. To summarize the account given in Chapter 3, three points might be made:

First, as integration to the nation-state consolidated, Diyarbakır evolved from a regional center of command and trade into a provincial town, located on the margins of the new-born state. The city lost its commercial, political and cultural ties with its regional hinterland, the other parts of the historical Kurdistan among them foremost.<sup>391</sup>

Second, as "the homogenous present of the nation" replaced "the heterogeneous history of the locality" by the help of strategies such as changing topographic names,<sup>392</sup> the cityscape was stripped of traces of its cosmopolitan past and thus "a large multi-ethnic territory was incorporated into the nation-building project through purification" as Gambetti argues.<sup>393</sup>

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<sup>391</sup> Keser, *Diyarbakır*, p. 7.

<sup>392</sup> Kerem Öktem, "Incorporating the Time and Space of the Ethnic Other," p. 561. See also, Jongerden, "Crafting Space, Making People."

<sup>393</sup> Gambetti, "Decolonizing Diyarbakır," pp. 98-9.

Third, in parallel to purifying practices, the physical environment of the city was ordered in a way that the symbolic presence of the state was highlighted. Accordingly, the new-born Republican administration designed and built both civil and military buildings (public administrations' headquarters, parks, statues, military barracks and lodgings) in a fashion that renders the state strongly visible in the eyes of local inhabitants.<sup>394</sup> For decades spaces have been kept under control by the help of various militaristic and nationalistic items, resulting in the thorough militarization of the cityscape, as Atlı contends.<sup>395</sup>

On the other hand, in the 2000s, more precisely after the abolishment of the OHAL in 2002, the Kurdish political movement began to reverse this process of homogenization, using its institutional power in the municipalities,<sup>396</sup> in accordance with its counter-hegemonic project. Cultural activities organized by the municipalities in collaboration with local, national and international NGOs have made more visible Diyarbakır at home and abroad, and provided the movement with increased political legitimacy.<sup>397</sup> The organization of culture and art festivals, workshops and seminars, construction of art and conference centers, and promotion of the right to mother tongue by supporting theatre, literature, music and cinema studies in Kurdish have created a productive popular-intellectual environment.<sup>398</sup> Discursive interventions such as (re)naming streets, squares and parks after historical or contemporary figures revered by

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<sup>394</sup> Çağlayan, *Cumhuriyet'in Diyarbakır'da Kimlik İnşası*, pp.250-62.

<sup>395</sup> Mehmet Atlı, "Diyarbakır: Bir Kültür Metropolüne Doğru (Mu)?" *Arredamento Mimarlık* 269 (June 2013), p. 71.

<sup>396</sup> Zeynep Gambetti, "The Conflictual (Trans)formation of the Public Sphere in Urban Space: The Case of Diyarbakır," *New Perspectives on Turkey* 32, (2005), pp. 43-71.

<sup>397</sup> Ayşe Seda Yüksel, "Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations," p. 448.

<sup>398</sup> Even the national mainstream media has not been oblivious to such popular-cultural vitality. Can Dündar, a prominent columnist, celebrates what he witnessed during his visit to the city as "the Diyarbakır Renaissance." *Cumhuriyet*, 19-22 November 2013.

the Kurdish movement and creating an alternative ('militant')<sup>399</sup> mode of expression as in the case of statues erected in newly-built parks served to re-appropriate the urban space within a reverse process of cultural decolonization.<sup>400</sup>

By the same token, material interventions into the built environment in Suriçi should also be considered as part of this contention. Inclusive restoration projects for prominent historical buildings (e.g. the Surp Giragos Church<sup>401</sup> or the Cemilpaşa Mansion<sup>402</sup>) and monuments (e.g. City Walls), street renovations or the redesign of public spaces (the Dağkapı Square<sup>403</sup>) are intrinsically related to the decolonization of urban space by pro-Kurdish municipalities.

For instance, the Dağkapı Square is an important piece of the city's historical landscape, since it bears traces of the transition from an Ottoman to a Republican city. In locational terms, it stands between the historic walled city and modern era public buildings constructed outside the walls in the first decades of the Republic. Moreover, it is the place where the public executions of the leaders of the Şeyh Sait Rebellion were carried out in 1925, thus it has an overarching meaning through which historical landscape of the city breaks surface.

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<sup>399</sup> Atlı, "Diyarbakır," p. 71.

<sup>400</sup> Gambetti, "Decolonizing Diyarbakır," p. 99.

<sup>401</sup> One of the most prominent examples of Armenian religious architecture in the region, the Surp Giragos Church was restored between 2009 and 2013 with the collaboration of the church foundation and the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. See, Karacadağ Development Agency, *Diyarbakır Kültür ve Turizm Projeleri Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2012), p. 22.

<sup>402</sup> The abandoned mansion located in the Alipaşa neighborhood of Suriçi belonged to the Cemilpaşa family which has been influential within the Kurdish nationalist movements since the late nineteenth century. See, Malmısaniç, *Diyarbakırlı Cemilpaşazadeler ve Kürt Milliyetçiliği* (İstanbul: Avesta Yayınları, 2004). The restoration project started in 2010 with the collaboration of the DMM and the Special Provincial Administration to convert the building into a city museum. See, Karacadağ Development Agency, *Diyarbakır Kültür ve Turizm Projeleri Raporu*, p. 24.

<sup>403</sup> The square was redesigned by the DMM in 2006-2007. See, Karacadağ Development Agency, *Diyarbakır Kültür ve Turizm Projeleri Raporu*, p. 13.

Similarly, by highlighting traces of Armenian culture as in the case of the Surp Giragos restoration, “the municipality reversed the official historical narrative of the Turkish state and turned the urban space into a contested ground for counter-hegemonic narratives.”<sup>404</sup> The Kurdish political movement’s counter-hegemonic “post-colonial space” conception lays an alternative imaginary of Diyarbakır. In contrast to the provincial town of the previous era, Turkified by various spatial strategies, the city is re-imagined in a particular way, and certain elements from the collective memory of the city are recalled.

Two main points might be depicted as components of this process of re-imagination: First, the city is conceived as a metropolitan center. In the first place, it is the capital of the imagined Kurdistan. Yet, also, it is the political, cultural and economic epicenter of the whole Middle East region, as the Mayor Baydemir often states.<sup>405</sup> Second, referring to its cosmopolitan heritage and in stark contrast to contemporary political dynamics prevalent in the Middle East, the city is thought to be a place where different ethnic and religious identities can harmoniously coexist. Building an imaginary multicultural city, the Kurdish political movement differentiates itself, in political terms, both from the nation-state’s homogenizing policies and the sectarian political forces sovereign in the region.

That is to say, the counter-hegemonic project of the Kurdish political movement constitutes Diyarbakır as a regional metropolitan center that has transnational political, cultural and commercial ties, and wherein a liberating administrative and political model built on the Kurdish people’s demands (democratic autonomy) might be developed.

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<sup>404</sup> Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations,” pp. 447-8.

<sup>405</sup> Agos, 25 October 2013.

Diyarbakır is imagined as the capital of Kurdish identity which has been redefined in a particular way by the Kurdish political movement.

The extraordinary prominence given to the city walls is essentially expressive in this regard. As stated before, despite the acute financial straits and potential unpopularity of such a project, the removal of unlicensed commercial units (restaurants, tea houses, kiosks and parking lots) located around the walls on the eastern wing of the city, from Dağkapı to Mardinkapı, during the mayorship of Feridun Çelik, displays such deep-rooted political aspirations. Çelik refers to “people’s values” to explain the motivation behind the project:

Clearing away the Wall’s environs had been my dream, ever since my young days. I have been living in Diyarbakır since I was ten. We reached a consensus on this issue. But nobody believed in it. There were so many people who earned their bread in those workplaces. Just after my first days in office, I talked to tradesmen there. I told them that we must remove that debris. Yet their response was that ‘Even Kenan Evren could not manage it, do not mess with this issue’. Then I said ‘But we are your [political] will, we will demolish these buildings.’ First, we demolished our own bakery, kiosk, the offices of TEDAŞ and the Journalists Association, thus we set a good example. In the end, we gained ninety percent support in the polls for the demolitions. [...] Those workplaces were paying quite low occupancy taxes to the municipality. We told them ‘This is enough; let us bring people’s values to light’. Truthfully, they did not raise a protest. We returned empty lots into parks. This was one of our most important projects back then.<sup>406</sup>

During my field research, I repeatedly observed that this early effort is recognized as necessary to revive “what Diyarbakır deserves.” In contrast to more disputed initiatives of the latter period, such as current urban transformation projects, the project witnessed a wide-reaching acceptance, because the city walls are seen as part of urban identity and as a monument of the “civic life” that has faded away in decades of state violence and

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<sup>406</sup> Feridun Çelik, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

deep economic deprivation. Gambetti argues that clearing the squatters “not only served to unearth the local pride that was under cover for decades, but also to reconstruct it.”<sup>407</sup> Consequently, the project has been praised by local residents, and still represents in their political imaginary a decisive step towards the “new Diyarbakır,” which was saluted by the party’s 1999 election slogan: “We will manage both ourselves and our city on our own” (*Kendimizi de kentimizi de biz yöneteceğiz*).

As noted above, after the disintegration of the classical Republican discourse, the major challenge to the Kurdish political movement’s decolonizing practices and discourses came from a pro-Islamic position. Against the efforts to constitute an urban space and social memory on the basis of Kurdish identity, the AKP government has occasionally benefited from an alternative imaginary that defines Kurdish identity within the framework of Islamic bonds. Hence “the city of Sahabah” has been presented to create an Islamized memory for the city. For sure, this alternative political imaginary has been functional to make the ruling AKP acceptable within the local political public which is shaped around the Kurdish identity. Without repudiating the Kurdish identity at once, such discourse has provided the government with a political identity that challenges the PKK’s symbolism that is composed of more universalistic, secular and socialist references for the Kurdish identity. The words of Kenan Haspolat, a professor at the local medical school and one of the champions of this discourse, are exemplary:

In the aftermath of the Sheikh Said Rebellion, Diyarbakır was under embargo in both material and spiritual terms. It has been blocked since then. The press and some other mobs have done their best to illustrate Diyarbakır as the city of terror. However, it is one of the most sacred cities of the world after Mecca and Medina. Three of the nine prophets tombs mentioned in the Quran are located in Diyarbakır. Up to now, 887

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<sup>407</sup> Gambetti, “Decolonizing Diyarbakır,” p. 109.

tombs of Shabah and subjects have been found here. I believe that the citizens of this country would like to see them, but this spiritual side of Diyarbakır is being concealed.<sup>408</sup>

After the mid-2000s this narrative has become more visible, and been promoted occasionally by central state institutions. In that regard the Governorship organized conferences in the name of prominent Islamic poets and intellectuals born in the city for instance. Against the municipality's restoration works for buildings referring to Kurdish national figures and non-muslim elements in the city's cosmopolitan past, an inclusive restoration project for the Ulu Cami was prioritized. Even archeological works regarding some edifices in Suriçi became a matter of fussy dispute in local media.<sup>409</sup> However, such practices have proven reactive and relatively ineffectual in comparison to the cultural events and festivals that the Kurdish political movement has successfully used to increase its political legitimacy both nationally and internationally.

This struggle over the urban imaginary, however, should not be regarded exempt from the dynamics of economic regeneration in Suriçi. As argued in the previous subsections, the tourism-centered local economic growth approach, on which the entrepreneurial circles, the municipalities and the central state institutions have reconciled, necessitates transforming Diyarbakır into a "center of attraction." If tourism investments turn the city into a plausible location for further investments and an educated labor force, it is supposed, then Diyarbakır would become a metropolitan

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<sup>408</sup> *Zaman*, 01 November 2013.

<sup>409</sup> For instance, an old factory building demolished during the urban transformation project in İçale led to a controversy around the Diyarbakır Museum. The museum experts stated that the vaulted building had no historical properties, yet Kenan Haspolat from Dicle University and İbrahim Yılmazçelik from Fırat University claimed that the structure used to be the İbn-i Sin Mosque built in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. After a prolonged exchange of opinions and harsh accusations aimed at the museum experts in local media channels, the building was registered by the Directorate of Foundations. See, *Yeni Yurt*, 13 November 2013.

center that functions as a hub for cultural, political and commercial networks on a regional scale.

The concept of center of attraction includes, by definition, the reconfiguration of certain items of historical, cultural and physical landscapes of localities as “authentic” features which would give them competitive advantages. To this end, certain meanings and values attributed to particular places are transformed into local assets that constitute the city as a brand. As Yüksel rightly suggests, in the case of Diyarbakır, and to a certain extent, of other southeastern cities that have stagnant economies, the “cultural diversity turn” in the discourses and policies of the EU and UNESCO has produced plausible economic and political circumstances for such a local economic development model, and opened up a space for pro-Kurdish municipalities.<sup>410</sup>

Accordingly, the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality has benefited from these circumstances to acquire financial resources for some of the restoration and renovation projects undertaken, and to increase its sphere of political influence as in the case of the candidacy process for the city walls. In that regard, the urban transformation projects in Suriçi are conceived and presented, by the municipal administrators, not only as physical rehabilitation of the dilapidated built environment but also as a component of political intervention to decolonize urban space. The homogenous present of the modern nation-state would be fractured, it is assumed, if the cityscape is reconfigured in the dreamed image of the cosmopolitan past. The words of Abdullah Demirbaş, the mayor of Sur district between 2004 and 2014 are telling:

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<sup>410</sup> Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations,” p. 448. For a similar critique of the deployment of heritage industry programs for local economic development in the case of Mardin, see Ayşe Çağlar, “Rescaling Cities, Cultural Diversity and Transnationalism: Migrants of Mardin and Essen,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30, no. 6 (2007), pp. 1070-95.

We are dreaming of the Diyarbakır of the 1930s. Those narrow alleys wherein different beliefs and cultures melded, prayers intermingled with tolling of church bells. Our preservation plan portrays that Diyarbakır where we jumped from one roof to another, we played hide and seek in those alleys. A city like an open air museum. A city where asphalt does not exist and streets are paved with basalt, a city where children play soccer freely. For this reason, I call this project not urban transformation but a rendezvous with history. Because this is a city which has been tried to be homogenized and uniformed in the name of modernity. Under the pretext of housing shortage unhealthy and unqualified buildings were constructed. This fact proves that modernity is decayed and unhealthy. What we want is a multi-lingual and multi-religious city where people communicate with each other face to face.<sup>411</sup>

Thus, efforts to regenerate the physical and social conditions of Suriçi are articulated with further political aspirations of the Kurdish political movement in a manner that attributes extra legitimacy and meaning for the proceeding transformation projects and regeneration plans. Beyond local entrepreneurial circles or municipal administrators which would be, expectedly, in favor of the regeneration for economic reasons, the restructuring of Suriçi is incorporated into the long-standing political aspirations of local inhabitants. This articulation of economic expectations and political aspirations by the mediation of urban imaginaries explains why criticisms about the negative consequences of transformation projects on residents' working and living conditions have not led the municipality to substantially reconsider its collaboration with TOKİ. A local businessman recalls the "genuine" ways of living of the Kurdish people to justify the collaboration between the municipality and TOKİ:

First of all, this place is not Sulukule. Such impoverished life is not the culture of these people. This is the result of some compulsory conditions. Therefore, if you displace them you would not deprive them of their culture. On the contrary, to preserve the authentic culture of Suriçi, you must demolish these sites. This does not mean assimilation, but preservation of culture. These people deserve to live under humane

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<sup>411</sup> Abdullah Demirbaş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

conditions, since this situation does not stem from their culture. They have come to this because of forced migration; it is a major sin to consider this situation as part of their culture.<sup>412</sup>

In consequence, the municipality, local political and economic elites, central state institutions and majority of the local residents converged on a common terrain, and this common terrain helped create an affirmative stance against the exclusionary dynamics of contemporary urbanism. Even the displacement of the urban poor from Suriçi is belittled, if not justified, by a narrative that refers to a certain claim of authenticity.

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<sup>412</sup> Remzi Durmaz, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

CHAPTER SIX  
LEAVING THE CITY BEHIND:  
SUBURBANIZATION IN KAYAPINAR

In nearly two decades, Kayapınar, a former rural settlement on the western outskirts of the city of Diyarbakır, has become a populous district which symbolizes today for many “the new face” of the city.<sup>413</sup> Tens of thousands of residents rushed into “sparsely populated apartment blocks and gated communities scattered around parks, shopping centers and larger arterial roads.”<sup>414</sup> Tens of hectares of rural land were turned into profitable urban land on which planned and regulated dwelling and commercial units were erected in dramatic contrast to the vast unlicensed and poor-quality housing stock of Diyarbakır.

