CUSTOMIZED FORMS OF KURDISHNESS IN TURKEY

State Rhetoric, Locality, and Language Use

CEREN ŞENGÜL

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State Rhetoric, Locality, and Language Use

Ceren Şengül

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To my mother. . .
To all the people fighting for a better future. . .

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Abbreviations

AKP Justice and Development Party [*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*]

ANF Fırat News Agency [*Ajansa Nûçeyan a Firatê*]

BDP Peace and Democracy Party [*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*]

CHP Republican People's Party [*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*]

DEHAP Democratic People's Party [*Demokratik Halk Partisi*]

HDP Peoples' Democratic Party [*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*]

MEB Ministry of National Education [*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı*]

MHP Nationalist Action Party [*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*]

PKK Kurdistan Workers' Party [*Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan*]

RP Welfare Party [*Refah Partisi*]

TRT Turkish Radio and Television Association [*Türkiye Radyo ve Televizyon Kurmu*]

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Introduction

Researching Kurdishness in Turkey

As a non-Kurdish person who was born and grew up in the Western part of Turkey, the author of this book, as most of the citizens of Turkey, has always watched and read about what was going on with regards to the Kurdish citizens of Turkey in newspapers and on TV. Even though there is a considerable Kurdish population living in Western Turkey,[1] the author had not had many interactions with Kurds on a personal level. This might have resulted from the fact that even by the end of the 1990s, being a Kurd or speaking, singing, and/or writing in Kurdish were things that would result in trouble, so people might have been reluctant to bring up the issue of ethnicity. To give an example, as recently as 1999, Ahmet Kaya, a very famous folk singer, created controversy in an award ceremony when he declared that in his next album, he would sing one of his songs in Kurdish and he would shoot a music video in Kurdish, which was his native language. During his speech, people from the crowd, most of which were other musicians and/or people from the entertainment industry, started throwing forks and knives at him. He was physically attacked as he was returning to his table, and the controversy surrounding this incident resulted in him being exiled from Turkey. He died one year later when he was in exile in France. As this book will discuss in chapter 1, there have been some reforms since this incident with regards to the rights of Kurds living in Turkey. Some of the artists who were among the crowd protesting Ahmet Kaya that night sang songs and shot films in the Kurdish language years later. However, it is still possible to see that the "shared memories" (Margalit 2002) of these kinds of incidents have contributed to forming some type of awareness among people that discussing the issues of Kurds, Kurdishness, and the Kurdish language in Turkey might lead to undesirable results.

There were instances during data collection when people, without asking any questions, assumed that the author was a Kurd when they were told about this research. Even though most of the time these were genuine questions expressing interest in these topics, they also serve to trigger the author's curiosity on the definitions of concepts such as Kurds and Kurdishness: what do people have in mind when they ask if someone is a Kurd? Do they mean it in the ethnic sense of the word or does it have any other connotations? How should the receiver of this question

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respond to it? Is it possible for someone to answer "yes" to the question if he or she has no ethnic origins? Or is it possible for someone to answer "yes" to this question if he or she does not speak a word of the Kurdish language? Would the answer to that question also depend on where someone is based within Turkey? What exactly does the concept of Kurdishness include in the Turkish context? Which contextual variables influence how Kurdishness is manifested and exhibited by individuals?

Kurds are the largest ethnic group in Turkey,[2] and the language they speak within Turkey has two different variances: *Zazaki* and *Kurmancî*. *Kurmancî* is more widely spoken, whereas *Zazaki* is mostly spoken by the people of Sivas in Central Anatolia. In Southeast Turkey, in the three different field sites where the data for this research were collected (Derik, Mardin, and Diyarbakır), *Kurmancî* is the language spoken by people, and the speakers of that language also call it *Kurmancî* instead of calling it Kurdish. In fact, one of the questions that was often asked during data collection was "*Tu Kurmancî dizanî*" ("Do you speak *Kurmancî*")? When the language of the respondents is discussed throughout this book; therefore, it refers to *Kurmancî*. Both *Kurmancî* and *Zazaki* belong to different language families than Turkish, making Turkish and these languages mutually unintelligible. The mutual unintelligibility of Turkish and Kurdish (*Kurmancî* and *Zazaki*) has added to the issues surrounding language since some Turkish speakers, as the data in the upcoming chapters will show, express their discomfort about the fact that they cannot understand what Kurdish speakers are saying to each other. The Southeast and Eastern part of Turkey are considered part of the Kurdistan homeland. Regarding the borders of the Turkish state, however, Kurds are located across the state, having migrated from Southeast Turkey toward the Western part for decades.

The fact that Kurds have their own language, that they are scattered all over Turkey, and that they have been exposed to various policies of the state (see chapter 1) presents an interesting case for scholars of ethnicity. How is the impact of these different factors reflected in how Kurdishness is manifested? Within the literature, Kurds in Turkey have been widely researched. Some of these studies have focused on the "Kurdish Question" and its evolution throughout the decades (Barkey and Fuller 1998; Kirişci and Winrow 1997; Yavuz and Özcan 2006; Yegen 1999; Yegen 2011); some have discussed the emergence of Kurdish nationalism and its evolution throughout the decades (Al 2015a; Entessar 1992; Natali 2005; Olson 1989; Sarigil and Fazlioglu 2014; van Bruinessen 2000; Yavuz 2001). Recently, Aras (2014), in his anthropological work, studied the formation of Kurdishness in Turkey and defined Kurdishness as a state of being constructed by experiences of "political violence, fear of the state and pain" (2014, 190). The diversity of individual experiences with regards to Kurdishness, however, has yet to be well-understood. Is it possible to discuss Kurdishness as a single, unified concept? If not, what are

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some of the ways in which Kurdishness can be manifested? This research aims to fill this gap by exploring the diversity of experiences of Kurdishness.

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research, inspired by these thoughts, aims to explore the different ways in which Kurdishness is manifested in Turkey and through which variables these different forms are shaped. To do this, it raises the question: how is Kurdishness manifested and exhibited in Turkey by individuals? What variables influence how Kurdishness is manifested by individuals?

As the anecdote that started this book suggests, the Kurdish language has been one of the points of contention with regards to the decades-long Kurdish Question. Speaking, singing, and/or writing in the Kurdish language was not allowed, and even though some of the restrictions on Kurdish language were lifted in 1992 during the presidency of Turgut Özal, there were still tensions with regards to the use of the Kurdish language in public space afterwards, as the above-mentioned incident suggests. It would be fair to state that the situation has not remained the same: Serdar Ortaç, one of the singers from that night protesting Ahmet Kaya, made a public apology in 2013,[3] and Ajda Pekkan, another famous singer who was among the protesting crowd, sang a song in Kurdish for the first time in 2009 (*Hürriyet* March 11, 2009). These developments suggest in a way that the words "Kurdish" or "Kurd" have become more "normalized" compared to even as recently as 1999. However, the issues and discussions surrounding the use of the Kurdish language still continue and as chapter 1 shows, the demand to have education in the mother tongue constitutes one of the aspects through which Kurdishness is exhibited in its recent form. Even though, as mentioned earlier, there have been some relaxations with regards to the use of the Kurdish language, the current generation grew up in a period where even the mention of the word "Kurd" was not allowed. With this in mind, one of the things this research is interested in is the role that the language plays in how an individual manifests his or her own Kurdishness. Therefore, one of the questions that this research asks is: *what role does the Kurdish language play in the manifestation of Kurdishness?*

The discussion on the relationship between language and nationalism is nothing new, and has mostly been dominated by two camps: essentialists and instrumentalists. The essentialist camp of linguistic nationalism argues that language is the heart and the soul of a people. This approach was pioneered by the German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder in the eighteenth century. He wrote that "with language is created the heart of a people" (quoted in Fishman 1975, 1). Fishman, influenced by Herder-

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ian philosophy, also stated that language, more than any of the other elements, is the life of a nation: "the mother tongue is itself an aspect of the soul, a part of the soul, if not the soul made manifest" (1975, 46). Associated with the primordialist approach, the essentialists "emphasize language as an object of affect" (Hearn 2006, 210). The instrumentalist camp, on the other hand, argues that instead of being the heart and soul of a nation, language is a mere instrument that is used during the process of nation-state building (Anderson 1983; Billig 1995; Deutsch 1953). If the Kurdish language, in line with the discussions on linguistic nationalism, is (or is not) the heart of the Kurdish nation, then does being a native speaker of Kurdish have an impact on manifesting Kurdishness? This question is also related to the aforementioned research question in the sense that the public use of the Kurdish language differs across the regions. As will be discussed in chapter 2, the field sites in Southeast Turkey reveal more instances of the use of the Kurdish language in public spaces than Western Turkey. How do these differences play a role in manifestations of Kurdishness? This question also explores the case of non-native speakers of Kurdish: how is being a non-native speaker of Kurdish reflected in their forms of Kurdishness? How does the Kurdish language shape boundaries of Kurdishness in the case of non-native speakers? These questions aim to unpack the relationship between being fluent in the Kurdish language and how Kurdishness is manifested by that individual.

Secondly, this research is also interested in the effect of living in different localities within Turkey on manifestations of Kurdishness. That is, how would an individual based in a Western city of Turkey and another based in a Southeast city of Turkey differ in terms of the ways they manifest their forms of Kurdishness? With this aim, the second sub-question that this research is interested in is: *is there a locality aspect to the manifestation of Kurdishness?* Sarigil and Fazlioglu's study shows that "the Kurds from Southeast Turkey are more likely to have an ethno-nationalist orientation compared to Kurds living in other regions" (2014, 446). Key policies during the Kemalist period, such as the Resettlement Law (chapter 1), were based on the idea that if Kurds from Southeast Turkey would be relocated, they would eventually be converted into "the ideal Turks." The government, after the Kemalist period officially ended, also implemented policies aimed at improving the socio-economic conditions of the Southeast region (Aydınlı 2002; Sarigil and Fazlioglu 2014; Yegen 2011). Named as a "socio-economic approach" (Sarigil and Fazlioglu 2014), the policy to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Southeast region also assumes that Kurds based in that region are more likely to show ethnic orientation than Kurds in other regions due to the economic underdevelopment in that region. This implies that if socio-economic conditions improve in the Southeast region, then the ethnic orientations of individuals living there would be constrained just like individ-

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uals living in the other regions. This research aims to unpack this relationship between different localities and Kurdishness further by collecting data from five different field sites in two different parts of Turkey.

The third question that this research is interested in is the role of the state rhetoric. What this question is interested in is *not* how Kurdishness is led by the Kurdish elites; rather, it is more interested in the impact of state rhetoric on Kurdishness and on its manifestations. This question emerged as a result of an "intellectual curiosity" (Lofland, et al. 2006, 12) during the Peace Process between the government and the PKK,[4] which included talks of reforms. During fieldwork, the then-ongoing Peace Process was one of the most contested issues among the respondents. The ceasefire between the government and the PKK, along with other developments throughout the period of the Justice and Development Party [*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, or AKP],[5] meant some significant changes emerged in the state rhetoric from earlier periods. To explore the role that state rhetoric plays in the manifestation of Kurdishness, the state rhetoric starting from the early Republican period (1923–1938) is analysed in chapter 1, and then the state rhetoric from the two "moments of transition" in the history of the Republic is compared: the early Republican period (1923–1938) and the AKP period (from 2002 onwards). These two periods presented two different "moments of transition" in the history of the Turkish state: the early Republican period saw the transition of a multicultural, multi-ethnic, and a multilingual Empire into a monocultural, secular, and monolingual nation-state, whereas the AKP period saw the transition of this secular nation-state into one with an Islamic multiculturalist vision. As will be discussed in chapter 1, the state rhetoric during the early Republican period of Turkey (1923–1938) and AKP period (from 2002 onwards) shows significant differences but also significant continuities. Based on this, another question that this research aims to explore is: *what role does state rhetoric play in the manifestation of Kurdishness?*

To explore and answer these questions, this research relied on a "triangulation of methods" (Denzin 1978): semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document research. The following section overviews the methodological issues of this research.

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Timeline and Grounded Theory Approach

The data collection for this research started in January 2013 and lasted until mid-May 2013. The second stage was in June 2014. Grounded theory, first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), usually refers to the "approach to the generation of theory out of data" (Bryman 2008, 541).

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Even though the definition of grounded theory is not agreed upon within the literature, one of its crucial aspects is the interrelatedness of data collection and analysis (Corbin and Strauss 1990, 6). That is, the data collection and the analysis "proceed in tandem" (Bryman 2008, 541). In this approach, the process itself guides the researcher, and leads the researcher to the next interviews and to the next observations.

This is what led the author to conduct the second phase of data collection in June 2014. After an analysis of the data through coding, what usually happens is that some concepts and categories emerge by "repeatedly being present in interviews, documents, and observations in one form or another" (Corbin and Strauss 1990, 7). In this research, the data collection, led through the initial analysis, was followed by more analysis, and an "initial hunch" (Bryman 2008, 544) emerged about the concepts that came through the data. To collect more data on this hunch, additional data were collected in June 2014.

On March 21, 2013, the Peace Process was officially declared between the government and the PKK, which meant that the data collection in Southeast Turkey coincided with the initial stages of the Peace Process. The reactions to the Peace Process constituted a great deal of the concepts and the categories that emerged during the initial stages of data collection. This, in turn, led to an "intellectual curiosity" (Lofland, et al. 2006, 12) on the relationship between state rhetoric and how Kurdishness is manifested by individuals. Hence, the author went back to the field one year later (June 2014) to observe the reactions one year into the Process. At that time, the Process was officially still going on. Even though the final analysis does not mainly focus on the Peace Process itself, the reactions toward this Process were useful to observe the current forms through which Kurdishness is manifested.

Overall, the data collection was based in five different field sites in two parts of Turkey, which is shown in Table 0.1.

The Selection of Field Sites

As the main question of this research is to explore the diversity of Kurdishness in Turkey, it does not claim to be a representative study of Kurdishness. Therefore, the main concern was not that the field sites should be "'typical' or 'representative'" (Burgess 1984, 59). Not having to

Table 0.1. List of the field sites

Western Turkey	*Southeast Turkey*
Istanbul	Diyarbakır
Ayvalık	Mardin
	Derik

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find a typical field site presenting Kurdishness, the main goal was to look for field sites, or "localities," having different characteristics. Apart from having the largest population in Turkey, Istanbul is also home to Turkey's largest Kurdish population.[6] This made Istanbul one of the clear choices.

Sometimes, where fieldwork is done is influenced by factors that are independent of the research itself. Even though the choice of the field sites does not entirely depend on external factors, having initial contacts at a certain setting or location might affect the path the fieldwork leads to (Burgess 1984). In the case of this research, the author's familiarity with Istanbul and Ayvalık[7] helped with the interview process. Ayvalık is a town in the province of Balıkesir with a population of 58,738[8] on the Western coast of Turkey, and there is a significant Kurdish population there due to migration from the Eastern parts of Turkey. To capture the diversity of the experiences of Kurdishness, the second part of the data collection took part in Southeast Turkey.

Diyarbakır has long been considered a spiritual capital for Kurds. In fact, it has been declared the capital of Kurdistan by some leaders.[9] It has a population of 1,362,708,[10] so it has the characteristics of a big city. The author took daily trips to Diyarbakır while staying in Mardin and in Derik. Mardin is slightly smaller than Diyarbakır in terms of population,[11] and its demographic characteristics are also slightly different. It is more multicultural in the sense that there is also a significant Arab and Assyrian population living there alongside Kurds and Turks. It is common to hear people speaking Arabic on the streets. The fact that it is located on the border with Syria has also changed the dynamics of the city recently as there has been an influx of Syrian immigrants into Mardin. In this sense, Mardin can be considered the Southeastern counterpart of Istanbul: multicultural, multilingual, and cosmopolitan.

With one multicultural town from each part (Istanbul and Mardin), Diyarbakır and Ayvalık represented unique characteristics of their respective regions: Diyarbakır, as mentioned above, has been "the spiritual capital of Kurds"; Ayvalık, on the other hand, has been dominated by the Republican People's Party [*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, or CHP].[12] In the last three local elections (2004, 2009, and 2014), the candidates for CHP were elected as the mayors.[13] The loyalty to the Turkish state is also observed in the daily life of Ayvalık: every Friday and Sunday at 4:50 p.m., the national anthem is played through the speakers on the streets. This tradition, which started in 1955, results in some conflicts among the locals. Emir, one of the respondents who lives in Ayvalık, narrated a story of how he, with a couple of friends, once was outside when the anthem was being played, and they continued with their business, whereas the others around them all stopped with what they were doing and stood up during the anthem. This caused an argument between Emir and others and, since then, Emir said he has been careful of not being outside during the

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hours the anthem plays. As this research was interested in the role that different localities play in the manifestation of Kurdishness, the contrast between these two towns (Diyarbakır and Ayvalık) presented a good case to explore this question. However, even though the contrast in the characteristics between these two field sites was satisfactory, the differences resulting from being a small town or a big city could not be eliminated. Therefore, it was also necessary to look for a counterpart of Ayvalık in terms of size yet with more "Kurdish" characteristics.

The opportunity arose when one of the contacts from Ayvalık led the author to some of the locals in Derik. Derik is a town within the province of Mardin, and has a population of 55,278.[14] Going to Derik through someone that the locals know also helped in gaining their trust, and helped the author develop a good relationship with the locals faster, which was crucial before undertaking participant observation. It also was well suited to the purposes of this research: firstly, its population matched Ayvalık's, and that would mean there would be a similar-sized district from both parts of Turkey; secondly, due to its smaller size, the characteristics of the town could be observed more visibly, which provided ideal conditions to undertake participant observation.

One last note should be added here about these different field sites. Istanbul and Ayvalık, as mentioned earlier, both have significant Kurdish populations. It would be impossible to ignore the impact of the internal migration within Turkey throughout decades on this population to emerge. Whether this migration is forced due to the armed conflict in Southeast Turkey since the 1990s (Sirkeci 2000, 159) or due to having more job opportunities in the Western part of Turkey (some respondents mentioned this in the interviews), the statistics show that the number of Kurds in Western parts of Turkey has steadily increased (Mutlu 1996; Sirkeci 2000).[15] Specifically, the Marmara and Aegean regions, where Istanbul and Ayvalık are located, respectively, have seen the biggest increase in terms of their Kurdish populations (Mutlu 1996, 532).

This is a useful reminder for the purposes of this research, especially as one of the research questions is on the locality of Kurdishness. Among the respondents, there were individuals who migrated to Western part of Turkey with their families and/or by themselves, as well as "second-generation immigrants."[16] In that sense, it would be a fallacy to ignore the fact that these two parts of Turkey are linked through migration. Even though the discussion on locality in chapter 2 on locality will deal with two different contexts that different localities generate, the link between these two regions that has emerged through decades-long migration should also be kept in mind. Some of the by-products that migration to the Western part of Turkey brings will be acknowledged in chapter 3, where the role that neighborhoods play in the manifestation of Kurdishness will be discussed. Even within the same field site, the different neighborhoods that the respondents reside in generate different contexts

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for the respondents. Through these "immigrant-neighborhoods," internal migration that has continued for decades between these two parts of Turkey plays a role in interpreting the data of this research.

Methods of Data Collection

Interviews

Interviews were one of the main methods of data collection in this study. They were used to collect data both in the Western and Southeast parts of Turkey. Overall, 33 semi-structured interviews were conducted.

The reason for doing interviews was to collect narratives of the respondents with regards to their experiences of Kurdishness. Interviewing in qualitative research is useful to "hearing respondents' views 'in their own words'" (Byrne 2012, 209). As one of the questions this research is interested in is the role that the language plays in manifesting Kurdishness, stories from the respondents' early childhood were gathered. These stories were also about their first interactions with the world outside of their family environments and their current experiences when they speak their language. In that sense, sometimes the interviews took the form of "life history interviews" (Bryman 2008, 440) to understand "the inner experience of individuals, how *they* interpret, understand and define the world around them" (italics added for emphasis, Faraday and Plummer 1979, 776). In contrast to document research and participant observation, interviews provided the subjective voice this research needed, as the focus of life history interviews is "paramountly concerned with the subjective meanings of individuals" (Faraday and Plummer 1979, 776). As this research is interested in how Kurdishness is manifested and exhibited by individuals, interviews were useful in exploring the agency of this process. Interviews consisted of both individual and group interviews.

The interviews conducted in the Western part of Turkey were semi-structured. The main reason for this was that no participant observation was undertaken during the first phase of data collection. This means that there was no "regular interaction with people and participating in their daily lives" (Bryman 2008, 410). Data collection in the Western part of Turkey in February–April 2013 consisted of "one-visit interviews" (Gold 1958, 220–21). Therefore, to have guidance during these "one-visits," semi-structured interviews were needed. The selection of the respondents had the characteristics of "snowball sampling" (Bryman 2008; Taylor 1993) as the respondents were constantly asked to ask others who would be willing to share their experiences of Kurdishness. This method was used in a slightly different way during the stage of participant observation, which will be discussed shortly.

Even though the interviews were semi-structured, and there was an interview guide beforehand, it was also a "flexible" (Bryman 2008, 438)

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process. That is, some things that the respondents mentioned were picked up and they were asked to elaborate on them further. For instance, if the respondent mentioned he or she had children, then he or she would be asked to elaborate on his or her family life and how the children were raised. Or, if the respondent mentioned that he or she could not speak much Kurdish, the reasons for it were discussed. In all the interviews that took place after the declaration of the Peace Process, how the respondents perceived this on-going development was also discussed. The questions about the Peace Process were "how do you perceive the ongoing Peace Process?," "how do you perceive the recent developments such as the establishment of *TRT 6*?,"[17] and "how do you perceive the constitutional definition of the 'Turkish nation'?" Before all the interviews, the respondents were informed about the topic of this research, and their verbal consent was asked. They were also told that their real names or any other revealing information would not be disclosed in any way, and that pseudonyms would be used. In total, 12 respondents were interviewed in Western Turkey.

What differed in Southeast Turkey in terms of the respondent selection happened in Derik due to "continuous presence in the area" (Taylor 1993, 16). What happened was that, after a while, people were not continuously asked about others who might be interested as in other places, yet this would happen naturally during the course of interactions. That did not mean, however, there was undercover work. Due to the fact that almost everybody in Derik was aware of the presence of a researcher, they would interact willingly, and a tape recorder was always carried around in case an opportunity for an interview occurred during the course of everyday life. This approach was also useful in order to prevent some of the "taken-for-granted" perceptions. In total, 21 respondents were interviewed in Southeast Turkey. All of the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed.

The interviews conducted in Derik became more unstructured during the course of the stay. These were mostly in the forms of "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess 1984, 102). Even though there was the same interview guide, the structure of the conversations shifted due to developing "the trust and confidence of those with whom interviews are used" (Burgess 1984, 103).

Participant Observation

Participant observation was undertaken in Ayvalık and in Derik. In Ayvalık, the author regularly visited the place where local Kurds (along with Turks) hang out, socialize, and discuss the most recent political events.[18] In accordance with the definition of "participant-as-observer" detailed by Roy, "no secret of investigation" was made, and it was made known that "research was overriding interest" (1970, 217). In addition to

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the interviews conducted there, the author occasionally went there and observed the daily discussions people would have among themselves. A tape recorder was always carried around, and people were always informed when it was turned on.

Similarly in Derik, the author went to the local place[19] every day to "hang out" (Geertz 1998) there. The author would usually go there first thing in the morning to have breakfast, to read newspapers, and to have informal conversations with the people there about the current news. In addition to collecting data, this also helped with the process of getting to know people and trust building with the locals. This way, informal conversations could be initiated, which turned out to be a crucial source for data collection. After the presence of the researcher in the field was solidified, more activities with the locals were done: going to nearby villages, classroom observations, dinner/tea at locals' homes, and overnight stays at locals' homes.

The main aim of this research is to explore the diversity of Kurdishness in Turkey, rather than claiming to be a representative study of Kurdishness. That is why, when choosing the respondents, the priority was not to find a representative group in terms of age, gender, or social status. Therefore, it is fair to say that there is a variety among the respondents in terms of their occupations, age, and social status. A table of the respondents showing their occupations and their localities is provided in the Appendix. The respondents consisted mostly of teachers, students (both high-school and university students), journalists, and construction workers. Their ages varied from mid-teens to the late fifties. The following discussion aims to elaborate on that table.

Since religious or sectarian factors do not constitute part of the research questions, the respondents were not particularly asked which religious group or sect, if any, they belong to. The respondents' religious or sectarian loyalties were only brought up by the respondents themselves if they wanted to. The aim here is not to undermine the role that religion plays in the lives of people. Chapter 1 will show how crucial the decrease or increase in the significance of religion in state rhetoric is for manifestations of Kurdishness. It will specifically discuss that putting religion into state rhetoric has allowed AKP to emphasize Islam as a common bond between Turks and Kurds.

Being a Sunni Kurd or an Alevi Kurd is another factor worth considering when discussing Kurdishness in Turkey. Alevis differ from Sunnis in many respects in terms of how they practice their religions. The traditional Sunni Islam practices such as fasting in Ramadan [*oruç*], praying five times a day [*namaz*], and hajj [*hac*] do not exist in Alevi traditions, and Alevis claim "obedience to a set of simple moral norms" (van Bruinessen 1996, 7) instead of Sharia laws. Throughout the history of the Republic, there have been tensions and even brutal clashes between Sunnis and Alevis, especially during the 1970s. Part of this can be explained through

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Alevis' further integration into the society when they came into close contact with strict Sunnis (van Bruinessen 1996, 8). Considering the rather secular approach Alevis have adopted, it is perhaps not surprising that Alevis have generally been in favor of the Kemalist ideology with its emphasis on secularism. To illustrate, the Sheikh Said Revolt, which will be the focus of chapter 1 as one of the most important manifestations of Kurdishness during the early Republican period, was not really supported by the Kurdish Alevi tribes (van Bruinessen 1996). Therefore, it would be naive to assume that religious and sectarian differences have no significance on manifestations of Kurdishness. One of the arguments developed in this book is that the use of religion (or lack thereof) in state rhetoric plays a significant role in different forms of Kurdishness, so this book does not endorse such a claim. It is only that religious and sectarian factors were not the focus of this research, so this issue was left to the respondents' own will to be brought up. Among the respondents, only one (Emel) was openly emphasizing her Alevi identity and some others (Kenan, Emir, Arzu) mentioned the Sunni-Alevi division among Kurds. In the end, this was not significant enough to be one of the points to focus on for this research.

The variable of age is also something that this research does not mainly focus on. However, it is worth discussing one of the most important differences between the younger and the older generation that was observed whilst collecting the data. Generally, the younger respondents (high-school and university students, and some construction workers) entertained the idea of an independent Kurdistan more often than some of the older respondents. Some of them were even critical of Abdullah Öcalan due to the PKK's transforming agenda. The older respondents, on the other hand, generally used a more compromising language. Whilst this might simply be the excitement and enthusiasm that youth brings, it is also worth considering the occupational effects. Individuals who do not yet have an established status, such as students, might be more likely to embrace the more radical options than others.

Here, however, it is important to emphasize the main argument of this book: forms of Kurdishness are *customized* and *personalized* through individuals' interaction with the three different variables discussed in this book. With its focus on individuality, one thing that this book avoids, and wants to avoid, is generalizations about groups of people. Therefore, whilst it is necessary to provide a general overview of the group of respondents, it is also crucial to keep the uniqueness of each individual in mind.

Documents as Data Sources

To explore the role that state rhetoric plays in how Kurdishness is manifested, firstly the state rhetoric needed to be analysed. The state

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rhetoric starting from the early Republican period to the current period is discussed in chapter 1, yet that discussion also argues that there are two "moments of transition" in the history of the Republic: the early Republican period and the AKP period. For this purpose, the party programmes of AKP and CHP, and the laws and the regulations that were adopted during both periods were analysed. This way, rhetoric during these two periods was compared to explore the main characteristics of both.

Secondly, speeches of the state leaders in these two periods were analysed. Apart from Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who were both the leaders of their respective parties, the statements of other members who belonged to those parties were selectively included in the analysis. The transcriptions of the speeches and the statements during the AKP period were accessed on the official AKP website and, when they were not available there, the media archive was searched to find excerpts of the speeches. In some occasions, the videos of the whole speeches uploaded on YouTube were used. To find the speeches and statements during the early Republican period, secondary data were used.

Thirdly, the policies implemented during both periods were selectively analysed. For this reason, Official Gazzette[20] and newspaper archives were searched, including *ANF News*, *BBC News*, *Bugün*, *Habertürk*, *Hürriyet* and its English version *Hürriyet Daily News*, *Milliyet*, *Zaman* and its English version *Today's Zaman,* and *TRT Haber*. *ANF News* is a Kurdish news agency whose access has been blocked by Turkish courts many times; *TRT Haber* is the news agency of the state organ; *Habertürk*, *Hürriyet*, *Milliyet*, and *Zaman* are Turkish newspapers that have been among the most popular newspapers in Turkey.

Problems and Limitations with the Methodology

Selection Bias

One of the problems that needs to be discussed is how before and during the initial days of data collection, Kurdishness as a concept was defined according to a given framework. Hence, the respondents were selected according to this taken-for-granted Kurdishness. That is, the respondents selected in the initial days of the data collection were the ones the author perceived as Kurds: as the respondents were not asked beforehand whether *they* perceive themselves as Kurds, the initial respondents were the ones who were "ascribed" (Barth 1969) as Kurds by the author or by others. To illustrate this, the first contacts established were the ones that were either suggested by others or those whom the author perceived as Kurds because their parents were Kurds or they grew up in a Kurdish-speaking environment. It is fair to argue, then, that the initial perception of Kurdishness was based on ethnic and linguistic factors, which meant

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excluding self-ascribed Kurds who are not attached to the Kurdish language in any way or including people whose parents are ethnic Kurds even though they are not self-ascribed Kurds. As this research is interested in the role that different contextual variables (state rhetoric, localities, language use) play in manifestations of Kurdishness, analyzing the contextual variability of Kurdishness was essential. To explore the situational variability of Kurdishness, or how its boundaries are (re-)shaped, it was essential not to impose some predefined categories on the respondents. When it was noticed that the preconceptions about Kurdishness would result in some bias with regards to the selection of the respondents, a different method was applied.

That is how participant observation was useful in overcoming these issues. Undertaking participant observation was useful in engaging with people first before conducting any formal interviews. It also gave the author time to make her presence as a researcher known in the area so that people who thought of themselves as relevant to this research would be willing to participate. In the end, participant observation allowed familiarization with people and collecting data that would otherwise not be possible. For example, as will be illustrated in chapter 2, there were instances where individuals would define themselves as Kurds even though they were not fluent in the Kurdish language, which could not be revealed if sticking with the initial approach.

Issues Regarding Language

One of the most difficult challenges faced in this research design concerned the language in which the interviews were conducted. The fact that the author was not fluent in Kurdish meant either relying on a translator for each respondent or having to conduct the interviews and to carry informal conversations in Turkish, which was the second language for most of the respondents.

When the respondents were told about this research, none of them asked for a translator and all of them agreed to do the interview in Turkish. So, the idea of a translator was never mentioned by the respondents, and it was not brought up by the author. Did this mean that potential respondents were excluded? Not to a significant extent, as speaking and comprehending Turkish was common in all field sites. Naturally, there were some exceptions to this, and it was possible to observe situations where an individual was not fluent in Turkish, especially among the older generation: one of the houses that the author frequented in Derik to have dinner/tea had one mother and her three daughters living together. The mother did not speak any Turkish, and she would always greet the author in Kurdish. After dinner, it was usually TV time, consisting of watching the news and TV shows such as soap operas. Even though the news was followed on Kurdish channels,[21] the TV shows they watched

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were always on Turkish channels. Once one of her daughters was asked whether her mother enjoys these TV shows in Turkish, and she answered that her mother enjoyed them very much and that her mother could now comprehend Turkish due to watching TV channels in Turkish. This incident suggests that even the older generation Kurdish-speakers now, due to advances in technology, are familiar with the Turkish language. Speaking or understanding Turkish for a Kurdish-speaker in Turkey is the norm rather than the exception, hence, it was decided that this would not exclude data to a significant extent from data collection.

The choice of not using a translator can be criticized in two aspects. Firstly, it might be argued that there was a selection bias when it came to respondents as that meant the elimination of individuals who could not speak Turkish. However, this point, and why this would not create significant problems for this research, was explained in the previous paragraph. Another angle through which to look at this is to question the fact that all the respondents could speak Turkish and whether this would have any significant implications for the data. The fact that Turkish has always been the only official language of the state means that an ordinary citizen of the state, even though he or she may have only spoken Kurdish up until that point, would have to learn Turkish throughout primary school. Even if someone does not go to school, the compulsory military service (for males) and the existence of many TV channels in Turkish, as the above mentioned incident illustrates, makes it possible that most citizens would encounter the Turkish language in some way or another in their lives. Also, some of the respondents were native speakers of Turkish as one of the sub-questions of this research was the relationship between language and the manifestation of Kurdishness. For these reasons, the fact that all of the respondents spoke Turkish would not create a bias for this data.

A second criticism can be raised about the fact that most of the respondents were narrating their stories and having daily conversations in Turkish, which was their second language. Having a translator during the interviews would not necessarily be the better option as the existence of a third person would not necessarily be welcomed by the respondent due to the sensitive nature of data. Also, having Turkish as their second language did not mean that the respondents were struggling with expressing themselves. All of them were fluent in Turkish and, in fact, their use of grammar was perfect.[22] This is not to underestimate the importance of speaking in one's mother tongue. After all, to be able to speak freely in one's mother tongue (specifically, the right to have an education in the mother tongue) has been one of the basic demands for Kurds, as will be discussed in chapter 1. It only suggests that, as Hasan stated, speaking Turkish "is not part of the problem" (interview, April 17, 2013) for the respondents. As this research makes use of life stories and of the narration of those stories, the analysis of the data is not significantly

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affected by the exact wording that the respondents used. If anything, the author's translation from Turkish into English was more likely to be problematic. While translating from Turkish to English, the author tried to stay as close as possible to the original statements provided by the respondents. However, the original term is provided in brackets when an English translation was not available or failed to capture its original meaning.

Ethical Considerations

The potential negative effects of this research were two-fold. The first concerned the respondents: there were no physically invasive or potentially harmful physical procedures involved, yet, since the respondents talked about their life stories from their earlier years, this might have potentially caused some psychological discomfort for some respondents. This was dealt with by making the respondents as comfortable as possible, and no respondent was forced if any emotional stress was visible. Additionally, their requests of switching off the recorder if they asked were always complied with. For instance, one of the respondents started crying in the middle of the interview while talking about his childhood, and the interview did not continue.

Secondly, the data collection process also posed some risks to the author herself. The declaration of a ceasefire between PKK and the Turkish state on March 21, 2013 was good timing for the purposes of this research since it likely created a safer environment for the people there. In the end, the author travelled to Southeast Turkey with a relative who had lived and worked in Derik for one year. Even though this was not designed to prevent the author from any possible physical danger, it did contribute to feeling more comfortable during the stay there.

In all of the correspondence, the respondents were aware of the purposes of this research. Permission was asked every time the digital tape recorder was used, and everyone was told that their true names would not be revealed through any kind of presentation of the data. Even though some of the respondents were content with the use of their real names, every respondent was given a different pseudonym,[23] and these were consistently used while writing up to retain anonymity.

Despite all the precautions taken before conducting the fieldwork, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of good timing for this research. During the writing-up stage, military operations between the state and PKK re-started. Recently, the situation in Southeast Turkey has deteriorated, which has seen the state imposing a curfew in many districts, forcing residents to flee their neighborhoods (*Hürriyet Daily News* January 28, 2016). Conducting any kind of fieldwork under these conditions would be extremely difficult regardless of the precautions taken by the researcher. The ceasefire period that lasted for almost two years until July

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2015 has been the exception rather than the norm, so the importance of good timing cannot be emphasized more.

THEORETICAL ISSUES

Boundary-Making Approach

The idea that there is a constant interaction among ethnic groups instead of focusing on a one-way interaction through which only one ethnic group is affected can be traced back to the 1960s. Barth (1969), one of the pioneers of the boundary-making approach between ethnic groups, discusses the boundaries of ethnic groups by emphasising the notion of *ascription*. Self-ascription and ascription by others are the two critical features of ethnic groups, whose members use them to categorize themselves and others. This emphasis on ascription, according to Barth, is what provides the continuity of ethnic groups. Even though people, or the members of certain ethnic categories, might be flowing across boundaries, the very existence of these boundaries continues. The features and the criteria that define the boundaries may change, yet the maintenance of boundaries remains constant and this is provided by the constant dichotomization (1969, 14). The important feature of Barth's argument is that the membership to ethnic groups is subjective, rather than relying on any objective criterion: "it makes no difference how dissimilar members may be in their overt behavior—if they say they are A, in contrast to another cognate category B, they are willing to be treated and let their own behavior be interpreted and judged as A's and not as B's" (1969, 15).

The aspect of ascription puts the emphasis on agency of the individuals instead of the determinist ideas. In line with this focus on agency, the literature on boundaries between groups has also focused on the "making" and the "re-making" of the boundaries. Barth's work was groundbreaking in the sense that it introduced the idea that maintaining the boundaries between ethnic groups could be achieved regardless of the cultural differences between them. In contrast to classical assimilation theories that defended the idea that different ethnic groups and nations have different cultural markers, Barth, around the same time, suggested that this is not necessarily the case. Barth's work mostly focuses, however, on the processes of how boundaries are maintained, whereas recently, the focus of boundary literature has shifted toward the making of these boundaries (Wimmer 2013, 45).

In line with this shifting focus within the literature, Zolberg and Woon (1999) formulated three patterns of boundary-making in their study of immigration to Europe and to the United States: boundary crossing, boundary blurring, and boundary shifting. *Boundary crossing* refers to the process individuals go through "by acquiring some of the attributes of

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the host society" such as acquiring the mother language of the host society (1999, 8). *Boundary blurring* is the term that is more concerned with the host society: it refers to blurring of the differences between host society and immigrants that were once seen as "'alien' differences" (1999, 9) through the host society becoming more tolerant of those differences. *Boundary shifting* refers to the more comprehensive process, whereby the boundaries between immigrants and host society are redrawn either in the process of exclusion or inclusion (1999, 9).

In his discussion on ethnicity, Brubaker proposes to think of ethnicity (and also race and nations) as "relational, processual, dynamic, eventful and disaggregated terms" instead of substances or entities or collective individuals (2002, 167). By doing this, we can talk about "ethnicization" as a process and "groupness" as an event, "as something that 'happens'" instead of something that is "fixed and given" (2002, 167–68). In fact, Brubaker argues that even the very metaphor of boundaries that Barth introduced, with its focus on bounded groups, "can impede a more fully dynamic and processual understanding of ethnicity" (2009, 29). This kind of an approach; however, also carries the risk of being a "radical constructivist" (Wimmer 2013, 25) and treating ethnicities as mere "imagined communities" (Wimmer 2013, 26). Wimmer suggests we should be cautious against radical constructivism that would take situational and contextual variability of ethnicities for granted, and offers a comprehensive analysis of "how and why ethnicity matters in certain societies and contexts but not in others" (2013, 2). This research, drawing on these ideas, suggests to take Kurdishness as a continuous category whilst, at the same time, recognizing its varieties and the different forms it can take.

Thinking of "groupness" instead of "groups" helps us understand exactly this: how individuals can (re-)negotiate their ethnicities depending on the context whilst, at the same time, maintaining the boundaries of their identities. As will be discussed in chapter 2, an individual can still exhibit forms of Kurdishness despite being repeatedly called a "half-Kurd" by others due to her non-fluency in Kurdish. Loveman and Muniz (2007) illustrate this in their research on Puerto Rico where they looked at the categorization of individuals by looking at census data from 1910 and from 1920. Their data show significant differences in the way Puerto Ricans are classified in two censuses: it shows that Puerto Rico has become significantly whiter in terms of classification. That is, a significantly greater number of individuals from mixed background have been classified as "white" in 1920 compared to in 1910. This suggests a "primary shift in the social definition of whiteness itself" (Loveman and Muniz 2007, 935), which illustrates the concept of "boundary shifting" mentioned earlier. Similarly, Schwartzman's (2007) work on Brazilian non-white parents illustrates how boundary-crossing works across generations through socio-economic status: more educated non-white parents are more likely to classify their children as "white" than less educated

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non-white parents are. Within the Turkish context, Serdar (2017) analyses the two strategies of boundary making—boundary crossing and contraction—that are used by the Laz people of Turkey.

Within the literature on Turkey and its ethnic groups, the dominant framework has argued that the leaders of the Turkish nation-state building had a homogeneous nation in their mind that consisted of only Turkish elements and for this purpose, they denied the existence of all the non-Turkish ethnic groups (Heper 2007, 5). In Gellnerian terms, establishing a Turkish "high culture" (Gellner 1983) was the main goal for the founders of the Turkish state and anything belonging to the "low cultures" had to be abolished in order to reach this goal. Scholars defending this point of view (Barkey and Fuller 1998; Entessar 1992; Kramer 2000; Robins 1993) argue that it is the government that tried to forcefully assimilate the Kurds and the following ethnic conflict between the militants and the Turkish state is the result of these policies. However, an alternative point of view has emerged in recent years with regards to the assimilation of Kurds within the Turkish state. This paradigm distinguishes between "denial" and "non-recognition" of an ethnic identity: the assimilationist point of view argues that the Turkish state has been in denial of the Kurdish identity, whereas "the acculturation paradigm" states that the Turkish state chooses not to recognize the Kurdish identity. According to this paradigm, the policies of the Turkish state have not been aimed at assimilating the Kurdish peoples, but they are attempts at preventing "the de-acculturation of the already acculturated" (Heper 2007, 7). That is, this recent paradigm explains that the centuries-old living together of Turks and Kurds resulted in these two peoples sharing more than what they differ. Therefore, this paradigm continues, what the state does cannot be assimilation of Kurds as differences between Turks and Kurds have diminished due to living together for centuries. What it does instead is to prevent a "de-acculturation process" from taking place so that Kurds "would not again begin to think and act only in terms of their secondary ethnic identity" (Heper 2007, 11).

Similar to Brubaker's idea that it is now time to discuss *how* ethnicities are constructed instead of simply asserting that they *are* (2002, 175), Wimmer also argues that the idea that ethnicity is constructed, contextually variable, contested and contingently eventful, the four Cs of the constructivist framework have been a routine argument in the social sciences recently (2013, 204). The important task is to explore which contextual variables have an influence on the construction of ethnicities and through which means these ethnicities are constructed. This research, drawing on this framework, will look at the contextual variables having a significant influence on different manifestations of Kurdishness.

Another important discussion, for the purposes of this research, is the impact of social Darwinism in the formation of Turkish nationalism, and the place of Kurdish nationalism within this context. This is relevant for

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the discussion in chapter 1, where the influence of state rhetoric in the (re-)shaping of Kurdishness will be discussed.

Social Darwinism and "the Ideal Turk"

To understand the impact of social Darwinism on Turkish nationalism, it is essential to emphasize the importance of modernization/Westernization for Mustafa Kemal and his Kemalist ideology. In the minds of Kemalist leaders, the ideal citizen of the newly-established Turkish Republic had to be "Western," "modern," and "civilized." What exactly those terms meant was defined by the leaders themselves. Yet, defining the ideal citizen on those terms meant that anyone who, in the eyes of the Kemalist leaders, was not modern, Western, or civilized had to be turned into one. In the process of nation-building, "the people," who were simple and ignorant in Kemalist eyes, had to be transformed into "citizens" (Alemdaroğlu 2005, 63). This transformation process of "the people" had both mental and physical aspects: change of clothes (banning the fez, and introduction of hats and ties), fitness of the population, and regulation of the human body constituted the physical transformation process. Alemdaroğlu (2005) argues that eugenics discourse, dating back to the late Ottoman period, was crucial for Republican leaders in their quest for modernization. This eugenics discourse, which became a part of the Kemalist ideology's progressive discourse in the 1930s (Alemdaroğlu 2005, 68), was propagated by various tools owned by the state. One manifestation of this eugenics discourse was the Turkish History Thesis (chapter 1), which "argued" that Turks were the creators of all the great civilizations in all the lands to which they migrated. The Kemalist state made use of its magazine *Kadro* to propagate the idea of the superiority of the Turkish race through the use of slogans such as "One Turk is worth all the world" [*Bir Türk dünyaya bedeldir*] (White 1999, 82). The physical aspect of the Kemalist process of transformation is witnessed in the Public Hygiene Law that was passed in 1930 and in school textbooks of the time, as this passage elucidates: "The Turkish race, to which we are proud to belong, has a distinguished place among the best, strongest, most intelligent and most competent races in the world. . . . The future of our Turkey will depend on the breeding of high valued Turkish progeny in the families that today's youth will form in the future" (quoted in Alemdaroğlu 2005, 73).

The mental transformation of "the people" is related to the ideas of Orientalism and "White Man's Burden." Orientalism, as Said introduced it (1978), refers to the understanding in which the Orient is represented by the "progressive" Occident as "backwards." Through this othering process, the West (re-)defines itself as the opposite of the East. The Kemalist ideology, through its obsession with Westernization and secularism, applied this Orientalist approach in its policies: by denouncing the Orient

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and all the values associated with it, the Kemalist project of a modern, Western, and secular Turkey associated Islam with the Orient, hence "equated westernisation with de-Islamisation" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008, 4). The Kemalist idea of an "ideal Turk" meant that anyone who was not modern, secular, or Western was seen as the "other" who had to be converted into an "ideal Turk." Kurds fit this description in the minds of the Kemalist elites, and they have provided, still to this day, the major "other" for the Kemalist elites. This brief overview provides the necessary background for the discussion in chapter 1.

OUTLINE OF THIS BOOK

Each of the following chapters is devoted to one of the sub-questions that this research is interested in. It follows a "macro-to-micro" approach, and for this purpose, chapter 1 is devoted to the relationship between state rhetoric and Kurdishness. This chapter discusses the state rhetoric of the Republic throughout its history but two "moments of transition" in the history of the Republic will be focused on: the early Republican period (1923–1938) and the AKP period that started in 2002. The manifestations of Kurdishness in these two "moments of transition" will be compared. The fieldwork data will show that in its current form, Kurdishness is mainly manifested through a focus on two demands: education in the mother tongue and the right to self-determination. The differences in the forms of Kurdishness that are exhibited during the early Republican period and during the AKP period are explained through the changes and continuities between the state rhetoric of those two periods.

Chapter 2 will shift the focus of the book from the state rhetoric to the question of locality. Through the fieldwork data, other forms of Kurdishness manifested by the respondents will be illustrated: some exhibit this through an attachment to cultural elements, others through an attachment to the Kurdish language; whereas some others, without being attached to either the Kurdish language or culture, manifest their Kurdishness through "self-ascription" (Barth 1969). This chapter will show how everyday encounters of discrimination and prejudice that individuals receive, "informal, everyday discrimination" (Wimmer 2013, 75), is effective in (re-)shaping the boundaries of Kurdishness. It is possible to observe these acts of "everyday discrimination" in both parts of Turkey. How different localities are effective in the process of boundary making is observed in the different contextual environments they generate for receiving everyday encounters of discrimination and prejudice.

Chapter 3 will continue the focus on the interactions among "ordinary people." The data in this chapter will suggest the importance of two factors in the everyday lives of individuals for constructing different forms of Kurdishness: family environment and neighborhood/social stat-

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us. This chapter will explore the role that language plays in the manifestation of Kurdishness through these two factors. Along with the everyday acts of discrimination and prejudice that are discussed in chapter 2, family environment and neighborhood constitute the everyday practices that play a significant role in the manifestation of different forms of Kurdishness. In the last section of this chapter, the ways through the boundaries of Kurdishness are discussed through the narratives of the respondents.

NOTES

1. Ethnicity of citizens is invisible in the population censuses in Turkey, so there is no official information on ethnicity. However, according to unofficial information, Istanbul has approximately 3–4 million resident Kurds (two of the respondents, Mahsun and Halil, both mentioned this), which would make it a larger "Kurdish city" than Diyarbakır, the "spiritual capital" for Kurds.

2. Again, the invisibility of ethnicity in data censuses leaves us with no official sources to find exact numbers. Aktürk states that almost 16 percent of the population in Turkey identifies itself as Kurdish in public opinion surveys (2012, 6).

3. He stated his regret over those incidents many times publicly; he admitted that he was wrong and that Kurds should be able to express themselves in their own language (*Radikal* March 29, 2013).

4. The PKK was established in Ankara in 1978 by Abdullah Öcalan. The party's initial aim was to establish an independent, united Kurdistan, and the members of the party saw "the armed struggle as the only way to achieve this" (van Bruinessen 2000, 233). For a detailed account on the transformation of PKK's vision, see Al (2015a).

5. The AKP was founded in 2001, and it has constantly held the majority of seats in the National Assembly since the general elections in 2002. As of today (March 2018), AKP still holds the majority of seats in the Assembly. Chapter 1 will discuss the rhetoric of the AKP in detail.

6. As mentioned earlier, the censuses in Turkey do not reveal ethnic information of the citizens. However, a survey published by KONDA Research and Consultancy in 2006 shows the Kurdish population in Istanbul as 17–18 percent of its population. The "Who Are We?" survey including full information on the Kurdish population, can be downloaded at http://www.konda.com.tr/en/reports.php.

7. The author has lived in both of these places.

8. This is according to the census by the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2000 (http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/tabloOlustur.do).

9. See the statements of Osman Baydemir, the then-mayor of Diyarbakır, in 2012 (http://www.milliyet.com.tr/baydemir-turkiye-de-ozerk-kurdistan-olacak/siyaset/siyasetdetay/28.07.2012/1572884/default.htm), and Orhan Öztürk, the governor of Bitlis, in May 2015 (http://www.milliyet.com.tr/diyarbakir-kurdistan-in-baskenti--gundem-2054656/) [Accessed March 24, 2018].

10. This is according to the census by the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2000 (http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/tabloOlustur.do).

11. Its population is 705,098 according to the 2000 census by the Turkish Statistical Institute (http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/tabloOlustur.do).

12. The CHP was established by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk during the early years of the Republican period, which will be discussed in more detail in chapter 1. In that sense, it is the party that is loyal to the Kemalist principles of the Turkish state.

13. From 1994 until 2004, the mayor of Ayvalık belonged to the Nationalist Action Party [*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, or MHP]. The MHP was founded in 1969, and the party principles embrace Turkish nationalism.

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14. This is according to the census by the Turkish Statistical Institute in 2000 (http://tuikapp.tuik.gov.tr/Bolgesel/tabloOlustur.do).

15. Mutlu shows that Istanbul and Izmir received the biggest number of Kurdish immigrants by 1990, with Istanbul's Kurdish population increasing from 2.77 percent in 1965 to 8.16 percent in 1990 and Izmir's Kurdish population increasing from 1.04 percent in 1965 to 6.91 percent in 1990 (1996, 526–27 and 539–40).

16. There was even a "third-generation immigrant" in the case of Arzu, whose grandparents escaped from Dersim during the events of 1937–1938 (chapter 1).

17. *TRT 6* is the first (and so far the only) state-funded TV channel that exclusively broadcasts in Kurdish. It was established in January 2009 during the second period of AKP rule (chapter 1).

18. The name and the characteristics of this place is not revealed due to privacy reasons.

19. The name and the characteristics of this place is not revealed due to privacy reasons.

20. *Official Gazzette* is the governmental organ and can be accessed for free at its official website: http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/default.aspx#.

21. As will also be mentioned in chapter 1, there is one state-funded TV channel in Turkey that broadcasts exclusively in Kurdish (*TRT 6*). This means that one has to have satellite to be able to watch other TV channels broadcasting in Kurdish.

22. There would even be instances in Derik when, jokingly, some respondents would challenge native Turkish speakers about their knowledge of the Turkish language by showing them literature questions from an exam. Hasan, for instance, also mentioned that he used to have perfect scores on Turkish exams, and he wrote books in Turkish. Some university students mentioned that the easiest part of the university exams for them was Turkish Language and Literature, which would suggest that they do not find it a struggle to express themselves in Turkish.

23. It is necessary to mention here that the pseudonyms used in this book are not necessarily Kurdish names; they are random names that can be used by both Kurds and Turks.

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ONE

Two "Moments of Transition"

How State Rhetoric Plays a Role in Manifestations of Kurdishness

This chapter will focus on the state rhetoric throughout the history of the Republic, and the role it plays on the manifestations of Kurdishness. For this purpose, it will first discuss the characteristics of the rhetoric that was applied during the Kemalist period of the Republic, lasting from the establishment of the Republic in 1923 until the end of "High Kemalism" (Çağaptay 2006) in 1938. This period exhibited the first "moment of transition" in the history of the Republic: the transition from a multicultural, multilingual, and multi-ethnic Empire into a secular, modern, and central nation-state. The discussion in this section will show that Kemalist rhetoric during the early Republican period was based on the principles of modernization/Westernization, secularism, centralization, and also an emphasis on the Turkish language. Then, the post-Kemalist era until the 2000s will be briefly overviewed. The last sections of the chapter will focus on the second "moment of transition," the AKP period that started in 2002, and on some of the current manifestations of Kurdishness. The data from the respondents will illustrate that Kurdishness, in its current form, has been transformed, and now mostly focuses on linguistic and centralistic demands, compared to Kurdishness during the Kemalist period, when it was mostly focused on ethnic issues. This chapter will argue that *both* the changes *and* continuities within the state rhetoric play a role in the transformation of Kurdishness in these two different periods.

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KEMALIST RHETORIC AND ITS POLICIES

The history of the early Republican period and its policies will be analysed in two parts: a) the period from the establishment of the Republic to 1931, during which the young nation-state was experiencing a transitional phase; and b) the age of "High Kemalism" (Çağaptay 2006), that is, the period from 1931 to the death of Atatürk in 1938.

The 1920s: The Transitional Phase of Kemalism

Changes in the Usage of Rhetoric: A Comparison Between the Pre-Republican and the Post-Republican Period

To understand the period of establishment of the Republic, it is essential to take into account the fact that any Republic that would be established was going to inherit the multicultural characteristics of the society that used to inhabit the lands of the Ottoman Empire. The Republic's nation-builders inherited "an obsession with territorial integrity and national unity that seems to be rooted in the trauma of the gradual dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire" (van Bruinessen 2000, 226). This "obsession" was reflected in the approach of the elites towards the groups they considered threats to the territorial integrity of the state.

The period before the establishment of the Turkish Republic, however, saw the cooperation of nation-builders and the Kurdish tribal leaders against the Western powers. The leader of the Turkish Independence Movement, Mustafa Kemal (later to be officially called Atatürk), did not hesitate to use rhetoric that would appeal to Kurds by promoting "Sunni Islam as a key identity marker in the future Turkish state" (Natali 2005, 71). He had written personal letters to Kurdish aghas and sheikhs,[1] promising to save Islam from the Western powers (Beşikçi 1979, 270; Natali 2005, 71). By the end of 1919, Mustafa Kemal managed to rally the support of a significant number of Kurdish tribes (Loizides 2010, 515; McDowall 1996, 186), and those aghas and sheikhs were willing to give their support to Mustafa Kemal "in the belief that they were fighting for the Muslim Patrimony in which they had a share" (McDowall 1992, 18). To strengthen the religious sentiments of Kurdish society, Mustafa Kemal pragmatically used the rhetoric of Islam in his speeches, putting special emphasis on the use of concepts such as khilafa and a "Muslim brotherhood." The following excerpt by Mustafa Kemal illustrates this point: "As long as there are fine people with honor and respect, Turks and Kurds will continue to live together as brothers around the institution of *khilafa,* and an unshakeable iron tower will be raised against internal and external enemies" (quoted in McDowall 1996, 187). Similarly, after the establishment of a Grand National Assembly in Ankara in 1920, he stated in a secret meeting: "The general principle is that the various Muslim

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elements living in the country . . . are genuine brothers who would respect each other's ethnic, local, and moral norms [laws]. . . . If one thing is certain, it is this: Kurds, Turks, Laz, Circassians, all these Muslim elements living within national borders have shared interests" (quoted in Yegen 2009, 598).