In the 2000s, while the historic city center lost its population exponentially, Kayapınar has become a plausible residential location for middle and upper-middle classes that seek to leave the city’s undesirable physical and social environment behind. As the recent residential development expanded the city’s physical boundaries and redefined its urban fabric, Kayapınar came to be known as an expression of the dramatic change the city’s social space has undergone in the recent period. However, this shift in residential patterns had its own consequences, such as reinforcing the trend towards spatial segregation and fragmentation. While the middle classes of the city looked for

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<sup>413</sup> Kayapınar Municipality, website, accessed 14 January 2014, <http://www.Diyarbakirkayapinar.bel.tr/>.

<sup>414</sup> Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations,” p. 450.

ways to escape the gloom of the 90s behind the walls of luxurious housing projects, those left in the central city manifested their anger even towards the former during the March 2006 uprising.

Therefore, the extensive and swift residential development in Kayapınar constitutes a crucial moment of the contemporary processes of production of space in Diyarbakır — the other being the restructuring of Suriçi, as analyzed in Chapter 5. The main goal of this chapter is to analyze the suburbanization process in Kayapınar, by examining the relevant actors' –landowners, municipal administrators, planners, developers and the Mass Housing Administration (TOKİ)– positioning and role within the organization of housing provision.

Accordingly, I first analyze how the processes of housing provision in Kayapınar were politically constructed. Then, elaborating the argument that I made in Chapter 4, that is, that the AKP and the Kurdish political movement have developed two distinct hegemony projects in the 2000s, which are composed of two competing spatialities (“post-war space” and “post-colonial space,” respectively), I seek to answer in what ways their urban imaginaries have shaped production of space in Kayapınar.

My argument is that recent residential development in Kayapınar reflects the emergence of a *de facto* and internally-divided pro-growth coalition which consists of local landowners, construction firms and municipal administrations. These actors have created appropriate conditions for extended real estate activity which is considered as one of the primary sites for further capital accumulation. Spatial interventions of the state via the mass housing projects and land sales of TOKİ have reinforced the dynamics of the construction sector. Moreover, the articulation of urban imaginaries of the state and the Kurdish political movement has rendered possible such a persistent trend of

suburbanization. An alignment has emerged between the AKP's promise of stability and the Kurdish political movement's promise of building a distinguished city. Ultimately a spatial practice which is best pictured in the gated communities of Kayapınar was born.

This chapter consists of three sections. The first section describes the socio-spatial characteristics of Kayapınar, drawing on statistical data on the district's demographic background and the housing boom of the recent period. The second section analyzes the political construction of the relations of housing provision, exploring, from a sociological point of view, the positioning of the actors –i.e. developers, landowners, TOKİ, municipal administrators and planners– at different phases of the suburbanization process. The last section analyzes the imaginary aspect of this process, putting the discussion on the ordering of Kayapınar's physical and social landscape in the context of encounters between distinct spatial conceptions of the state and the Kurdish political movement.

### Socio-Spatial Structure of Kayapınar

The dramatic shift in demographic, land use and residential patterns in Kayapınar, which might be best understood by the term suburbanization, is a product of complex interrelationships between the local and extra-local actors that have various capacities to determine urban processes. Thus, understanding motivations, tactics and imaginaries bedded within the interplay among central state institutions such as TOKİ, district and metropolitan municipalities, land owners, developers and other entrepreneurial groups is crucial to picture the economic, political and cultural aspects of this suburbanization process. Yet, before elaborating on the role and position of these actors and analyzing

the articulations between their spatial strategies, first, I have to reveal the socio-spatial characteristics of Kayapınar so that the extent of the suburbanization process can be understood. Accordingly, in the following I draw on statistical data to delineate the demographic background of Kayapınar, and to show the magnitude of, and patterns in, the housing boom in the recent period.

### Demographic Background of Kayapınar

The administrative structure and boundaries of the area which is today known as Kayapınar have been altered repetitively in the last twenty years.<sup>415</sup> Before 1991, the area consisted of farm lands and few rural settlements. The only notable settlements beyond the residential areas of Bağlar were Peyas village and the Huzurevleri neighborhood. The former was a sizeable rural settlement surrounded by farm lands, nearby the Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır highway. The latter was an unplanned low-income neighborhood developed, after the 1970s, alongside the industrial facilities located along the Elazığ highway.

By 1990, the population figures of Peyas and Huzurevleri were, respectively, around four thousand and six thousand. In 1991, Peyas was declared a sub-district (*belde*) municipality under the jurisdiction of the Diyarbakır municipality which was to become a metropolitan municipality in 1994.<sup>416</sup> Later, Kayapınar's municipal status was upgraded to first-tier municipality in 2004 and to district municipality in 2008, both linked to the Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality. As of 2014, Kayapınar, with its

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<sup>415</sup> See, Figures 1 and 2.

<sup>416</sup> Kayapınar Municipality, *Diyarbakır Kayapınar Belediyesi Stratejik Planı 2010-2014*, (Diyarbakır, 2010), p. 21.

three neighborhoods (Peyas, Huzurevleri and Barış) and nine ex-villages (these were also turned into neighborhoods after the changes in the Metropolitan Municipality Law in November 2012) is directly under the direct jurisdiction of district and metropolitan municipalities.<sup>417</sup>

The demographic structure of Kayapınar reflects peculiar patterns of massive migratory flows to Diyarbakır that culminated in the 1990s. As discussed in Chapter 3, the forced migration policy the state implemented in the Kurdish territory as an effective tool to deprive the PKK of its logistic and popular resources in the rural areas is the most apparent factor in explaining the enormous growth in the city's urban population in this period. As in other districts of the city, forced evictions that reached their peak between 1991 and 1995 provided the impetus for the intensification of population in Kayapınar.

In Peyas and Huzurevleri, the direct result of immigration on physical environment was severe, notwithstanding the social turmoil it created. The village-type houses of Peyas and unlawful slums built on private lands with split-deeds of Huzurevleri were surrounded by new unlicensed dwelling units in the first hand. Thus, while the overall population of the city center almost doubled in only fifteen years between 1990 and 2005, settlements in Kayapınar witnessed a genuine explosion in demographic terms. Between 1990 and 2013, the urban population of Kayapınar grew more than twentyfive-fold, increasing from almost ten thousand to more than 255,000.

However, the sharp increase in Kayapınar's population was not confined to the extraordinary period of forced evictions culminating in the early 1990s. Even after the mid-1990s, when the forced evictions slowed down, the district's population continued to grow dramatically due to intra-city relocations. Between 2000 and 2013, the

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<sup>417</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 16-7.

population of Huzurevleri grew from 31,000 in 2000 to 57,000 in 2005 and 93,000 in 2013. During the same period, Peyas' population grew from almost 37,000 in 2000, to 74,000 in 2005 and nearly 152,000 in 2013.<sup>418</sup> Currently, the Peyas and Huzurevleri neighborhoods are the most crowded neighborhoods in Turkey, constituting almost one-fourth of the city population.

Although the sharp increase in Kayapınar's population is related to massive migratory flows caused by the forced migration policy, this relation is not direct but indirect. That is to say, Kayapınar has a different position within intra-city migration patterns than other districts such as Bağlar and Sur. The latter functioned as entrance points to the city for newcomers, hence developed a division of labor between them in terms of their positions within migratory flows. A detailed survey conducted in 2009 suggests that while the first choice for immigrants that declare security-related reasons as their primary motivation is predominantly Bağlar, Suriçi has been the first home primarily for immigrants seeking economic opportunities in the city.<sup>419</sup> Yet, this does not reflect an absolute division. These districts host both types of immigrants, the motivations and patterns of which are actually intermingled in their actual experiences.

In this scheme, Kayapınar as a district, and its more prosperous and developed areas like the Peyas neighborhood in particular, constitute a final destination for relatively more affluent residents. The survey indicates that Kayapınar is at the end of this chain, and that the majority of households (sixty percent) in the Peyas and

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<sup>418</sup> TURKSTAT, *Adrese Dayalı Nüfus Kayıt Sistemi*, 2014.

<sup>419</sup> İnan Keser, *EKOSEP: Diyarbakır Saha Araştırması Raporu*, pp. 40-54.

Huzurevleri neighborhoods state economic motivations for their migration rather than security-related motivations.<sup>420</sup>

The comparison of population density figures of neighborhoods affirms this tacit division of labor in settlement patterns within the city.<sup>421</sup> The later-planned residential areas in Peyas and Huzurevleri have much less densities than in neighborhoods where the war-torn urban poor took refuge. For instance, despite the fact that Suriçi has lost population exponentially after 2005, certain neighborhoods of Suriçi like Lalabey (911 people per ha), Abdaldede (486 people per ha) and Melik Ahmet (661 people per ha) were denser than Peyas (81 per ha) and Huzurevleri (181 per ha) by the year 2009. Neighborhoods of Bağlar, such as Körhat (1038 people per ha), Beş Nisan (990 people per ha), Muradiye (960 people per ha) and Mevlana Halit (842 people per ha) had even denser populations.<sup>422</sup> In short, reading this demographic data, we can reach the conclusion that Kayapınar has become home for more prosperous sections of residents in the aftermath of the massive exodus from rural areas to Diyarbakır. The patterns in residential development in the same period confirm the predominantly middle-class character of Kayapınar.

### The Housing Boom

As a result of this peculiar demographic background, and to a great extent in line with national trends in the construction sector, Diyarbakır has undergone persistent and

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<sup>420</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 40-54.

<sup>421</sup> See Figure 2.

<sup>422</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *Şanlıurfa-Diyarbakır Kentsel Alt Bölge Kalkınma Yaklaşımı* (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2012), p. 56.

considerable growth in its built environment after 1990. In only two decades, the volume of building stock more than doubled in the whole of the province. The increase was almost exclusively limited to residential units and concentrated in the provincial center. On a closer examination, it can be seen that this growth in housing stock has some persistent trends in terms of settlement preferences and income groupings. In the following, I draw on official data to better understand the magnitude of, and trends in, Diyarbakır's residential development, focusing on Kayapınar.

As Balaban suggests, the construction sector and real estate markets in Turkey had two distinct boom periods after 1980.<sup>423</sup> The period 1983-1993 was a time of constant growth for the sector which was to be followed by a long recession in 1994-2003. The second period started in 2003 and has continued to date, although it had a sharp but temporary interruption in the aftermath of the 2008-2009 global financial crisis. Given this macroeconomic background, it might be argued that the residential development in Diyarbakır in both boom periods has been coherent with national trends in a qualified sense. Yet, despite the overlay in general trends, the relative magnitude of residential developmental activity in Diyarbakır is striking in comparison to other major cities such as Istanbul, İzmir, Adana and Mersin, which have drawn immigrants from rural areas as well.<sup>424</sup>

Comparisons with other major cities manifest the relative prominence of residential development in Diyarbakır after 1990. Between 1990 and 2011 nearly 150,000 residential units were built within the province's boundaries. Given the demographic trends in rural and urban areas, it is convenient to assume that the

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<sup>423</sup> Osman Balaban, "Capital Accumulation, the State and the Production of Built Environment: The Case of Turkey" (Ph.D. diss., Middle East Technical University, 2008), p. 156.

<sup>424</sup> See Table 2.

overwhelming majority of these new units were added to the housing stock of the provincial center. That is to say, the built environment in four districts of the city, Kayapınar, Bağlar, Sur and Yenişehir, has expanded substantially, and in terms of dwelling units, the housing stock more than doubled in two decades, from around 110,000 to nearly 260,000. By 2011, the share of the units built between 1991 and 2000 to all housing stock was nearly thirty percent, while those built in the period 2001-2011 was more than one-fourth of the housing stock.

Table 2.  
Building Stock, 1991-2011

	Dwelling Units, 2011*	Units Added, 1991-2000*	Percentage	Units Added, 2001-2011*	Percentage
Diyarbakır	258	75	29.2	69	26.7
Istanbul	3694	1077	29.1	662	17.9
Ankara	1434	352	24.6	490	34.2
İzmir	1212	277	22.9	187	15.4
Adana	514	120	23.4	80	15.6
Mersin	448	110	24.6	78	17.4
Turkey	19,454	4780	24.6	4237	21.8

\*Thousand

Source: TURKSTAT, Population and Housing Research, 2011

This persistent activity of the city's construction sector and real estate markets, which have performed, as would be expected, in violation of formal building codes, zoning ordinances and land use decisions posed by dysfunctional development plans and municipal regulations especially until the 2000s, renders Diyarbakır a noteworthy case even among other major metropolitan areas. On the other hand, in the 2000s, more specifically after 2003, we observe a more regulated, upgraded and persistent construction activity. In addition to the figures of construction permits issued by the municipalities, figures of house sales confirm the increased and consistent economic activity within the local construction sector.

Table 3.  
House Sales by Years

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Diyarbakır						
Total Sales	7124	9723	8816	11,078	10,985	13,966
Mortgaged Sales	-	262	2856	3525	3847	5372
Percentage of Mortgaged Sales	-	0.02	0.32	0.31	0.35	0.38
Turkey						
Total Sales	427,105	555,184	607,098	708,725	701,621	1,157,190
Mortgaged Sales	-	22,726	246,741	289,795	270,136	460,112
Percentage of Mortgaged Sales	-	0.04	0.40	0.40	0.38	0.39

Source: TURKSTAT, House Sales by Provinces and Years, 2014

In addition to this overall growth trend since 1990 and especially after 2003, more relevant for the discussion here is to understand Kayapınar's position within this increased activity. On that score, the official data on construction permits issued by the municipalities might be useful to observe the intra-city distribution of building activity.<sup>425</sup> Although construction permits do not give us the exact figure of actual units built and also include the permits for building renovations and conversions, they nevertheless display the concentration of construction activity and residential development in Kayapınar and to a certain extent in Bağlar (the Bağcılar area, most notably).

Furthermore, as discussed in the next section, unlike the previous periods during which unlicensed constructions were not the exception but rule, in the 2000s the municipalities in Diyarbakır could have managed to establish authority on new constructions to a greater extent. Thus, reading data on the allocation of official permits issued by the municipalities provides us with the general trends of the activity and lines

<sup>425</sup> Tables 4 and 5.

of comparison among the districts, even though it is unreasonable to assume all dwelling units were built within formal regulations even in this period.

Accordingly, regarding the development of the built environment after 2000, the preeminence of Kayapınar among four districts in the provincial center is obvious. By 2000, in terms of building units, Kayapınar had less than one-tenth of the all stock (3600 units of 42,000). Almost eighty percent of these buildings (2900 units of 3600) were built between 1990 and 2000.<sup>426</sup> However, more strikingly, between 2002 and 2013, almost sixty percent of all construction permits were issued for units to be built in Kayapınar. Bağlar, the nearest challenger had only one-fourth. The extremely low share of the Sur district is also striking. Only one percent of the dwelling units are located in this district.

Table 4.  
Construction Permits by Residential Units, 2002-2013

	Number of Buildings	Number of Dwelling Units	Percentage of District
Kayapınar	1854	43,439	0.58
Bağlar	1265	19,153	0.25
Sur	573	1242	0.01
Yenişehir	529	10,872	0.14

Source: TURKSTAT, Construction and Occupancy Permits, 2014

Table 5.  
Construction Permits by Capital Value, 2002-2013

	Total Capital Value of Residential Units*	Capital Value per Unit*	Percentage of District
Kayapınar	4,712,248	108	0.58
Bağlar	2,153,512	112	0.26
Sur	196,979	158	0.04
Yenişehir	1,030,162	94	0.12

\*Thousand TL.

Source: Source: TURKSTAT, Construction and Occupancy Permits, 2014

<sup>426</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Diyarbakır Nazım İmar Planı Plan Açıklama Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, 2006), p. 40.

Similarly, in terms of capital value, Kayapınar contains an estimated 58 percent of Diyarbakır's housing stock added between 2002 and 2013. While Bağlar's share is consistent with the figures of dwellings units, what is striking is the quadrupled share of the Sur district. Given the low level of construction activity within the city walls and recent development of low-density, upper-middle class, single-family houses outside the walls, nearby Silvan Highway and the Tigris River, it seems suitable to explain the increased share of the Sur district in terms of capital value with the emergence of this particular housing type.

In terms of the city's macro-form, the direct result of these figures confirms the fact that the recent residential development has consolidated the previous trend and expanded the city along the western axis. Dwellings built in Kayapınar and Bağlar (Bağcılar area) characterize the residential development of the 2000s.<sup>427</sup> To a certain extent, because of the topographic features and physical barriers that determine the city's macro-form, and of farm lands available for conversion into profitable lots, the residential development of the city has been predominantly in the triangular area between Elazığ Highway on the northwest axis and Şanlıurfa Highway on the southwest axis.<sup>428</sup>

Finally, in addition to the citywide distribution of the residential development, we can state some characteristics for each district. First of all, in four districts, but particularly in Kayapınar, new units were built almost absolutely on green-field sites rather than in redeveloped areas. As discussed in the next section, the configuration of various contingent factors such as the availability of ample stock of farm land in the

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<sup>427</sup> See, Figure 1.

<sup>428</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, pp. 81-6.

hands of private landholders in the outskirts of the city, the eagerness of municipalities to ease developmental activity in the fringes, site selection decisions of TOKİ and private developers rendered possible full-grown construction activity on greenfield sites within a relatively short term. Redevelopments were exclusive to few, single projects in the planned neighborhoods of Yenişehir, requiring the demolition of occupied private apartments, which were mostly aged and relatively low-rise, located on small-but-valuable parcels.

Second, the overwhelming majority of the buildings built in the 2000s were high-rise apartments. As the figures of construction permits indicate, in the 2002-2013 period, the average number of dwelling units per newly-constructed buildings is notably high, especially in Kayapınar, Bağlar and Yenişehir. More specifically, in Kayapınar multi-story, detached apartments and gated communities consisting of high-rise apartment blocks characterize the prevailing housing type developed in the recent period.<sup>429</sup> Particularly brand-name housing projects on scale of city blocks, constructed by distinguished local private developers after 2004, located around the major avenues (Diclekent Boulevard, Yılmaz Güney Avenue, Musa Anter Avenue, Kayapınar Avenue, Mahabad Avenue) consist of high-rise (ten- to fifteen-story) apartment blocks scattered around green areas. As of Yenişehir district, in contrast to urban texture in the centrally-located neighborhoods of the district, planned and built after the 1930s, large scale social housing estates developed by TOKİ (Şilbe and Üçkuyu mass housing projects)<sup>430</sup> characterize the recent housing provision in outlying neighborhoods stretching alongside

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<sup>429</sup> Vahap Karakaya, “Yeni Yerleşim Alanları ve TOKİ,” in *TMMOB Diyarbakır Kent Sempozyumu: Bildiriler Kitabı*, (Diyarbakır: TMMOB Diyarbakır İl Koordinasyon Kurulu, 2009), p. 55.

<sup>430</sup> See Figure 4.

the north of Elazığ Highway. On the contrary, in Sur district the average number of residential units per building constructed in the last decade is extremely low, since the majority of the permits issued in the 2000s comprise of low-density, upper-middle class single-family houses built around Silvan highway. A similar housing fabric can be depicted in Bağcılar area of Bağlar district, south of Şanlıurfa Highway, and in the Diclekent area of Kayapınar district.<sup>431</sup> The Bağcılar area, along with the ten-story middle-class apartment blocks built after 2007 in accordance with construction ordinances, hosts villa-type, high-cost, single-family houses. Single-family houses recently developed in southwest (Bağcılar) and northeast (Silvan Highway) directions of the city are currently home to most affluent residents of Diyarbakır.

Third, in contrast to detached, mostly unauthorized, apartment blocks hastily built during the 1990s to accommodate unexpected population flux, residential development of the later period –whether in the form of villa-type houses, single apartment blocks and gated communities of high-rise apartment blocks– reflects higher standards of built environment (in terms of architectural and engineering properties) on which urban middle class groups, municipal authorities and entrepreneurs in real estate markets have reconciled. As the municipalities progressively increased their authority to implement more strictly the zoning ordinances, building codes and the development law, the physical landscape of newly developed areas, the Peyas neighborhood in Kayapınar and the Bağcılar area in Bağlar being the foremost, have changed strikingly. Having ample green areas behind the walls of housing estates has become a symbol of prestige

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<sup>431</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 56-7. Diclekent project, an early example of low-rise, single-family housing type in the city, was constructed by a housing cooperative with the initiative of Turgut Atalay, Diyarbakır mayor from SHP between 1989 and 1994. The project's goal was to encourage planned development in the outskirts of the city, by increasing the plausibility of the area.

for residents and a necessary marketing item for developers, for instance. Building city parks on every scale alongside wide arterial roads has become a *sine quo non* feature of good and successful municipal governance in the eyes of both residents and administrators.

### Housing Provision in Kayapınar

As demonstrated above, Kayapınar is the epicenter of the recent surge in terms of quantity. The overwhelming majority of dwelling units were built in the district, making Kayapınar the symbol of the modernizing Diyarbakır with its more regulated housing construction, upscaled built environment and public spaces in common use. However, more importantly, it is the site where the dynamics forming and characterizing the city's housing political economy overlap most symptomatically. Thus, the key layers of spatial restructuring in Diyarbakır can and must be read through Kayapınar.

A crucial question must be raised at this point: What are the contingent factors behind such a persistent dynamic of suburbanization which has been so swift and voluminous in terms of the production of physical space, and which has caused further residential differentiation and urban fragmentation in terms of the production of social space?

Accordingly, this section seeks to answer this question, examining the role of the major actors at distinct stages of residential development in Kayapınar. The first subsection asks if demand-side incentives give us a solid base to comprehend the political economic relations forming the suburbanization process. Then the second scrutinizes the position of the private and public actors in converting rural lands to urban

uses, touching upon the basic characteristics of the land market in the western fringes of the city. The third sub-section deals with urban planning procedures, and seeks to understand to what extent the municipalities' increased discipline on planning works and development applications impacted recent residential development in Kayapınar. The fourth sub-section describes the field of private construction firms, and examines the signs of the differentiation within the private market actors in terms of their economic and organizational structures. The last sub-section focuses on mass housing projects, construction works and land sales undertaken by TOKİ, and seeks to reveal the impacts of these activities on the suburbanization dynamic in Kayapınar.

### Factors Behind the Housing Boom

The recent wave of residential development in Kayapınar has been celebrated frequently in the mainstream national media as the manifestation of Diyarbakır finally reversing its misfortune.<sup>432</sup> Beyond being indicators of increased level of urbanization, luxurious high-rise apartment blocks and sparsely populated gated communities have been regarded as the prefiguration of possibilities waiting for the war-torn city. As the dark political atmosphere of the past years has grown thinner, it is argued, the city has taken steps towards civil urban living (e.g. an Istanbul-like built environment) that it has long aspired for.

The common point of the ideologically-divergent items comprising this popular discourse is that the emergence of an upscale built environment and swift residential

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<sup>432</sup> Among others, for an ideal-typical account by prominent, pro-government columnist Emre Aköz, see *Sabah*, 31 August 2010.

development is explained with reference to the demand of an emerging middle-class which has not found opportunities to express its economic and social needs until the recent era.

Accordingly, it is assumed, as the tense political and social environment of the conflict times has been superseded and the city's economic circumstances have relatively ameliorated, this group as a social category has crystallized; and thus their demands –which they could not have expressed smoothly in the past, due to war conditions and/or the physical and discursive dominance of the Kurdish political movement on them– have become more pronounced.

This framework of explanation is not totally irrelevant. The dominant character of the recent residential development in Kayapınar is evidently middle-class; and while TOKİ's projects have met the housing demand of a lower end of this group, a significant portion of the projects developed by the private sector has targeted the upper segment of consumers, that is, upper-middle income groups of the city such as doctors, lawyers, business people, high-rank municipal administrators, well-to-do merchants and landowners. Correspondingly, it would not be unreasonable to assume that more prosperous social groups' demand for expanded consumption patterns have become much more visible in a period when armed conflict has diminished and circumstances of investment in property development have relatively expanded.

However, such popular explanations underscoring demand-side incentives as the sole factor in forming the current residential patterns are based on false premises. First, on the political plane, an adverse relation is supposed between the Kurdish political movement and the urban middle-classes. The organizational structure and programmatic framework of the various sectors of the Kurdish political movement are conceived as

categorically exogenous to the Diyarbakır's urban middle classes' political aspirations and orientations.

Second, as of the consumption patterns, residents' preferences of location and housing type are taken as given predispositions. Accordingly, with the removal of constraining factors on the market, it is stated, the residents have "spontaneously" oriented towards an upscaled built environment organized in the form of segregated urban compounds whereby they can fulfill the requirements of a modern urban living as their counterparts in other (e.g. western) localities.

And third, more importantly, on the analytical level, such popular discourse follows the postulates of the mainstream economic thought that presupposes self-regulating perfect markets. As Bourdieu contends, this model suggests that "the economy is a separate domain governed by natural and universal laws with which governments must not interfere by inappropriate intervention; [and] the market is the optimum means for organizing production and trade efficiently and equitably in democratic societies."<sup>433</sup> If external factors deterring the ordinary functioning of markets are removed, then demand shall perfectly create its supply within self-regulating mechanisms. Accordingly, in the case of Diyarbakır, the relaxation of the political atmosphere as a result of the AKP's reformist orientation has opened the way for urban middle-classes that had to reside in unfavorable physical and social conditions of the dilapidated central city neighborhoods for decades. However, it would be incorrect to assume self-regulating markets that function in isolation of the social configurations in

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<sup>433</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *The Social Structures of the Economy*, trans. Chris Turner (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), pp. 10-1.

which they are embedded and without the interference of political and institutional actors.

On the contrary, if we follow the discussion on the theorization of neoliberalism developed in Chapter 2 and “recognize the politically constructed character of all economic relations,”<sup>434</sup> then we have to presume that the very terms of the demand and supply sides of the real estate markets are formed within the interplay of struggles between the actors. As the critical analysis of suburbanization processes suggests, demand-side explanations drawing on the neoclassical economic theory and past ecological approaches to the urban sociology do not provide comprehensive explanations on the significance of factors such as “the influence of the state, the role of progrowth boosterism, and the importance of capital flow into the secondary circuit of real estate.”<sup>435</sup> Therefore, instead of taking consumers’ preferences as given predispositions which create and spur housing supply, both the fields of production and consumption<sup>436</sup> of housing must be problematized as politically-constructed processes.

Following this line of argumentation which urges us to explore the interrelatedness of the political and spatial processes, below I conduct empirical analysis of the factors shaping the housing supply. My argument is that the recent residential development in Kayapınar reflects the emergence of a *de facto* and internally-divided progrowth coalition which consists of local landowners, construction firms and municipal administrations. The articulation of a series of contingent factors has caused its emergence:

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<sup>434</sup> Brenner and Theodore, “Cities and Geographies of ‘Actually Existing Neoliberalism,’” p. 6.

<sup>435</sup> Mark Gottdiener and Joe R. Feagin, “The Paradigm Shift in Urban Sociology,” *Urban Affairs Review* 24, no. 2 (December, 1988), 177-8.

<sup>436</sup> Sharon Zukin and Jennifer Smith Maguire, “Consumers and Consumption,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 30 (2004), pp. 173-97.

- i) within the local economic environment wherein investment opportunities have been insufficient due to the state's disinvestment in the industrial and agricultural sectors during the export-led development period and the extremely restricted business climate due to the repression of Kurdish business people during the conflict years, real estate sector activities such as land trade and housing production has been permanently vital in Diyarbakır;
- ii) following the relative easing of the political atmosphere after the abolition of the OHAL in 2002, and in parallel to the national trend in the construction sector, real estate activities in the city have expanded almost exclusively through housing constructions;
- iii) the presence of powerful landowners, which have vast farmlands in their possession and have constituted clientelistic networks with municipal administrators and cadres especially in the late 90s have determined the form and relations of such expansion in the real estate sector;
- iv) although their position against the landowners have not changed fundamentally, a small group of contractor firms has differentiated in terms of their organizational and economic capacities, and has oriented towards higher-yield, larger-scale housing production, targeting the upper-end of the urban middle-classes;
- v) the pro-Kurdish municipalities have played an affirmative role against the suburbanization process by restoring their power of control over planning processes and development applications, especially with the election of Mayor Baydemir in 2004;
- vi) through undertaking mass housing projects and land sales in the fringes of the city, TOKİ, which has targeted predominantly low-middle classes mostly ignored by the local construction companies, has reinforced the suburbanization process in terms of location, architectural form and social space.

### Land

To comprehend the urban development in Kayapınar, one must take into account the specific features of land property structure in Diyarbakır. Historical conditions such as the monopolistic character of land ownership in the development areas of the city, the relative ineffectiveness of the municipalities in the land market, and the past site

selection decisions of the central state institutions have been influential to a great extent in the political economy of housing provision in the district. In consequence, conversion of rural lands in the outskirts of the city to developable urban land, which is always one of the most crucial components of housing provision, has been undertaken under circumstances favorable to large landholders who have appropriated the major part of urban land rents. Their relative strength against developers and municipalities in the real estate markets triggered speculative fluctuations, causing fierce debates in political and entrepreneurial circles. Lastly, the increased legal and administrative capacity of TOKİ after 2003 has added a new dynamic in patterns of land use and settlement preferences and thus diversified the parameters in local real estate markets.

As a result of the deep-rooted political and economic dynamics discussed in Chapter 3, concentration of land in the hands of large landowners has characterized the property structure in the outskirts of the city of Diyarbakır. Until the 1990s, vast farm lands in the potential development areas of Diyarbakır had been in the possession of a few large families. After the massive flows into the city and emergence of acute housing shortage, these families –the Ekinci Family that owned almost the total of Peyas Village until the mid-1990s being the most well-known<sup>437</sup>– searched for ways to benefit from the locational advantage of their lands. The topographic features of the city and previous land use patterns had obliged the city to expand along the northwestern axis. The Tigris River surrounding the city center like a bow is a natural barrier which increases infrastructural costs of possible development activities and thus impedes the city’s development along the eastern axis.

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<sup>437</sup> Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations,” p. 450.

On the other hand, settlement preferences of large-scale public institutions such as the military base in north, the military airport in south, and the Dicle University campus in the East had blocked the city's residential development since the 1960s.<sup>438</sup> Furthermore, the fact that the public sector had limited land in its possession produced unpaired advantage in the market for these landowner families.<sup>439</sup>

Starting from the 1990s, when unregulated housing constructions first emerged around Peyas Village and in the Huzurevleri neighborhood, the large landholders began to use clientelistic networks to put pressure on municipal administrators and cadres in order to improve their shares in land rents. These efforts proved successful, as manifested in planning decisions of the period. In the 1994 revision master plan (this plan was prepared to revise the 1985 master plan which had become totally inadequate after the unexpected increase in population) Kayapınar was included into the plan as a development area with profitable building permissions and higher construction densities.<sup>440</sup>

Similarly, the supplementary development plan for Kayapınar of 2001, which was prepared exclusively for the district after the 1994 revision plan also proved ineffective, confirmed the pressure from the landowners.<sup>441</sup> With the official registration of profitable development rights, these families began to parcel their large estates and

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<sup>438</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, pp. 71-6.

<sup>439</sup> Historically, the share of state-owned lands –including meadows, and lands in possession of municipalities, foundations and state treasury– has been relatively low within the boundaries of the metropolitan municipality. By 2006, only twelve percent of the total lands were in possession of public institutions, and the municipalities were holding only 264 ha of 15,341 ha public lands. In Kayapınar district, the municipality had 60 ha, and the treasury had 737 ha lands. See, Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, p. 121.

<sup>440</sup> For a more detailed account of the planning process, see the next subsection.

<sup>441</sup> Gökhan Bilgihan, et al., “Diyarbakır Nazım Plan Çalışması: Aktör Merkezli Bir Değerlendirme,” in TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası, *Altıncı Türkiye Şehircilik Kongresi Bildiriler Kitabı*, (Ankara: TMMOB Şehir Plancıları Odası, 2007), p. 379.

sell off them to third parties for lucrative profits. By 2000s, almost all vast farm lands in Kayapınar were transferred to the new, smaller purchasers, except the distant lands that could not obtain higher densities.<sup>442</sup> When the main wave of regulated residential development began in Kayapınar, that is to say in the period that follows the 2001 plan, lands had already been sold off and the bigger portions of land rents were appropriated by a few families. As discussed in the next sub-section, although the 2006 master zoning plan limited, to a certain extent, further land rent pressure of the property owners, the existing regulations and development rights in the district reflect the economic and political power of influence of large landowners on urban processes in the 1990s and early 2000s.

On the other hand, after 2003, the Mass Housing Agency added a new dynamic to the local land market, since it has an effective power on residential development areas in the outskirts of the city.<sup>443</sup> With the construction of two large-scale housing projects (in the Üçkuyular area of Yenışehir district and the Çölgüzeli area of Kayapınar district<sup>444</sup>), principally planned and developed for low-middle and middle income groups and the rightful owners displaced from the urban transformation areas in Suriçi, and a hospital campus built in a distant area of the Kayapınar district, TOKİ had ample influence in defining prospective trajectories of urban development.<sup>445</sup> Furthermore, privatization of the state-owned lands in the outskirts of the city consolidated this outward urban development as discussed below, in the sub-section on TOKİ's role.

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<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 380.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 382.

<sup>444</sup> See, Figure 4.

<sup>445</sup> Yüksel, "Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations," p. 452.