Yet in another statement, Mustafa Kemal declared that the unity he is trying to create is "not only Turkish or Circassian" but "a mixture of one Muslim element" (quoted in McDowall 1996, 188). The idea of Kurds having their rights and even being granted autonomy was entertained in the Constitution of 1921 and in a draft law that was approved in the Assembly in 1922: the Constitution stated that "provinces were autonomous in local affairs" (Mango 1999, 12), and, in 1922, the National Assembly proposed to establish "an autonomous administration for the Kurdish nation in harmony with their national customs" (McDowall 1996, 188) within Kurdistan.[2]

Mardin argues that Mustafa Kemal declared his goal as the salvation of the *millet*[3] during the early years "to gather and energize a population materially and morally depleted by the Turkish involvement in the Great War" (1997, 116). It is beyond the scope and the intentions of this book to discuss whether these moves by Mustafa Kemal were simply pragmatic as the conditions required or sincere efforts. What is crucial to emphasize, however, is that throughout the Independence War and for a while afterwards (before the Republic was established in 1923), Mustafa Kemal did not use assimilationist rhetoric regarding the Kurds or any other Muslim groups within the lands of what would be Turkey.[4] He recognized the multi-ethnic character of the society and, as was stated earlier, autonomy to a certain extent was promised.

It was clear, however, that these ideas were dropped in the 1924 Constitution. As the first constitution of Turkey after the establishment of the Republic in 1923, the introduction of the 1924 Constitution clearly states the policies of the newly-established independent state:

> Our state is a nation-state. It is not a multi-national state. The state does not recognize any nation other than Turks. There are other peoples which come from different races [ethnic groups] and who should have equal rights within the country. Yet it is not possible to give rights to these people in accordance with their racial [ethnic] status. (quoted in Yegen 2009, 599)

With this statement, the newly-established Turkish state recognized the existence of different ethnic groups within its borders, yet it did not consider Kurds (or any of the other ethnic groups) as a separate nation. Since there is only one nation within the borders of the state, it followed that there could not be any rights granted to any of those ethnic groups due to their ethnic status. It was clear, then, that the newly-established Republic was going to be based on the principles of the nation-state, instead of a

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multi-ethnic, multi-national state, which was not in accordance with its demographic characteristics.[5]

The Republican Understanding of the Turkish Nation and Its Concordant Policies

Soon after the Republic was established in 1923, it became clear that the main aim of the leaders of the nation-state was to establish "a modern state along European lines with an identity that was explicitly Turkish" (McDowall 1992, 18). For this reason, the Republic's nation-builders started a process of "Turkification" (Loizides 2010, 516; Yegen 2009, 600). For this to happen, however, it was first necessary to define a "Turk" and its main features. Article 88 of the 1924 Constitution gives the definition of a "Turk" as "a political term." It states that "the name Turk shall be understood to include all citizens of the Turkish Republic, without distinction of, or reference to, race or religion." This kind of a definition of Turkishness, at first glance, seems in accordance with the idea of an inclusive civic nationalism as opposed to a more exclusive ethnic nationalism (Brown 1999; Brubaker 1990; Guibernau 1996; Kohn 1945).[6] A closer look at the practices and policies of the nation-state, however, reveal that the practice of belonging to the Turkish nation differed significantly from the idea of an "inclusive" nation. As will be discussed shortly, what belonging to the Turkish nation meant, for the leaders of the nation-state, was for ethnic groups to abandon their culture, their language, and their identity. It is possible to argue, then, that based on this article of the 1924 Constitution, there was an "official gap between citizenship and Turkishness" (Yegen 2009, 607).

The discussions in the National Assembly regarding Article 88 of the 1924 Constitution are manifestations of this understanding. Hamdullah Suphi, one of the Deputies for Istanbul, stated the following as a response to what it takes to become a Turk: "someone asked me 'How can I become a Turk? Could you please tell me?' I said, 'You can be a Turk. Jews who left Spain and came here with the Spanish language will be Turks after accepting the language of the country and the Turkish schools as their own, like Jews in France, like Jews in England'" (quoted in Aydıngün and Aydıngün 2004, 426). Another statement by Hamdullah Suphi also asserts that Armenians and Jews could not be acknowledged as Turks unless they abandoned "their languages, as well as Armenianness and Jewishness" (quoted in Çağaptay 2006, 15).

At this point, a question might be asked whether this understanding of Turkishness as an exclusive term is applied only to the non-Muslim groups of Turkey, or whether it also included Kurds who are predominantly Muslim. The following discussion will show that the latter is the case. However, it is important to note here that there was indeed a difference in the way the Turkish state viewed its non-Muslim and Muslim

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citizens. The nation-state saw both groups as those who needed to be assimilated into the concept of Turkishness that was being constructed by the new Kemalist ideology. The non-Muslim groups, however, were recognized as minorities by the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, where "it stressed the common religious identity of Turks as Muslims" (Yavuz 2001, 7), whereas the official rhetoric of the nation-state was "based on the denial of the physical existence of the Kurds" (Yegen 1999, 560). In other words, Kurds, according to the official discourse, were seen as a "population" (Çağaptay 2006, 21) instead of as a separate ethnic identity. In a way, it was easier to categorize a non-Muslim citizen as a minority, whereas a Kurd was ethnically "invisible" within the nation-state.

The importance of Article 88 of the 1924 Constitution was that it established the secularist principle on which the new Republic was founded since it "did away, at least legally, with the notion of the nation as an Islamic union" (Heper 2007, 91). The principle of secularism, seen by the Republic's nation-builders as something in accordance with Western principles, provided the foundation for the upcoming policies of the nation-state. As will be elaborated later in this chapter, the emphasis on Islam also brings about an emphasis on the concept of *ummah,* which is a supra-national concept that unites all Muslims. Hence, by abolishing this common bond, Kurds were seen not as the "Muslim brothers" of Turks, but as a population that needed to be assimilated into Turkish "high culture," in Gellnerian terms.

The abolishment of the Caliphate[7] in 1924 further consolidated the secular characteristics of the new nation-state. The Caliphate, for the Ottoman administration, was a necessary point of reference as it "prevented/delayed the constitution of Ottoman society on the basis of the logic of ethnic exclusion" (Yegen 1999, 559). For this newly-established Republic, however, it was an obstacle on its way to Westernization/modernization. Other secularization reforms included switching to the Gregorian calendar, closing down the *medreses* (religious schools), banning the *fez* (the hat that Muslim men used to wear in the Ottoman Empire), and the abolishment of Sharia law, replacing it with the civil code. All these reforms, for Mustafa Kemal, served the purpose of "breaking of links with the Ottoman past" (Çağaptay 2006, 13) so that a modern Turkish state, guided by Western ideals and principles, could be established in the lands of Anatolia. Secularism, then, was one of the ways in which the traditions of the past could be broken down. During the early years of the Republic, Mustafa Kemal made the aim of the nation-state very clear. In one of his speeches in 1925, he stated that the present government "has changed the nature of the common ties among the members of the nation that persisted for centuries; instead of religious and sectarian ties, it now assembles the members of our nation through the bond of Turkish nationality" (quoted in Parla and Davison 2004, 71).

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Going back to the discussion of what constitutes the Turkish nation, then, secularism provided one of the principles that the citizens of the new Republic should aim for if they wanted to be considered proper "Turks." That is, secularism was one of the ways that the gap between citizenship and Turkishness could be bridged.

Language was another means for the Kemalist state to construct Turkishness. Mustafa Kemal was aware of the importance of a standardized, national language for the establishment of a national consciousness among the peoples of a nation-state. In his words, "a rich national language has great influence on the development of national feeling" (quoted in Çolak 2004, 75). With this purpose in mind, one of the first policies the newly-established Republic adopted was to recognize Turkish as the sole official language of the state in the 1924 Constitution (Article 2). As quoted earlier, abandoning one's own language and adopting Turkish was seen as *sine qua non* for being a Turk. "Linguistic assimilation" was expected of all the citizens of Turkey by the Republican elites (Bayar 2011), and the cultural homogenization that Mustafa Kemal sought for the nation-state could be achieved through linguistic assimilation. In this sense, what the Republican elites had in mind could be understood through Gellner's concept of "high culture." Different to what Gellner outlines in his discussion, however, it is not modernity and industrialization that require the establishment of a "high culture." Rather, it was the conscious efforts of the state leaders that constructed a "high culture."

To create a "high culture" that is homogeneous and modern, the education system and, hence, a standardized language were seen as essential by Republican elites. In fact, for Mustafa Kemal, language was the essential element "in the creation of Turkishness and a culturally homogeneous, modern and secular society" (Aydıngün and Aydıngün 2004, 426). The Prime Minister at the time, İsmet İnönü, also emphasized "the need for everybody in Turkey to speak Turkish" (Çağaptay 2006, 25). Unlike what primordialists argue, Turkish nationalism was "not the awakening of Turks to national consciousness," but rather was "a project undertaken by intellectuals" (Kadioğlu 1996, 185). The reforms of the 1920s were attempts at creating this identity through differentiating Turkishness from its Ottoman past and making "non-secular" and "non-Western" entities as "the Other" of Turkishness.

With this purpose in mind, the law on the unification of education [*Tevhid-i Tedrisat*] was passed by the National Assembly in 1924. This law provided a standardized education for the masses and was essential in the "construction of Turkishness" (Aydıngün and Aydıngün 2004, 426). In 1926, Kurds were the specific target of another language policy that aimed at the solidification of Turkishness: the Eastern Regions Reform Plan [*Şark Islahat Planı*]. With this plan, speaking Kurdish was banned in the western regions of Turkey and using any language other than Turk-

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ish was banned in certain eastern towns that were predominated by Kurds (Bayar 2011, 116).

The biggest language reform of the 1920s, however, happened in the form of adopting the Latin alphabet for the Turkish language in 1928. This "linguistic engineering" plan (Çolak 2004, 68) initiated by the Republican elites aimed at a complete breakaway from the last ties to the Ottoman past. The alphabet revolution also aimed at eliminating the intelligentsia who were educated in Ottoman Turkish with Arabic letters. This provided total control for the state in establishing a new intelligentsia, one which was devoted to the principles of the nation-state. Apart from practical reasons, such as that the Latin alphabet was more suitable for writing Turkish, switching to the Latin alphabet from the Arabic letters was also a symbolic act for the Republican elites. It is possible to see this mind-set in the words of Mustafa Kemal: "so long as Turkish was written from right to left, it could never properly express *the ideals of European civilization*. The picturesque involutions and intricacies of Arabic script afforded a psychological background to *the Oriental mentality which stood as the real enemy of the Republic"* (italics added for emphasis, quoted in Wortham 1930, 18–9). The "obsession" of the Kemalist ideology with modernization and Westernization is reflected in this quotation. Through this "act of forgetting" (Çolak 2004, 73), ties to the Ottoman past were cut. This can again be explained through Gellner's theory of modernization, in which he argues that a standard education system and its standard medium of instruction are necessitated by modernity. In the Turkish case, modernity was imposed by the Republican elites. This suggests the importance of agency in the construction of a Turkish "high culture."

All in all, the 1920s was the decade that saw the establishment of a new Republic from the ashes of a multi-cultural Empire. The aim of this newly-established Republic was to be a modern, secular, and homogeneous nation-state with Western ideals. The policies of "Turkification" mentioned in this section should be, therefore, considered with this aim in mind. It was a decade of both the establishment of national sovereignty and "doing things" (Bayar 2011, 114), and it was crucial for setting out the principles on which the nation-state would be based. In other words, it was a period when "a non-western, de-central, a-national, and non-secular Empire" was transformed into a "western, central, national, and secular" nation-state (Yegen 1999, 559). Therefore, the concepts of "westernization/modernization," "centralization," and "secularization" were essential in the formation of official state rhetoric. It should be noted here that it would not be unusual to expect that all these changes imposed to society from the "top-down" would affect many groups. Every group that was seen as "non-Western," "non-secular," and "non-central" by the Republican elites would be a threat to the newly-established Republic. Kurds were one of those groups who were seen as "non-Western," "non-

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secular," and "non-central" by the Republican elites. The next decade, the 1930s, would see the further solidification of this understanding through the policies targeted specifically at Kurds.

The 1930s: Solidification of the Kemalist Rhetoric

After a tumultuous decade that saw the establishment of a new nation-state and the adoption of a new alphabet, it was time for this new order to be solidified. In 1931, CHP, which was established by Mustafa Kemal in 1923 and had been acting as the party representing the interests of the Republican elites, announced the six founding principles of Kemalism: republicanism, nationalism, populism, étatism, secularism, and reformism. Another important development at the start of this decade happened with regards to the definition of the "Turkish nation." In the party programme of 1931, the Turkish nation was defined as a "social and political community of citizens connected to one another through *language*, *culture* and *ideals*" (italics added for emphasis, quoted in Çağaptay 2006, 44).

The importance of this definition of a Turkish nation is two-fold. Firstly, it further strengthened the linguistic aspect of Turkishness. That is, linguistic assimilation that was seen as desirable for the citizens of Turkey in the earlier period now became officially necessary with this definition. This was observed in this speech of Mustafa Kemal before the First Turkish History Congress in 1932: "One, who regards himself as a member of the Turkish nation, should first of all and in every case, speak Turkish. If, someone, who does not speak Turkish, claims membership to Turkish culture and community, it would not be right to believe in this" (quoted in Çağaptay 2004, 89). This speech can also be read to suggest that the Kemalist ideology *did not* force its citizens to speak Turkish as it emphasizes "ascription" (Barth 1969): that is, if someone does not regard himself as a member of the Turkish nation, then he does not have to speak Turkish. After all, as was discussed earlier, there was a gap between citizenship and Turkishness. At the practical level, however, speaking Turkish was not so much a matter of choice. Campaigns such as "Citizen, Speak Turkish" specifically aimed at non-Muslim citizens such as Jews, Greeks, and Armenians (Aslan 2007; Çağaptay 2006) suggest that even non-Muslim citizens of Turkey who were officially recognized as "minorities" (hence, they were not expected to be a part of the "nation") were expected to speak Turkish in the public space. Regarding Kurds, as they were ethnically "invisible," they were assumed to be part of the Turkish nation and, hence, expected to speak exclusively in Turkish. As will be discussed shortly, the policies of the state in the 1930s reflected this expectation. The "Citizen, Speak Turkish" campaign that started in 1927 towards the non-Muslim citizens was extended towards all ethnic groups by the mid-1930s, including Kurds. The following statement in

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1938 outlines why Kurds were expected to speak Turkish: "To whom are we saying 'Citizen, Speak Turkish'? Who do we want this from? . . . The masses called Kurds—who speak Arabic—are the same as Turks" (quoted in Bayar 2011, 121). According to this understanding, Kurds, whose ethnicity was again disregarded, were simply Turks who speak Arabic[8] and had to be "converted" to speaking Turkish.

Secondly, this definition of the Turkish nation strengthened the importance of "culture and ideals" for Turkishness. This is linked to the alphabet revolution of 1928, which increased the importance of the education system. The primary role of the education system was now to raise citizens devoted to the principles of the Kemalist ideology, the six main principles outlined earlier.

The 1930s, along with "the advent of High Kemalism" (Çağaptay 2006, 43), also saw the re-definition of Turkishness along more ethnic lines. Within this framework, Kurds were seen as Turks who simply needed to be guided by the state to find their "true ethnicity." This paternalistic attitude of the state is reflected in this statement of Recep Peker, the secretary general of CHP, in 1931: "we accept as part of us those citizens in the contemporary Turkish political and social community who have had the idea that they are Kurds, Circassians and even Lazes and Pomaks, imposed on them. *It is our duty to correct these false conceptions [among them]*" (italics added for emphasis, quoted in Çağaptay 2002, 70). The Kemalist ideology, then, in a way took on a "White Turkish Man's Burden in order to carry out a civilizing mission on a supposedly backward and traditional Anatolian society" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008, 4), of which Kurds were part. As Westernization/modernization became a part of the official state rhetoric (Yegen 1999), Kurds, who were seen as "anti-Western" and "anti-modern," needed to be converted into "ideal citizens of Turkey."

The increasing emphasis on ethnicity and language in the formation of Turkishness was manifested in two important official rhetoric acts of the Kemalist era of the 1930s. The Turkish History Thesis and the Sun Language Theory saw the "crystallisation of Turkish Orientalism" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008, 9).

Turkish History Thesis

In 1932, the Ministry of Education organized a workshop for high school and secondary school teachers to instruct them on teaching a history that was in line with the Kemalist principles of the nation-state. The First Turkish History Congress, as it was later called, saw the deliberate discussion of the Turkish History Thesis and provided its outline. In line with the primordialist accounts of nations, this Thesis emphasized the antiquity of the Turkish race. Turks, according to this Thesis, used to live in Central Asia thousands of years ago and, from there, moved in differ-

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ent directions of the globe to "civilize the rest of the world" (Çağaptay 2002, 70). This was, as discussed earlier, an example of the paternalistic understanding of the Kemalist notion of Turkishness: it was a burden of the Turkish race to bring civilization to the "backwards people" in the rest of the world (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008, 9). The Thesis also reinforced the role of the Turkish language for the Turkish nation as the language that had "preserved the memories, cultural characteristics and everything else that made them a nation" (Çağaptay 2002, 70). This further increased the importance of the Turkish language for membership in the Turkish nation: as the Turkish language was the thing that preserved the nation, one had to speak Turkish to prove his or her ethnic Turkish descent (Çağaptay 2002, 70). Through this Thesis, it was easier to justify the policies of the nation-state: since Turks were the creators of all the great civilizations in all the lands to which they migrated, the current ethnic groups of Anatolia (including Kurds) were originally of Turkish ethnic origins. What the state was doing, then, according to the official rhetoric, was not assimilating those ethnic groups (since they were already Turks) but reminding them of their Turkishness by imposing the Turkish language and Turkish culture upon them.

Sun Language Theory

Even though the scientific basis of the History Thesis was not established, it provided the justification for the Sun Language Theory. If Turks were the originators of all the great civilizations in the world, it would be natural to assume that the language they spoke at that time was also brought with them to the lands they emigrated. This, combined with the Orientalist mentality mentioned earlier, constituted the basis of the Sun Language Theory. The final form of the Sun Language Theory was approved in 1936 in the Third Turkish Language Congress. The main aim of this Theory was to show that "Turkish was the basic source of all cultural languages including the Ural-Altai, the Indo-European and the Semitic ones" (quoted in Çolak 2004, 83). The Congress was a showcase for presenting the Sun Language Theory to linguists and to Turcologists to receive their support for this argument. The result, however, was that the scientific aspect of the Theory was questioned by the visiting scholars[9] and, as it lost its credibility in the international community, the earlier enthusiasm of the Republican elites regarding this Theory disappeared (Aytürk 2004).

Even though the enthusiasm was short-lived, it does not mean, however, that the Sun Language Theory did not have any impact. Combined with the Turkish History Thesis, these "invented traditions" (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983) of the Republican elites served to educate the upcoming generation about the ideals of the new Republic. These theses served to "instil in people an awareness of belonging to a great nation," and

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even though the scientific credibility of these theories was quickly dismissed, a whole generation was still educated according to the arguments of those theses (Aytürk 2004, 19). This helped strengthen the mentality that reinforced the superiority of a Turkish race and Turkish language. The adoption of the Resettlement Law in 1934 was another manifestation of this mentality.

Resettlement Law [İskân Kanunu]

The first instance of a law on resettlement was observed in 1926, when the Republican elites needed to regulate the influx of immigrants coming from Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania. While defining who could be qualified as an immigrant, the Law stated that, "those who do not share the Turkish culture . . . will not be admitted as immigrants" (Çağaptay 2002, 71). According to this law, non-Muslim immigrants who were former citizens of the Ottoman Empire were not allowed, whereas Muslim immigrants were welcome (Çağaptay 2002, 71). Religion, then, was one of the essential factors of Turkish culture. However, if being Muslim was enough to be considered an "ideal Turk," then it would be expected that Kurds, who are predominantly Muslim, would be considered as such. The discussion so far suggests that this is not the case. The previous sections discussed that the Turkish language, according to the Republican elites, is also crucial to Turkish culture. This idea was further solidified in the resettlement law of 1934.

The Law of Resettlement of 1934 is considered an extension of the understanding that resulted in the "invention" of the Turkish History Thesis and Sun Language Theory. According to van Bruinessen, it was a "measure by which the authorities hoped to speed up the process of assimilation" (2000, 80). Firstly, it reconfirmed the criteria for the admission of immigrants into the Turkish state. Article 4 states that populations who do not belong to the Turkish culture, anarchists, spies, nomadic gypsies, and those who were expelled from the state are not allowed as *muhacir*s (cited in Beşikçi 1977, 135).[10] *Muhacir* is defined in the previous article as "settled or nomadic individuals or tribes migrating from abroad who belong to the Turkish race and settled individuals who belong to the Turkish culture." More importantly, and unlike the previous Resettlement Law, "belonging to the Turkish culture" was more ambiguous, and deciding who belongs to the Turkish culture was left to the authorities (Article 3). In accordance with the emphasis Kemalist elites gave to ethnic ties during the 1930s, the Turkish word for "race" [*ırk*] was mentioned frequently.

The proposal that was presented in the National Assembly in 1932 provides insight into the reasoning of the authorities. Talking about the structure within the Ottoman Empire, the proposal stated that the absolutism of the Empire based its existence on the co-existence of groups

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who do not assimilate into each other's cultures. "Due to the separate locations these groups were based in, even the *muhacir*s, who belonged to the Turkish race, could not mingle with their fellow Turks" (cited in Beşikçi 1977, 156).[11] Through this "population engineering" (Çağaptay 2006, 88), the aim was the conversion of those groups who were considered "unsuitable" into "proper Turks."

The Law divided the lands of Turkey into three different zones. Zone 1 consisted of the lands into which "the populations who share the Turkish culture" (Çağaptay 2006, 88) were to be resettled. By relocating the populations who belong to the Turkish culture there, it aimed to have a concentration of "high culture" (Gellner 1983) in these lands. According to Beşikçi (1977), this is the area that is referred to as "Northern Kurdistan," which is the part of Kurdistan that is located within the borders of the Turkish state (Southeast Turkey). Zone 2 was for "the relocation and resettlement of populations which are to adopt the Turkish culture" (Çağaptay 2006, 88). This was the Western regions of Turkey, specifically the Aegean, Marmara, Mediterranean, and Thrace (Beşikçi 1977, 133). This means that groups who were required to adopt Turkish culture were going to be resettled into the Western part of Turkey. Zone 3, which was located in Eastern Turkey (Beşikçi 1977, 133), would be "closed to resettlement and habitation due to sanitary, economic, cultural, political, military, and security reasons" (Çağaptay 2006, 88). The arrangement of these zones and the phrases that were used in the Law such as "tribal populations that do not speak Turkish" (Çağaptay 2006, 89) suggest that Kurds were the main focus of this Law.

Not only was the relocation and the resettlement of "those populations who do not belong to the Turkish culture"[12] necessary, but it was also forbidden for those groups to form groups in the new places they moved. Article 11 of the Law clearly illustrates this: "those whose mother tongue is not Turkish will not be allowed to establish as a group new villages or wards, workers' or artisans' associations, nor will such persons be allowed to reserve an existing village, ward, enterprise or workshop for members of the same race" (quoted in van Bruinessen 2000, 80). This article reaffirms the argument that, for Republican elites, the Turkish language was an essential feature of Turkish culture.

Summary of the Kemalist Rhetoric

Before the establishment of the Republic and during its early years, the rhetoric Mustafa Kemal used, emphasizing Islam as a common bond, implied the acknowledgment of Kurds as a separate ethnic group. However, this rhetoric started to change after the Republic was established. The emphasis that Republican elites put on modernization/Westernization necessitated homogenization of the nation-state. This is similar to Gellner's theory of modernization, yet the discussion in this chapter em-

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phasizes the actions of the elites instead of Gellner's functionalist forces. Secularism, one of the six main principles Kemalist rhetoric is based on, provided the necessary justification for diminishing the importance of the common bond that had existed between the Turks and Kurds: Islam. Özbudun (1998) notes that the word "Muslims" is not mentioned in the Republican texts after 1924 when addressing the public.

Apart from secularism, modernization/Westernization and the Turkish language were also seen as the requirements of becoming "the ideal Turk." For that purpose, the rhetoric of the nation-state targeted those groups who were seen as "backwards" and who spoke a language other than Turkish. Kurds fitted this description in the minds of the Republican elites. Kurds, according to the Kemalist rhetoric, were Turks who had forgotten their identity. The definition of the word "Kurd" in the 1936 state-published Turkish dictionary is given as the "name given to a group or a member of this group of *Turkish origin*, many who have changed their language, speaking a broken form of Persian and lives in Turkey, Iraq, Iran" (italics added for emphasis, cited in Zeydanlıoğlu 2008). Herein lies the paradox of Kemalist rhetoric: if Kurds were already of Turkish origins,[13] then why would it be necessary to Turkify this group of people (van Bruinessen 2000; Zeydanlıoğlu 2008)? The concept of "the ideal Turk," however, provides a partial explanation for this puzzle. Kurds were "mountain Turks" (van Bruinessen 2000, 79) who had forgotten their identity but still needed to be modernized/Westernized—and needed to be reminded of their original language, which was Turkish. Therefore, for the Turkish state, this process was not one of "Turkification"; it was a "Kemalist civilizing mission" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008) that was necessary to create "the ideal citizens" for the Republic.

For the purposes of this book, then, what is essential to emphasize is that secularism, modernization/Westernization, and the Turkish language were the main characteristics of the Kemalist rhetoric. As one of the questions that this book is interested in is the influence of state rhetoric on how Kurdishness is manifested, the following section will discuss some of the main instances of manifestations of Kurdishness during this period.

Manifestations of Kurdishness Under Kemalist Rhetoric

As was discussed in the beginning of this chapter, Kurds were unified with Turks against enemies during the Independence War under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal. With the change in rhetoric after the establishment of the Republic, however, the nature of the relationship was modified. This section will focus on two instances of Kurdishness exhibited during the Kemalist period of the Republic: the Sheikh Said Revolt of 1925[14] and the Dersim events of 1937–1938. The reason for focusing on these two instances is that the former marks the first public manifestation

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of Kurdishness against the newly-established Republic and the latter marks the end of these public manifestations until the beginning of the 1970s, when the PKK was established.

Sheikh Said Revolt

To understand the context of how this revolt started, one has to take into account the influence of the sheikhs on Kurdish society. Within the de-centralized nature of Kurdish society, sheikhs were the figures who "restored order among Kurdish tribes" (Yeğen 1996, 219). In addition to that, however, sheikhs were also "more-than-religious" figures within their respective tribes and acted more like a "mediator between the religion of Islam and the Kurdish nationalism" (Yeğen 1996, 220). In fact, according to Tucker, "it must be appreciated that for the Kurds nationalism and religion became intertwined, in effect, from the beginning" (1989, xvii).