Despite this increased residential activity in Kayapınar, the municipalities' power of influence in the land market has been limited in comparison to commanding actors like private landowners and TOKİ. Since the municipalities had not large-scale lands in their possession and adequate financial resources to expropriate land to lead residential development, they performed a relatively passive role in the land market, capitulating to pressures from market actors during the initial planning works in Kayapınar district.<sup>446</sup>

This ineffectiveness and incapacity in developing urban lands on the front of municipalities have caused longstanding results regarding housing provision. Particularly, as for the acute demand for affordable housing, the municipalities could not have produced operative solutions, paving the way to mainly middle and upper-middle class residential development in the recent period. Although the current master plan and the strategic plans of the DMM target to create viable solutions for the extremely dense and inconvenient accommodation circumstances of the lower-income groups through renewal and rehabilitation projects,<sup>447</sup> municipal administrations could not undertake such projects since they do not have large-scale developable land in their possession.

Consequently, as the price of urban lands and thus the share of the revenue demanded by the landowners increased constantly in the potential development areas such as the Peyas neighborhood in Kayapınar and the Bağcılar area in Bağlar district, the developers targeted upper segments of the housing market to maintain their competitive position in an economic environment where strong landowners coexist with many small-scale and a few medium-scale developers.

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<sup>446</sup> Unlike other major cities, assignment of state-owned lands to the municipality has never been the case in Diyarbakır. The only exception was the transfer of the Sümerbank Serge factory's land in Yenişehir during the RP (Welfare Party) period. Bilgihan, et al., pp. 384-5.

<sup>447</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, p. 145.

Furthermore, such a property structure of land, which grants landowners a steady position in the market and detains the municipalities to intervene more actively on behalf of lower-income residents, has produced a highly speculative land market in Kayapınar. Even after the validation of the 2006 master plan, which increased the regulation capacity of the municipality on a larger development area, the speculative sale of lands in expectation of further construction rights continued. Even agricultural land outside residential growth zones designated by the plan were subjected to daily sales. Rumors on “malicious speculators” who tempted small buyers with minimal savings to buy land in distant villages spread citywide, and created a fierce debate, after a while, on land speculation among entrepreneurial circles and municipal administrators.

Discontent reached its peak in the first months of 2011, as witnessed by local and national press.<sup>448</sup> After subsequent condemnations from business organizations and political parties, the intervention of Mayor Osman Baydemir proved successful and speculative land sales came to an end. Rather, it might be more convenient to state that land markets returned to acceptable levels in Diyarbakır wherein transactions of land have always been widespread and continually speculative in character since the 1990s,

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<sup>448</sup> Among others, see *Özgür Gündem*, 3 March 2011; Milliyet Emlak website, 3 March 2011, *Diyarbakır'da Arsa Fiyatları 50 Kat Arttı*, accessed 6 October 2013, [www.milliyetemlak.com/haber/Diyarbakırda-Arsa-Fiyatları-50-Kat-Arttı-/haber.html?haberID=8262](http://www.milliyetemlak.com/haber/Diyarbakırda-Arsa-Fiyatları-50-Kat-Arttı-/haber.html?haberID=8262); *Sabah*, 14 March 2011; *Hürriyet*, 16 March 2011; Emlak Kulisi website, 22 March 2011, *Osman Baydemir: Arsalar satılıp sermaye kent dışına çıkarılıyor!*, accessed 6 October 2013, <http://emlakkulisi.com/osman-baydemir-arsalar-satilip-sermaye-kent-disina-cikariliyor/67359>. In March 2011, Diyarbakır Directorate of Title Registration informed that nine thousand single operations have been undertaken in a year, increasing fifty percent on the previous year's operations. Diyarbakır Association of Real Estate Agents and Advisors declared that land prices have risen fifty-fold due to speculative sales. Business organizations like the Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Diyarbakır Association of Businessmen in Organized Industry Zone and the Diyarbakır Association of Industrialists and Businessmen made subsequent announcements, condemning speculative operations in the land market and cash flow out of the city.

due to the lack of alternative outlets for investment.<sup>449</sup> It would not be unreasonable to assume that common concerns among political and entrepreneurial circles for “capital outflow from Diyarbakır”<sup>450</sup> due to land speculation have been determining for such interventions.

To sum up, given that Diyarbakır’s urban economy has long been characterized by inadequate industrial production, disinvestments and service sector based disproportionately on construction economy, the property structure in Kayapınar and the interventions of influential market players such as large landowners and, to some extent, TOKİ into the land markets have produced a land rent-led economic environment. At first sight, the process of urban land development in Kayapınar might be compared to the conversion of large farm real estates (*çiftlik*) for large scale housing projects in the outskirts of Istanbul. The existence of these vast and privately-owned lands made possible the emergence of middle- and upper-middle class suburbs in the 1980s.<sup>451</sup> In the case of Istanbul, private developers with clientelistic relationships with politicians, municipal administrators and managers of central state institutions bought these large-scale farm lands at moderate charges from the owner families and then established partnerships with public banks and contractor firms to undertake lucrative housing projects.

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<sup>449</sup> This effective intervention was celebrated as “the bursting of the land sale bubble.” See, *Özgür Gündem*, 4 April 2011; *Anadolu Ajansı*, 20 April 2011.

<sup>450</sup> Emlak Kulisi website, 22 March 2011, *Osman Baydemir: Arsalar satılıp sermaye kent dışına çıkarılıyor!*, accessed 6 October 2013, <http://emlakkulisi.com/osman-baydemir-arsalar-satilip-sermaye-kent-disina-cikariliyor/67359>.

<sup>451</sup> Cf. Hatice Kurtuluş, “The Roles of Çiftlik on the Formation of the Metropolitan Fringe in the Expansion of Istanbul Metropolitan Area” (Ph.D. diss., Middle East Technical University, 1999).

However, in Kayapınar, the process has followed a different path. During the initial phases of residential development in Kayapınar, given the lack of private developers powerful in economic and political terms, large landowner families who have clientelistic relations with state institutions and municipal cadres, used their relations to change the building and zoning ordinances and increase the development rights of their lands, and then transferred land in smaller portions to relatively smaller landowners. Thus, the major part of land rents was appropriated in the late 1990s by these few families. Later, this monopolistic character of the land market triggered speculative fluctuations and has worked in advantage of novel landowners against developers. Municipalities have functioned as passive supporters of the course of events, especially until 2004. Later, as the 2006 master plan indicates, the DMM, under the mayorship of Osman Baydemir, took a more active stance against speculative land sales. However, as for the whole suburbanization process in Kayapınar, it cannot be argued that the municipalities could have employed proactive and interventionist methods, because of their relative incapacity in terms of land ownership and the clientelistic relations conducted with landowners in the previous terms.

### Planning

The recent residential development process in Kayapınar differs from the previous stages of urbanization in Diyarbakır, in terms of maintaining discipline on planning processes and development applications. As discussed in Chapter 3, due to the configuration of dramatic economic, demographic and political dynamics, residential development in other parts of the city has been undertaken at an uncontrollable tempo

and form. However, the physical environment of Kayapınar, except the unlawful buildings in Peyas Village and the Huzurevleri neighborhood constructed in the very early stages of residential development in the area, was formed under regulated conditions in the 2000s. As a result of the administrators' pro-active involvement, both the metropolitan and district municipalities have restored their planning authority in this period.

As I elaborate in the next section, this re-orientation in the field of urban planning cannot be taken as a mere technical improvement. Both the content of the plans (i.e. plan ordinances regarding macro-form strategies, land uses, building densities and public facilities) and the increased discipline of the municipalities on implementation processes reflect, to a certain extent, the pro-Kurdish municipalities' spatial conception that envisions a rationalized urban living. Yet, before detailing this discussion, I have to picture the stages and components of the planning process in Kayapınar.

The master zoning plan (1/25,000 scale) of Diyarbakır of 2006 was prepared by a team of experts, under the supervision of Tarık Şengül, an urban planning professor from the Middle East Technical University. In legal terms, the plan was an obligation, since the 2004 Metropolitan Municipality Law (Law No. 5216) expanded the DMM's physical boundaries (from 25,000 ha to 125,600 ha) and obliged the administration to prepare a new master plan within two years.<sup>452</sup>

Yet, on the other hand, the newly elected Mayor Osman Baydemir felt the urgency to intervene into the development process with more comprehensive tools, as his predecessor Feridun Çelik had. On that score, as the chief planner of the bureau that

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<sup>452</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, pp. 2-3. By this law Kayapınar's administrative status was upgraded to first-tier municipality of the DMM.

prepared the city plan states, the urge to restore planning authority on the urban development processes superseded legal and formal obligations.<sup>453</sup> The previous plans had become completely ineffective, although several revisions and amendments had been undertaken. In fact, such particularistic interventions had broken the conceptual and practical integrity of planning procedures and thus had reduced the DMM's capacity of intervention into prompt residential development.

However, the Mayor Baydemir and his cadres were ambitious to rehabilitate the physical environment of Diyarbakır by the help of rational methods and tools conceived in accordance with a modernizing planning paradigm. Planning authority and the plan itself were regarded as necessary apparatuses to progress beyond major western cities — physical manifestation of “political success.”<sup>454</sup> Thus, Baydemir, after the 2004 local elections, commissioned Şengül and a small team of experts from Ankara and Diyarbakır to prepare the plans.<sup>455</sup> After the validation of the 1/25,000 scale zoning plan by the municipal council in December 2006, 1/5,000 scale zoning plans were prepared in two years by the same team. As of today, 1/1000 scale application plans (*uygulama imar planları*) covering the majority of the city of Diyarbakır are available to the municipalities.

The primary reason behind the urgency was the apparent ineffectiveness of the previous 1994 revision master plan (the original plan had been prepared by Zühtü Can

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<sup>453</sup> Remzi Sönmez, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

<sup>454</sup> Tarık Şengül, interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

<sup>455</sup> Before 2004, the DMM had only two planners within its administrative structure, therefore Hatice Kurşuncu, Gökhan Bilgihan and Gökhan H. Erkan were invited to Diyarbakır to form a special planning bureau under the wings of the DMM. The research process and drawing of some of the technical plans were undertaken by this bureau, while Remzi Sönmez from Ankara (Dampo Ltd.) undertook the main part of the technical drawings as the A-class planner.

and validated in 1985).<sup>456</sup> After a long period of unplanned development since the 1960s, the master plan of 1985 aimed at producing a comprehensive solution for the city's acute housing problems. It envisioned decreasing population densities in the overcrowded city center, by spotting Kayapınar, the Şilbe mass housing zone and the south of Şanlıurfa Highway as residential growth zones, and the Elazığ and Şanlıurfa road axes as industrial growth zones.<sup>457</sup> However, massive migration in this very period annulled the plan's population calculations and paved the way to rapid and unlawful residential development, intensifying further the population and building densities in Bağlar, Yenişehir and Suriçi, as described in Chapter 3.

The 1994 revision plan could not alter this course. Besides a massive surge in “unlawful” housing in the outlying neighborhoods, between 1994 and 2004 the “formal” housing stock of the city was built with subsequent plan amendments designed for single parcels and localized development plans (*mevzii imar planı*), reducing the planning authority of the municipalities. In only ten years more than five hundred plan amendments were decreed by the municipal councils.<sup>458</sup> Geographically, these amendments were overwhelmingly concentrated in Bağlar and Yenişehir. As would be expected, the main demand of the property owners on every scale was to alter land uses (from agricultural land to residential land, for instance) and increase building densities.

Kayapınar was exempt, to a great extent, from these particularistic interventions of property owners into planning procedures, since the 2001 Kayapınar supplementary development plan (*ilave imar planı*; revised in 2005) had already defined lucrative

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<sup>456</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, p.108.

<sup>457</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>458</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 111-2

development rights by doubling building densities given by the 1985 plan.<sup>459</sup> As discussed in the previous sub-section, during the 1990s, the effectual power of large landowners in the land and real estate markets had played a defining role in obtaining such increased building rights.

Given such a background in the field of planning, the main goal of the municipal administration and the planning bureau was to restore control over the planning and application processes. Therefore, for three years between 2004 and 2007, the DMM and the district municipalities halted partial plan amendments and prevented construction facilities in the undeveloped zones, in order that new constructions would conform to the obligations defined in the development legislation.<sup>460</sup> The continuing pressure from the landowners and developers to change land uses and building densities by particular plan amendments was absorbed by the resolute political stance of the administrators and professional cadres. In this period, one of the planners invited to Diyarbakır for the planning process states, the municipalities issued permits only for buildings that would be constructed in already developed areas and in accordance to existing building ordinances.<sup>461</sup>

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<sup>459</sup> *Ibid.*, p.109. During the first term of the pro-Kurdish municipality in the city, a supplementary plan of Kayapınar was prepared to prevent particularistic amendments and to lead rapid residential development in the area. In 2001, a private local firm, Planevi Ltd., was commissioned to undertake the planning work targeting the year of 2015 and population of 300,000. Thus, ordinances of the master plan of 1994 regarding Kayapınar were revised, and 2287 hectares were included in the plan, doubling the building densities defined by the master plan.

<sup>460</sup> As result of this strict discipline, a significant portion of the new residential areas of Diyarbakır –such as the Peyas neighborhood of Kayapınar and the Bağcılar area (south of Şanlıurfa highway) of Bağlar district– could be constructed in accordance with the 18<sup>th</sup> article of the development law (Law no. 3194). That is to say, forty percent of each lot located in these areas was transferred to the municipality and used to develop public facilities and spaces.

<sup>461</sup> Hatice Kurşuncu, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, January 2014.

The master plan of 2006 envisioned northwestward development in the outskirts of the city, in accordance with the “planned decentralization” macro-form strategy.<sup>462</sup> High-rise apartments and single-family houses scattered around common spaces and large arterial roads were to give definition to the landscape in the residential zones such as Kayapınar and Bağcılar. Building densities in the already-developed areas of the city center were to be decreased by the help of urban renewal, rehabilitation and preservation projects. Thus, the plan envisioned, the building pressure in the low-income neighborhoods of Bağlar, Yenişehir and Suriçi was to be released and the historic urban fabric of the latter was to be preserved. The central neighborhoods of Yenişehir were zoned as a central business district.

In fact the planning team did not have substantial alternatives in terms of macro-form strategies. As noted above, the topographic features and the locational preferences of the public institutions such as the military base in the North, the military airport in the South and the university in the East impeded the city’s development in the previous eras. Nevertheless, we know from the accounts of the planners who had to deal with daily requests of landowners and developers, during the planning process some landowners and developers expressed their aspirations for eastward or southwestward development.<sup>463</sup> However, such propositions were deprived of material practicality. Large-scale residential development along the eastern bank of the Tigris River necessitated immense infrastructural works, increasing costs for the municipality and other institutions that would deliver public facilities. On the other hand, to the south of the Bağlar district there were first-quality agricultural lands that had to be protected. In

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<sup>462</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, p. 145.

<sup>463</sup> Gökhan Bilgihan, interview by the author, tape recording, Istanbul, Turkey, January 2014.

the end, the already existing northwestward expansion trend was included in the master plan.

Kayapınar was zoned as the primary residential growth zone of the city. Along with the Bağcılar area of Bağlar, vast lands of Kayapınar extending beyond the Peyas village and Huzurevleri neighborhood were to be home to inhabitants leaving the city center. The plan estimated that the population of the Diyarbakır city would be 1,600,000 by the year 2020.<sup>464</sup> Accordingly, 620,000 of them would live in Kayapınar, 440,000 in Bağlar and 300,000 in Yenişehir. Thus, of the total 4880 hectares of planned land in Kayapınar, 2626 ha (476 ha developed areas and 2149 ha growth zones) were devoted to residential areas and 824 ha to green areas. Both of these figures are much higher than the remaining districts.<sup>465</sup>

### Developers

The recent residential development in the 2000s, which has extensively altered the urban fabric of the city of Diyarbakır and led to the emergence of the Kayapınar district, is also interrelated with the changing dynamics in the field of private construction firms. In tandem with the persistent activity in housing constructions, a small-but-increasingly-influential group of developers began to differentiate –in terms of scale and mode of operations– within the local construction sector historically characterized by small scale investments and fragile one-man ventures.

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<sup>464</sup> Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality, *Plan Açıklama Raporu*, p. 153.

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

Yet, this differentiation has its own limits. The relations and terms peculiar to the previous periods' build-and-sell type business environment still prevail to a great extent. Even though a small segment of the contractors have increased their capital budgets and expanded their share in the market in comparison to the rest, the terms and relations of operations reflect a transitional character. Factors such as the degree of financialization in the sector, relative strength of landowners against developers, narrow scope of operations in terms of locality and consumer segment determine this transitional phase. In what follows I give an account of this differentiation in the field of private actors.