The Kemalist elites' rhetoric emphasizing secularism, therefore, meant the introduction of a new order for some Kurdish tribes. The closing down of *medrese*s were the first blow for some of the Kurdish tribes. Sheikh Said, who had a great deal of charisma and influence over his followers, stated this in one of his speeches before the Revolt:

> The *medrese*s, where people learn their religion and gain spiritual knowledge [*irfan*] were closed. . . . Newspapers openly insult our religion. . . . Our beloved Prophet is defamed. . . . [Under the circumstances] Muslims are obliged to defend their faith. If I had the physical ability, I would grab a weapon, gird on a sword, and start the fighting for my religion. (quoted in Heper 2007, 149)

The removal of the *medrese*s was crucial for Kurds also for more practical reasons. In a society in which religion plays a major role, the religious schools were the primary places of education for most Kurds. By cutting this source of education, the Republican elites, in a sense, were implementing Gellner's ideas about the role of the education system within nation-states. The abolishment of the Caliphate in 1924 by the Republican elites was the final blow for the tribes that felt a loyalty to the Caliphate. This weakened the common bond between Kurds and Turks and made Kurds conscious of their positioning within the newly-established state. This could be observed in Sheikh Said's letter to the other Sheikhs: "earlier, we had a common Caliphate, and this gave to our religious people a deep feeling of being a part of the community that the Turks also belonged to. Since the abolition of the Caliphate, *the only thing we are left with is Turkish repression"* (italics added for emphasis, quoted in Bozarslan 2003, 180).

The Caliphate also provided structure for a society that was otherwise dominated by different tribes and religious groups. It provided a sense of

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unity for Muslims and it "allowed space for diverse loyalties and local autonomy for the periphery" (Yavuz 2001, 7). The abolishment of the Caliphate, then, was seen by sheikhs and by religious groups as an attempt at suppression by the state. The very groups that collaborated with Mustafa Kemal during the Independence War against their common enemies now started seeing the Turkish state as the enemy. In a way, Mustafa Kemal and his friends, by abolishing the religious institutions, "now made enemies of the very Kurds who had helped Turkey survive the years of trial" (McDowall 1996, 192). This suggests that it was not Mustafa Kemal and the Kemalist leaders *per se* but the rhetoric of these leaders that had an influence on the emergence of this revolt.

The revolt, then, is interpreted not as a mere ethnic conflict, but as a revolt against the very basic principles Kemalist rhetoric was trying to incorporate within the nation-state. It emerged as a reaction against the policies of *centralization* and *secularism* combined with ethno-nationalist sentiments: Sheikh Said issued "a manifesto in favor of a Kurdish government and the restoration of the Caliphate" (McDowall 1996, 194), yet the fact that he announced a non-Kurd for the throne of a proposed Kurdistan suggests that ethno-nationalist sentiments were not the only factors contributing to the rise of this revolt.[15] The grandson of Sheikh Said, Abdülmelik Fırat, also describes his grandfather as "a religious man without nationalist feelings" (quoted in Aras 2014, 49). The rebellion was a reaction against the establishment of a new, centralized, and secular order by the Turkish state in order to restore the old order that was based on anti-central and anti-secular Kurdish tribes.

The suppression of the revolt in the provinces of Diyarbakır and Elazığ required some brutal measures by the government. Independence Tribunals [*İstiklâl Mahkemeleri*], which had "special powers and no appeals" (Çağaptay 2006, 22), were established to achieve this aim. In April 1925, Sheikh Said and his followers were captured by the government and were executed after a trial in the Tribunals.

Even though the rebellion at the end could not achieve its aim of establishing an independent Kurdistan under the leadership of the Caliphate, it managed to leave its legacy on the subsequent policies of the Kemalist elites. First of all, the rebellion was seen by the Republican elites as a plot by *some bandits* to overthrow the government and to tempt the "poor people" who could easily be deceived by the actions of these bandits. This mentality was observed in this statement by the chairman of the Independence Tribunals, which sentenced the leaders of the rebellion to death:

> Everybody must know that as the young Republican government will definitely not condone any cursed action like incitement and political reaction, it will prevent this sort of banditry by means of its precise precautions. *The poor people of this region who have been exploited and*

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> *oppressed under the domination of sheikhs and feudal landlords* will be freed from your incitements and evil and they will follow the efficient paths of our Republic which promises progress and prosperity. (italics added for emphasis, cited in Yegen 1999, 560)

This statement reflects the paternalistic attitude of the Kemalist elites towards Kurds and the anti-central, anti-secular structure of their society. In line with the concept of "the ideal Turk," the elites saw Kurds as a people who must be civilized, and the biggest obstacle in their way to civilization was sheikhs and religious leaders. Mustafa Kemal, in his famous speech in 1927, emphasized this point by asking this question: "Could a civilized nation tolerate a mass of people who let themselves be led by the nose by a herd of shaykhs, dedes, sayyids, chelebis, babas and amirs?" (quoted in McDowall 1996, 196). As Kemalist rhetoric was based on modernization/Westernization and secularization, any group of people who felt loyal to anti-Western and anti-secular institutions would be considered "traitors" and needed to be shown "the right way" of being an "ideal Turk." The most important consequence of the Sheikh Said revolt was perhaps, then, that it provided a justification for the newly-established state to intensify its policies of secularization and Westernization.

It also had an impact on the idea that Kurds needed to be relocated and resettled to prevent possible future uprisings, which was manifested in the implementation of the Resettlement Laws of 1926 and 1934. Heper argues that the scholars who adhere to the dominant paradigm on the Kurdish issue in Turkey[16] suggest that "all Kurdish rebellions had an ethnic motive behind them" (2007, 145). The discussion in this session suggests that it was more than ethno-nationalist motives that were behind the most important rebellion against the state during the early Republican period. The Sheikh Said Rebellion was the result of a combination of ethnic, religious, and tribal motives in accordance with the changes that the Kemalist rhetoric brought to society.

The Dersim Uprising

The wording regarding the incidents in Dersim in 1937–1938 also warrants attention. Starting as an "uprising" (Çağaptay 2006) or as a "rebellion" (Hallı 1972), it later turned into a "genocide" (Beşikçi 1990;[17] van Bruinessen 2000).

Similar to the rhetoric used as a reaction to the Sheikh Said Rebellion, the rhetoric that the Republican elites used concerning the area of Dersim again demonstrated "the civilizing mission" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008) of the Turkish state. The invisibility of the Kurdish ethnicity was again observed in the Kemalist rhetoric, so much so that the interior minister at the time, Şükrü Kaya, described the region as "comprising a purely Turkish population" (quoted in McDowall 1996, 208). Through the Resettle-

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ment Laws of 1926 and 1934, the areas predominantly populated by Kurds were under state control, but Dersim was "the last part of Turkey that had not been effectively brought under central government control" (van Bruinessen 2000, 71). For this purpose, the National Assembly passed the Tunceli Law in 1935. The Interior Minister explained the Republic's main goal through this law was "to establish within this zone the civilized organization enjoyed by the country as whole" (quoted in Çağaptay 2006, 111). Through this law, the name "Dersim" was also officially changed to the Turkish name "Tunceli."[18]

Since, according to the Kemalist rhetoric, the people of Dersim were Turks, the justification of this law was again based on the "civilizing" rhetoric. One of the inspectors for the civil service, Hamdi Bey, stated his observations of the people of Dersim in 1926 with the use of words such as "ignorance" [*cehalet*], "poverty" [*geçim darlığı*], and "a leaning towards Kurdishness" [*Kürtlük eğilimleri*]. To him, since the people living there had these characteristics, they could easily be "fooled" by the likes of *reis*, sheikhs, *bey*s, and *agha*s (Hallı 1972, 25–26).[19] In a way, Kurdishness in the Republican rhetoric was associated with being "ignorant," "backwards," "tribal," and "anti-central," which was in contrast to the Republican ideals. The rhetoric Ankara used, then, was a mix of modernization, centralization, and de-feudalization (Çağaptay 2006, 111). With the Tunceli Law, an Inspectorate-General was established in the province of Tunceli in 1936. Through this Inspectorate, the area of Dersim and the province of Tunceli would feel the power of the central government and maybe this way, the government in Ankara thought, Dersim could be tamed (Çağaptay 2006, 110).

The uprising started, then, as a resistance against this presence of the central government in the area of Dersim. This was reflected in an ultimatum that a federation of tribes sent to the government, which stated that "no posts of troops or gendarmerie should be established in the Dersim, that no bridges should be built, that no administrative units should be organized," adding that they "should continue to meet their taxes, as in the past, through bargaining on the part of their chiefs" (quoted in Çağaptay 2006, 111). In 1937, it turned into a "war" (Dersimi 1952) between the military forces of the state and the people of Dersim. The military operations, which saw thousands of civilians killed, thousands of notables deported, and the villages totally burnt down and destroyed,[20] lasted until 1938.

The importance of the Dersim events is two-fold: firstly, it marked "the end of the 'tribal' revolts against the Kemalist state" (McDowall 1996, 209). The military operations were so brutally effective that it took a couple of decades for the next significant Kurdish movement, under the name of PKK, to emerge. However, the immediate effect of the operations was visible in the region. Professor von der Osten, a German ar-

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chaeologist who was travelling through the region in 1938, described the region in these words:

> The Kurds . . . are generally abandoning their nomadic mode of life and settling in villages, have come to take pride in considering themselves citizens of Turkey, frequently intermarry with the Turkish population, send their children to the Government schools, and have come to constitute a loyal and law-abiding element in the population. (quoted in Çağaptay 2006, 113)

This observation draws a picture of a Kemalist state that achieved its aim of making Kurds "ideal citizens" of the Republic. After fifteen years of Kemalist rule, it finally seemed that Kurds were becoming "obedient yet inactive members of the republic" (Çağaptay 2006, 113), just like the Republic wanted.

Secondly, the military operations in Dersim also revealed the pragmatism [*pragmatizm*] (Beşikçi 1990) of Kemalist ideology. The invisibility of ethnicity within the Kemalist rhetoric required that Kurds were "mountain Turks" who had forgotten their identity, their language, and their culture. This was manifested in one of the written texts in the official newspaper of the state, *Ulus*, after the Tunceli Law was passed in the National Assembly:

> Dersim is pure Turk [*öz Türk*]. The people are poor. The aghas, who hide in the caves, in the mountains, and at the cliff sides, are the last feudal lords of Anatolia. The people are their slave . . . Anatolia has witnessed, perhaps for the first time in its history, tranquillity and unity [*sükun ve birlik*] during the Republic of Atatürk. From time to time, it has been necessary to take radical measures. Today, it is time to do this for the province of Tunceli. (quoted in Beşikçi 1990, 47)[21]

When a full military operation started for Dersim, however, it was necessary to justify the actions of the government. During the Sheikh Said Revolt, justification was found in the fact that the rebels were traitors to the new, secular Republic who wanted to bring the Caliphate back and, therefore, needed to be eliminated. The killing of civilians (meaning "non-sheikhs," "non-aghas," and the people who were their followers) in Dersim was justified by emphasizing the ethnicity of the people. When operations continued in Dersim, another newspaper, *Cumhuriyet*, published a column by Mazhar Aren stating: "Some people think that people from Dersim [*Dersimliler*] are Turks. And I do never think that they are Turks. A Turk cannot have the attributes of nomadism [*bedevilik*], primitiveness [*iptidailik*], brutality [*vahşet*], mercilessness [*merhametsizlik*], and barbarism [*kan içicilik*]" (quoted in Beşikçi 1990, 48).[22] This statement is different from the paternalistic approach shown earlier by the Republican elites. Republican elites, carrying "the white Turkish man's burden" (Zeydanlıoğlu 2008), thought they had to bring "civilization" to the areas where "poor people" live. In a way, their explanation for their actions

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was that they wanted to bring those people to the same level as that of "the ideal citizens." The above statement, however, was the justification for the complete elimination of Kurds. By categorizing Kurds as "barbaric," "nomadic," "primitive," and "brutal," the Kemalist elites emphasized the fact they are not any of these and placed themselves in the opposite position. Through this othering process, the Kemalist elites re-constructed Turkishness as something "civilized," "progressive," and all those other things that Kurds were, supposedly, not.

Post-Kemalist Era

The suppression of the Dersim uprising was effective for the Republican elites in the sense that the Kurdish Movement remained quiet for a while. The Kemalist era officially ended in 1950, when the Democrat Party won the elections with a landslide victory. Following the military coup in 1960, a new constitution was ratified in 1961. Even though this was a constitution that was promulgated by the military officers, it was a relatively liberal constitution that created a free environment in Turkey allowing the development of both Left and Right ideologies (Heper and Keyman 1998; van Bruinessen 2000). This made possible the establishment of some movements within Leftist groups that took an interest in the Kurdish Question of Turkey.[23] Within this environment, Kurdish intellectuals started replacing tribal and religious leaders, which resulted in "secularisation of the Kurdish Question" (Yavuz 2001, 9). Even though the 1970s saw the Left movement dominated by Kurds and the issue of the Kurdish Question (Yavuz 2001, 9), those discussions took place without even mentioning the word "Kurd" (van Bruinessen 2000, 228). The martial law that was declared in 13 cities in 1978[24] and the following military coup of 1980 closed down all political groups, associations, and organizations.

It is the liberal environment of the 1960 and the 1970s that the PKK had its roots in. Many Kurdish intellectuals were involved with the Worker's Party of the 1960s (Al 2015a, 98). Abdullah Öcalan himself, the founder of the PKK, had Marxist ideals and when he established the PKK in 1978, his main goal was to "create a socialist pan-Kurdish state" (Yavuz 2001, 12).[25] The PKK started its military activities in 1984, which started the fight against the Turkish state. As the opening anecdote of this book showed, even until the late 1990s, there were restrictions with regards to the rights of Kurds. However, the impact of the PKK on the Kurdish Movement cannot be denied as no other Kurdish organization has managed to capture "the mind and the resources of the Kurds as much as the PKK" (Yavuz 2001, 10). The most important contribution of the PKK to the Kurdish movement has been that it has created space within the movement for "the middle class and urbanized Kurdish youth" (Yavuz 2001, 11), as opposed to the earlier periods of being domi-

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nated by religious and tribal leaders. In this sense, while the PKK and its activities are not the main focus of this book, its contribution to the transformation of Kurdishness should be acknowledged.

For the purposes of this book, the discussions in the decade of the 1970s is essential in understanding the roots of the AKP rhetoric that will be discussed in detail shortly. Apart from the PKK, the 1970s also saw the establishment of the "National Outlook" [*Milli Görüş*] ideology by Necmettin Erbakan. As mentioned briefly in the Introduction, this ideology defended an Islamic, anti-Western outlook with an anti-materialist approach.

The term *Milli Görüş* was firstly coined by Erbakan in his book with the same name (1975). Here, he detailed the principles of this ideology, and argued that the priority of this ideology is good ethics and spirituality (Yılmaz 2016, 1171). This ideology, with its main emphasis on an Islamic world view, embraced the concept of *ummah*, which was mentioned earlier in this chapter. This supra-national concept sees Islam as a unifying bond among all the Muslim brotherhood. To illustrate what kind of society Erbakan had in mind, one of his most ambitious visions was to create a society with "legal pluralism," where "more than one legal system operates simultaneously and each citizen has the right freely to choose the legal system of his preference" (Yayla 1997). This vision was influenced by the Medina Contract of the Prophet Muhammad, who managed to establish a Muslim society in Medina whilst, at the same time, also guaranteeing the rights of Jews and Christians living there (Bulaç 1993; Ege 1993; Hale and Özbudun 2010; Yayla 1997).

An excerpt below from one of Erbakan's speeches is a good reflection of his world view with regards to Kurds living in Turkey:

> For centuries, children of this country began school with *besmele* [in the name of God . . .] but you removed *besmele*. What did you put instead? "I'm a Turk, I'm right, I'm hard-working."[26] Saying this gave a Muslim child of Kurdish origin the right to reply, "Is that so? Then I'm a Kurd, I'm more right, and I'm more hard-working." So, you made the peoples of this country be strangers to each other. (quoted in Çalmuk 2001, 8, the author's translation from Turkish)

Erbakan's vision, then, allowed space for Kurdishness (or any other ethnicity for that matter) to exist under the umbrella identity of Islam. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who was a former student and a close follower of Erbakan, would inherit the key characteristics of *Milli Görüş* ideology, and adjusted it to the requirements of its current period years later in his rule. Erdoğan and his AKP's rhetoric will be discussed in detail later in this chapter as the second "moment of transition." What is important for now is to keep in mind that this ideology that was already formulated by the mid-1970s allowed Kurds to be a part of a bigger, supra-national concept that is *ummah,* whereas the discussions within the Left movement of the

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same period, as mentioned earlier, did not even allow mentioning the word "Kurd." Within the state rhetoric, Kurdishness was still invisible in the 1970s as can be illustrated by the example of Şerafettin Elçi, a minister of state in the government, when he publicly declared himself a Kurd (Yavuz 2001, 10) and was immediately forced to resign afterwards (Ataman 2002, 127).

The wave of neoliberalism that impacted many developing countries throughout the 1980s also impacted Turkey. The military coup in 1980 saw all the parties, social and political organizations, and political elites banned from political activities. The return to elections and to parliamentary politics in 1983 saw Turgut Özal becoming the Prime Minister of Turkey. During his term as prime minister, a process of "neoliberal restructuring" (Karadag 2010) started. The fact that all the former political elites were banned from the political arena meant that he had enough freedom to pursue his vision. Özal's policies such as privatization of state-owned enterprises, fiscal austerity measures, and the introduction of the Value-Added Tax meant that the financial system was fully liberalized by 1989 (Karadag 2010, 18). This process also brought about Turkey's membership in the Customs Union and pushing for the negotiations with the EU. This was essential in "promoting an important set of regulatory and democratization reforms" (Öniş 2008, 37).

The liberalization process initiated by Özal in the 1980s was momentous for Turkey as it represented the first time when the ruling government officially started to challenge the Kemalist state ideology of the preceding decades. In fact, Özal even stated that there were two forms of Turkish nationalism: the old, strictly Kemalist nationalism and his new nationalism that was "based on good administration that is tolerant towards its people and meets accepted cultural values and traditions inherited from the past" (Ataman 2002, 138). The Özal government, for the first time in the history of the Republic, recognized the existence of different ethnic groups other than Turks within the borders of Turkey, and Özal publicly announced that his grandmother was "probably a Kurd" (*Milliyet* March 28, 1991). The significance of such a statement should be considered with regards to what happened when Şerafettin Elçi stated a similar thing in the 1970s. A restructuring of the state rhetoric was observed in these words of Özal with regards to the different ethnic groups living in Turkey: "the name of the US does not represent an ethnicity. Jews, Muslims, Latinos live there. If the name of Turkey would be Anatolia instead of Turkey, it would be more appropriate. Thus, Turks, Kurds, everybody would say I am Anatolian" (quoted in Ataman 2002, 129).

The period of Özal also saw modifications within the Constitution and in criminal law. The most relevant of these changes, for the purposes of this book, was the abolition of the law prohibiting "the use, either in speech or in writing, of any language not recognized as the official language of another country" (Hale 1994, 289–90). Following this, a new law

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was introduced in 1991 "permitting verbal, written, and recorded expressions of languages other than Turkish" (Ataman 2002, 136). The death of Özal in 1993 and thus the end of Özal period saw the liberalization process coming to an end. In line with the "old, strictly Kemalist nationalism," the new leaders closed down the pro-Kurdish newspapers, outlawed the pro-Kurdish political parties, and went back to the old ways of solving "the Kurdish Question" through militaristic means.

The general elections of 1995 saw the victory of *Milli Görüş* ideology, with the Welfare Party [*Refah Partisi*], or RP, under the leadership of Necmettin Erbakan. It also became the most successful party in the regions predominated by Kurds. This success can be explained through the *Milli Görüş* ideology that RP adopted. RP was part of a coalition government that lasted briefly until 1997, when the party was forced to resign by the Kemalist military forces. Throughout its rule, RP adopted a view of "pluralism based on the re-articulation of the Ottoman *millet* system" (Çolak 2006, 597). Clearly in contradiction with the principle of secularism outlined by the Kemalist rhetoric for decades, this view was one of the reasons for the military forces, who has always been the vanguard of secularism in Turkey, to force RP to resign. Known as the "28 February Process," this incident would have an impact on the AKP policies in the following decade in two ways: firstly, it made the AKP cadre act more cautiously in their first period in terms of policies they wanted to implement. As will be discussed shortly, there is a significant difference in the AKP rhetoric if one analyses their first, second, and the third periods, and part of this difference can be explained by their desire to appear "within the rules" to avoid any possible shutdown initially in their rule. Secondly, this background is useful to understand the context of the "cold war" the AKP started against the military in their second period (discussed shortly).

Overall, the post-Kemalist era of Turkey until the 2000s can be summarized as the period when the democratization process was interrupted by military coups, when Kurdishness was still invisible in the state rhetoric (notwithstanding President Özal's attempts at restructuring the ethnic policy), and when the *Milli Görüş* ideology, which would have an enormous impact on AKP rhetoric years later, started to be shaped. However, in terms of transforming the state rhetoric, not until the AKP rule that started in 2002 would there be another "moment of transition." For this reason, the rest of this chapter will detail the state rhetoric during the AKP period and will discuss how this second "moment of transition" in the history of the Republic would play a role in manifesting different forms of Kurdishness.

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THE AKP RHETORIC

Rhetoric in Transition (2002–2007)

The elections in 2002 saw the AKP come to power, having won 34 percent of the total votes. The military, which has always seen itself as the bedrock of the Kemalist state (Hale and Özbudun 2010, 80), has been the vanguard of secularism, which has been arguably *the* most essential principle of the Turkish state. The earlier discussion in this chapter showed that the Kemalist state's emphasis on secularism provided one of the frameworks through which an "ideal Turk" could be constructed. As a result, religion was one of the ways through which Kurdishness during that period was manifested, as illustrated by the Sheikh Said Revolt. The success of the early period (2002–2007) AKP lies in its rhetoric, which managed to unite Islamists, liberal intelligentsia, and the different ethnic groups such as Kurds and Alevis who were equally critical of Republican ideals and principles (Aktürk 2012; Hale and Özbudun 2010). Kurdish support for the AKP in the November 2002 elections was observed in the votes coming from the regions with predominantly Kurdish populations (see Table 1.1). The votes in the Southeastern region of Turkey were split between the AKP and Democratic People's Party [*Demokratik Halk Partisi*], DEHAP, the then-pro-Kurdish party.

An analysis of the AKP's party programme, describing itself as "conservative democrat," reveals the crucial difference of the AKP both from the previous Islamic parties and from CHP. As mentioned earlier, the key to the AKP victory was to gather groups from different backgrounds

Table 1.1. 2002 General Election Results in Nine Provinces of the Southeast Anatolian Region

Province	*AKP (%)*	*DEHAP (%)*
Gaziantep	40.04	8.00
Diyarbakır	15.96	56.13
Şanlıurfa	22.90	19.28
Batman	20.62	47.10
Adıyaman	41.42	11.97
Siirt*	84.82	—
Mardin	15.43	39.58
Kilis	36.39	2.26
Şırnak	14.02	45.94

*The elections in Siirt had to be rerun with the only two parties that passed the threshold of 10 percent, AKP and CHP, allowed to participate. Source: http://www.haberturk.com/secim2002 [Accessed March 1, 2018].

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under one single rhetoric. The most important example of this is manifested in the party programme under the subheading "Fundamental Rights and Freedoms": "our party considers religion as one of the most important institutions of the humanity, and secularism as a pre-requisite of democracy, and an assurance of the freedom of religion and conscience. It also rejects the interpretation and distortion of secularism as an enmity against religion."[27] This attempt to combine religion with the most important principle of the Turkish nation-state, secularism, has modified state priorities. Establishing religion as an important part of human lives whilst, at the same time, acknowledging the principle of secularism represents a major change from the Kemalist rhetoric. It was also a different kind of secularism that was officially recognized in the AKP's programme. The following article on secularism offers the explanation of the AKP's interpretation of secularism:

> Secularism is a principle which allows people of all religions, and beliefs to comfortably practice their religions, to be able to express their religious convictions and live accordingly, but which also allows people without beliefs to organize their lives along these lines. From this point of view, secularism is a principle of freedom and social peace.[28]

These two articles on the relationship between secularism and religion suggest that the AKP, whilst officially acknowledging secularism as one of its principles, has a different attitude towards secularism than the Kemalist ideology. The Kemalist ideology holds secularism as one of its main principles, and religion, for the maintenance of the secularist ideology, had to be removed from public space, whilst for the AKP, secularism was the basic means through which religion could be protected. In that sense, *secularism, for Kemalism, was the end, whereas, for the AKP, it was the means.*

Related to the discussion on 1970s Turkey, the AKP's approach to secularism was inspired by Erbakan's view on secularism. For Erbakan, secularism should mean "freedom of religion," and freedom of conscience should mean "the right to live according to one's beliefs" (Hale and Özbudun 2010, 7–8). The AKP's view on secularism is a reflection of this type of secularism, yet it has stayed rather modest (at least in its earlier period) compared to Erbakan's visions. Erdoğan's statements from his previous political life draw resemblance to Erbakan's views; in 1993, when Erdoğan was an MP for RP, he stated:

> It is not possible to be both secular and a Muslim. You have to be either secular or a Muslim. To be both secular and a Muslim is like being the opposite ends of a magnet. . . . Why? Because the sovereignty of a Muslim belongs solely and absolutely to Allah, Who is the creator of the Muslim. "Sovereignty is vested fully and unconditionally in the nation"[29] is a lie.[30]

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A newly-elected party, like the AKP was in 2002, could not afford to make such bold moves if it wanted to establish its authority in the political arena. When the party was first established in 2001, Erdoğan was insistent on his loyalty to the secular characteristics of the Turkish state, and assured the people who were questioning his intentions that he and his party were not going to build a state based on Sharia (*Milliyet* September 13, 2001). Yet, the AKP also managed to put forward a different understanding of secularism compared to CHP's rhetoric, as was suggested by the above statements in the party programme.

Contrasting this to CHP's party programme might illuminate this further. The official programme of CHP does not specifically mention religion as one of the important institutions of humanity, and instead states the six principles of Atatürk as the basis of its policies, one of which is secularism. It defines secularism in these words: "[CHP] absolutely opposes religion being taken advantage of by politics. It does not accept the politicization of religion, nor the religionization of politics. The state is neutral to religions and beliefs. The state has no religion. *Religion is the subject of private life, instead of public life"* (the author's translation, italics added for emphasis).[31] The key difference between these two definitions of secularism is the fact that Kemalist ideology strictly defends the restriction of religion and all its expressions to private life, while the AKP, by stating that secularism is all about freedom and social peace, maintains a different understanding of it. This difference is explained through different types of secularism: passive and assertive (Kuru 2007). Assertive secularism means that the state "plays an 'assertive' role as the agent of a social engineering project that confines religion to the private domain," whereas passive secularism "allows for the public visibility of religion" (Kuru 2007, 571). The AKP, the representative of passive secularism, has differed from the Kemalist vision and its decades-long ideology of assertive secularism. This represents the first small, yet significant, change in state rhetoric.

The argument in 2007 between Bülent Çakır, the Parliament Speaker at the time, and Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the then-President of Turkey, is an example of how crucial the definition of secularism is for both the AKP and the Kemalists.[32] Arınç suggested that one should take a look at the legal grounds of the second article in the Constitution[33] since the definition of secularism is not in the Constitution. Sezer opposed this by stating that the definition of secularism is clear in the Constitution, and that it would be against the Constitution to define secularism by departing from the legal ground of an article, and continued that "secularism does not mean freedom of religion and conscience" (*Zaman* February 6, 2007); this argument is clearly in conflict with the type of secularism the AKP wanted to endorse.

It is no surprise, then, that scholars interpreted AKP's coming to power as "'counterelites' representing constituencies with ethnically specific

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grievances" (Aktürk 2012, 5), "a victory of 'periphery' over 'centre'"[34] (Şen 2010, 60), and scholars further question whether the AKP's politics could be interpreted as the continuation of the ideology of Political Islam (Heper and Toktaş 2003; Kalaycıoğlu 2010; Saraçoğlu and Demirkol 2015; Somer 2007). What is relevant for the purposes of this discussion is to understand the ways in which these changes within state rhetoric influenced the manifestation(s) of Kurdishness.

The first breakthrough in policies regarding different ethnic groups came in June 2004, when *TRT 3*, the state-funded TV channel, started broadcasting in five different languages spoken by different ethnic groups in Turkey (Bosnian, Arabic, Kurdish, Circassian, and Zaza) at certain hours for the first time in Republican history. The CEO of TRT at the time, Şenol Demiröz, explained that this decision was in accordance with the principles of the nation-state and within the principles set out in Article 2 of the Constitution (*Milliyet* June 5, 2004). As mentioned in the Introduction, the political context of that period with regards to the negotiations with the EU might have an impact on the passing of these reforms by the Parliament. After all, it was still the "golden age of Europeanization in Turkey" (Öniş 2008). However, even then, this was a small but important step that signified the reforms on a bigger scale for the future.

Solidification of AKP Rhetoric (2007–2011)

Having now established itself firmly in the Turkish political arena, the AKP headed to the general elections in 2007 having received the support of Kurds even against DEHAP in many places. The effects of the new government's willingness to move away from Kemalist rhetoric, along with broadcasting in a language other than Turkish for the first time in Republican history, was reflected in the results of the general elections that were held in July 2007. Those results show that there was even bigger support for the AKP than there was in 2002 from places predominated by Kurds (see Table 1.2).

The convincing AKP electoral victory, apart from receiving the approval of a significant section of the society regarding its reforms, also symbolized a crucial victory over the secularist/Kemalist segment of the society. This is showcased by looking at the process of presidential elections, which ultimately resulted in Abdullah Gül being elected as the 11th President of Turkey as the successor of Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

The "Cold War" between the AKP and Kemalists

Since it was the first time that a "counterelite" (Aktürk 2012) became president in the history of the Republic, the months leading up to the election of the President by Parliament were not without controversy.[35]

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Table 1.2. 2007 General Election Results in Nine Provinces of the Southeast Anatolian Region

Province	*AKP (%)*	*DEHAP/Independents* (%)*
Gaziantep	59.25	5.05
Diyarbakır	40.90	47.01
Şanlıurfa	59.78	20.14
Batman	46.41	39.42
Adıyaman	65.31	8.04
Siirt	48.78	39.51
Mardin	44.06	38.77
Kilis	56.21	0.13
Şırnak	26.93	51.83

*DEHAP decided not to participate in the general elections. Instead, independent MPs of Kurdish origin were nominated.
Source: http://www.haberturk.com/secim2007 [Accessed March 3, 2018].

Starting with secular rallies [*Cumhuriyet Mitingleri*] in Ankara in April (*BBC News* April 14, 2007) two days before the election process began, the period that resulted in the election of Abdullah Gül on August 28 was very tumultuous. *Cumhuriyet Mitingleri* represented a section of Turkish society that was anxious about the direction in which the Turkish state was heading. The main slogan of the protests, "Turkey is secular and will remain secular forever," showed the primary motive of these protests.

The Turkish Armed Forces, the vanguard of the Kemalist state, also issued a declaration stating its worries about the direction the government was taking regarding state rhetoric. This declaration, shortly afterwards called an "e-memorandum" due to its online publication on the official website of the Turkish Armed Forces, showed the willingness of the military to intervene in political affairs if it was deemed necessary, as was exemplified by the military coups of the Republican past.[36] The timing of the memorandum, coinciding with the nomination of Abdullah Gül by the AKP, meant that it gave reference to the more specific issue of presidential elections, as this excerpt shows:

> The problem that emerged in the presidential election process is focused on arguments over secularism. Turkish Armed Forces are concerned about the recent situation. It should not be forgotten that the Turkish Armed Forces are a party in those arguments, and absolute defender of secularism. Also, the Turkish Armed Forces is definitely opposed to those arguments and negative comments. It will display its attitude and action openly and clearly whenever it is necessary.[37]

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However, the memorandum was about more than presidential elections. It was, rather, a statement by the Turkish Armed Forces that declared its main attitude against the changing state rhetoric. Yaşar Büyükanıt, the then-Chief-of-the-General-Staff, stated in an interview in 2009 that he wrote the declaration himself, and that he wanted to emphasize the sensitivity of the Armed Forces to the fundamental principle of secularism (*Zaman* May 8, 2009). This sensitivity was observed in the passage, where it was stated that "it is observed that some circles who have been carrying out endless efforts to disturb fundamental values of the Republic of Turkey, especially secularism, have escalated their efforts recently" (*BBC News* April 28, 2007). Incidents seen as threatening the fundamental principles of the Turkish state, which were "Atatürk nationalism" and "secularism," were also mentioned as part of the general motive of the declaration:

> [In line with those efforts to disturb the fundamental values of the Republic], a Quran recital contest was organized on the same day as the celebrations of April 23[38] but it was cancelled due to the public pressure and the media sensitivity to it. On April 22, a group of girls in Şanlıurfa, gathered from Mardin, Gaziantep, and Diyarbakır, who were dressed in age-inappropriate old-fashioned clothes were singing religious songs at an hour when they were supposed to be in bed. During this ceremony, the real aim and intentions of the people organizing this were made clear through the removal of the Turkish flag and of the portrait of Atatürk. (*Milliyet* April 28, 2007)

This was a manifesto by the Turkish Armed Forces on their disapproval of the direction in which the government's policies at that time were heading. The AKP's response to this memorandum was to be dismissive of it, and their nomination of the presidential candidate, Abdullah Gül, did not change. The first round of presidential elections in the National Assembly was cancelled on May 1by the Constitutional Court due to not having enough MPs in the Parliament. The crisis of the presidential elections and the preceding e-memorandum resulted in Erdoğan calling for general elections in the upcoming months. The general elections of 2007, then, in a sense asked people their opinions about the recent conflict between the government and the military. The convincing victory of the AKP in the elections was interpreted as a "vote of confidence" in the AKP by the people, and it signified that "the e-memorandum had been regarded by a significant portion of society as an excessive and inappropriate move" (Aydinli 2011, 231).

Having a president sharing a similar ideology certainly provided a more favorable environment for the AKP than during the period of Sezer, the previous president. Having the majority in Parliament and a president from a similar background, the AKP had more power to implement its policies. The Turkish Armed Forces remained the actor that could

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counterbalance AKP policies, albeit through undemocratic means. *Ergenekon* operations that officially started in June 2007 were often interpreted as serving the purpose of taming the impact of the military on Turkish politics,[39] and the arrest of many higher-ranked military officers in the Armed Forces reinforces this point. Erdoğan also called for a referendum, which was scheduled for October 2007, to propose amendments to the Constitution, including election of the president by the public. The result of the referendum (68.95 percent voted "Yes") was the second "vote for confidence" for the AKP in its "cold war" against the Kemalist establishment.

In 2010, another referendum was held on September 12.[40] The current constitution of Turkey was ratified during the military junta that lasted from 1980 until 1983. Hence, the proposal for amendments to the constitution could be interpreted as another challenge to the military establishment. One of the proposed amendments involved Article 145 of the Turkish Constitution regarding military justice. The third paragraph of the original article stated: "the offences and persons falling within the jurisdiction of military courts in time of war *or under martial law*, their organization and the appointment, where necessary, of judges and public prosecutors from civil courts to military courts shall be regulated by law" (italics added for emphasis). The proposal offered to remove the "or under martial law" part, making it possible for the leaders of the military junta to face trials. The results (57.9 percent of the voters voted "Yes") again showed support for the AKP during its struggle to overcome the secularist tradition within the state.

As the general elections in 2011 were approaching, Erdoğan intensified his rhetoric on Islam to gather more support from Kurds. The strategy he used was to emphasize the common bond between Turks and Kurds—that is, Islam—and to attack the other parties, including the pro-Kurdish party of the time Peace and Democracy Party [*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*], or BDP, due to their dissociation from this common bond. His speech in Diyarbakır two weeks before the elections illustrates this: "brothers, the community praying in this Ulu Mosque turns towards the same Kiblah as the communities praying in Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul, Selimiye Mosque in Edirne, and Hacıbayram Mosque in Ankara do. See, the kiblah is the same. Is there any discrimination? No" (the author's translation).[41] His speech in Mardin, a couple of days later, had a similar overtone: "that person who is staying in İmralı [Abdullah Öcalan] stated that the religion of Kurds is Zoroastrianism and that they are closer to Christians. . . . They insulted my Kurdish brothers by saying that Kurds were forced to convert to Islam" (the author's translation).[42] The view of Islam as something that binds Turks and Kurds is inherited from Erbakan and his *Milli Görüş* outlook.

The second period of the AKP, then, can be summarized in two points: firstly, it was the period when the AKP clearly established its

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dominance in the political arena by gaining popular support over the Kemalist camp and even over the military[43] as the two referendum results show. Erdoğan started using Islamic rhetoric more often. Whilst this rhetoric may have been useful when gaining Kurdish support, there was still no sign of cooperation between the AKP and BDP by the end of this second period. Secondly, this was the period when reforms regarding the Kurds started to be implemented. When the AKP's position was secured within the state against the vanguards of the Kemalist tradition, then it became easier to implement the reforms that they did. The following discussion will show that there were also continuities within state rhetoric. That is, the focus on a standardized language in the education system and on a centralized nation-state have remained as significant as during the AKP period. Current manifestations of Kurdishness that are expressed through demands for education in the mother tongue and the right to self-determination have been, to a certain extent, shaped by these changes and continuities within state rhetoric. At the end of the second period, it still looked like the AKP was a good alternative for Kurds who do not vote for pro-Kurdish parties, as is shown by the election results in 2011.

Continuities Within the Rhetoric (2011–2015)

The general elections in summer 2011 proved, again, a convincing victory for the AKP. The party increased its votes to 49.95 percent from 46.47 percent in 2007. The votes in the Southeast Anatolian region were, again, distributed in a way to show support for the AKP (see Table 1.3). Now that the AKP further solidified its position with the support of voters from different parts of Turkey, AKP leaders had more confidence in the policies they were implementing. In his victory speech, Erdoğan did signal some further changes in the Constitution:

> My brothers! We all will write a Constitution that emphasizes freedom. In this constitution, there will be a place for everyone: everyone from the East, from the West, from the North, from the South. My people will say, "This is my Constitution"! The new Constitution will see every member of the nation as a first-class citizen. This constitution will represent every identity and every value; and will answer every demand of freedom, democracy, peace, and justice. This constitution shall be the constitution of Turks, Kurds, Zazas, Arabs, Circassians, Lazs, Georgians, Romani, Turkmens, Alevis, Sunnis, of all 74 million people. (the author's translation)[44]

The most important developments regarding Kurdish rights during this period first came in 2012 when primary schools started to offer the Kurdish language as an elective course starting from the 2012–2013 education year. Then, in September 2013, six months into the Peace Process, Erdoğan announced the AKP's "Democratisation and Human Rights

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Table 1.3. 2011 General Election Results in Nine Provinces of the Southeast Anatolian Region

Province	*AKP (%)*	*BDP/Independents (%)**
Gaziantep	61.69	5.39
Diyarbakır	32.17	61.69
Şanlıurfa	63.46	26.97
Batman	37.13	51.48
Adıyaman	67.30	6.56
Siirt	48.03	42.45
Mardin	32.17	60.85
Kilis	59.54	0.13
Şırnak	20.61	72.31

*BDP decided not to participate in the general elections. Instead, independent MPs of Kurdish origin were nominated.
Source: http://www.haberturk.com/secim/secim2011/genel-secim [Accessed January 25, 2015].

Package." In the press conference, he stated that "the top-down, authoritarian, despotic, and an arrogant state way of doing politics has been abolished through the 'Silent Revolution' we have had in law and democracy in the last 11 years" (the author's translation),[45] reinstating his party's anti-establishment stance. Regarding the Kurds, the most important points of this package were the allowance of education in different languages and dialects other than Turkish in private schools, and the abolishment of *Andımız* in primary schools. *Andımız* was a policy that was implemented in 1933 during the period of "High Kemalism" (Çağaptay 2006). It was compulsory for all students in every public and private school to recite this Oath every morning. The full text of *Andımız* read:

> I am a Turk. I am honest and I am a hard worker. My duty is to protect those younger than me and to respect my elders, to love my country and my people more than I love myself. My ideal is to progress. Hey, Great Atatürk! I solemnly promise to walk on the road you have opened, to the goal you have showed, without stopping. I offer my existence to the Turkish nation as a gift. How happy for the one who says "I am a Turk." (cited in Sevincer and Biseth 2013, 76)

For the purposes of this chapter, the most crucial feature of this AKP period could be characterized as reaffirming its stance not only against the secularist establishment but also against the extreme Kurdish nationalist stance. As was emphasized previously when the first two periods were described, the difference between the AKP and the parties coming from a secular tradition was that it was easier for the AKP to use Islam as

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a common bond between Kurds and Turks, and, hence, they did not see the existence of a separate Kurdish identity as a threat to the integrity of the Turkish state as the secularists did. The aforementioned reforms implemented during the AKP rule constitute a break from the official rhetoric, yet they do not meet the demands of Kurds either. While it was possible for Erdoğan to meet the identity demands of Kurds due to the common bond of Islam, the rhetoric throughout the AKP period has not changed significantly when it came to issues of language. Back in December 2010, in his speech in the National Assembly, he stated that "my nation has only one language and that is Turkish. Municipalities are also institutions of the state, so they also use Turkish" (the author's translation),[46] clearly implicating that municipalities in regions predominated by Kurds cannot use the Kurdish language in their official conversations. Similarly, in October 2012, he declared that "there is no such thing as education in the mother tongue. There cannot be a right to have education in the mother tongue as Turkish is the official language" (the author's translation), reaffirming the official rhetoric on the issue of education in the mother tongue. His use of religion to emphasize the unity of the nation, however, has continued to be a theme in his speeches. In May 2012, in a public speech he gave in Adana, he reiterated the "4 red lines" the AKP follows in its policies: one nation, one flag, one state, and one religion.[47] Taking religion away as one of the bonds that unites the peoples of Turkey was one of the principles necessary for the Kemalist ideology to construct "the ideal Turk." By including religion as one of the "red lines" of the state's policies, the AKP has significantly shifted the state rhetoric compared to the rhetoric of the Kemalist ideology.

The discussion so far has focused on the differences in state rhetoric since the AKP came to power in 2002. By doing that, it also aimed to serve the purpose of comparing the two "moments of transition" in the Republican history in terms of their rhetoric. How is this comparison, however, useful in our understanding of Kurdishness? Related to the argument that there are variances of Kurdishness, what this chapter shows is that the Kurdishness exhibited through the following data has been influenced by the state rhetoric of its period. This chapter argues that both the differences and the continuities between the two rhetorics of those two periods are reflected in how Kurdishness in those periods is manifested. Earlier in this chapter, it was discussed that the emphasis during the early periods of the Turkish Republic was on modernizing/Westernizing, centralizing, and secularizing the nation-state. For this reason, the kind of Kurdishness formed was partly influenced by those policies of the state. The Sheikh Said Rebellion, the first major rebellion against the Turkish state, was a combination of religious, ethnic, and tribal factors. The AKP period, on the other hand, saw religion being brought into the state rhetoric. This approach embraced the Islamic concept of *ummah* and this, in turn, has allowed some space for expressions

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of other ethnicities. Therefore, the form of Kurdishness that is currently exhibited is not so much through religious demands. Rather, as will be shown in the following sections, it is more focused on linguistic rights and self-determination demands. Even though there has been a significant shift in the official rhetoric with regards to religion, the emphasis that has been put on language and on centralization has remained significant, as shown earlier. This, in turn, has shaped a form of Kurdishness that is exhibited through linguistic and self-determination demands, instead of one that focused on identity demands in its earlier form. The following section will focus on how Kurdishness, in its current form, is exhibited by looking at the data from the respondents. This will illustrate that the two most common forms of Kurdishness manifested by the respondents, the demand to have education in the mother tongue and the right to self-determination, have been shaped in accordance with these changes and continuities within state rhetoric discussed in this section.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF KURDISHNESS IN ITS RECENT FORM

The Demand for Education in the Mother Tongue

The right to have education in one's mother tongue is something that is demanded even by those respondents who do not defend the idea of an independent Kurdistan.

Emel, as a teacher having worked in Southeast Turkey, thought that her own lack of fluency in Kurdish constituted a problem there. One incident she encountered when she was working in a small village of Mardin illustrates this:

> I was working with mentally disabled kids. I had a student who said *evet* ("yes" in Turkish) to everything I said, even to things that one is not supposed to say *evet*. I had an assistant who could speak Kurdish and when I talked to her, she told me that the student said "no" to many of the things she said because, as we realized later, *evet* was the only word he knew in Turkish. This looked like a torture to me; forcing children, who are even mentally disabled, to speak Turkish . . . you can only be productive as long as there is education in mother tongue. (interview, February 26, 2013)

Halil, a language activist, said that the Kurdish Question cannot be solved without granting two rights: education in the mother tongue and local governments [*yerelden yönetim*] (interview, March 4, 2013). Dilan said that even though, on an individual level, some demands might change, in general, "every Kurd wants to have education in their mother tongue" (interview, April 28, 2013). Meryem, when asked what she wants the most from the Peace Process, answered that "most importantly, it would be to have education in our language" (interview, May 4, 2013).

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Mahsun, on the other hand, argued for a more active strategy for Kurds in "saving the language":

> If Kurds say "the state should save our language," then that would be wrong. It is not for the state to save the Kurdish language; it is the Kurds themselves who is going to save it . . . what the state should do, though, is *to abolish the bans on language*: the state should not ban it if a person wants to speak Kurdish in public space, if he [or she] wants to defend himself [or herself] in courts in Kurdish or if he [or she] wants to have an education in Kurdish. (italics added for emphasis, interview, February 20, 2013)

For Ümit, the right to have education in one's mother tongue is one of the most natural rights:

> In law, some rights cannot be abolished; they are [in]alienable and you only have to respect those rights. The right to have education in mother tongue is one of those rights. A child, from any part of the world, should be able to have an education in the language he [or she] has learnt from his [or her] parents if he [or she] wants to. (interview, April 30, 2013)

Halil, who insisted that education in the mother tongue is one of the non-negotiables for a solution to the Kurdish Question, expressed his discontent with *TRT 6*[48] by saying that to him, it feels like an attempt to curb increasing Kurdish nationalism (interview, March 4, 2013). Related to the overall argument of this book, what is being exhibited here by the respondents is another variant of Kurdishness that has been modified since the early Republican period. Religious elements no longer carry the same significance in the manifestation of Kurdishness as they did during the early Republican period due to the importance the AKP rhetoric has put on religion. Now, it is a form of Kurdishness that has been dominated by linguistic concerns. Overall, 12 respondents (Mehmet, Arif, Meryem, Ali, Halil, Dilan, Mahsun, Kadir, İlhan, Kenan, Emel, and Ahmet) mentioned the phrase "education in mother tongue" [*anadilde eğitim*] when they discussed their demands.

The current education system in the Turkish language provides an opportunity for the state to turn its citizens into "ideal Turks." This can be interpreted as remodelling "the French way" as was discussed by Eugen Weber (1977). In his extensive study of rural France, Weber discusses schools and schooling as one of the agents for the transformation of peasants into "Frenchmen." Apart from being "great socializing agents" (Weber 1977, 332) where children whose mother languages were anything but French had to speak French, the schools were also the "instruments of indoctrination and patriotic conditioning" (Weber 1977, 333), which was made possible through history and geography courses. Soysal and Schissler also emphasize the importance of education in the process of nation-building, arguing that school textbooks have been

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"subordinated to particular control mechanisms by the state and/or dominant elites in the process of nation building and the creation of loyal citizens" (2005, 1). Therefore, it should be no surprise that the production of knowledge and national objectives go hand in hand (Soysal and Schissler 2005, 1). The Turkish schooling system, similar to this understanding, is also in line with the ideals of the nation-state. This is reflected in many ways, from the way the classrooms are designed to the curriculum. Halil exemplifies this when talking about the curriculum for high schools. Incidentally, his example also draws on history courses: "the current education system was founded on the idea that Kurds do not exist. Kurds are mentioned only once in all history courses, and that is only when discussing the societies that were established during the Independence War: Society for the Rise of Kurdistan is described as one of the 'harmful societies'" (interview, March 4, 2013).

The way the classrooms are designed also manifests the loyalty of the state to Atatürk nationalism. The fact that every classroom has to have an "Atatürk corner" that contains a portrait of Atatürk, the Turkish flag, the lyrics of the National Anthem, and the full speech of Atatürk's Address to the Turkish Youth is secured by law. However, as the AKP rhetoric is mainly based on challenging the Kemalist establishment, it is not surprising to see attempts to change this law. Those attempts happened during the second period of the AKP. In March 2008, the Ministry of National Education [*Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı* or MEB] amended a regulation concerning private education institutions. This amended regulation made no reference to the existence of an "Atatürk corner."[49] The Atatürkist Thought Association [*Atatürkçü Düşünce Derneği*] sued the MEB for implementing anti-constitutional laws in the Turkish Council of State [*Danıştay*], and in November 2008, *Danıştay* decided to suspend the amended regulation. In its current form, the regulation merely states that there is an "Atatürk corner" in private education institutions without specifying what this corner should entail. Even though being seemingly small amendments, these attempts go in line with the aforementioned ideological AKP foundations. More importantly, however, this also shows that the importance put on the education system for the implementation of an ideology, as Gellner suggested, has remained more or less the same. The importance of controlling the education system for the AKP, it is suggested, is the reason for not implementing the right to education in the Kurdish language. Gellner's theory of modernization suggests that the education system within a nation-state is *the* medium for reproducing members of the nation-state, and, as was also the case in Weber's study of France (1977), the AKP period presents an example of this understanding. During one of the classroom observations, one of the students strongly reacted to the "Atatürk corner" in his classroom. He said that he does not want to see *that* guy [Atatürk] in his classroom and would rather see a picture of his own leader instead.[50] The fact that there was a picture of a Turkish flag

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also bothered him so much that his teacher, Dilan, had to interrupt and warn him not to be disrespectful of any flag (field notes, April 27, 2013). This incident suggests that a form of Kurdishness is being formed as a reaction to the Kemalist principles of the state, hence suggesting the importance of state rhetoric on the formation of Kurdishness.

The conflict over the issue of education in the mother tongue emerges out of the importance both sides put on language. AKP policies, as discussed so far, show the different rhetoric they use. The more overt use of religion in their rhetoric, more specifically, has differentiated the AKP from its predecessors. Through religion, the existence of Kurds as a separate ethnicity could be recognized, unlike the previous eras of the nation-state. In terms of the role of language, however, it is possible to observe continuity between the Kemalist period and the AKP period. The statement Erdoğan made the day after *Newroz* celebrations of 2013 once again shows the conflict that is at the core of the Kurdish Question: "they wrote 'Have a happy *Newroz*' in Kurdish; would it be bad if they also wrote this in Turkish? These are provocations that are against the progress of Peace Process" (the author's translation, *Milliyet* March 22, 2013). This statement, made the day after the declaration of Peace Process, suggests that the issue of language remains one of the non-negotiables for both the state and Kurds, and this has had a significant effect on the (re-)shaping of manifestations of Kurdishness.

The Demand for Self-Determination

The demand for self-determination is another common theme that emerged among the respondents. Compared to the issue of education in the mother tongue, however, this demand, as will be shown shortly, was manifested in a variety of ways. Unlike the demand to have education in the mother tongue, the demand for self-determination is not only expressed through a simple "yes" or "no," but through different levels of self-determination. These expressions ranged from any degree of autonomy to an independent state. For instance, Mahsun defended the idea of autonomy by still maintaining a unitary structure. "If there were 8–10 regions, each region had its own assembly and if everyone tried to develop his or her own region, it would be possible to maintain the unitary structure with such cultural richness" (interview, February 20, 2013). Halil talked about the issue of local governments as one of the other "non-negotiables" to solve the Kurdish Question. He continued: "there is distrust among Kurds after 80, 90 years of oppression, of assimilation, of massacres: a lack of trust against this system. That is why they want to rule themselves. They want to have the control of the sources on their own lands" (interview, March 4, 2013).

The demand for any degree of self-determination is related to the topic of the previous section, education in the mother tongue. This rela-

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tion is explained through the aforementioned idea of the Turkish state having a monopoly on the use of language and "monopoly of the education system" (Gellner 1983). If one of the common demands of Kurds is the right to have education in the mother tongue, then it would not be surprising to also demand some form of self-determination to have control over the language and the education system. Halil illustrates this point by saying that "the localisation [*yerelleşme*] of the education system is better not only for Kurds but for all Turkey, and a system where local governments are strengthened [*ademi merkeziyetçilik*] is suitable for this" (interview, March 4, 2013).

Yet, it was not always the case that the respondents were as straightforward as those mentioned earlier. In line with the argument mentioned in the beginning of this section, it is possible to see variances with regards to these demands. In some cases, there were usages of ambiguous terms. Emel, when talking about her activism, always used the phrase "Kurdish Freedom Movement" [*Kürt Özgürlük Hareketi*]. This phrase was most probably chosen because that is how PKK and Öcalan refer to the movement, yet it was not clear, throughout all of our conversations, what the Freedom Movement entails for her. Whether, for her, it was freedom in the sense of having more rights or having an independent state, she did not elaborate. Even though she specifically stated education in the mother tongue as one of the demands she valued, regarding other demands, she was less specific. Meryem, similarly, when asked what would be the ultimate goal for her personally, answered that "it would be our freedom" (interview, May 4, 2013). Again, there was no reference to what she specifically meant by "freedom" throughout her narrative. Ali used the term "self-determination" [*milletlerin kendi geleceklerini tayin etme hakkı*] when explaining his wishes. In his words, the right to self-determination for nations is necessary because "even if something bad happens, then maybe we would suffer less thinking that it is our own decision" (interview, April 28, 2013). Zeynep stated that Kurds wanted their own lands (interview, May 5, 2013). What is important to notice here is that the different terms that were used by the respondents ("self-rule," "freedom," "autonomy") are all different manifestations of the umbrella term "self-determination."

Contrary to the Kemalist period where Kurds were regarded as Turks who had forgotten their true identity, Kurdishness as a separate ethnic category is now taken for granted; it is becoming an "immutable category," as Ergin (2014) calls it. The recognition of Kurdishness as a separate ethnic category has become a part of the official rhetoric, as this chapter explores. Saraçoğlu (2009), based on the case study he conducted in Izmir, coins the term "exclusive recognition" of everyday relations that "develops independently of the manipulation of the state" (2009, 643). According to Saraçoğlu, not only have Kurds been recognized as a separate "people," but this recognition is usually accompanied by an anti-

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Kurdish discourse based on negative perceptions against Kurds. Exclusive recognition, this argument continues, is constructed by non-Kurds through their interactions with Kurdish immigrants in their everyday lives. The following chapters will discuss the importance of everyday interactions in manifestations of Kurdishness. What this chapter aims to add to the discussion is the argument that, apart from those everyday interactions the respondents experience in their daily lives, their interactions with the nation-state also shape the way Kurdishness is exhibited. Now that the existence of Kurds as a separate group of peoples has been recognized both in the state rhetoric and in the public domain (Çelik 2005; Saraçoğlu 2009), other aspects through which Kurdishness is exhibited have gained more importance, such as demands for language rights and for self-determination.

CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the first of the three factors that this book argues play a role in the manifestation of Kurdishness in Turkey: state rhetoric. For this purpose, it reviewed the state rhetoric of the Republic, by focusing more on two "moments of transition" during the history of the Republic. These two periods were described as "moments of transition" for different reasons. The first "moment of transition," the early Republican period (1923–1938), was the period where a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and multi-ethnic Empire was transitioned into a secular, central, and monolingual nation-state, whereas the second "moment of transition," the AKP period, saw religion being brought into the state rhetoric for the first time since the end of the Kemalist period in 1950. The emphasis on religion in state rhetoric has brought about a new understanding based on the Islamic concept of *ummah*, which has allowed the acceptance of non-Turk ethnic groups as a separate ethnic category. This has, in turn, influenced the way Kurdishness has been manifested: instead of a form of Kurdishness that prioritizes the recognition of Kurdishness as a separate ethnicity, as it was during the Kemalist era, it currently focuses more on linguistic and anti-centralization demands. This is because the control of the state over the use of language and the emphasis given on centralization have remained as significant during the AKP period. At the end, this discussion argues that *both* the changes *and* continuities within the state rhetoric play a significant role in how Kurdishness is manifested.