As described and analyzed extensively in the literature on formal housing provision in Turkey's metropolitan cities in the pre-1980 period, the determining feature of the sell-and-build type house building, operated by small-scale individual investors, is the *sui generis* relationship established between contractors, landowners, construction workers and urban middle classes.<sup>466</sup> Accordingly, given the low levels and limited scope of public expenditures in housing and reluctance of the large-scale capital to invest in real estate markets wherein profit rates were low and unstable, small-scale entrepreneurs bridged the gap in the market, bearing the high levels of risk that larger actors avoided.

Having quite limited initial capital outlay in their hands, these contractors created a relationship of revenue-sharing with landowners on the basis of barter. Thus, without having adequate financial resources to purchase land, contractors could undertake the

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<sup>466</sup> Among others, see Oğuz Işık, "Yapsatçılığın Yazılmamış Tarihi: Türkiye'de Konut Kesiminde Küçük Üreticiliğin Varlık Koşulları ve Gelişimi Üzerine Gözlemler," *Mimarlık* 261 (January, 1995), pp. 43-5; Ayşe Öncü, "The Politics of the Urban Land Market in Turkey: 1950-1980," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 12, no.1 (1988), pp. 38-64; İhsan Bilgin, *Konut Üretiminin Karşılaştırmalı Analizi* (İstanbul: YÜMFED, 1992); Ayşe Buğra, "The Immoral Economy of Housing in Turkey," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 22, no.2 (1998), pp. 303-17.

building process, at the end of which they shared dwelling units with landowners according to rates which increased steadily from the 1960s to the 1980s. Meanwhile, benefiting from low levels of wages in labor markets flooded with a mostly unskilled and unorganized labor force, the build-and-sell type contractors could manage to keep average operations costs per dwelling unit relatively low and thus increased their profit rate.

On the other hand, the existence of middle-income groups eager to invest in housing, because of the inflationary pressure on their disposable incomes, enabled small-scale contractors to find regular demand for the dwelling units. A significant portion of the urban middle classes opted to buy second houses to protect their monetary savings against steadily-increasing inflation. Moreover, since the financial vulnerability of the contractors led them to sell units during the construction phase, under the market rates and by installments, the middle-income groups obtained higher purchasing power in the formal housing market. However, this type of housing provision, forming the urbanization dynamics of the import-substitution development period to a great extent, lasted until the 1980s. Macroeconomic shifts in the capital accumulation regime have altered the terms of this compromise, and caused the substitution of small-scale contractors with larger private firms and housing cooperatives in housing provision in the major cities.

As for Diyarbakır, except few housing cooperatives initiated by the urban middle classes with regular monthly income, the above described market structure and build-and-sell type housing provision were prevalent in the 1980s and 1990s, during which the acute housing demand of the new immigrants spurred unprecedented construction activity in developed and undeveloped zones of the city. By the year 2000, of the total

stock of ninety thousand buildings within the province's boundaries, only one thousand buildings had been constructed by housing cooperatives.<sup>467</sup> The share of public investment was nearly five percent; that is, the housing demand of the city had been met predominantly by the private sector.

On the other hand, in addition to rise in demand side, low levels of public investments and lack of alternative outlets for private investments in the city led small-scale investors into the construction sector, searching for modest profits with limited savings and without professional competence and skills. These contractors, along with housing cooperatives which operated in the planned neighborhoods of Yenişehir (the Kooperatif neighborhood being the most apparent example), built a significant portion of the seventy five thousand dwelling units added to the city's housing stock in the 1990s. Apart from the *gecekondu* neighborhoods that emerged during the period, the whole housing stock of the central neighborhoods of Bağlar, Yenişehir and the early apartment blocks erected around Peyas village in Kayapınar were constructed by this group.

In the 2000s, in tandem with the general increase in the overall volume of the housing production, the total number of the registered construction firms almost tripled.<sup>468</sup> The prominence of the construction sector in Diyarbakır's economic structure can be understood by the numbers of the firms and the employment figures.

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<sup>467</sup> State Institute of Statistics, *Bina Sayımı 2000*, (Ankara: State Institute of Statistics, 2001), p. 50.

<sup>468</sup> Diyarbakır Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *unpublished report*, 2013. By the summer of 2013, of the total seven thousand active firms in Diyarbakır, 666 entities were categorized as special-purpose construction firms (three quarters of these firms were limited liability corporations, while the rest was sole proprietorship), and 733 as contracting firms in energy, infrastructure and construction (two-third of these firms were limited liability corporations, while the rest was sole proprietorships).

Accordingly, by 2011, classified in terms of the main field of business activity, the construction firms constituted one-tenth of all the corporations in the city.<sup>469</sup> On that score, construction firms come after manufacturers and merchants. However, more telling is the share of the construction firms in employment structure. By 2011, although the high level of unregistered employees in Diyarbakır in general and in the construction sector in particular makes it difficult to work out exact calculations, yet it can be stated that one-fourth of all the employees in the city were employed by the construction firms, ranking the sector the first among all.<sup>470</sup> The EKOSEP survey of 2009 confirms the predominance of the construction workers within the city's employment structure.<sup>471</sup> In each of the four districts, construction work is the primary profession in providing household livelihood.

However, despite the increase in the number of construction firms, only a few dozens of them possess the institutional and financial capacity to carry out large-scale, higher-yield projects. In contrast to the majority of the local firms which carry on operating according to the build-and-sell mode and constructing middle-cost apartment blocks on single parcels, these incoming actors of the market construct multi-block high-rise luxurious apartments (in Kayapınar) and single-family houses (in Bağcılar and nearby the Silvan Highway), developed on scale of city blocks.

Approximately, one-half of the housing stock developed after 2004 were undertaken by these firms, most of which organized under the roof of the Diyarbakır

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<sup>469</sup> Karacadağ Development Agency, *TRC2 Bölgesi 2014-2023 Bölge Planı Mevcut Durum Raporu*, (Diyarbakır: Karacadağ Development Agency, 2013), p. 198.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 200.

<sup>471</sup> Keser, *EKOSEP*, p. 84.

Construction Businessmen Association (DIYAD).<sup>472</sup> That is to say, it is these more structured firms –e.g. brands such as Ensar Holding (Dicle Vadi Konakları), AZC Holding (Dicle Vadi Konakları) and Çeyisa Holding (Tutkapark, Goldpark, Misstanbul, Diyarpark, Altinkent Villaları, Altınşehir) or relatively rising ones such as Azel Holding (Azel Villa, Azel Deluxe, Azel Residence, Azel Sanat), Metropol İnşaat (Metropol Kent, Metropol Life), AC İnşaat (AC Center), Bedir Yapı (City Flowers), Bektaş Yapı (Diamond City), Rensa İnşaat (Rensa Yaşam Evleri) among others– which defined the physical landscape of Kayapınar, undertaking luxurious housing complexes and gated communities which “draw on broader global transformations that have shaped urban landscapes over the last decades.”<sup>473</sup>

However, even among this group, the number of firms that have contracting business with the government is very low. The outstanding example among these is Ensar Holding, owned by the former president of the DTSO and current AKP MP Galip Ensarioğlu’s family, which has undertaken several construction works procured by public institutions such as schools, hospital campuses, and transportation infrastructure for the Dicle University, TOKİ and Uludağ University.<sup>474</sup> Similarly, AZC Holding has undertaken road constructions in Diyarbakır. Lastly, of the brands in Diyarbakır, only Çeyisa Holding (via its subsidiary firm Dibay İnşaat in the Çölgüzeli Project) and Ensar Holding (the overall infrastructural works of Üçkuyular housing zone), have undertaken contracting works in Diyarbakır. Yet, among the smaller firms there are ones that have produced units in other cities of the region (Durmaz İnşaat in Mardin, for instance). In

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<sup>472</sup> Celalettin Birtane, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

<sup>473</sup> Yüksel, “Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations,” p. 450.

<sup>474</sup> Ensar İnşaat, website, accessed 21 February 2014, <http://www.ensarins.com/projeler.php?p=1>.

short, it might be stated that except a very few of them, the overwhelming majority of the construction companies in Diyarbakır operate out of the economic networks constituted via public tenders by the state, and strive to accumulate capital in only housing production.

In terms of the construction sector's integration to the financial system, as Table 6 demonstrates, there has been a clear increase in the degree of integration since 2007. Following the overall increase trend on the national scale, construction-sector-specific cash loans have increased prominently in both absolute and relative terms in Diyarbakır. While the total amount of the construction sector loans increased, their share in total cash loans has risen noticeably from 2007 to 2013. Particularly for the subsequent three years after 2009 the credit expansion is remarkable. In Diyarbakır, the agriculture and construction sectors constitute the primary focus of commercial bank loans.

Table 6.  
Bank Credits for Diyarbakır's Construction Sector, 2007-2013

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Construction Sector Credits*	53,229	66,276	80,245	162,661	249,623	451,440	480,556
Sector Credits Under Follow-up*	2851	4869	5536	3843	4316	10,440	18,709
Total Cash Credits*	1,081,354	1,673,899	1,975,734	3,035,404	4,274,388	5,551,393	6,819,388
Percentage of Construction Credits	0.049	0.039	0.040	0.053	0.058	0.081	0.070

\*Million TL.

Source: Banking Regulation and Supervision Agency, 2014

As for the terms of land procurement in large-scale projects undertaken by the new-generation firms, it can be argued that the general character of the relationship between the developers and the landowners has not changed fundamentally since the 1990s. As stated in the previous sub-sections, due to their comparative advantage in the market, landowners holding relatively vast farm lands in the western outskirts of the city have steadily increased their share of land rent. Presently, a typical deal between the developer and the landowner in this area of the city gives a half of the dwelling units to be built to the latter.<sup>475</sup> Purchasing land or collecting available farm lands for prospective projects is not common, since most, if not all, of the contractor firms do not have adequate capital budget.

In consequence, such a relationship with landowners has limited recent housing production in Kayapınar mostly to upper segments of the market. As landowners increased their share of the land rents created and squeezed contractors' profits, the latter has oriented towards increasing the size of their operations and thus increased building-densities on the one hand, and has targeted the most prosperous consumer segments in the market on the other. Given the planning decisions that allow building relatively higher densities in the residential growth zones of the city, reflecting the landowners' effective pressure in the past to obtain more share from land rents, Kayapınar's urban landscape has been defined predominantly by the high-rise luxurious blocks of spacious (on average more than two hundred square meters) flats constructed after 2004.

As the demand for upscale housing has maintained a steady level in the 2000s – partly due to demographic shifts (decrease in average household size) and changes in housing preferences of urban middle-classes (urge to leave the inner-city, physically

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<sup>475</sup> Remzi Durmaz, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

decrepit and socially insecure)<sup>476</sup> – developers could have continued to operate in this segment without running into severe problems of excess supply. As shown in Table 3, total house sales in Diyarbakır have steadily risen in the last five years in parallel to the establishment of a mortgage system, except the significant decrease in 2010.

The most dramatic increase in both total sales and mortgaged sales was observed in 2013. On the other hand, while the middle- and upper-middle classes left their deteriorated buildings in the city center and flooded Kayapınar, the acute demand of large low-income groups for affordable housing could not be met by the market actors. On that score, TOKİ's redefined activity in Diyarbakır takes on extra significance, since its mass housing projects have appealed to groups with modest-but-regular income such as civil servants, and have met a particular portion of the housing demand. The following section examines TOKİ's role in the recent suburbanization process.

### Mass Housing Agency

Although in terms of numbers it has played a limited role in the recent residential development, the political economic relations characterizing the suburbanization process in Kayapınar cannot be comprehended without taking into consideration TOKİ's significant presence in the city. The institution, the legal and administrative capacities of which have been redefined after 2002 by the AKP governments, undertook important housing projects in the distant areas of the provincial center and constructed nearly ten thousand dwelling units exclusively for middle- and low- income groups in the period. This considerable construction activity and allocation of some state-owned lands by

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<sup>476</sup> Yüksel, "Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations," p. 451.

TOKİ to private purchasers have substantially affected the dynamics of local real estate markets and determined to a certain extent the form of urban development in Kayapınar.

TOKİ was established in 1984 by the ANAP government, to resolve the acute affordable housing shortage and prevent informal settlements in the major cities. In this initial period its scope was mainly limited to providing private developers and housing cooperatives with subsidized state loans. Between 1984 and 1995 almost one million dwelling units were financed by the state through the Mass Housing Fund, in addition to the forty five thousand units constructed directly by TOKİ.<sup>477</sup> The state's intervention into the housing economy proved successful and the volume of the construction sector continuously increased in the 1980s and early 1990s.<sup>478</sup> Despite its significant role in the general increase of housing production, TOKİ did not manage to resolve low-income housing shortage, in opposition to its principal institutional goal. It performed essentially as a public agency that channeled state subsidized funds to middle- and upper-middle income housing projects, spurring suburbanization in the metropolitan fringes of the major cities.<sup>479</sup> Towards the end of the 1990s, as a result of its lending regime, ineffective resource management and widespread corruption, TOKİ was bankrupt and became totally dysfunctional.

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<sup>477</sup> Ali Türel, "Toplu Konut İdaresi," in *Yüzyıl Biterken: Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türkiye Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: İletişim, 1996), vol. 3, pp. 796-7.

<sup>478</sup> Balaban, "Capital Accumulation, the State and the Production of Built Environment," p. 156.

<sup>479</sup> Buğra, "The Immoral Economy of Housing in Turkey," p. 308.

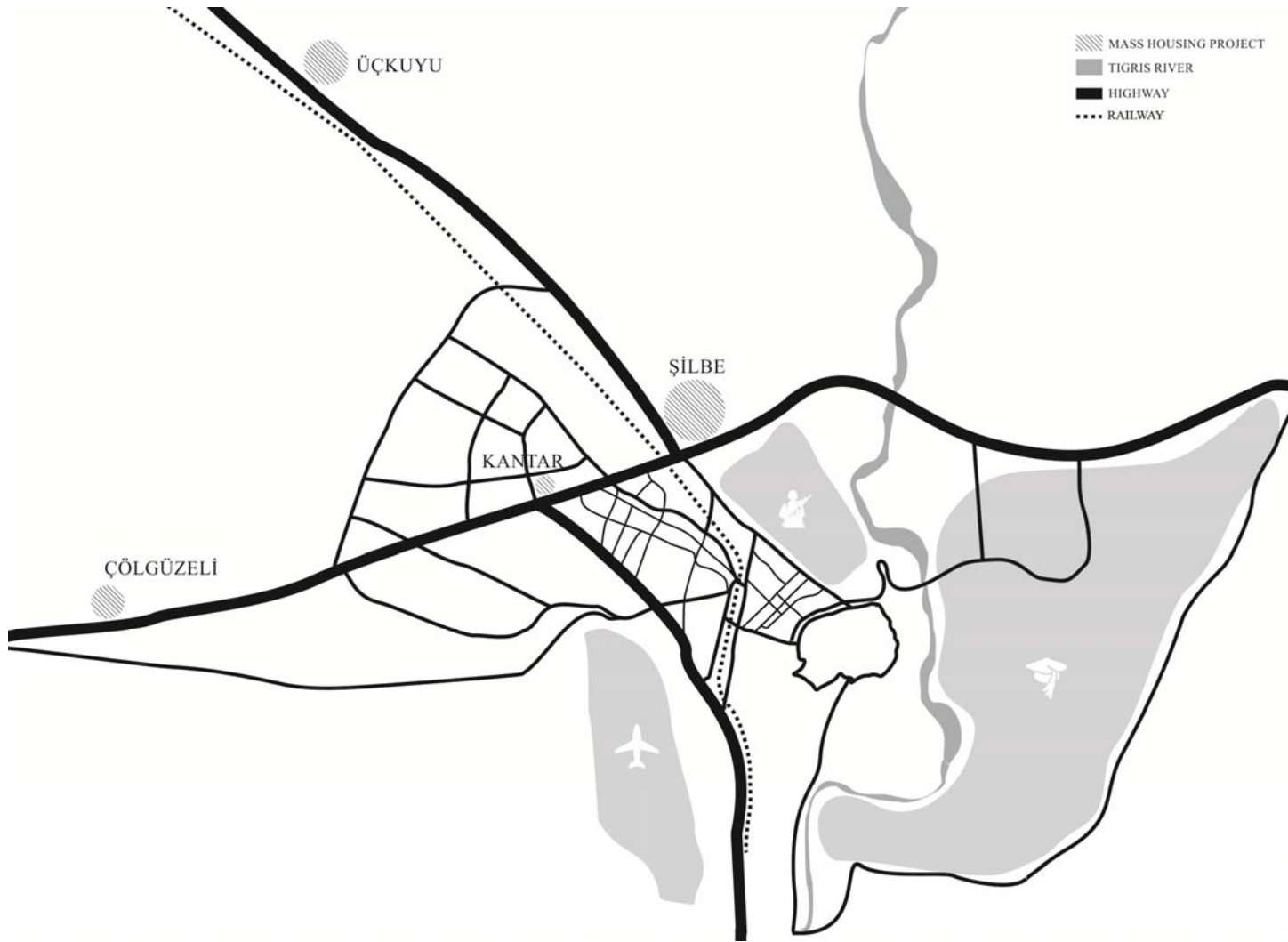


Figure 4. Housing Projects by TOKİ in Diyarbakır

In this framework, TOKİ's first mass housing project in Diyarbakır was built in the Şilbe area of Yenişehir district between 1994 and 1996.<sup>480</sup> Located in the triangular area between the Elazığ and Silvan highways, in the north of the city center and nearby informal neighborhoods such as Aziziye, Gürdoğan, Yolaltı and Seyrantepe, the Şilbe project was planned and designed to accommodate low-income inhabitants who struggled with acute housing shortage in the period. However, the project missed its goal and the apartments were bought by more well-to-do bidders who had regular income.<sup>481</sup>

The second and more influential wave of the mass housing projects in the city started after 2002, in the aftermath of the AKP's rise to power. As highlighted in the relevant literature, the AKP governments have redefined TOKİ's role in the construction sector and extended its scope and resources.<sup>482</sup> As a result of successive legal and administrative changes undertaken between 2002 and 2008,<sup>483</sup> its institutional capacities have increased substantially in terms of its financial resources and legal authorities, and thus TOKİ has become the most influential public institution in the field of land and housing development.

In contrast to its first phase when it functioned as a financial intermediary between the developers and the state banks such as the Real Estate Bank and the Mass Housing Fund, now TOKİ had the

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<sup>480</sup> Zümrüt, pp. 172-174.

<sup>481</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>482</sup> Osman Balaban, "The Negative Effects of Construction Boom on Urban Planning and Environment in Turkey: Unraveling the Role of the Public Sector," *Habitat International* 36, (2012), pp. 26-35; Dilek Özdemir, "The Role of the Public Sector in the Provision of Housing Supply in Turkey, 1950-2009," *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35, no.6 (2011), pp. 1099-117.

<sup>483</sup> Balaban, "The Negative Effects," p. 31. Balaban lists the legal changes that aim at liberating and deregulating the field of urban development in general and construction sector in particular, and states fourteen legal changes regarding TOKİ.

“right to (i) regulate the zoning and sale of almost all state-owned urban land, (ii) form subsidiary construction firms and/or engage in partnerships with existing private firms, (iii) construct ‘for-profit’ housing on state land either through its own subsidiary firms or through public private partnerships in order to raise revenues for public-housing construction, (iv) sell its mortgaged claims to private mortgage-brokerage firms, (v) execute ‘urban renewal’ and ‘gecekondu transformation’ projects, and (vi) revise planning and zoning regulations in ‘transformation’ zones.”<sup>484</sup>

Such a renewed role had consequences for Diyarbakır as well. In addition to the dwelling units constructed in 1996, TOKİ made particular plans for state-owned lands allocated to the agency by the Treasury and the Land Office,<sup>485</sup> undertook infrastructural works in these sites, and constructed eight thousand more dwelling units, mosques, office blocks, schools, hospital buildings and military facilities such as an officers’ club, headquarters and dormitories, in various districts of Diyarbakır.<sup>486</sup>

In terms of total residential units built by TOKİ, Diyarbakır, with 10,600 units, comes after Istanbul, Ankara, İzmir, Bursa, Kocaeli, Konya, Kayseri and Adana.<sup>487</sup> That is to say, Diyarbakır has been one of the primary sites of activity for TOKİ in its second period after 2002. In accordance with its official target to build five hundred thousand dwelling units on the national scale, TOKİ has played a quantitatively significant role in

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<sup>484</sup> Tuna Kuyucu, “Poverty, Property and Power: Making Markets in Istanbul’s Informal Low-Income Settlements,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 2009), p. 177-8.

<sup>485</sup> Between 2003 and 2006, within the boundaries of the Diyarbakır province, nearly 780 ha of public lands registered in the name of the Treasury and Land Office were allocated to TOKİ. Nearly 200 ha of these lands were in the Üçkuyular area of Yenişehir district and 35 ha in Çölgüzeli of Kayapınar district. See, Republic of Turkey, *Soru Önergesi Yanıtı*, 8 January 2009.

<sup>486</sup> Mass Housing Agency, website, accessed 14 April 2014, [https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c\\_illist.asp?x\\_ilkodu=21](https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c_illist.asp?x_ilkodu=21).

<sup>487</sup> Mass Housing Agency, website, accessed 14 April 2014, [https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c\\_illist.asp?x\\_ilkodu=21](https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c_illist.asp?x_ilkodu=21).

Diyarbakır's real estate markets, building one-fifth of the whole new housing stock between 2001 and 2009.<sup>488</sup>

As for the geographical distribution of these dwelling units within the province, the overwhelming majority of the construction activity has been concentrated in Yenişehir and Kayapınar districts of the provincial center.<sup>489</sup> Accordingly, 1536 units were built in the Şilbe mass housing zone (Yenişehir), 2724 units in the Üçkuyu mass housing zone (Yenişehir), 1272 units in the Çölgüzeli mass housing zone (Kayapınar), and finally 384 units nearby the Kantar junction in Kayapınar.<sup>490</sup> The remaining units are located in Ergani, Silvan and Bismil districts.<sup>491</sup>

As for the economic category of the dwelling units, the bulk of the TOKİ constructions in Diyarbakır were planned and developed for low- and middle-income groups ("low-income" and "administrative" housing projects, in the official terminology of TOKİ).<sup>492</sup> The only exception is the Çölgüzeli project, which was constructed mainly for the rightful owners determined in the urban transformation projects proceeding in Suriçi as mentioned above in Chapter 5. As discussed in the previous chapter, the property owners –and tenants, after negotiations between TOKİ and the municipality– evacuated from the project sites in İçkale and Alipaşa-Lalabey neighborhoods obtained the right to buy state-subsidized dwellings in exchange for their properties. While the

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<sup>488</sup> Calculated by the author on the basis of the 2000 national building census and the construction permits issued by the municipalities. See State Institute of Statistics, *Bina Sayımı 2000*. The census counts all kinds of buildings, regardless of whether they were built with or without construction permits, located on registered or unregistered land.

<sup>489</sup> Figure 4.

<sup>490</sup> Zümrüt, p. 172.

<sup>491</sup> Mass Housing Agency, website, accessed 14 April 2014, [https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c\\_illist.asp?x\\_ilkodu=21](https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c_illist.asp?x_ilkodu=21).

<sup>492</sup> The dwelling units produced by TOKİ are classified as "low-income," "administrative," "urban renewal," "disaster housing projects," "agricultural village projects," and "revenue-share projects."

second and third phases of the Şilbe project were developed for middle-income inhabitants (apartments of 100 and 130 square meters), the Üçkuyu project essentially targets low-income and to a lesser extent middle-income inhabitants (apartments in this project range between 40 and 140 square meters).<sup>493</sup>

On the other hand, the twelve blocks raised in the Kantar area were assigned to the Security General Directorate.<sup>494</sup> These units are exempt from market sales, and are used as lodge houses by the police forces. Lastly, of the 2724 units in Üçkuyu, 1124 units were assigned to Memur-Sen, a trade union close to the AKP, by a special protocol signed in November 2011.<sup>495</sup> These units were sold to the union's members with a down payment of fifteen percent of the apartments' value.

Presently, more luxurious projects developed in accordance with TOKİ's revenue-sharing model do not exist in Diyarbakır. Consequently, as Zümrüt suggests, TOKİ projects in the city of Diyarbakır are overwhelmingly preferred by civil servants who have a regular monthly income. Half of the current owner occupiers in the Şilbe and Üçkuyu mass housing projects are civil servants and pensioners. Moreover, nearly fifty percent of the civil servants are composed of teachers.<sup>496</sup> As discussed in the previous sub-section, while the private developers undertaking projects in Kayapınar target predominantly the upper-end of the housing market, the housing demand of the lower segment of the urban middle classes –those who have regular but inadequate income for expensive apartments in gated communities– is fulfilled, to a certain extent, by TOKİ.

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<sup>493</sup> Zümrüt, p. 172.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 178.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 179.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 197-9.

The contractors of TOKİ's social housing projects are determined by an open bidding method. Following the allocation of the land to TOKİ and development of the project according to TOKİ's plans, the bidding process for contractors begins. The aforementioned housing projects constructed after 2002 were undertaken predominantly by non-local firms that have head offices outside Diyarbakır.<sup>497</sup> Out of eleven firms that undertook the projects in Şilbe, Üçkuyu and Çölgüzeli seven are based in Ankara,<sup>498</sup> three in Diyarbakır<sup>499</sup> and one in Şanlıurfa.<sup>500</sup> These companies range from well-established firms that have investments in various sectors and have undertaken more comprehensive construction works like highways, airports and tourism facilities (such as Hiperbol İnşaat, Koçoğlu İnşaat, Altındağ İnşaat and Sarp Group) to relatively smaller local firms specialized in housing construction.

In addition to these housing projects, TOKİ has also been actively involved in the local land market through sales. As noted above, nearly 240 hectares of the state-owned lands allocated to TOKİ after 2003 are located in the Üçkuyular and Çölgüzeli areas (780 hectares in total). The mass housing projects developed in these areas expectedly increased the market value of the lands in these outlying areas. Parceling the lands in accordance with localized development plans (*mevzii imar planı*) it prepared and selling separate parcels around the housing projects, TOKİ sought to increase its revenues. Between 2006 and 2009, seventy three hectares of public land were sold to private firms

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<sup>497</sup> Mass Housing Agency, website, accessed 14 April 2014, [https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c\\_illist.asp?x\\_ilkodu=21](https://www.toki.gov.tr/programlar/ihale/c_illist.asp?x_ilkodu=21).

<sup>498</sup> Hiperbol İnşaat (Kayapınar, Çölgüzeli and Üçkuyu projects), Koçoğlu İnşaat (Şilbe project), Altındağ İnşaat (Üçkuyu project), Pakt İnşaat (Üçkuyu project), GAP İnşaat (Üçkuyu project), Sarp Group (Üçkuyu project) and Okçuoğlu İnşaat (Üçkuyu project). The latter has a subsidiary office in Diyarbakır.

<sup>499</sup> Polen İnşaat (Çölgüzeli project), Dibay İnşaat (subsidiary partner of Çeysa Holding; Çölgüzeli project) and Fettah İnşaat (Çölgüzeli project).

<sup>500</sup> Bucaklar İnşaat (Üçkuyu project).

and individuals for nearly 22 million TL. Sales were concentrated in the Aziziye, Şilbe and Üçkuyu areas of Yenişehir district, and the Çölgüzeli area of Kayapınar district. Regarding residential development in Kayapınar district, it should be noted that nearly twelve ha of land was sold to eight buyers in Üçkuyular and fourteen ha to seventeen buyers in Çölgüzeli.<sup>501</sup>

To sum up, the strengthened presence of TOKİ in Diyarbakır's real estate markets in the 2000s has had significant implications on the processes of production of space in general and residential development in particular. First of all, the locational concentration of TOKİ's activities have had effects on the city's macro-form, and reinforced the existing westward expansion dynamic.<sup>502</sup> The Çölgüzeli and Üçkuyu mass housing projects, the large-scale health campus constructed in Üçkuyu and sales of land created a force of gravity on the outlying edges of the triangular area between Elazığ and Şanlıurfa highways. This area, that is Kayapınar district, designated as the residential growth zone by successive planning works since the mid-1990s, has already been the main site of suburbanization proceeding since the early 2000s. Hence the outward trend has consolidated.

Secondly, TOKİ has reinforced a particular division of labor in the supply-side of the local housing markets. Since the private developers have predominantly produced dwellings for more wealthy segments such as professionals, the mass housing projects have met the demand of the urban middle classes with regular-but-modest income, offering them relatively affordable price options and a standardized living environment.

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<sup>501</sup> Republic of Turkey, *Soru Önergesi Yanıtı*, 8 January 2009. Of the sixty eight transactions, only seven were undertaken in down payments, the rest were in forward sales.

<sup>502</sup> Yüksel, "Rescaled Localities and Redefined Class Relations," p. 452.

Thirdly, in a sense, TOKİ has had a regulation impact on local private developers. Even though their target purchasers vary, both the price policies and building standards of TOKİ have created a benchmark for private developers. While TOKİ's increased construction activity has expanded the housing markets, this also created a competitive market structure. By targeting the upper end of consumers, the developers sought to escape this competition. Yet, the strong presence of TOKİ in the market stabilizes the general prices of the dwelling units.

### Encounters in Suburbia: Imagining the New City

In the previous sections I demonstrated how Kayapınar, a former rural settlement has become a predominantly middle-income residential area in the 2000s, describing its demographic background and quantitative features in the housing boom, and exploring the relevant local and non-local actors' role and positioning at distinct phases of the suburbanization process. Accordingly, I tried to reveal to what extent and in what ways the municipalities, TOKİ and the real estate market actors such as developers and landowners have impacted on the emergence of this suburban zone, examining separately processes of land development, urban planning and housing production by the private and public sectors.

Aside from the relationship between residential development and the process of capital accumulation, what promises (*vaat*) can one find beyond the efforts to build a new city? To answer this question, we must include the field of urban imaginaries into our analysis and identify the imaginary elements characterizing the spatial strategies of the political actors which have had effects, to varying degrees, on Kayapınar's formation

in terms of its physical environment and social space. After then, we can trace points of alignment and disassociation emerging from encounters between distinct spatial conceptions and strategies. In view of that, the following provides an account of urban imaginaries, placing the discussion in the context of hegemony struggles between the AKP government and the Kurdish political movement.

The issue of the redevelopment of Diyarbakır should be associated both with the AKP's general approach to urban living and to its resolution perspective for the Kurdish issue. Put differently, these two distinct planes –both of which contain ideological and political elements– constitute separate but interrelated aspects of politics of the spatial ordering of Diyarbakır. In view of that, what is considered as a problem by the government and state institutions, regarding Diyarbakır's urban life, or more specifically, its built environment –and hence solutions presented– is not unaffiliated to political conducts regarding the Kurdish issue.

In Chapter 4, I contended that the hegemony projects of the AKP and the Kurdish political movement are based on two fundamentally different paradigms: authoritarian vs democratic resolution of the Kurdish issue. This argument implies that there has been a radical shift within the traditional militaristic state approach to the Kurdish population as a distinct ethnic group and to their political demands. The traditional Republican framework which has been characterized by total repudiation and repression is shattering. Alternatively, Kurds have been recognized as group and their political representatives have been acknowledged by the state –not in formal legal terms, but in political terms– as the vital part of the political negotiation.

However, on the other hand, the perspective represented by the AKP defines the contours of the solution in a manner that leads to the further authoritarianization of the

political system. Policies underscoring individual cultural rights instead of collective political rights or discourses redefining the bond between the Kurds and other ethnic groups and the state in reference to Islamic fraternity are key components of this paradigm. Contrariwise, the Kurdish political movement has a political program based on the autonomy project which underscores collective political rights and an equal, constitutional relationship with other ethnic entities and the state.

These two hegemony projects contain totally different political positionings regarding the localization of sovereignty. As for the AKP, the localization of sovereignty implies reinstating the state's political authority by expanding the administrative and legal capacities of local branches and organizations of central state institutions, that is to say, the transferring of the political power concentrated in the center to the local representatives and apparatuses of the center (deconcentration). On the other hand, localization defined by the Kurdish political movement's democratic autonomy thesis implies, basically, a diffusion of the political sovereignty to local autonomous entities, that is, disempowerment of the center in terms of its political and administrative authorities (decentralization).

In tandem with this fundamental disparity, the AKP's authoritarian approach to the political realm envisages a professionalized political negotiation, the boundaries of which are strictly defined and which is confined to a group of political figures. Accordingly, the sole recognizable –albeit adverse– subjects of the political field would be party administrators, mayors and deputies. Thus, not only would masses not be recognized as political subjects, politics springing up from the daily lives of these masses would be considered dangerous and suspect.

On that score, the city space, which is presumed as open to daily encounters and hence uncontrollable mobilizations, is regarded as a source of danger and risk.

Undoubtedly, this approach of the AKP administrators and cadres towards city space is not limited to Diyarbakır, but reflects their general understanding of the political realm and of the urban life. Yet, in a locality such as Diyarbakır, where the level of political engagement is considerably high and political currents contentious to the state and the political tradition represented by the AKP are deeply rooted, it would not be surprising to observe open manifestations of this political understanding.

On that score, the city of Diyarbakır is viewed as a source of risk and danger that must be fixed by the central state authorities. Both the physical environment and the social space of the city are associated with a recurrent discourse of risk and danger.

Areas such as Suriçi, the central neighborhoods of Bağlar, and neighborhoods surrounding the city walls such as Ben-u-sen, Dicle and Fiskaya are regarded as blighted slum areas wherein the line between the potential and the actual is quite thin.