NOTES

1. Kurdish society has been dominated by tribes and "local tightly knit rural communities" (Yavuz 2001, 3), and each of these tribes is led by a different *agha* or *shaykh*.

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2. The lands of Kurdistan, according to this draft law, were limited to the provinces of Van, Bitlis, Diyarbakır, and Dersim (Natali 2005, 73).

3. *Millet*, the Arabic word for "nation," was defined as "membership of a religious community" (McDowall 1996, 2) during the Ottoman period. According to the Ottoman *millet* system, then, Turks and Kurds were considered part of the same *millet*.

4. Mango (1999) cites quotations by Atatürk in which he refers to Jews as part of the multi-ethnic character of the state, such as in the following excerpt: "there is a primary element which has established the Turkish State. Then there are [other] elements which have joined their endeavors and their histories with those of this primary element. There are citizens from this element too" (quoted in Mango 1999, 16). As the following sections will argue, requirements of creating a modern and secular nation-state resulted in the importance of the decline of Islam in state rhetoric. Hence, Kurds and non-Muslim groups within Turkish society after the establishment of the Republic were both taken as "others."

5. Due to invisibility of ethnic data in the censuses, there is no official information regarding the ethnicity of the citizens of Turkey. However, it is possible to have an idea about the diversity of the ethnic groups of Turkey at that time by looking at the languages spoken by people: by 1927, 1,764,985 people (13.58 percent of the total population in Turkey) spoke a language other than Turkish, 1,184,446 of whom spoke Kurdish (Çağaptay 2006, 16).

6. Al (2015b) argues that instead of the dichotomy of ethnic vs. civic nationalism, the concept of Turkishness, "monolithic nationhood" as he calls it, should be read from a singularity/plurality framework. Until the 1990s, the policies aiming for the monolithic establishment of Turkishness persisted, he argues, leaving no room for hyphenated identities. That is, "hyphenated self-identifications of Turkish-Kurd (or Kurdish-Turk) have been oxymoronic in the contest of Turkey" (2015b, 97).

7. Caliphate is the name given to the Muslim community and caliphs are the head of this community. The Ottoman Sultans had the title of caliph since the fourteenth century, and when the Ottoman Empire collapsed after the First World War, the Republic of Turkey, as the successor state to the Ottoman Empire, also inherited the title of caliph.

8. This suggests that the Kurdish language was also invisible in the eyes of the Republican elites.

9. One of the scientific guests at the Congress, Friedrich Giese, questioned the methodology of the Theory in these words: "what is the principle behind these studies? Are you depending on unambiguous proof, or are you proceeding by intuition? Although these are very interesting matters, one still needs to depend on a methodology. What is that methodology?" (quoted in Aytürk 2004, 18).

10. The original version of the whole law in Turkish is given in İsmail Beşikçi's *Kürtlerin 'Mecburi İskan'ı* (1977). While translating to English, the author tried to stay true to its original wording as much as possible.

11. The original version of this proposal in Turkish is given in İsmail Beşikçi's *Kürtlerin 'Mecburi İskan'ı* (1977). While translating, the author tried to stay true to its original wording as much as possible.

12. Note that the word "Kurd" has never been mentioned by the elites and the word "population" was used instead, suggesting, again, the ethnic invisibility of Kurds in the Kemalist rhetoric.

13. This was not only restricted to Kurds. As was discussed earlier, the Turkish History Thesis, "invented" by the Republican elites, argued that Turks were the origins of all the great civilizations.

14. The wording regarding this incident is varied within the literature. McDowall (1996) explains it through the use of the word "revolt," while some others have used the word "rebellion" (Olson 1989; van Bruinessen 2000; Yeğen 1996; Heper 2007) and "uprising" (Çağaptay 2006). Within the academic literature in Turkish, this incident is known as *Şeyh Sait İsyanı*.

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15. For other interpretations and analyses of this rebellion, see Olson (1989) and van Bruinessen (1992), who describe this rebellion as a national one.

16. As was discussed in the Introduction, Heper positions himself within the "alternative paradigm" with regards to the Kurdish issue in Turkey, which would suggest that the starting point of the "troubles," as Heper calls it, is when "Kurds, or rather some militants thereof, who for one reason or another but not for ethnic reasons, became dissatisfied with the pattern of relations they have had with the state" (2007, 11).

17. Beşikçi (1990) uses the Turkish term *jenosid* to describe the incidents.

18. Geographically, Dersim was the name of the district and Tunceli was the name of the new province including the district of Dersim. However, today, the political connotation of those two names still remains. As of today, even though the official name is still Tunceli, Kurds still refer to that area as Dersim and people who are loyal to the principles of the Kemalist state use the word Tunceli.

19. This is the author's translation from Turkish. The whole report of the Inspector can be read in Turkish in Hallı (1972).

20. Nuri Dersimi (1952), in his detailed account of Dersim history, describes a poisonous gas that was thrown by the air forces of the state (1952, 319).

21. This is the author's translation from Turkish. The original text can be read in Beşikçi (1990, 47–48).

22. This is the author's translation from Turkish. The original text can be read in Beşikçi (1990, 48–49).

23. Van Bruinessen (2000) discusses in detail the different groups and organizations in the 1960s that emerged both within the Turkish and Kurdish Left.

24. The martial law of 1978 was announced in the Official Gazette on December 26, 1978, http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/16501_1.pdf&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/arsiv/16501_1.pdf [Accessed February 23, 2018].

25. Al (2015a) discusses the transformation of PKK's vision from an independent Kurdistan into demands for a pluralist Turkey.

26. Erbakan here refers to the first sentence of "Our Oath" [*Andımız*], which will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

27. The full text in English can be found at http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_ (Section 2.1) [Accessed March 1, 2018].

28. http://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme#bolum_(Section 2.1) [Accessed March 1, 2018].

29. This is a famous saying of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and it is also written on the wall of the Grand National Assembly. Article 6 of the Turkish Constitution begins with this sentence.

30. This is the author's translation from Turkish. The Turkish version of this speech can be found online through this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5XgqU50c_Y [Accessed March 3, 2018].

31. The full version of CHP's party programme in Turkish can be found online on this link: http://www.chp.org.tr/wp-content/uploads/chpprogram.pdf [Accessed March 3, 2018].

32. Ahmet Necdet Sezer, who served as the President of Turkey from 2000 to 2007, was known for being a staunch defender of the Kemalist ideology, and this had resulted in many conflicts with the AKP on several occasions. Erdoğan even stated that he "suffered a lot from Sezer during his presidency" (*Haber 7* April 17, 2014). Sezer stated near the end of his ruling period that should the AKP's presidential candidate succeed him, it would be the biggest danger for the political regime in Turkey since the founding of the Republic, and "the activities aimed against the secular order and efforts to bring religion into politics are raising social tensions" (*Reuters* April 13, 2007).

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33. The second article of the Turkish Constitution defines the characteristics of the Republic, and states that the Turkish state is a democratic, secular, and social one that is loyal to the nationalism of Atatürk.

34. The concepts of "periphery" and "center" in the context of Turkish politics were coined by Şerif Mardin (1973).

35. The fact that Hayrünnisa Gül, Abdullah Gül's wife, would become the first First Lady with a headscarf was one of the issues that were often brought up during the discussions for the Presidential Elections (*Today's Zaman* April 25, 2007), again showing the issue of secularism was at stake.

36. Throughout the history of the Republic, there have been two military coups aimed at overthrowing the government: on May 27, 1960 and on September 12, 1980. In 1971, there was also a memorandum by the Turkish Armed Forces forcing the government to resign. On July 15, 2016, there was a failed attempt by the military forces to overthrow the AKP government.

37. The official text of the declaration was removed from the official website of the Turkish Armed Forces in 2011. Excerpts of the original text can be found on BBC News (April 28, 2007).

38. April 23, National Sovereignty and Children's Day, is one of the national holidays of Turkey, and it marks the day when the first Grand National Assembly of Turkey was established in 1920.

39. Aydinli explains in detail about the impacts of "Ergenekon" operations on Turkish politics. He states that after all the operations "those absolutists who might still be willing or courageous enough to attempt a military intervention are now more likely to be deterred by the possibility of an eventual indictment and prosecution" (2011, 236).

40. The choice of the day for the referendum on September 12 was not arbitrary. It is the day when the military coup of 1980 took place, and 2010 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the coup. Symbolically, it represented another step in the AKP's challenge to the military establishment within the state.

41. The full text of this speech (in Turkish) can be accessed at the AKP's official website: https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/haberler/1-haziran-diyarbakir-mitingi-konusmasinin-tam-metni/8230#1 (June 2, 2011) [Accessed January 23, 2015].

42. The full text of this speech (in Turkish) can be accessed at the AKP's official website: https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/haberler/7-haziran-mardin-mitingi-konusmasmasinin-tam-metni/8376#1 (June 8, 2011) [Accessed January 23, 2015].

43. Gaining popular support against the Turkish Armed Forces is especially significant since, as recently as 2008, the Armed Forces has been voted as "the most entrusted institution" in Turkey. See the research report done by Eurobarometer (Spring 2008) to look at the institutions that Turkish society trusts the most (http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb69/eb_69_first_en.pdf).

44. The full text of this speech (in Turkish) can be accessed at the AKP's official website: https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/haberler/basbakan-erdoganin-12-haziran-gecesi-yaptigi-konusmanin-tam-metni/8520#1 [Accessed January 25, 2015].

45. The full text in Turkish can be found online on the AKP's official website: https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/haberler/basbakan-erdoganin-demokratiklesme-paketi-basin-aciklamasinin-tam-metni/52596# [Accessed February 3, 2015].

46. His full speech in Turkish can be watched online on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=abFUz7_ooaw [Accessed August 2, 2015].

47. His full speech in Turkish can be watched online on this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vY9DejExm0g [Accessed August 2, 2015].

48. TRT 6 is a state TV channel devoted exclusively to the Kurdish language at all hours. It was established during the second period of AKP.

49. The full regulation in Turkish was published on Official Gazzette on March 8, 2008 (http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/main.aspx?home=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2008/03/20080308.htm&main=http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2008/03/20080308.htm) [Accessed March 5, 2018].

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50. The student here refers to Abdullah Öcalan as his leader.

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TWO

Contextualizing Kurdishness Through Localities

Everyday Experiences of Prejudice/Discrimination

Muhsin Kızılkaya states in one of his interviews that "the state has been partially successful in its policies by assimilating 50 percent of the Kurds within Turkey" and "the other half has managed to retain their identity and their culture." He bases his estimation on the urbanization and migration rate and states that "the ones living in the cities have become "Turkified" and they lead a Turkish life."[1] This observation is one of the statements that reflect the diversity of experiences of Kurds living in different towns within Turkey. In this and the following chapter, "bottom-up" factors that play a role in the emergence of varieties of Kurdishness will be discussed. This chapter will focus on how living in different localities within Turkey plays a role in how Kurdishness is manifested. The first part of chapter will illustrate the different forms of Kurdishness manifested by the respondents. The second part of the chapter will discuss "informal, everyday discrimination" (Wimmer 2013, 75) as one of the means through which boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-)shaped. The role that different localities play is observed in terms of the nature of discrimination: whilst acts of prejudice and discrimination are encountered by the respondents in both parts of Turkey, the reasons for encountering these acts differ depending on the locality. These everyday experiences of prejudice and discrimination play a significant role in exhibiting forms of Kurdishness through the process of boundary creation. This chapter will explore how different localities generate these different contexts through which different forms of Kurdishness can be formed.

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As was explained in the Introduction, one of the reasons for conducting fieldwork in different parts of Turkey was "intellectual curiosity" (Lofland, et al. 2006, 12) about whether Kurdishness is manifested differently due to the different environmental surroundings in different localities. An incident encountered during fieldwork provides an illustration of the differences with regards to the use of the Kurdish language in public space: in one of the shuttle buses between Mardin and Derik, one of the passengers from behind the shuttle asked (in Kurdish) the woman in front of him to pass his money to the driver. The woman, looking at him with questioning eyes, asked him to repeat what he said, this time in Turkish. The man repeated his request in Turkish and the woman did what she was asked. After this, one of the men sitting next to the man shouted why people were speaking Turkish. The fact that he said this in Turkish as well gave the impression that he wanted to be understood by the non-Kurdish speakers on the shuttle. Contrary to Ayvalık where speaking Kurdish in public space is one of the reasons for encountering prejudice and discrimination, as will be illustrated later in the chapter, this suggests a significant difference in context. Another example of contextual differences is the photo below:

The photograph (Figure 2.1) shows a bilingual placard in the municipality of Diyarbakır; the Kurdish translation was added in December 2013.

How do these differences impact how Kurdishness is manifested? That is, in what ways does a citizen of Turkey who was born and grew up in the Southeast part of Turkey and who has been exposed to Kurdish for most of his/her life differ in terms of how he or she exhibits his or her

Figure 2.1. The bilingual placard in the municipality of Diyarbakir Source: Hürriyet

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Kurdishness compared to another citizen who lives in the Western part of Turkey? Through these questions, this chapter will explore how different localities play a role in the manifestation of Kurdishness.

KURDISHNESS AS CULTURAL ATTACHMENT

The definitions of Turkish culture and Kurdish culture and whether they are very different from each other have been one of the discussion points for the respondents. Turkish culture has been described as "the major language and culture within the society" by Hasan (interview, April 17, 2013), whereas Mahsun defines culture as "the habits of living and nothing else" (interview, February 20, 2013).

Language was identified as the key cultural marker by the respondents. Ten different respondents (İlhan, Hasan, Kadir, Dilan, Abdullah, Emir, Meryem, Murat, Halil, and Emel) expressed the relationship between language and culture by mentioning the words "culture" [*kültür*] and "language" [*dil*] consecutively or by using them interchangeably. For instance, Dilan described language as "the most important element of culture" (interview, April 28, 2013).

If adopting the language of another culture is part of the "acculturation" (Gordon 1964) process, then it would be reasonable to argue that all of the participants have been acculturated to a certain degree since all of them were fluent enough in Turkish to be interviewed in that language. This was made possible through the standardized education system that the Turkish state implemented that was explained in chapter 1. That is, after a person starts school in Turkey, then he or she would *have to* learn the Turkish language. This is considered the inevitable product of attending the Turkish education system. As explained in the methodological overview, when discussing the implications of interviewing in Turkish language, speaking and/or understanding Turkish is the norm rather than the exception for most individuals. Therefore, it might be argued that it is not the knowledge of the Turkish language that generates significant differences among manifestations of Kurdishness.

One of the ways localities play a role in generating different forms of Kurdishness is observed when it comes to differentiating different cultures: the feeling of having a unique and a different culture than the Turkish one was evident among all of the respondents from Southeast Turkey. Murat is a primary school teacher who was born and grew up in Derik. While talking about his observation that Turks do not want to live together with Kurds, he states: "do you know how *they* [Turks] want to live? *They* could live with Kurds if things were how they were 20 years ago. But as long as *we* insist on having *our* own culture, *our* own language, *our* own identity, on the fact that *we* are Kurds, *they* will not like this. *They* do not want to live like this" (italics for emphasis, inter-

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view, May 12, 2013). Meryem, a high-school student from Derik also distinguishes Kurdish culture from Turkish culture to explain why her older sister chose to become a guerrilla by saying that "she is there [on the mountains] to protect *her* language, to protect *her* culture" (italics for emphasis, interview, May 4, 2013). Abdullah from Derik also makes a similar distinction when talking about the system of village guards by saying that "they are there to protect *their* [Turks'] culture, *their* language" (italics added for emphasis, interview, April 26, 2013).

The case of Halil is another complex case: he was born in a small village in the province of Adıyaman[2] and lived there until he was 6, when his family moved to Mersin. He has been living in Istanbul since 1993, when he started working for a newspaper. He indirectly stated that Kurds have a different culture. When I asked his views on the establishment of *TRT 6*, he started discussing the idea that culturally, Kurds are different:

> It looked like the aim of establishing such a channel was to offer an alternative to the already-existing "separatist" [*bölücü*] channels, and that is why it has [generated] such a reaction among Kurds; they did not buy the idea of this channel and they did not see it as their own. Who accepted it? "Conservative Kurds": Kurds who vote for AKP. The positive thing about this is that it has provided the "Kurdification" of those Kurds who are loyal to AKP; they have become Kurds culturally. (interview, March 4, 2013)

The language Halil uses is more abstract compared to the previous examples. That is, he does not provide certain clues as to how he positions himself with regards to those different cultures he mentions. The distinct usage of "they" [*onlar*] and "we" [*biz*] when discussing Turks and Kurds is non-existent unlike the interviews with Abdullah, Meryem, and Murat. He does not use the "we" [*biz*] pronoun when talking about either group of Kurds (the ones who did not buy the idea of *TRT 6*, and the ones who accepted it). It is crucial, however, that he still recognizes the existence of differences between the two cultures by saying "they have become Kurds culturally." It is possible to see the effects of the fact that he lived in different parts of Turkey from the language he uses. In this sense, localities do influence the way individuals perceive culture, and the fact of living in different parts of Turkey is reflected in the way individuals view these differences.

In line with the overall argument of this book, however, different forms of Kurdishness were exhibited even when it came to the relationship between language and culture. Some respondents exhibited a feeling of attachment both towards a separate Kurdish culture and towards the Kurdish language, whereas there were also occasions where the respondent exhibited attachment towards the Kurdish language while, at the same time, clearly denouncing the existence of a separate Kurdish cul-

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ture. Consider this case of Mahsun: Mahsun was born, grew up, and lived in Hakkari[3] until he was 18, when he moved to Istanbul for his undergraduate studies in 1981. In his narration, it is possible to observe an ambiguous relationship with regards to cultures:

> What we call "culture" is the habits of living and nothing else. Now, Turks, Kurds, Circassians, Arabs, they all live within the same culture and you cannot differentiate these. *Lahmacun,* for example, is it a Turkish food, Kurdish food or an Arabian food? We cannot know that. A Turk spits on the floor; a Kurd also spits on the floor. A Turk beats his wife; a Kurd also beats his wife. What is the only difference? Their languages. (interview, February 20, 2013)

In this case, the boundaries between the two cultures, for Mahsun, are erased in all but one element: language. He expresses his attachment to the Kurdish language but other than that, he does not express any attachment to any cultural elements of Kurdishness. What Mahsun is exhibiting here is a different form of Kurdishness that is exhibited only in terms of linguistic attachment.

What happens, though, when an individual is not a native speaker of Kurdish? The case of Emel provides another form of Kurdishness that is manifested by the respondents, suggesting the importance of language for perceptions of belonging to Kurdish culture. She was born and grew up in Sivas, a Central Anatolian town that has a considerable Alevi population and then lived in Istanbul and Adapazarı[4] for long years before she moved to Ayvalık. Having lived in different parts of Turkey (but never in the Southeast), she unquestionably recognizes the existence of different cultures ("I have been going to the Southeast for seven years now, and I can see that we are from different cultures"), yet she does not see herself as having the same culture as those living in Southeast Turkey either ("even though I identify myself as Kurd, I do not have the same culture," interview, June 5, 2014). If language is considered a part of the culture, according to some of the respondents, then the fact that Emel is not fluent in the Kurdish language is one of the explanations for her perception of belonging to a different culture.

Kurdishness as cultural attachment among the respondents, then, to summarize, manifests itself in variant forms: there are occasions where individuals perceive no significant differences between cultures; there are cases where the existence of different cultures is recognized but where individuals do not perceive themselves being attached to either one, and there are cases where individuals do not perceive themselves belonging to a certain culture, yet they are attached to the Kurdish language and make conscious efforts to protect it. The role that different localities play in these different forms is observed when distinguishing between different cultures: all of the respondents from Southeast Turkey expressed clearly that Kurds have their own culture that is different than

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the Turkish one, whereas for the respondents from Western Turkey, the boundaries were not that clear.

KURDISHNESS AS IDENTIFICATION

Another way through which Kurdishness was manifested among the respondents was through identifying themselves as Kurds or not. In the previous section, the dichotomy of Turkish culture, "high culture" (Gellner 1983), versus Kurdish culture was discussed. Is it possible to talk about a straightforward relationship between the views on culture and how an individual identifies himself or herself? Based on the data this section will reveal, the answer would be "no." In fact, only one respondent out of 33 expressed that she does not identify herself as Kurd. What does this reveal? This section will show that identification of one's self as a Kurd is possible through two ways: through "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) and through identification of one's self by others. In this discussion, the concept of "half-Kurd" will be introduced.

Self-Identification

This section will show that it is possible for someone to identify himself or herself as Kurd in Ayvalık and in Istanbul in their social interactions but the context and the meaning is quite distinct. This way, it will also prepare for the discussion in the following section. "Informal, everyday discrimination" (Wimmer 2013, 75), which will be illustrated in the following section, is significant in the (re-)shaping and in the (re-)construction of the boundaries of Kurdishness. Elif, a young woman from Derik who works for a women's organization there, emphasized the importance of this when she talked about her brother's military service:

> If you go to such a place [where there are negative perceptions towards Kurds], you would be more aware of your Kurdish identity even if you were assimilated before. People there were told that "Kurds are terrorists, Kurds are barbarians, Kurds have tails,"[5] and they accept this without questioning. That is why a Kurd there, no matter how much he speaks Turkish, no matter how many times he denies his identity, will always be a Kurd there and he will be treated as such. Then, he would realize that he is a Kurd. (interview, May 10, 2013)

Reyhan from Ayvalık defines herself as a Kurd even though she is not fluent in Kurdish. What is important for the purposes of this section is that even when fluency in the Kurdish language is not present, Kurdishness is manifested through self-identification. Halil, who has been based in Istanbul since 1993, mentioned the emergence of a new group of people "who do not know one word of Kurdish, yet could sacrifice themselves for the cause," hence that "Kurdish identity [*Kürt kimliği*] has be-

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come clearer compared to the past" (interview, March 4, 2013). Aras argues in his book that "the state has failed to Turkify or integrate/assimilate its Kurdish citizens" (2014, 195) through those policies aimed at incorporating Kurds, with all the other "non-Turkish" groups, into a "higher culture." In chapter 1, the policies of the Kemalist state were discussed that aimed at suppressing the Kurdish language. If the Kurdish language and other elements associated with the Kurdish culture were suppressed, the Kemalist leaders thought, then it would be easier to convert them into "ideal Turks." The statements of the respondents, however, suggest that they have constructed a form of Kurdishness that is not exclusively based on the Kurdish language.

Mahsun was also adamant that he be identified as a Kurd. Even though he does not see any crucial difference between Turks and Kurds in terms of objective cultural indicators (illustrated in the previous section), he identifies himself as a Kurd:

> [When talking about the environment in the school where his daughter goes to in Istanbul] It is nice. But of course, it also depends on the attitude that you are showing. . . . Everybody would be bothered if they see manifestations of other nationalisms. If I go there and say, "I am a Kurd and this is Kurdistan," of course people would react to this. I would also react if someone says, "this is the land of Mustafa Kemal [Atatürk] and you cannot speak Kurdish here." (interview, February 20, 2013)

Here, it is possible to see an example of someone identifying himself as a Kurd without necessarily being attached to its culture. This is a crucial point in further understanding the different forms of Kurdishness and its contextual nature the discussion so far suggests that the Kurdish language is not *sine qua non* for the establishment of forms of Kurdishness.

The responses on *Andımız*,[6] "Our Oath," among the respondents provide another, albeit more subtle, source through which identification was manifested. In addition to the mandatory activity of reading *Andımız* out loud every morning in the schoolyards, the state put additional efforts to make *Andımız* part of everyday life for Kurds. For instance, whilst travelling between Mardin and Derik, it is possible to see inscriptions of the very last sentence of *Andımız*, "how happy for the one who says 'I am a Turk,'" on the mountains. Local people say that those inscriptions have been there since the military coup in 1980. The reactions to *Andımız* have been similar regardless of whether the respondent is from the West or Southeast Turkey. Meryem, who was born and grew up in Derik, said that she "felt it difficult to read *Andımız* when she was old enough to understand what it means" (interview, May 4, 2013). Zeynep, who was born and grew up in Derik, joked that she and her friends from high school used to "change the words to 'I am Kurd, honest, and hardworking'" (interview, May 5, 2013).

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Another manifestation of respondents' identification as Kurds is their responses to Article 66 of the Turkish Constitution. Article 66 states that "everyone bound to the Turkish state through the bond of citizenship is a Turk." The controversy surrounding this article lies in the "discord between the texts defining Turkish citizenship and the practice of Turkish citizenship" (Yeğen 2004, 55). Among the respondents, however, there was a consensus regarding the interpretation of this article: it was an ethnic definition of citizenship, which does not take into account the non-Turkish population within the society. Or, as was discussed in chapter 1, for the nation-state, this article was the reinforcement of the idea that Kurds were actually Turks who just needed to be reminded of their forgotten language and culture. Ali, born and raised in Derik, expressed his frustration at this Article and its implications by saying: "I can accept the notion of *Türkiyelilik,*[7] or the idea of a place within Turkey where Kurds and Turks could live together without any conflict, but I do not find it okay that a nation under the name of Turk establishes a control mechanism over Kurds; I cannot stand this" (interview, April 28, 2013).

Zeynep stated that she "always feels bad when [she] see[s] the constitutional definition of 'Turkish nation' because [she] [is] not a Turk" (interview, May 5, 2013). Murat was not convinced that Article 66 is not defined along ethnic lines ("the concept of 'Turk' does not include all the ethnic groups within Turkey. It does not include me, for instance, because I do not feel Turkish. . . . It would be better if it was 'the peoples of Turkey' [*Türkiye halkları*]," interview, May 12, 2013); Meryem expressed that she is "not included in that definition because if [she] [was], [she] would be in the same situation as Turks" (interview, May 4, 2013), and Dilan, similar to Murat, suggested that it should be changed to "the peoples of Turkey" [*Türkiye halkları*] to make it more inclusive because the way it is does not include her (interview, April 28, 2013). Similarly, Emir from Ayvalık told this: "I can only speak on my behalf. I am neither proud nor ashamed of being a Kurd. When they [Turks] ask me about this, I always insist that I am a Kurd." In fact, he later joked about the fact that he cannot bring himself to say that he is a Turk when his Turkish friends insist (interview, February 28, 2013).

Identification by Others: Being a "Half-Kurd"

Self-identification or "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) is not the only way through which identification is possible. Apart from self-identification, there are also occasions where people are ascribed by others as the following incident in Ayvalık suggests: a group of people, some of them native speakers of Kurdish and the others non-native speakers, were having an informal chat in Turkish when the discussion suddenly turned to "how to name the days of the week in Kurdish." When the non-native speakers had trouble remembering some of the Kurdish words, they

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were immediately called "half-Kurds" [*yarım Kürt*] by those who could. Emel was in that group that was referred to as "half-Kurds." In fact, she narrated in our follow-up conversations other occasions where she was referred to as a "half-Kurd": "sometimes when I try to speak Kurdish, some people tell me, 'nevermind, do not even bother speaking Kurdish, you cannot manage it anyway, you are half-Kurd.'" And sometimes, this hurts" (interview, June 5, 2014). However, she does not hesitate to identify herself as a Kurd: "I grew up always being aware of my Kurdish identity; I have always been aware of it. I am now as well" and "I do not feel less Kurdish just because I cannot speak Kurdish" (interview, June 5, 2014) are manifestations of how she perceives herself as Kurd. In fact, in our follow-up conversations, she jokingly suggested that in this research, she should be described as a Kurd who has not lost her identity despite not being from the Southeast. This suggests the independence of these two different means of identification: even though Emel is referred to as a "half-Kurd" by others, it is clear that she identifies herself as a Kurd through "self-ascription" (Barth 1969).

KURDISHNESS AND ENCOUNTERS OF PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION

In social psychology literature, prejudice is defined as "any attitude, emotion or behavior towards members of a group, which directly or indirectly implies some negativity or antipathy towards that group" (Brown 2010, 7). As will be shown throughout this section, all three aspects in this definition of prejudice (attitudes, emotions or behaviors) are existent and applicable to the case in question. Discrimination is a concept that is considered in relation to prejudice (Correll, et al. 2010; Harley, Rollins and Middleton 1999; Thornicroft, et al. 2007), yet there might also be types of discriminatory acts without any kind of prejudiced attitudes or emotions (Blood, Jr. 1955). To clarify the concept for the purposes of this section, I borrow the definition in the *SAGE Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping and Discrimination*, where it is defined as "behaviors directed towards category members that is consequential for their outcomes, and that is directed toward them not because of any particular deservingness or reciprocity, but simply because they happen to be members of that category" (Correll, et al. 2010, 46).

Wimmer discusses "informal, everyday discrimination" (2013, 75) as one of the means of ethnic boundary making. This section, through narratives of the respondents, will illustrate that Kurdishness is constructed through these acts of everyday prejudice and discrimination. In line with the overarching argument of this book that forms of Kurdishness differ across different contexts, this section will show how different localities generate these different contexts, which are reflected within the encoun-

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ters of prejudice and discrimination. Here, it is important to clarify that what this discussion is interested in, for the purposes of this section, is not whether these perceptions of the respondents are, in fact, a reality. The important criterion is whether the respondents perceive them as prejudices or discriminatory acts. The focus, for the purposes of this section, is simply on *experiences* of prejudice and discrimination.

Since prejudice and discrimination are directed towards the members of certain groups, as defined above, one condition of encountering prejudice and discrimination should be that other people are aware that you are a member of that certain group. How is this possible in the case of the respondents? The accent when speaking Turkish is one way to express membership. Non-native speakers of Turkish have a different accent from native speakers of Turkish. Emir gave a more specific description of the differences in pronunciation between native- and non-native speakers by saying that "*we* are different even biologically; *we* pronounce 'ğ'[8] in a harsher way, and it is not like that in Turkish language" (italics for emphasis, interview, February 28, 2013). Zeynep, who was born and grew up in Derik, told about her daily struggles when she looks for jobs at banks in the Southeast region:

> *We* all speak Kurdish until *we* go to primary school and *we* learn Turkish at school. And of course, this is a disadvantage for *us* because *we* are competing with people from the West [Western Turkey] in this sense. Compared to *them*, *our* accent is not good; in fact, it is terrible for most of *us*. Then of course, the banks would not hire *us* since *we* are so behind *them*. For instance, if I get 90 in the written exam and the person from the West gets 75, he [or she] would still be more convincing in the interview and the bank would be more likely to hire him [or her] instead of me. (italics for emphasis, interview, May 5, 2013)

This type of prejudice against the Kurdish accent is observed in the public space as well. One of the recent instances happened in February 2013, when the then-spokesperson for CHP, Haluk Koç, while criticizing the members of the pro-Kurdish party BDP for their actions, used the phrase "with their rough Turkish."[9]

Respondents from all the five different field sites encounter acts of prejudice and discrimination as a "means of ethnic boundary making" (Wimmer 2013), yet as will be illustrated below, due to different markers varied across different regions. The difference in accents that was mentioned above, for instance, does not apply for an individual who is born and grows up in the Western part of Turkey. As will be illustrated shortly, for individuals living in the Western part of Turkey, the reasons for discrimination vary. Being prejudiced against, emotionally or attitudinally, is something that the respondents mostly encounter during the course of everyday life and as shown in previous examples, it is possible to experience it even when they speak Turkish due to their accents.

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Another situation where the respondents experience prejudice is when they speak in Kurdish. The role of different localities is again observed regarding speaking Kurdish in public spaces. In Derik, encountering prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behaviors for speaking Kurdish was not common as the everyday life was dominated by the Kurdish language. Mardin, due to its different demographic characteristics, is a place where it is possible to hear different languages in everyday life without any type of prejudiced reactions. That does not mean, however, that the respondents do not experience any type of prejudiced attitude or discriminatory behavior in Mardin. Even there, it is possible to encounter incidents where people experience prejudice and discrimination due to the language they speak. Hasan, a high school teacher who was born and grew up in a small village in Mardin, narrates the story of how, from Turks' point of view, some perceptions regarding the Kurdish language are still the same:

> For instance, we are at school talking to other colleagues in Kurdish. Then, one Turk comes to us and says, "why are you speaking in Kurdish? I do not comprehend what you are saying." At first, what he says seems really humane: the poor guy does not understand our conversation but it is actually a matter of perception. They think, "I should understand." Why? He thinks he belongs to the major language and culture; since we live in Turkey, he has to be the one who comprehends. You do not have to comprehend! Or learn Kurdish so you would also comprehend what we are talking about! . . . One of the experiences I had was with a guy who defined himself as a socialist. He would say, "as a socialist, I defend the right to self-determination for Kurds" but when he comes here and fights alongside his Kurdish comrades, he would say "I do not understand what you are talking about, you are speaking in Kurdish." (interview, April 17, 2013)

Even though there are many different languages spoken in Mardin, the existence of a Turkish speaker changes the dynamics within the group. The possibility of an individual receiving prejudiced attitudes and/or being discriminated against because he or she speaks Kurdish would be less likely in Derik than in Mardin even though one (Derik) is a district of the other (Mardin). Diyarbakır is also similar to Mardin in this regard. Güvenç (2011) illustrates the use of public space and urban parks in the establishment of a Kurdish nationalism in Diyarbakır. The use of Kurdish language in everyday life, however, is surprisingly less common than what would be expected. Ayşe, who works in Diyarbakır alongside her husband, stopped at a patisserie one day on her way to her husband's place of work. While she was ordering the desserts, she interacted with the cashier in Turkish, and the cashier was taking notes on a sheet of paper in Turkish yet with Kurdish letters.[10] Later, when asked why she and the cashier did not interact with each other in Kurdish, she told that Kurdish is still not common in public place, unlike a place such as Derik.

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Abdullah from Derik expressed a similar opinion by saying that "Kurdish is not spoken in Diyarbakır. As much as we say it is, it is not spoken. It is spoken at homes but outside, it has just started to be spoken" (interview, April 26, 2013).

When it comes to the Western part of Turkey, two respondents (Arif and Halil) stated that they have not encountered many problems when speaking Kurdish in public space. Halil, who has been working as a journalist in Istanbul since 1993, stated that he talks in Kurdish within his group of friends when he is outside, and he has never received any negative attention. He stated that the comfort in Istanbul with regards to speaking Kurdish is not existent even in the capital city of Ankara, and he even jokes that he interacts in Kurdish more in Istanbul than he does in Diyarbakır.

Other respondents from the Western part of Turkey, however, narrated their stories of discrimination and prejudice with regards to the use of the Kurdish language in public space. Emir who lives in Ayvalık narrated this story: he and another friend he defined as Kurd were in a bank. The account officer in the bank was getting frustrated when his friend did not exactly understand what he was saying and the officer said, "why do you not comprehend? Are you Kurdish?" Reyhan from Ayvalık narrated the story of her brother, and how, one month after he came back from his compulsory military service, the police stopped his car because he was listening to a Kurdish song on his radio. He then spent the night at the police station being tortured throughout the night only to be released the next day. Hasan, who lives in Mardin, told how he could visualize where his brother, who resides in Istanbul, is at that moment when they talk on the phone: if his brother talks to him in Kurdish, that means he is home, but if he speaks in Turkish, he must be at his workplace. He, then, added that he also senses the anger of people when he is in Istanbul when he talks on the phone in Kurdish. Murat, who was born and grew up in Derik but moved to Istanbul with his family when he was around 13 years old, told about his experiences in Istanbul. His experience there was that he "felt that people were looking at him with a judgmental look if he spoke Kurdish on a train, on a bus etc." (interview, May 12, 2013).

The organization of marches and protests on special days provides opportunities to observe discriminatory behaviors, if any, targeted at specific groups. In Ayvalık, this was all the more apparent when there was an occasion that different groups want to commemorate or celebrate. Emel said that things still have not changed much when it comes to attitudes and emotions targeted at the use of the Kurdish language in public space. She narrates her experience of International Women's Day in 2014:

> Because it was International Women's Day, we wanted to celebrate it without excluding any woman or any organization; despite everything,

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> we still wanted to celebrate it all together. We had a meeting together with the *ulusalcı*[11] group and they only had one condition: they did not want any slogan in Kurdish. . . . In fact, we invited people from all ethnicities: Greeks, Armenians, Bosnians . . . and we had slogans and banners in all of those languages. But the *ulusalcı* group allowed all those other languages except the Kurdish one. So, we had to celebrate separately from them as was the case in the last years. (interview, June 5, 2014)

She also added that they were, for the first time in Ayvalık, able to celebrate *Newroz* but that this was only possible due to the upcoming local elections and even then, they had to celebrate it in a separate district where immigrants from Southeast Turkey predominate instead of the town centre.

Speaking Kurdish in public spaces or speaking Turkish with a different accent are not the only occasions where individuals encounter prejudice and discrimination. An individual who is born and grows up in Western Turkey is more likely to be a native speaker of Turkish or more likely to speak Turkish with an accent similar to native speakers.[12] However, those individuals also face prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives. Emir illustrates this point by referring to his daughter who was born in Ayvalık and who is not even fluent in the Kurdish language (due to her mother being a Turk), and her experiences in the school suggest that prejudice and discrimination are not only about the use of the Kurdish language in public space. Just because of his daughter's name, he said, the teachers would be prejudiced [*önyargılı*] against her. Related to the literature on boundary-making, this example suggests that names might also act as boundary markers.

Apart from names, ethnic origin is another one of the boundary markers for the respondents living in Western Turkey. That is, the fact that someone is ethnically Kurd, regardless of the language he or she speaks or the accent in which he or she speaks Turkish, might be one reason for encountering prejudice and discrimination. In Ayvalık, many respondents narrated stories of prejudice and discrimination that they had received throughout the years, regardless of the language they speak or with which accent they speak Turkish. Emir described his daily experiences in public space in these words:

> We would go to Teachers' Lodge and there would be colleagues there from the Union. I could feel that their blood pressure would rise up when they see us. We do not harm anything nor anyone but even our existence would bother some people. Or, I am sure you have witnessed this [in Ayvalık] as well: if some people speak in English in the market, they are always envied and people would say, "oh, how nice that they speak English." But when we speak in Kurdish, they immediately become grumpy. . . . Once, we were again at Teachers' Lodge having a casual chat about random stuff and suddenly, one colleague said, "do

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> you encounter any problems here [for being Kurdish]?" I mean, even if you would talk about football, he would bring the topic to this because he wanted to say something but he could not. It does not change anything when a Kurd also prays or even votes for the same party; it is enough that someone is a Kurd. (interview, February 28, 2013)

Similarly, Emel told that she could not be appointed to the centre of Adapazarı for nine years when she was working as a teacher in a village nearby just because of her Kurdish descent. For the respondents living in Southeast Turkey, ethnic origin is a marker not so much in the interactions amongst "ordinary people" but in their interactions with the state and with the state institutions.

All in all, this section discussed encounters of prejudice and discrimination as one of the means of boundary making of Kurdishness in Turkey. This is possible in both parts of Turkey due to the fact that these encounters of prejudice and discrimination are observed in both parts. The role that locality plays, however, is observed in the contextual nature of these encounters. Language and the accent act as boundary markers in Western Turkey. For native speakers of Kurdish, when they speak Kurdish in public places and when they speak Turkish due to their accent, it is possible to encounter acts of prejudice and discrimination. Language and the accent are less likely to act as boundary markers in Derik, or for the respondents who are native speakers of Turkish. For these respondents, names or ethnic origins act as boundary markers. Through these encounters of prejudice and discrimination, boundaries are being (re-)shaped to distinguish between the groups of "we" and "they," which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The further implications of these findings will be discussed in the next section.

DISCUSSION

First of all, this chapter showed other forms of Kurdishness manifested among the respondents. The previous chapter showed that as a response to the changes and continuities in state rhetoric, Kurdishness was manifested in modified forms. This chapter showed variances in forms of Kurdishness in different ways through interactions with "ordinary people": there are instances where Kurdishness is manifested through attachment to cultural elements; through attachment to only language even though other aspects of Kurdish culture are not as important (the cases of Mahsun and Halil); through "self-identification" (Brubaker and Cooper 2000) or identification by others as in the case of "half-Kurd." It is possible to observe a straightforward relationship between localities and the extent to which the respondents express some form of cultural attachment. That is, all the respondents from Southeast Turkey showed a

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strong attachment to a certain Kurdish culture, whereas for the respondents in Western Turkey, the boundaries were more blurry.

Sarigil and Fazlioglu (2014) argue that, based on their data from a major public survey, the region has a significant impact on ethno-nationalist orientations of Kurds. That is, Kurds from Southeast Turkey, according to Sarigil and Fazlioglu, are more likely to have an ethno-nationalist orientation compared to Kurds living in other regions (2014, 446). One of their findings is that Kurds who think they face discrimination in any aspect of their lives are more likely to develop a stronger ethno-nationalist orientation. The discussion throughout this chapter suggests a slightly modified version of Sarigil and Fazlioglu's findings (2014). Instead of stating that individuals are more ethno-nationalistic or less ethno-nationalistic depending on the regions they are based in, this research suggests that individuals manifest their own forms of Kurdishness in different ways, depending on the contextual differences generated by different localities. This means that Kurdishness is not a matter of degree; rather it is simply manifested in different forms in different contexts. Similar to Wimmer's argument of boundaries as varying from one social situation and from one context to another (2008, 976), Kurdishness responds to different contexts by modifying its forms.

Secondly, two of the questions that this research is interested in, language and localities, are related in the sense that localities are influential on individuals' usage of Kurdish language. The influence of local differences is observed in its relationship with language. As mentioned above, language and the accent act as boundary markers for the respondents from Southeast Turkey. As will be discussed in the next chapter, other factors are also influential on an individual's relationship with the Kurdish language, yet the role localities play in how Kurdishness is manifested is observed through its relationship with language.

Emel's case suggests that individuals who are not fluent in the Kurdish language do not exhibit significant levels of attachment towards cultural elements of Kurdishness. This provides a partial explanation for the Turkish state's persistence on policies aimed at suppressing the Kurdish language, on not establishing a separate education system in the Kurdish language, and on restricting the use of the Kurdish language in public space even after the recent developments discussed in the previous chapter. So, what the Turkish state has tried to do is to make Kurds feel alienated from their own culture by taking away one of the crucial parts of Kurdish culture, the language. Where an individual, for whatever reasons,[13] is not fluent in Kurdish, there might be dissociation from cultural attachment to a certain extent. Or, in other words, feeling alienated from Kurdish culture is more likely for individuals who are not fluent in the Kurdish language. Related to the overarching argument of this research, however, the respondents who do not exhibit attachment towards cultural elements manifest their own forms of Kurdishness in other ways such

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as through self-identification, and through demands for education in the mother tongue and for the right to self-determination (chapter 1).

Even the respondents who do not associate themselves with the Kurdish culture or do not differentiate Kurdish culture from the Turkish one may identify themselves as Kurds. The identification of one's self as a "Kurd," "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) is something that develops independent from the language. That is why it is possible for an individual who was born and grew up in parts other than the Kurdistan homeland without any particular knowledge in Kurdish to also develop forms of Kurdishness. Emel was visibly distraught when her friends called her "half-Kurd" because of her lack of fluency in the Kurdish language. Reyhan, despite not being a native speaker of Kurdish, still identifies herself as Kurd. As argued earlier, it is not that individuals from the Western part of Turkey show less ethno-nationalist orientations; it is rather that they manifest their own forms of Kurdishness in different ways, and this is made possible through means of boundary making. In this case, those means, as illustrated earlier, are the encounters of prejudice and discrimination individuals receive in their everyday lives. "Ascription" (Barth 1969) is more crucial than any other objective criterion such as language. What is more is that it is "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) not imposed by anybody else but the respondents themselves. As exemplified in the incident of "half-Kurds," it is not the criteria that the others (in this example, the others being the fellow Kurds) ascribe to people, but how people perceive themselves to be that is influential on one's sense of identification. In this sense, Kurdishness in this research is taken in Brubaker's terms as it treats Kurdishness as "variable and contingent rather than fixed and given" (2002, 168).

Prejudices and discriminatory behaviors together combined constitute one of the means through which the boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-)shaped. Related to Wimmer's argument of "everyday discrimination" being one of the means of boundary making (2013, 75), this chapter showed that everyday experiences of prejudices and discrimination provide means through which "us" and "them" are determined. As was shown in above sections, the reasons for prejudices and discriminatory behaviors vary. Acts of prejudice and discrimination are encountered due to different reasons: the language and the accent, names, and ethnic origins. These different factors act as boundary markers for individuals depending on where in Turkey individuals live. This way, individuals across towns and regions all contribute to (re-)making the boundaries of Kurdishness through constructing their own forms of Kurdishness. Encounters of prejudice and discrimination are one of the means through which boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-)shaped. Other means through which this is made possible will be discussed in the next chapter.

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CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the question of locality, and on the role locality plays in the manifestation of Kurdishness. In line with the overarching argument that there are varieties of Kurdishness across different contexts, this chapter showed that Kurdishness is manifested in different ways: Kurdishness is manifested through an attachment to Kurdish culture, through an attachment to only the Kurdish language or through self-identification. Instead of simply stating that individuals have more ethno-nationalist or less ethno-nationalist orientations depending on where they are based within Turkey, this chapter suggests that Kurdishness is manifested in different forms in different contexts. Locality differences provide these different contexts. One way these differences are reflected is through attachment to cultural elements; that is, how attached individuals feel to "Kurdish culture." Individuals who do not perceive attachment to Kurdish culture, however, manifest their own forms of Kurdishness in different ways such as attachment to the Kurdish language or identification. Manifestation of Kurdishness in the form of identification, self-identification, or "self-ascription" (Barth 1969), is the determining factor. The last part of this chapter focused on encounters of discrimination and prejudice as means of boundary making. The role that locality plays is reflected in generating different boundary markers for different localities: for individuals from Southeast Turkey, the language they speak and the accent in which they speak Turkish act as boundary markers, whereas for individuals from Western Turkey, having a Kurdish name and ethnic origins act as markers. Through these different markers across different regions, individuals from either part of Turkey construct their own forms of Kurdishness. The next chapter will focus on how the language shapes different forms of Kurdishness through family environments and through neighborhoods that individuals inhabit.

NOTES

1. The full interview can be read online at http://www.duzceyerelhaber.com/roportaj-haberleri/20048-Muhsin-Kizilkaya-Turkce-edebiyat-bayragini-Kurt-yazarlar-yukseltti#.VZUZnEaZ7IU (September 16, 2013) [Accessed March 13, 2018].

2. Adıyaman is a province in Southeast Turkey and is considered part of the homeland of Kurds.

3. Hakkari is a province in the Southeast corner of Turkey and is considered part of the Kurdish homeland.

4. Adapazarı is a neighboring province of Istanbul.

5. "Kurds with tails" is another one of the myths that were spread throughout Turkey to further "otherize" Kurds. Orhan Doğan, a Kurdish lawyer and politician, told in an interview that some students in his high school in Nazilli (a town on the Aegean Coast of Turkey) checked under his coat to see if he had actual "tails" (http://www.internethaber.com/nazillide-kuyruklu-kurt-olmak-77300h.htm) (April 2, 2007) [Accessed March 15, 2018].

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6. In chapter 1, it was stated that this policy was abolished in September 2013 by the AKP government.

7. *Türkiyelilik* literally translates as "being from Turkey" and it refers to a more umbrella term for all the citizens of Turkey regardless of their ethnic background.

8. This is the soft "g" letter that is specific to the Turkish language, and it does not exist in the Kurdish language.

9. The full statement in Turkish can be read at http://www.ensonhaber.com/haluk-koc-bdpliler-o-kaba-turkceleriyle-2013-02-21.html [Accessed March 16, 2018].

10. *Kurmancî,* the dialect of the Kurdish language that is spoken in Diyarbakır, uses the Latin alphabet as does the Turkish language. There are, however, 6 different letters in *Kurmancî* than in Turkish: ê, î, û, q, w, and x. The usage of some of those letters by the cashier led the author to think that he was probably a native speaker of Kurdish.

11. *Ulusalcı* is the name given to the neo-nationalist group that has emerged in Turkish politics in the recent years, which is based on three basic ideas: anti-Westernism, externalization of Islam from Turkish nationalism, and ethnic exclusionism (Uslu 2008). Officially, they are not affiliated with any parties, yet what the respondent here refers to is the *Ulusalcı* group within the CHP.

12. This, again, shows variances among the respondents. As will be discussed in the next chapter, family environment is another thing generating a different context, and Mahsun's case shows how his children, born and raised in Istanbul, grow up to be native speakers of Kurdish due to his and his wife's insistence to talk to them in Kurdish.

13. Some of the reasons for which the respondents are not able to be fluent in the Kurdish language will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

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THREE

Contextualizing Kurdishness Through Language

Family Environment and Neighborhood

This chapter will focus on the role that language plays in shaping different forms of Kurdishness. It will show that language is effective in constructing different forms of Kurdishness through different family environments and neighborhoods that the respondents inhabit. Then, the interaction of all these factors will be discussed. All these variables, along with encounters of prejudice and discrimination discussed in chapter 2, constitute part of "everyday practices" of individuals. The second part of this chapter, therefore, will be devoted to how all these variables interact to influence forms of Kurdishness. The last part of this chapter will discuss, in reference to boundary theories, how boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-)shaped by individuals through the language they use and through their narratives. By focusing on the roles that family environments and neighborhoods play in shaping different forms of Kurdishness, this chapter focuses on more micro contexts compared to the ones in chapters 1 (state rhetoric) and 2 (localities).

THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE THROUGH EVERYDAY PRACTICES

The Role of Language Through Family Environments

Since the age of the respondents varied from teenager years to late-fifties, the influence of family environments can be considered in two different ways: the family the respondents were born into (their parents

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and/or primary caregivers) and the family they acquired later on in their lives (their spouses and children).

In terms of the family that one is born into, there was consistency across the respondents: there was only one respondent (Rezine) who had a mother of Turkish ethnic origin but apart from that, all the respondents were born to ethnically Kurdish parents. Family environment is one of the factors that creates social interactions and social experiences for a person. In fact, for many people, it is where most of the first social encounters were shaped. Chapter 2 showed that language plays a role in an individual encountering prejudice and discrimination, which provides one of the means through which boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-) shaped. These encounters emerge both among native speakers of Kurdish and non-native speakers. That is, it is possible that an individual encounters prejudice and discrimination coming from native- or non-native speakers, depending on the language and/or the accent in which he or she speaks the language. For instance, a native speaker of Kurdish might face discrimination and prejudice due to speaking Kurdish in public space or due to the accent he or she speaks Turkish with. This section will illustrate another way the language shapes different forms of Kurdishness: family environments. By discussing that, it will show how family environments generate different contexts of Kurdishness, which, in turn, are effective in construction of different forms of Kurdishness by the respondents.

As the process of acquiring and learning a language mostly starts within family environments, language that is spoken by parents and within the family becomes important for the respondents. The effect of language acquisition can be observed in the respondents' experiences in their early school years. Most of the respondents, when talking about their time when they first started primary school, had traumatic memories. Hasan, who is from a small village in the centre of Mardin, narrated the stories of him and of his brothers/relatives/friends when they all started the primary school in Mardin. He grew up at a time when there was no electricity or TV in his village, so he was not exposed to any Turkish before he started school. He described what he and his friends went through as little kids as "traumatic" [*travmatik*]:

> It was the Monday morning and we would do the usual: we would sing National Anthem; we would recite *Andımız*; we would go inside. The school principal read aloud our names; we went to his room and he took out his iron bar and started beating us. . . . That is how it all started. From that point on, if we would speak Kurdish in any way, even among each other, we would get beaten. There would even be spies outside the school, and they would inform the principal and/or the teachers when any of us speaks Kurdish outside the school. Then, we would go to school on Monday and get beaten again. (interview, April 17, 2013)

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Halil, whose family moved to Mersin when he was around five to six years old, was luckier in this regard. Similar to Hasan, he did not know any Turkish before their move to Mersin from Adıyaman. In his village in Adıyaman, in his words, "his whole life was in Kurdish" (interview, March 4, 2013), and he first encountered Turkish when they moved to Mersin. Yet, he had one year before he started the primary school, so by the time he startedf school, he knew Turkish a bit, and he did not receive the same treatment by his teachers as the ones who did not know Turkish did. However, he added that he still heard stories from his friends who were beaten up by their teachers and who were spied on when they spoke Kurdish. Ali, who was born and grew up in Derik, was also one of the luckier ones in the sense that he knew a bit of Turkish when he started the school because his father could speak a bit of Turkish. This, he said, led him not to have as traumatic experiences as his other friends who did not know Turkish.

Emel had a different experience: her parents were native speakers of Kurdish, and they always talked in Kurdish to her and to all her other siblings. In fact, her mother did not even know one word of Turkish, so the fact that Emel now is not fluent in the Kurdish language makes it a more interesting case. She always questioned herself why she would not be as fluent in Kurdish as some others who also had Kurdish-speaking parents. This is her explanation for this situation: "[As a kid] I would go outside and everybody was Turk, so I would speak Turkish probably to be included in them. In order not to be excluded, not to be frowned upon, we even rejected our own language. We thought, 'the more we speak Turkish, the more we would be included in the system'" (interview, June 5, 2014). So, for Emel, the Turkish language had a functional purpose. She thought that if she spoke only Kurdish, she would not have a chance to interact with the people she saw outside in Sivas, an environment not predominated by Kurds.

There was a similar case in Derik: Ramazan works in construction sites. He is married to someone who is also of Kurdish descent and has one daughter and one son. He would speak Kurdish to his son, who was two years old at the time, and to his daughter, who was 8 years old, in Kurdish. His son, who had just started uttering some words, would respond in Kurdish but in all of the visits to their house, the daughter Burcu never spoke in Kurdish. When Ramazan and his wife were asked if this was because of other people's presence, they simply said no. They said that she had been speaking in Turkish most of the time since they moved back from Aydın.[1] They had lived there for five years prior and in fact, their son was born there before they moved back to Derik. Burcu had contacts in Aydın to whom, in time, she became very attached. Burcu's case, again, is an example of the functionality of the Turkish language; she used it to interact with the people around her in a non-Kurdish environment.

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These cases illustrate the functionality of the Turkish language for the respondents. The instrumentalist camp within the discussion on linguistic nationalism (Anderson 1983; Billig 1995; Deutsch 1953; Gellner 1983) argues that language, instead of being the essential element of an individual's culture, can be used as an instrument by individuals. In this sense, it is suggested that the Turkish language serves the role of "functional communication" (Hearn 2006, 210) for most of the respondents. However, there were also incidents where, such as Emel's case, the respondent thought speaking Turkish would serve as "a medium of status-marking" (Hearn 2006, 213). Zeynep, who was born and grew up in Derik and is a native speaker of Kurdish, exemplified this when she mentioned her cousins who are not fluent in Kurdish. When asked why her cousins, who were also raised in Derik, did not speak Kurdish, she answered that speaking Turkish, for them, was "a sign of modernity" (interview, May 5, 2013).