Yet, the source of the danger is floating. First, as would be expected, in parallel to a widespread emphasis on natural disasters within the discussions on urban renewal, the danger is linked to earthquakes. Vast housing stock of the city, constructed in violation of legal formalities and technical requirements must be renewed as soon as possible. The presence of physical risks, which are not entirely fictional, is a routine component of the discourse on these neighborhoods. That the urban transformation projects in Suriçi must be expanded to these neighborhoods due to natural disaster risks has been often stated. The government authorities, bureaucrats of the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, and the AKP deputies have announced their demand to

declare the central neighborhoods of Bağlar as a risk area.<sup>503</sup> It seems that the experts of TOKİ and the Ministry have reached a consensus on the necessity to declare a risk area on the basis of the “Disaster Law” (Law no. 6306) to renew the housing stock with the encouragement of the state and by the hands of residents.<sup>504</sup> Similarly, in the report prepared by the local branch of the Ministry it is stated that redevelopment of the risk areas of the city of Diyarbakır would be a priority in the period 2013-2023.<sup>505</sup> However, as the vice mayor of the Bağlar municipality states, since the projects in Suriçi are still proceeding and such a comprehensive program in Bağlar, a site where pro-PKK political mobilization is strikingly active, would necessitate high levels of cooperation and engagement with municipal authorities, this policy has not realized yet.<sup>506</sup>

On closer examination, however, we see that the discourse of disaster is intermingled with deeper concerns regarding social risks and danger. These neighborhoods are conceived as the source of problems of public order such as drug use-traffic and thievery on the one hand, and of pro-PKK street actions on the other. In view of that, primarily youth, as a social group on the verge of explosion, must be kept under constant surveillance and control. The widespread and violent street clashes which began following the guerrilla funerals in March 2006 have expressly increased this perception towards the youth. On that score, March 2006 was a decisive moment, since the incidents progressed beyond the “ordinary” level of such clashes and turned into a city-wide rebellion led by the urban youth, and an extreme level of political violence

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<sup>503</sup> *Söz*, 28 November 2012.

<sup>504</sup> Hüseyin Dayan, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, April 2013.

<sup>505</sup> *Söz*, 11 March 2012.

<sup>506</sup> Nimet Taş, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

occurred overreaching adverse-but-familiar political subjects.<sup>507</sup> Therefore, it is no coincidence that the state's spatial interventions into these neighborhoods are located within a discourse of overall risk. Rehabilitation of the built environment is acknowledged as a *sine quo non* condition to minimize social risk and to reinstitute law and order.

In that sense efforts of the AKP to substitute the traditional militaristic face of the state with its "benevolent" face go hand in hand with the motivation to reinstitute law and order in the city.<sup>508</sup> The belief that social risks would be dispersed by rehabilitating the built environment represents the negative moment of the imaginary dimension of the AKP's hegemony project.

On the other hand, efforts to raise the state's "benevolent" face –which are typically most visible in the form of development activities along with social aid programs– represents its positive moment. Accordingly, large sections of society, which have been deprived of a secure and sound life in a city fraught with deep economic difficulties and political tensions, it is assumed, have supported the Kurdish political movement due to the PKK-affiliated organizations' repression or to the lack of a viable alternative. Therefore, if the demands of these groups are identified and conditions of a more comfortable life can be created, then anti-systemic politics embodied within the Kurdish political movement will waste away. In that regard, the presence of a middle-class in Diyarbakır is conceived as a crucial component that might alter fundamentally

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<sup>507</sup> Günay, "Political Debt and Development Discourse: Translating Incommensurable Worlds in Diyarbakır."

<sup>508</sup> The AKP's renewed developmentalist discourse based on a populist emphasis on "service politics" (*hizmet siyaseti*) calls for "drying the marsh to get rid of the flies," as exemplified many times in PM Erdoğan's speeches. One of them is quoted in Cuma Çiçek, "Etnik ve Sınıfsal İnşa Süreçleri Bağlamında Kürt Meselesi: Bölgesel Eşitsizlik ve Bölgesel Özerklik," *Praksis* 28 (2012/1), p. 19.

the political configurations.<sup>509</sup> Being a member of the middle class is associated with being a property –home, in our case– owner.

On that score, behind the restructuring of TOKİ after 2002 lays an ideological-political effort that targets primarily the low-middle classes, in addition to general economic goals such as stimulating the construction sector. Creating available conditions for such groups to buy homes at subsidized rates and via plausible payment arrangements is the primary goal of the administrations, and this has certain political implications. Words of a TOKİ manager are quite explicit:

During the first term our primary target was to develop cheap and fast housing, because there was a considerable shortage in the cities. There were not adequate flats for rent, for example. Rents for ramshackle houses were quite high. [...] Local contractor corporations generally do not understand our role. They presume that we are in competition with them. However, we are basically working for low-middle income groups, a totally different segment. If I am in Hakkari, it is because contractors do not produce qualified and affordable housing there.<sup>510</sup>

It must be noted that this orientation has proved successful, yielding political achievements to the AKP in the short run and, more crucially, consolidating the already potent homeownership ideology. As stated in Chapter 2, in comparison to TOKİ's urban transformation projects or lucrative housing projects developed in partnership with the private sector, the socio-political implications of this category have been underestimated to a large extent in both popular and academic literature. Conversely, housing stock produced by TOKİ for low-middle and middle-income groups is larger than the other categories in quantitative terms and contributes significantly to the production of consent for the administration.

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<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 50-53.

<sup>510</sup> Interview by the author, tape recording, Ankara, Turkey, January 2014.

As stated before, however, TOKİ's housing production in the city of Diyarbakır comprises principally of this housing type in addition to units produced for residents evicted from the Suriçi urban transformation sites. The modest but secure and comfortable physical environment of the TOKİ projects meets the expectations of a segment of the urban middle classes. Zümrüt demonstrates that current inhabitants of these projects declare their contention for proper landscape design and public facilities of the sites, which are seen much more plausible than the central neighborhoods of the city, in addition to payment availabilities.<sup>511</sup> Even though the uniformity of architectural designs and the incompatibility of the interior facilities to local habits of accommodation are a subject of complaint, the TOKİ projects have been an alternative for middle income groups that cannot afford houses produced by the private sector. On the other hand, living together with families in a site which provides a sound environment that the city center lacks is a distinguishing factor. The words of an employee of the Development Agency, who also resides in the Şilbe mass housing project, summarize key points of the homeownership ideology:

Diyarbakır does not belong to old urbanites any more. The population has mushroomed, but at the expense of its identity. Now there are so many people who do not feel any belonging to this city. We used to greet at least ten people on our way home to work, but nowadays three at most, if you are lucky. The city has grown as if it was in hormone treatment. [...] Most people residing in the TOKİ projects are civil servants. If a man is not after investment but looking for security and a little bit of green, then he comes here. I would not live in those neighborhoods of the city, because I do not want my child to be beaten by other children. I want them to exchange their books and test sheets.<sup>512</sup>

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<sup>511</sup> Zümrüt, pp., 224-235.

<sup>512</sup> Interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

However, demand to leave the city center for secure and peaceful physical environment is much more prevalent. Residents of the luxurious apartment blocks and gated communities which comprise a much bigger volume than the TOKİ units and which give definition to the landscape of residential zones in Kayapınar act with a similar motivation. Empirical studies revealing expectations, preferences and level of satisfaction of residents of these projects are not available. Thus, we do not have quantitative and qualitative data adequate to lead to clear conclusions for this category of the urban middle classes. Yet, it is still possible to get some clues from the interviews conducted with the owners of the contractor firms or realtors. The chair of the most influential association of realtors in the city states that:

It is not like the old times anymore. Three families used to live in one apartment then. Grandfathers, fathers and sons used to live together, even if they had money. People would have behind your back, if your son had moved out. Anyway there was no place to go. The whole city was crammed with people, the rich and the poor used to live in the same neighborhood. Yet things have changed. Now people have more opportunities, thus they demand the best. Those who have money change their place frequently. Those with moderate income in Bağlar want to go to Diclekent. Those in Diclekent want to move to the projects nearby 75 Meters Avenue. The most well-to-do reside in the villas. In reality, they all want the same. They dream to live in spacious new-built flats, away from the chaos and dust of the old neighborhoods.<sup>513</sup>

Residing in a gated community with ample green areas, swimming pool, parking lot and playground is not only a status symbol, but also implies eventually having a genuine “home.” During my field research, I witnessed more than once that developers explain the recent residential development as a transition “from shelter to home.” This meant finally the achievement of a certain way of life which had to be adjourned for decades. While shelter was the temporary place of the gloomy life colored with the violence and

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<sup>513</sup> Mustafa Koç, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, April 2013.

horror of the '90s, today's shiny and comfortable homes seemed to be a symbol of leaving behind those years. What defined the home was the ability to leave danger and insecurity behind. Hence leaving the old behind. This urge may give us some clues to speculate why enwalled gardens, security guards and surveillance cameras have become a crucial item for residents' satisfaction.

However, it should not be supposed that such residential differentiation which furthers urban segregation and fragmentation has been approved by all without objection. Especially during the interviews conducted with professionals such as architects and urban planners I observed that a critique of such development is becoming increasingly widespread. Moreover, despite the general satisfaction among municipal administrators and cadres, BDP activists and administrators were much more responsive to such criticisms. Yet, it is not possible to say that these criticisms have had clear effects on the municipal level. The owner of a construction company, who had been chairman of the pro-Kurdish party's provincial organization years ago, gave a self-critical explanation to the swift residential development, referring to the local residents' psychologies. According to him, this was a transition phase that would be superseded one day; yet, for today it must be experienced:

Perhaps it is about the repression and contempt that society has lived through. Perhaps, goaded by an inferior complex we found compensation in climbing to higher stories. Perhaps, as such psychology has impacted on the society, the contractors have adapted to this situation. I think the local government should not have done it like this. [...] Yet, as Adorno holds "wrong life cannot be lived rightly."<sup>514</sup>

Commenting on the points made up to now, we can lead to the conclusion that there is a resonance between the state's rehabilitative perspectives to the city's physical

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<sup>514</sup> Celalettin Birtane, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

environment and a series of predispositions widespread among urban middle classes and developers. Yet, the presence of such resonance is not adequate to explain the emergence and formation of suburbanization in Kayapınar, to understand the totality of the configuration of urban imaginaries lying behind (re)development activities. To do so, we must include into the analysis questions such as how municipal administrators locate Diyarbakır on their mental maps and how they read the physical and social landscapes of the city.

For the pro-Kurdish municipalities the effort to build a city which functions in accordance with rational principles is based on a complex series of promises (*vaat*) which face both the past and the present, therefore which comprise both negative and positive moments. Accordingly, first of all, the rational city which has been embodied in Kayapınar represents the fading away of the '90s. As the local residents leave the dilapidated built environment of the city center for the modern dwellings which are identical to their counterparts in western big cities, the gloom of the '90s shaded with the state terror, repudiation and repression, deprivation and indignation will be left behind. On the other hand, building a new city signifies the intention to turn Diyarbakır once again into a metropolitan center. The intention of building anew the civic city of the glorious past is a crucial component of the municipal administrators' perspectives on urban development.

The modern history of Diyarbakır is associated with a series of losses in the eyes of the local administrators, business people and intellectuals. To sum up, first of all, in tandem with the establishment of the Republic, the city has lost its commercial and political ties with its vast hinterland extending like a bow from the other parts of Kurdistan to the Caucasus. Second, as a result of the purification policy targeting non-

muslim populations, which began in the late nineteenth century and culminated terribly in the 1915 Genocide, Diyarbakır lost its cosmopolitan character, paving the way for further Turkification. Third, as a result of demographic and commercial detriment it has lost its comparative advantage; and an economic structure characterized by deep-seated urban poverty and disinvestment emerged. The limited industrial investment of the import-substitution era could not alter the course. Furthermore, the agricultural policies of the later export-oriented development era have rendered Diyarbakır's economy more fragile. In short, almost in one century the city of Diyarbakır turned from a prosperous city of commerce and manufacture into a marginalized provincial town entrapped in severe underdevelopment. Lastly, against the massive population flux to the city, Diyarbakır has lost its educated labor force and capital.

Against the backdrop of this narrative based on losses, Diyarbakır is “the flower of Kurdistan” and “the political, commercial, cultural and intellectual center of the Middle East.”<sup>515</sup> Therefore, developing a distinguished city is a crucial step towards the regeneration of this lost metropolitan center. Certainly, this metropolitan center has been redefined in accordance with the political imaginary of the Kurdish political movement. Diyarbakır, as “the capital of the Kurdish identity” is defined in reference to the cosmopolitan urban life of the past and in stark contrast to the dominant character of contemporary Middle East politics.

On the other hand, while the restructuring of Suriçi proceeds with the spatial interventions that aim to reconfigure the historical and cultural landscapes of the area, what is more relevant in Kayapınar is the reorganization of physical landscape in accordance with the features of the modern city. On that score, the meaning attributed to

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<sup>515</sup> Metin Kılavuz, interview by the author, tape recording, Diyarbakır, Turkey, May 2013.

the planning work and planners is telling. The pro-Kurdish municipality's affirmative perspectives to planning is intriguing, especially if we consider the local political culture wherein the notion of plan has not been so praised and the more general environment of contemporary urbanism where neoliberal urban policies are in open conflict with the comprehensive planning paradigm of the previous periods.

Thus, in comparison to contemporary experiences in the field of urban politics, efforts of Mayor Baydemir to reinstitute control over planning processes and development applications can seem extraordinary. Behind this affirmative stance lies the political legitimacy to be obtained from being able to build a rational city. Kayapınar is presented as a stage on which the city of Diyarbakır will be reborn from its ashes in the hands of pro-Kurdish local governments. Large avenues, city parks and high-rise apartment blocks are a manifestation of the promise to be reborn, besides economy-oriented motivations such as attracting an educated labor force back to the city. This deep-rooted political aspiration explains why the DMM has undertaken spatial interventions that superseded short-term economic expectations and caused occasional conflicts with landowners or central state institutions — as in the case of the City Forest project planned in Kayapınar.

Undoubtedly, interventions into the Kayapınar's physical landscape are not exempt from symbolic-spatial components. As in Suriçi, efforts to (re)appropriate the cityscape through discursive interventions can be observed in Kayapınar as well. (Re)naming avenues (Ayşenur Zarakolu, Yılmaz Güney, Musa Anter, Selahattin Eyyubi), squares and parks (Jiyanan Azad, Yek Gûlan, Beybun, Zembilroş, Derwêşê Ewdi, among others) in Kurdish or after historical or contemporary figures revered by

the Kurdish movement, and creating an alternative (“militant”)<sup>516</sup> mode of expression as in the case of statues erected in new built parks served to re-appropriate the urban space within a reverse process of cultural decolonization.

In that sense, it would be wrong to assume a duality between the restructuring of the historic city and the development of the new city, between past and present; and culture and development. Rather, even though different spatial interventions are observed in different sites, behind the Kurdish political movement’s efforts to reorganize the city lies a unique urban imaginary which is a crucial component of its counter-hegemony project. The restructuring of Suriçi through the reconfiguration of its cultural and historical landscape on the one side, and constructing a new built environment that has rational standards exclusive to the capitalist city in Kayapınar on the other denote distinct aspects and moments of a common political goal — the “making of Amed,” the capital of the Kurdish identity and the metropolitan center of the Middle East.

Emergence of such a swift and persistent process of suburbanization in Kayapınar should be explained with articulations between the distinct urban imaginaries of distinct political actors. Undoubtedly, the spatial conceptions of the ruling AKP and the Kurdish political movement, which have produced radically different hegemony projects as regards the Kurdish question, vary at many points. However, an alignment has emerged between the AKP’s promise of stability and the Kurdish political movement’s promise of leaving the city of the ‘90s behind and building a distinguished city. Ultimately a spatial practice which is best pictured in the gated communities of Kayapınar was born. While Kayapınar has been acclaimed by various political circles as

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<sup>516</sup> Athı, “Diyarbakır,” p. 71.

a source of pride at home and abroad, segregation between the urban poor and wealthy became apparent in a manner that renders future political configurations unforeseeable.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### CONCLUSION

In this dissertation, I offered a framework for understanding the conditions under which the ongoing spatial restructuring of Diyarbakır has been possible in a manner that fragmentizes, hierarchizes and homogenizes urbanscape, examining the material, institutional and ideological dimensions of urban renewal projects undertaken in Suriçi and the suburbanization process in Kayapınar. Considering the social and spatial outcomes of the reconfiguration of physical, historic and cultural landscapes of the city in tandem with a tourism-oriented economic growth model and differentiation in residential patterns as an inevitable result of the construction industry-based capital accumulation process, we can lead to the conclusion that recent urban developments in Diyarbakır have assumed a neoliberal character. Accordingly, I argued that, despite the multifaceted and deep-rooted conflicts between central state institutions and local political forces, unintended and intrinsically conflictual articulations of competing spatial conceptions and strategies of the AKP and the Kurdish political movement have rendered urban neoliberalism, as a certain mode of politics of space, both possible and hegemonic in the 2000s.

The emerging literature of critical urban studies which has produced important research in the recent period on the social and spatial dimensions of the comprehensive restructuring processes Turkish cities continue to undergo has omitted to a great extent the problematic of hegemony. Research has focused on global, national and local

dynamics that led to the emergence of competitive localities, the political-economic rationale behind the orientation of the powerful to reconfigure geographies of production, the consumption and accommodation of cities, mechanisms of urban transformation projects, the role and motivation of central and local governments in the politics of urban renewal, and social and spatial outcomes for subordinated groups.

Nevertheless the question of why and in what ways the recent urban processes have assumed not only a dominant but also hegemonic character has not been answered satisfactorily. It would not be incorrect to state that the inclusionary mechanisms that produce consent for urban neoliberalism have been to a great extent underresearched. Therefore, in this study, I examined the economic, political and cultural aspects of recent spatial processes in Diyarbakır to elucidate the ways in which hegemony of urban neoliberalization is politically constructed, the grounds on which this construction is based upon, and the interaction of imaginations, values and desires that shape these grounds.

Commonly, the notion of neoliberalism is used as a self-explanatory key concept. In many examples, urban neoliberalization marks a series of policies, which are disseminated from top to bottom and from center to periphery; put forward by the initiative of homogenous elites and violate without exception oppressed sections of society. Such a conceptualization underestimates the hegemonic character of neoliberal urbanism, creating blindfolds in research and analysis. However, neoliberal urbanism is a complex configuration of strategies which simultaneously aims at commodifying urban space by disintegrating the political capacities of subordinate groups. It is not simply a coherent blueprint to transfer land rents from the urban poor to the well-off, but a conflictual and contingent, politically-constructed, twofold process of

commodification and depoliticization which intrinsically contains moments of destruction and creation.

The dynamics and conflicts of production of space in Diyarbakır, which manifest themselves in alterations in the city's physical environment, shifts in geographies of production, consumption and accommodation, intra-district population movements, spatial relations it comprises, and urban imaginaries of local and non-local political actors which strive to reconfigure its symbolic space are configured within the double determination of combined and uneven capitalist development in Turkey and the state's attempts at (re)instituting its authority in the Kurdish territory. As I discussed in Chapter 3, in the context of the historical course of urban development in Diyarbakır from the late nineteenth century to the 1990s, double processes of commodification and bureaucratization have transformed the city of Diyarbakır from a regional commercial and command center of a vast geography to a politically marginalized and economically underdeveloped provincial town of the Republican period, from a multi-ethnic and religious cosmopolitan locality to a heartland of Kurdish national aspirations. Drawing on this schema elaborated to comprehend moments of production of abstract space and dynamics of its prevalence on concrete space, I argued that during the 2000s, which are examined as a particular political conjuncture in this study, these processes have generated a novel context in which material, institutional and ideological dimensions of spatial processes have substantially altered.

Thus, throughout the dissertation, I examined moments of the politics of space in Diyarbakır within the context of struggles between the state and the Kurdish political movement, and associated the formation of spatial conceptions, strategies and interventions of institutional and political actors of different scales that have various

capacities to determine spatial processes with alterations in their broader strategies vis-à-vis each other.

In the post-1999 period, as a result of the alignment of decisive factors, which have military, geopolitical, ideological, political and organizational dimensions, both the emerging historical bloc represented politically by the AKP and the Kurdish movement, of which the PKK has been a referential actor since the early 1990s, have formulated two distinct hegemony projects which produce substantially different spatialities: post-war space and post-colonial space.

The former denotes spatial processes that have emerged as a result of the state's employing discursive and non-discursive tools to reinstitute its authority in the Kurdish territory, within a context wherein militaristic methods are no longer the primary option. This strategic orientation, which aims basically at establishing hegemony over the Kurdish population by replacing the state's repressive face with its "benevolent" face, has economic, administrative and imaginary dimensions. Conceptions and strategies affiliated with each of these dimensions aggregately produce a particular spatiality, and in turn are formed by this spatiality.

On the other hand, in the aftermath of the PKK's abandonment of the goal of separate state, the Kurdish political movement has embarked upon redefining the nature of political relationships to be established both within the Kurdish population and between the Kurds and the state. Decolonization of the Kurdish territory and constitution of "an alternative governmental presence" are crucial components of this strategic reorientation which in turn produces a particular spatiality — the post-colonial space.

General features, trends, inner contradictions and results of recent urban processes in Diyarbakır should be seen in the light of this hegemonic struggle, along

with the broader dynamics of capitalist development. Accordingly, throughout the dissertation I demonstrated that encounters among distinct instances of these hegemony projects are crucial to understand on what bases consent for neoliberal urban policies, relations and practices in Diyarbakır has been produced, and how exclusionary mechanisms and the severe negative impact of recent urban policies have become legitimate. Hegemony formation, however, is not a unidirectional and non-conflictual process. Thus, I focused on dissociations and discontinuities along with articulations and continuities so as to comprehend encounters among the spatial conceptions and strategies of the AKP and the Kurdish political movement.

The urban renewal process in Suriçi and the suburbanization process and residential differentiation in Kayapınar represent two crucial moments of social production of space that has been configured by the complex interplay among central state institutions such as TOKİ and the governorship, district and metropolitan municipalities, landowners, developers and entrepreneurial groups.

Specifically, urban transformation projects proceeding in Suriçi can be viewed as an outcome of a tourism-centered economic growth approach which is informed by an influential discourse on the city's historical and cultural assets. Although initial motivations and the rationale of actors involved in the projects were not identical in the beginning, it is possible to depict a gradual reconciliation, which has occurred and consolidated in time, around "branding the city" to attract capital and a qualified labor force. Both local and central governmental institutions took steps to highlight the locality-related features of Diyarbakır, since they have progressively reached the conclusion that tourism might be a suitable way to overcome economic and social deficiencies. As would be expected, this orientation necessitates lowering the density of

residential areas, rehabilitating the physical environment to make the historical urban fabric more visible, and carrying out a refunctioning of the commercial infrastructure in Suriçi.

On the other hand, the swift suburbanization process in Kayapınar, with its more regulated housing construction, upscaled built environment, and public spaces in common use, has had substantial effects on the city's population structure, residential pattern and economic organization. The construction sector has been the catalyst of the local economy since the early 2000s. Spatial interventions of the state via the mass housing projects and land sales of TOKİ have reinforced the dynamics of the local construction sector. At present, the residential pattern in Kayapınar has an evidently middle-class character. While TOKİ's projects have met the housing demand of lower end of this group, a significant portion of the projects developed by the private sector has targeted the upper segment of the consumers, that is, upper-middle income groups of the city such as doctors, lawyers, business people, high-rank municipal administrators, well-to-do merchants and landowners.

At the particular level, analyzing these two sites, we can illustrate three important patterns of the production of space in Diyarbakır in the period 1999-2014. On the economic plane, recent urban development reflects the emergence of a *de facto* pro-growth urban coalition which consists of local landowners, construction firms and municipal administrations.

The real estate sector has been vital since the 1980s in Diyarbakır wherein investment opportunities have been insufficient due to the state's disinvestment in the industrial and agricultural sectors during the export-led development period, and the business climate has been extremely restricted due to repression on Kurdish business

people during the armed conflict years. Following the relative easing of political atmosphere after the abolition of the OHAL in 2002, and in parallel to the national trend in the construction sector, real estate activities in the city have expanded almost exclusively through housing constructions. Consequently, although their competitive power against the landowners has not increased substantially, a small group of construction firms has differentiated in terms of their organizational and economic capacities, and has oriented towards higher-yield, larger-scale housing production, targeting the upper-end of the urban middle-classes. On the other hand, restoring their power of control over planning processes and development applications, and encouraging development in Kayapınar and Bağcılar, municipalities have played a limited but decisive role for the development of the local construction economy especially in their second and third terms.

This coalition consists of internal conflicts as in the case of the relationship between powerful landowners and newly flourishing construction firms, yet it is still possible to depict common interests and aspirations concretized in real estate activities and the tourism-based service economy as a primary channel for further capital accumulation and local economic development. However, more crucially, this commonality and existence of an urban coalition do not suggest that a fully-fledged economic model has matured as a result of elaborated negotiations among different sectors of the Kurdish political movement. Rather, at present, we can talk of a *de facto* model which is still in the making, and which does not comprise of specified plans, but general inclinations.

Moreover, this model is imprinted by the inner contradictions of Kurdish society, as can be observed in increasing criticisms by different circles within the Kurdish

movement on the urban policies of the municipalities and social and spatial outcomes of the recent urbanization process. There are differing conceptions regarding economic policies within the Kurdish political movement, which has become as of today a national movement with a constituency from the urban poor, middle classes and business circles. Since there exist different social groups from various class backgrounds within the movement, the clarification of the content and coordinates of this model will be bound to the power relations among them. Yet, it would be convenient to contend that, between 1999 and 2014, during the formative years of the pro-Kurdish municipal experience, the dynamics of urbanization in Diyarbakır have been in favor of business circles.

On that score, the relation between this coalition and central state institutions can be regarded as a relation of competitive co-existence. Although the spatial interventions of the AKP have aimed at obstructing the effective functioning of pro-Kurdish municipalities and destabilizing their institutional structure to impair their political legitimacy, comprehensive infrastructural investments and housing policies of the state have created a plausible economic environment for local capital circles.

TOKİ has played a crucial role in this process. On the one hand, undertaking mass housing projects and land sales in the fringes of the city, it has targeted predominantly low-middle classes mostly ignored by local construction companies and thus reinforced the suburbanization process. On the other hand, as we can best observe in Suriçi, despite short-term economic losses, it has undertaken urban transformation projects with the aim of constituting an “efficient” real estate market and creating plausible conditions under which a fully-capitalist market for land and property can operate.

Undoubtedly, political divisions among businesspeople determine opportunities to benefit from lucrative public procurements. It is a fact that the overwhelming majority of large-scale construction firms undertaking public investments such as hospital, school and highway constructions are firms owned and managed by business groups affiliated with the AKP. Against this competitive relation business circles affiliated with the Kurdish political movement seek to define and institutionalize a mechanism of effective coordination and cooperation within each other. The construction sector is considered an economic ground to accumulate capital so as to undertake larger operations in different localities such as Southern Kurdistan or different sectors such as mining. On that regard, ongoing attempts to formulate practical initiatives within the institutions that might be considered as part of the Kurdish political movement reflect the strength of the aspirations of local business circles for a pro-capital economic model within a possible autonomous entity to be established in the Kurdish territory.

However, reconciliation around tourism-oriented urban renewal policies and a common interest in the booming of construction sector do not necessarily undo deeper power struggles between the AKP and pro-Kurdish municipalities. One of the crucial sites of these struggles is the political-administrative plane. Spatial conceptions and strategies are constantly reconfigured within the parameters of the severe struggle between the government and the legal components of the Kurdish political movement to expand their respective spheres of hegemonic projects.

On that score, a dialectic of two dynamics, which stem from opposite understandings of localization (deconcentration vs. decentralization), configures the course of the spatial interventions. On the one hand, the AKP seeks to promote the “benevolent” face of the state by undertaking spatial interventions, which cannot be

merely assessed in terms of short-term economic expectations, in order to reinstitute the state's political authority in the region in a more effective manner. As I demonstrated for the urban renewal projects in Suriçi, risking short term financial failures, central state institutions consider spatial interventions, which are called “prestige projects,” as strategic tools to render the state's “benevolent” presence visible and credible. To do so the government expands the administrative and legal capacities of the local branches and organizations of central state institutions, such as the governorship office, TOKİ and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism.

On the other hand, the Kurdish political movement fights to expand the boundaries of its alternative governmental presence by using the institutional capacity of the municipalities it holds. Municipalities endeavor to institutionalize their popular political power and to strengthen their control over local government mechanisms by establishing inter-scalar links with prominent NGOs, national and international experts, educational institutions and international governance bodies. Deployment of urban planning tools by the municipalities and their obvious wish to rationalize urban living in Diyarbakır through increased control on development processes, for instance, can be associated with this broader strategic agenda. Planning processes are used as a tactical tool to gain a larger area of maneuver against institutional capacities of central state institutions. Yet, more crucially, planning authority and the plan itself are regarded as necessary apparatuses to progress beyond major western cities — a physical manifestation of “political success.”

The economic rationale behind urban processes and the struggles over the redefinition of the institutional architecture are articulated with struggles over urban imaginaries. Expertise and knowledge produced by institutional and political actors and

their strategic interventions to the space are both manifestations and tools of the struggle to (re)appropriate the city's symbolic space. Alterations in the built environment bear traces of particular historical and cultural imaginaries. On the ideological plane, efforts and plans for the regeneration of Suriçi and the extensive suburbanization process in Kayapınar reflect encounters between the urban imaginaries of the AKP and the Kurdish political movement. However, these encounters are not unidirectional, and consist of moments of articulation and dissociation at once. Yet, in the final analysis, as I demonstrated in Chapters 5 and 6, despite severe ideological differences between the parties, unintended articulations between their desires, values and promises regarding urban life in general and the restructuring of Diyarbakır in particular have rendered the recent urban policies which further fragmentize and hierarchize urbanscape both possible and desirable.

An important conclusion that we can derive from this study is that, contrary to widespread opinion about neoliberal urban policies commonly equated with urban transformation projects, neoliberal urbanism, as a particular mode of politics of space, is not a fixed policy package, designed by a handful experts to respond to demands of capitalists. Its actual functioning is configured by encounters between different political projects, spatial conceptions and strategies in a given conjuncture and locality; its hegemony depends on the actors' ability to respond to the moments of the conflicts and negotiations between different social and political forces. Even the urban transformation projects are not fixed designs, and they are not necessarily applied from top to down, and disseminated from center to periphery. They undergo changes in relation to the capacities of actors within the processes of the political struggle. The form and extent of the state's strategic interventions into space vary significantly in relation to the balance

of power in a given locality. Experts and bureaucrats at state institutions are receptive to local relations of force, and adapt their priorities on the basis of negotiations with local political actors. The dialectic between the space and the political is at work. Each moment of the politics of space is configured in tandem with moments of multidimensional hegemonic struggles, and in turn what makes a particular spatial moment hegemonic is the degree of articulations occurring within these struggles.

Case studies that employ the urban political economy approach are crucial in understanding the general dynamics of neoliberal urbanization that has substantially transformed spatial structures and relations both in advanced and peripheral capitalist localities. This approach enables us to investigate global, national and local dynamics that led to the emergence of competitive localities all around the world, the political-economic rationale behind the orientation of the powerful to reconfigure geographies of production, the consumption and accommodation of cities, mechanisms of urban transformation projects, the role and motivation of central and local governments in the politics of urban restructuring, and the social and spatial outcomes for subordinated groups. Yet, this study demonstrated that an analysis that aims at grasping how urban neoliberalism has been so persistent and successful, despite its adverse impact on large social groups, must include contingent factors into the analysis and reveal encounters between distinct spatial conceptions and strategies within a particular locality and conjuncture.

Aiming to contribute to the emerging literature of urban studies, in this study I focused on the problematic of hegemony of neoliberal urbanism, and examined material, administrative and ideological aspects of recent spatial processes in Diyarbakır. Situating spatial conceptions and strategies of actors of various scales which strive to

reconfigure the city's physical, historic and cultural landscapes within the context of broader hegemonic struggles between the state and the Kurdish political movement, I demonstrated that flourishing urban middle classes and business circles within Kurdish society, their expectations of urban life and physical environment, the resonance between their demands, values and desires and the priorities and promises of pro-Kurdish municipal administrators on the one hand, and the AKP's strategic interventions into urban space to destabilize the institutional presence and political legitimacy of the Kurdish political movement on the other have rendered possible the adaptation of general features of supralocal urban practices into a particular locality which has historically been comprised of multifaceted relations of conflict between the center and periphery.

Yet, these conclusions should be strengthened by further research. On that matter, two main lines of research might be useful to enhance our understanding of the politics of space in the Kurdish territory. First, a comparative study which would expand the space of fieldwork to other localities where one could observe how different relations of power effect spatial moments might be fruitful. Second, and more crucially, focusing on the everyday level of resistances and adaptations to neoliberal urbanism is crucial to comprehend the dynamics of the politics of space in the Kurdish territory. Deploying a fully-fledged ethnographic method, a research that centers upon the construction of political subjectivities in relation to the politics of space and investigates how consent to neoliberal urbanism is (re)produced within everyday life practices would produce answers to critical questions that this study left out of its scope.

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