This was observed in the case of Mahsun when he grew up. Mahsun, who was born, grew up, and lived in Hakkari until he was eighteen years old, had a family environment where Kurdish was spoken all the time. He witnessed the pressures and bans on the Kurdish language, and that, in his words, "created a trauma for him." He felt "ashamed of his native language" during his youth. The Turkish language was considered by him as a marker of having a higher status within the society. Currently, Kurdish is the language that is spoken in his home in Istanbul. It is the language of "his family, and that is not going to change" (interview, February 20, 2013). What happened with his children (a 6-year-old daughter and a 2-year-old son) is that Kurdish is their mother language since it is the language they speak at home to their parents but they are also aware that a different language is spoken when they are in public space. This was a conscious decision by Mahsun and his wife to raise their children as native speakers of Kurdish, leaving Turkish to be learnt when they start kindergarten. The feelings of shame and the experience of trauma explain why Mahsun, along with his wife, insist on a family environment for his children where they can grow up without facing any pressure but also having a healthy attitude towards their own language. This is crucial for Mahsun as is evidenced by this excerpt: "the best thing about what we are doing at home is that my daughter and my son do not feel any shame towards their own language, as I used to. They do not feel any pressure and therefore, they will not go through the same traumatic periods as I did" (interview, February 20, 2013).

However, there is another reason why Mahsun wants their children to learn Kurdish at home and learn Turkish outside. His reasoning was that if his daughter and his son learn Turkish from them, then they would learn Turkish with a Kurdish accent. So, he and his wife deliberately avoided speaking Turkish to them so that they would learn Turkish at school from their teachers who are native speakers of Turkish. If they

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learn Turkish from their teachers, Mahsun said, then "they would speak it more correctly and without an accent." In chapter 2, it was illustrated that speaking Turkish with an accent that let others know that you are a native speaker of Kurdish would result in experiencing discrimination and prejudice. Minimizing the existence of a Kurdish accent in Turkish, therefore, is important for non-native speakers of Turkish. This mentality of Mahsun, however, differs from most of the other respondents, the reason for which will be discussed in the following section when discussing how the language plays its role in shaping forms of Kurdishness through neighborhoods.

Out of 33 respondents, only one respondent grew up in a family where Turkish was dominantly spoken even though both parents were of Kurdish ethnic origin, and that was Arzu. In the case of Arzu, her grandparents were the victims of Dersim uprisings, after which they were exiled in other parts of Turkey. Both her maternal and paternal grandparents were from the same tribe in Dersim, yet they found each other again in Konya,[2] where they first came after they were exiled from Dersim. After they got married in Konya, they moved to Izmir, where Arzu was also born and grew up. Her family environment was so much influenced by the Kemalist doctrine that Arzu explains that her family, as most of the Dersim exiles, supports CHP and are loyal to Kemalist principles of the state. As a result, Turkish was spoken in her family and she grew up as a native speaker of Turkish. She had just started learning Kurdish by the time of her interview. She does not feel Kurdish, which implicates the role of her family environment when she was growing up.

Speaking Kurdish and teaching Kurdish to their children is seen as crucial by the respondents to create a family environment that is conducive to develop some forms of Kurdishness. This suggests the awareness they have of the importance that the family environment has for constructing forms of Kurdishness. For the respondents who are based in the Western part of Turkey, the family provides the only environment where the Kurdish language can be learnt. However, where the Kurdish language is not learnt within the family such as the cases of Arzu and Emel, it is still possible to manifest different forms of Kurdishness in the later stages of their lives. For Emel, it was exhibited in the form of being involved within the Kurdish Movement and of making explicit demands to have education in the mother tongue (discussed in chapter 1). As was discussed in chapter 2, she also identifies as a Kurd. Arzu does not identify herself as a Kurd. As will be discussed in the following section, however, Arzu also spends a considerable amount of her time with Reyhan and Rezine, who are self-ascribed Kurds. This, as part of her "neighborhood," contributes significantly to forming her own forms of Kurdishness. The effects of neighborhood and in which ways one's neighborhood plays a role in manifesting different forms of Kurdishness will be discussed in the next section.

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The Role of Language Through Neighborhoods

In the previous section, the family environment of Mahsun was introduced. There was also the case of Emel, who felt the need to learn Turkish to be included in her external environment even though both her parents do not know any Turkish. It was mentioned that Mahsun and his wife speak only Kurdish to their two children in order for them to learn Turkish at school where they can learn it "without any accent" (interview, February 20, 2013). As mentioned above, however, this attitude is different than the other respondents. The difference in these attitudes can be explained by the neighborhoods they live in within the towns they reside. This section will discuss another way through which the language plays its role in constructing different forms of Kurdishness: through neighborhoods.

The neighborhood where Mahsun lives with his family in Istanbul is an upper-class neighborhood, and the school his children go to, in Mahsun's own words, is an "upper-class school, so for people there, such things [having Kurdish speakers around] are not a problem" (interview, February 20, 2013). Mahsun lives in a neighborhood where he feels comfortable speaking Kurdish and declaring himself a Kurd. His interview was conducted at a Starbucks near his neighborhood. He said that he chose the place because his home was just around the corner. However, he still perceives some disturbance when he is outside [of his neighborhood] with his daughter or with his son. Since he talks to his children in Kurdish, he fears that people would react if his daughter expressed herself in Kurdish in public. At one point during the interview, however, Mahsun's mobile phone rang and he started talking on it in Kurdish at a not so low voice. His body language also showed the relative comfort and ease he was feeling while he was talking in Kurdish. The possibility of him feeling really comfortable with that specific place and the people there knowing him personally might have contributed to his at-ease behaviors while speaking Kurdish. His concerns regarding his daughter arise when they go to the more central places of Istanbul. At the same time, however, he also emphasized that his six-year-old daughter and his two-year-old son (who had just started kindergarten) had not encountered any type of discriminatory behaviors so far in the school, be it from other parents or from other children. This contrast of experiences Mahsun receives within and outside of his neighborhood is effective in shaping his form of Kurdishness. The different neighborhoods provide different contextual environments for individuals during the course of their everyday lives. Related to the discussion in the previous chapter, Mahsun's case suggests that neighborhoods determine if individuals encounter prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives.

In Mahsun's case, it is also possible to see a relation between the neighborhood in which he lives with his family and his social status. As

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mentioned above, that specific neighborhood implies that its residents belong to a higher social status. The study of Sarigil and Fazlioglu (2014) discusses the effects of socio-economic approach for Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey. Using the data based on a comprehensive public opinion survey, they argue that the conventional socio-economic approach, which was defined as "individuals with high socio-economic status (i.e. a high level of income and education) would be less likely to have ethno-nationalist orientations" (2014, 440), did not apply to the Kurdish case in Turkey. That is, similar to economically developed regions where there are ethno-national conflicts such as Quebec and Catalonia, ethno-nationalist orientations among Kurds cannot be suppressed through measures of economic improvements (2014, 449). Mahsun's case suggests that changes within socio-economic status and neighborhood are reflected in manifestations of Kurdishness.

The effects of the social status were observed within the neighborhoods where the respondents reside and even in the way they appear to others. Halil, a journalist based in Istanbul, said that he has not encountered much prejudice and/or discrimination in Istanbul, and he speculated that this could be due to his and his colleagues' "modern" outlook. He continued: "people [Turks] have these codes in their minds, such as Kurds being illiterate etc. So, when they see a Kurd holding a Kurdish newspaper in his hand, they get a bit surprised" (interview, March 4, 2013). As discussed above in Mahsun's case, social status, directly or indirectly, influences how Kurdishness is manifested. The indirect influence of social status was observed in Mahsun's case through the neighborhood he lives in. It also has a more direct influence on manifestations of Kurdishness as the below examples illustrate.

Meryem stated that "young people [Kurds] today might decide not to go to school if they fail, and they might be hesitant of going to school because they are not fluent in Turkish" (interview, May 4, 2013). One of the visits to a village nearby Derik illustrated this. There, there was an 11-year-old girl who does not go to school anymore. When she was asked questions in Turkish, her answers to each question were very short and brief. She could comprehend all the conversations around her and all the questions that were asked in Turkish without any difficulty. However, her responses consisted mostly of "yes" [*evet*], "no" [*hayır*], "I do not remember" [*hatırlamıyorum*], and other brief sentences. When asked, by a teacher in the room, to bring some books in Turkish to check her Turkish, she acted reluctant, which suggested that she might be feeling uncomfortable with her level of Turkish.

In Ayvalık, the effects of neighborhood were also observed. The discussion below aims to introduce a specific neighborhood within Ayvalık: *Fikirtepe*[3] is the neighborhood of Ayvalık where Kurdish immigrants from Eastern and Southeast Anatolia are mostly settled. This is where *Newroz* celebrations usually take place in Ayvalık.[4] During the campaign

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for the municipality elections on March 30, 2014, all the demonstrations were held here. The district of *Fikirtepe* presents an interesting case: even though it is known as the "neighborhood of Kurds" among the locals, it is also possible to observe "banal" (Billig 1995) instances of Turkish nationalism as the pictures below illustrate:

The existence of Turkish flags at the particular time of taking the pictures is interesting, not least because it was not a national holiday, and none of the other neighborhoods in Ayvalık had this pattern on that specific day. What might have caused such a display of "banal nationalism" (Billig 1995) in this Kurdish neighborhood? The concept of *mahalle baskısı* (the pressure of the neighborhood) is a recent term within the Turkish sociological literature, firstly coined by Şerif Mardin in 2007.[5] Mardin discusses the intolerance of the "small societies" of Turkey towards any value that is against their norms (1991, 186). He discusses that the "good" and "bad" values are determined according to the neighborhood patterns. For example, being religious would be a "good" thing as the traditional small societies in Turkey are religious, yet "being alienated from the neighborhood" would be considered "bad" (Mardin 2007, 102). In this case, *mahalle baskısı* results from the fact that the people who do not hang Turkish flags on their apartments might be considered "outsiders" to the society and this, in turn, might result in alienation of those families who do not hang flags in their neighborhoods. A different form of the concept of "the pressure of the neighborhood" can be observed in a different context within Ayvalık. Emel illustrated this point when she

Figure 3.1. Turkish flags on the buildings of private apartments in Fikirtepe. Source: Author

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Figure 3.2. Turkish flags on the buildings of private apartments in Fikirtepe. Source: Author

discussed the disappointment within the HDP[6] about its votes in certain neighborhoods of Ayvalık:

> Some of our Kurdish friends here who migrated from Southeast Anatolia started out construction businesses. They all worked or voted for the "status-quo party" [*düzen partisi*].[7] The reason for that is that they were scared that they would lose money if they do not give their support to it [that party]. . . . That was the main reason why HDP received less votes in the neighborhoods where it was expected more.

Similar to the arguments discussed in chapters 1 and 2, instead of stating that people are less or more likely to have ethno-nationalistic orientations depending on their socio-economic status, the discussion in this chapter suggests that the form of Kurdishness that individuals exhibit changes its forms. The role that the language plays was shown to be effective through family environments and neighborhoods. Social status was also shown to be effective through its interaction with the neighborhood. In towns where they are not predominated by Kurds such as Ayvalık and Istanbul, the existence of neighborhoods provides individuals experiences to construct their own forms of Kurdishness.

Combined with the family environment that was discussed in the previous section, the neighborhood and social status constitute the other contextual variables for manifesting different forms of Kurdishness. This way, the discussion in this chapter so far presents the continuation of the discussions in chapters 1 and 2, where other contextual variables playing

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Figure 3.3. Turkish flags on the buildings of private apartments in Fikirtepe. Source: Author

a significant role in manifestations of Kurdishness were discussed. The variables that were discussed in this chapter are in interaction with individuals in their everyday lives. Chapter 2 discussed another contextual variable as part of the respondents' everyday lives: encounters of discrimination and prejudice. That discussion also suggested that different localities are generators of different contexts for individuals. The following discussion, then, explores how all these variables, constituting part of everyday practices, interact with each other to generate different contexts for different forms of Kurdishness.

HOW EVERYDAY PRACTICES WORK IN INTERACTION

The relationship within everyday practices (encounters of discrimination and prejudice, family environment, and neighborhood/social status) works in different ways. One way in which all these factors interact with each other is that one perceives less prejudiced attitudes and less discriminatory behaviors because his or her socialisation process involves other fellow Kurds. Emel had this to say about this situation: "it would be wrong to assume that Kurds have a comfortable life here. Some progress has been made, albeit very slowly, but things are still not ok. I have seen incidents of people getting jobs in some places just for the next day to be fired because they are Kurds."

A similar thing can be said about Halil. Working as a language activist in Istanbul and as a journalist in a Kurdish newspaper, his work environ-

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ment is surrounded by Kurds. He said that they all speak Kurdish at work and they also speak Kurdish when they all go out together. If a Kurd works in an environment dominated by non-Kurds, it might happen that the experiences he or she encounters in that environment result in him or her being motivated to be in an environment where it is dominated by his or her fellow Kurds. This would result in different experiences of socialisation processes for individuals. It also illustrates how boundary theory works to (re-)shape the boundaries of Kurdishness. Zeynep, born and raised in Derik, had this reaction when asked whether she would want to work and live in Western part of Turkey:

> No. Of course, a work is a work but I want to work in the East [Eastern Turkey]. Maybe this is a nationalist sentiment but I want to work for my nation. I would be more comfortable in the East; it is my nation after all. For example, I compare myself to my friend [who studied in Çorum[8]], and I see that I was really comfortable in Hakkari [when I did my undergraduate] compared to her. (interview, May 5, 2013)

Is it also the case that the more an individual spends time among non-Kurds (due to neighborhood or work environment), the less discrimination and prejudice that individual would encounter? As was discussed in chapter 2, discrimination and prejudice, in the case of Kurds in Turkey, are encountered less due to physical features but more from the place of origin, the accent in which one speaks Turkish, and due to the fact that an individual speaks Kurdish. If an individual is born and raised in an environment dominated by native speakers of Turkish (due to family environment or neighborhood), the chances that he or she would be a native speaker of Turkish or would speak Turkish without any particular accent is higher than an individual who was raised in an environment predominated by native speakers of Kurdish. That might, in turn, result in less discrimination and less prejudice towards that person since the accent is one of the boundary markers. In a way, what Mahsun has been doing with his children has this motive behind it, as discussed in the previous section. He and his wife want their children to learn Turkish at school, as opposed to learning from them, because they want them to speak Turkish like a native speaker. This point illustrates another way through which the accent in which one speaks Turkish and the language play a role in different forms of Kurdishness. Family environment is crucial in determining an individual's accent and his or her native language. This, in turn, influences the encounters of prejudice and discrimination, which is in a mutual interaction with neighborhood and social status, as discussed earlier. In chapters 1 and 2, some of the different forms of Kurdishness that are manifested by the respondents were discussed: Kurdishness can be manifested through demands of education in the mother tongue and self-determination (chapter 1), through cultural attachment or through

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ascription as Kurd (chapter 2). The following section discusses how these different forms are shaped by the factors discussed in this chapter.

THE EFFECT OF EVERYDAY PRACTICES ON DIFFERENT FORMS OF KURDISHNESS

In chapter 1, the discussion focused on two different manifestations of Kurdishness (demands of education in the mother tongue and self-determination), and these different forms of Kurdishness were explained through the differences and the continuities of AKP rhetoric and Kemalist rhetoric. The different forms of Kurdishness that were shown in chapter 2, cultural attachment and ascription, were explained through encounters of prejudice and discrimination the respondents receive. As the previous section discussed, however, everyday practices do not act in isolation. Rather, all factors that constitute "everyday practices" are in interaction with each other. This section will discuss how this interaction plays a role in shaping the different forms of Kurdishness mentioned in chapter 2.

In line with one of the questions that this research is interested in, chapter 2 discussed language in relation to cultural attachment. That is, it suggested that not being a native speaker of the Kurdish language has influence on the extent to which an individual is attached to cultural elements of Kurdishness. This was illustrated through the case of Emel, who is not a native speaker of Kurdish and who does not perceive herself belonging to a certain "Kurdish culture." As discussed in earlier sections, family environment and neighborhood, separately or combined, play a significant role in which language the individual uses in his or her everyday life. Through this interaction, family environments and neighborhoods have an impact on an individual's cultural attachment.

As shown through the case of Mahsun, Kurdishness can be manifested through "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) even when the individual belongs to a higher social status. Ascription by others, however, is influenced by social status. In Ayvalık, there was a common narrative among the respondents about how, when individuals first migrate to the Western parts, they think only about becoming rich. Some of them, after becoming rich, forget about their identity according to some of the respondents. Ascription by others can also be determined by the extent to which someone speaks the Kurdish language. This was suggested in chapter 2, where the concept of "half-Kurd" was introduced. In that example, it was native speakers of Kurdish jokingly telling non-native speakers that they were "half-Kurds." Emel also mentioned how she was referred to as a "half-Kurd" by others due to her inability to speak Kurdish fluently. In Emel's case, it is not her social status that makes her "half-Kurd" in the eyes of others but her inability to speak Kurdish as fluently as they do.

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These different narratives suggest the importance of both ascription by others and "self-ascription" (Barth 1969). These two processes do not significantly influence each other in the sense that one can identify herself or himself as Kurd even though she or he is identified as half-Kurd by others (the case of Emel). In this chapter, it was also mentioned that only one of the respondents (Arzu) did not identify herself as Kurd. It was discussed that coming from a family of descendants of the Dersim incidents of 1937–1938, everything that is related to Kurdishness was suppressed within her family. This case suggests the importance of the family environment in whether an individual identifies herself or himself as Kurd or not. Such are different forms of Kurdishness manifested through everyday practices.

(RE-)SHAPING THE BOUNDARIES OF KURDISHNESS

The discussion so far has showed the effects of everyday practices on Kurdishness and how those factors interact with each other. Throughout this discussion, Kurdishness, as a different ethnicity, has been taken for granted. At the same time, related to Wimmer's argument, boundaries "do not imply closure and clarity, which vary from one social situation to another" (2013, 10). However, as this book focuses on different forms of Kurdishness and on contextual factors affecting these different forms, Kurdishness as a separate category has been acknowledged. Yet, Kurdishness has been taken as an "event that happens," instead of something that is "fixed and given" (Brubaker 2002, 167–68) with clear boundaries distinguishing members from non-members. The existence of boundaries manifests itself in the language the respondents use in their narratives. This last section will focus on how these boundaries are (re-)shaped by the respondents.

One way of shaping boundaries is through the respondents' usage of the pronoun "we" [*biz*] instead of "I" [*ben*]. By talking in a plural sense, these respondents expressed their feelings of belonging to a certain ethnic group. Abdurrahman, who owns his own business in Derik, illustrates this. He used the plural personal pronoun [*biz*] when he discussed the difficulties he faced as a native-speaker of Kurdish when he was in primary school. In this case, Abdurrahman puts himself in the same category as his fellow native speakers of Kurdish. What Abdurrahman does in this case, unconsciously or not, is similar to those who use the phrase "half-Kurd." By referring to himself and other native speakers of Kurdish as "we," non-native speakers of Kurdish, in this context, are taken as non-members of Kurdishness. This way, boundaries of Kurdishness are shaped by native speakers of Kurdish by referring to themselves as members of Kurdishness, excluding, for this occasion, non-native speakers from belonging to Kurdishness. Similarly, Kenan also used the pronoun

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"we" when he was discussing the difficulties he faced in Ayvalık and Istanbul before he became fluent in Turkish. Similar to Abdurrahman, Kenan here, by referring to native speakers of Kurdish as "we," includes those who are native speakers of Kurdish and therefore who have an accent when speaking Turkish as members of Kurdishness, non-native speakers being implied as non-members.

This does not mean, however, that non-native speakers are always perceived as non-members of Kurdishness, in line with the discussion on boundary making. The reference to being a native speaker of Kurdish is not there when the topic is not related to speaking Kurdish. Consider the narrative below from Emir from Ayvalık: he had a similar language in his narrative in the sense that he also used the plural personal pronoun instead of a singular pronoun. Compared to Abdurrahman, however, Emir's usage of the plural pronoun is not limited to Kurdish speakers: "the illiteracy rate among *us* has always been very low, then *we* realized that this has been a systematic policy of the state. Fevzi Çakmak[9] mentioned this in his memoir by stating that 'do not educate Kurds; if you do, they would be aware of their rights'" (italics for emphasis, interview, February 28, 2013).[10]

Another example is found when Emir talked about the literary tradition of Kurds and said that "*our* literary tradition is not that strong; the system [*sistem*] does not want *our* written literature to flourish because if *our* history is written, it would not get lost" (italics for emphasis, interview, February 28, 2013). Zeynep responded to the question of what she personally wants at the end of Peace Process by saying that "*we* want *our* language; *we* want *our* identity; *we* want *our* land" (italics for emphasis, interview, May 5, 2013). Ali from Derik explained how he thinks Kurds and Turks are not that related in these words: "both linguistically and nationally, *we* are not relatives with Turks; we are neighbors but not relatives" (italic for emphasis, interview, April 28, 2013).

Compared to previous examples in the beginning of this section, these examples show that, in some other occasions, being a member of Kurdishness is not related to the extent one speaks Kurdish. In some cases, the respondent also draws boundaries through the parts of Turkey individuals live in. Elif illustrated this when discussing the effects of the media on shaping the perceptions of people. This is related to the discussion in chapter 2, where locality was discussed as one of the factors that provides contextual differences for individuals. Through being located in different parts of Turkey, individuals are exposed to different effects of the media, which, in turn, has an impact on shaping the boundaries of Kurdishness.

By using "our," "we," and "us" in their narratives, the respondents express their attachment to their "imagined communities" (Anderson 1983), however that is defined for them. The importance of "self-ascription" (Barth 1969) in shaping the boundaries of Kurdishness can be observed in the cases of Emel and Reyhan, both of whom identify them-

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selves as Kurds despite their lack of fluency in the Kurdish language and their residency in Ayvalık. Even though they were considered by others as non-members of Kurdishness due to their lack of proficiency in Kurdish in previous situations, they are members of Kurdishness through their "self-ascription."

The other way that respondents shape the boundaries of Kurdishness is more implicit in its manifestation. They did not use "we," "us" or "our" but it is possible to infer from their narratives that they refer to themselves as being members of Kurdishness. Consider, for instance, this narrative by Mahsun:

> She [my daughter] does not know yet what sacrifices have been given for this channel [*TRT 6*] to be established, what stages it has been through, and I do not teach her that yet. I want her to know about that stuff when the time comes. But I do not worry about her being a *Kürtçü*[11] by imposing on her a discourse such as "we are Kurds, our language was banned etc." . . . I do not want to impose my exact ideology on her; I would not want her to copy my opinions. (interview, February 20, 2013)

This narrative is an example of a less explicit way of shaping the boundaries for Kurdishness. It should be mentioned that throughout the interview, Mahsun used a personal language that focused on his individual experiences instead of a more collective language. When he talked about things concerning a more collective level such as the tension between the state and Kurds regarding Kurdish rights, he used the word "Kurds" instead of using "we" or "they," unlike previous examples. However, as the previous chapters showed, it is possible to see his own manifestations of Kurdishness. He shows attachment to the Kurdish language; he identifies himself as Kurd; he expresses his demands for self-determination and education in his mother tongue. His case is an example of how Kurdishness exists in different forms. Through more implicit ways, his narrative shapes boundaries of Kurdishness.

Halil provides a more different case. His usage of the pronouns was more mixed: he used both plural [*biz*] and singular [*ben*] pronouns. However, when he used the plural pronoun, it was more to refer to his family or to his colleagues. Consider this quotation as an example: "[When I was a kid], I did not have much communication with the other kids in the neighborhood. It was only me, my brother, and my cousin, who lived not far away from us. We could not communicate with other kids, and we would always fight with them because we would assume they were insulting us" (laughter) (interview, March 4, 2013). Consider the case of Emel, who said this when she elaborated on her lack of fluency in the Kurdish language: "I do not feel that I have a 'lesser identity' just because I do not speak Kurdish. One day, I woke up in the morning and I realized I dreamt in Kurdish; I felt really happy. This does not mean that I do not

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perceive my identity; it only means that I feel a bit 'loser' [*eziklik*] because I cannot speak my own language" (field notes, June 5, 2014).

The illustration that individuals switch from being non-members to members and vice versa shows the contextual variability of Kurdishness. It is not only that boundaries are shaped by individuals; they are also constantly (re-)shaped depending on the context.

CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed how language plays a role in the manifestation of different forms of Kurdishness through family environments and neighborhoods. Family environments are important for shaping different forms of Kurdishness as they influence an individual's fluency in Turkish or in Kurdish, which, in turn, plays a significant role in encountering discrimination and prejudice, through which boundaries of Kurdishness are shaped. The social status is influential on an individual's neighborhood (as in the case of Mahsun), which, in turn, plays a significant role in shaping forms of Kurdishness. By discussing family environments and neighborhoods, this chapter concludes the discussion on Kurdishness by focusing on micro-contexts as opposed to the more macro ones in chapter 1 (state rhetoric) and in chapter 2 (locality).

These factors, constituting part of "everyday practices" for individuals, are in interaction with each other, as well as with encounters of prejudice and discrimination discussed in chapter 2. All these factors, separately or combined, play a significant role in the manifestation of different forms of Kurdishness. Apart from discussing the contextual variables on different forms of Kurdishness, the last part of this chapter also discussed how boundaries of Kurdishness are (re-)shaped by individuals. These boundaries are manifested in the language the individuals use: through the explicit usage of plural pronouns such as "we" [*biz*] and "they" [*onlar*] or implicitly in their narratives, boundaries are determined by individuals. "Self-ascription" (Barth 1969) and ascription by others both play a significant role in shaping the boundaries. The criteria of being a member of Kurdishness include fluency in the Kurdish language and being located in Southeast Turkey, yet there are also situations where "self-ascription" draws the boundaries. As the boundaries of Kurdishness are contextually contingent, they are in the process of constant (re-)shaping.

NOTES

1. Aydın is a province in the Aegean part of Western Turkey.
2. Konya is a big city in Central Anatolia that is not considered part of the homeland for Kurds.
3. This is a pseudonym not to reveal the real name of this district.

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4. Emel explains that the *Newroz* celebrations in 2014 in *Fikirtepe* were the first time that *Newroz* was celebrated in Ayvalık.

5. Çetin (2010), in his brief discussion on the concept of *mahalle baskısı*, states that even though the concept was first coined by Mardin in one of his interviews with the journalist Ruşen Çakır in 2007, it has been a historical phenomenon within the Turkish society.

6. Peoples' Democratic Party [*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*], HDP, is the current pro-Kurdish party in Turkish politics.

7. By "status-quo party," what the respondent refers to here is the "mainstream parties," the main purpose of which is to protect status quo. AKP, for her, was considered in this category.

8. Çorum is an inland town in Central Anatolia and is not considered part of the Kurdish homeland.

9. Fevzi Çakmak was a Turkish field marshal and the first Chief of General of Staff of the Turkish Republic.

10. Whether Fevzi Çakmak really said this or not is irrelevant for this discussion.

11. *Kürtçü* is a Turkish term that is used in informal conversations to refer to people who defend the Kurdish cause.

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Conclusion

(Re-)Shaping Kurdishness from Macro to Micro

The main questions of interest for this research were to explore the roles that state rhetoric, locality, and language play in the manifestation of Kurdishness. The main aim of this research was to understand the diversity of experiences of Kurdishness. The data collected through interviews in five different field sites, through participant observation and through document research show the different, personalized, and customized forms of Kurdishness that are constructed by individuals. In this concluding discussion, then, the individuality of Kurdishness should be emphasized. This book showed, in line with the boundary making approach, that what Kurdishness means, its boundaries, and how it is experienced shows variances depending on the changes and the continuities within state rhetoric, on different contexts generated within different localities, and on language use. Through the interaction of these different elements, Kurdishness is (re-)negotiated by individuals who make meanings of their own, customized forms of Kurdishness.

At the end, this book argues that there is not one single way of exhibiting Kurdishness in Turkey but multiple, different ways that are shaped through different variables: state rhetoric, everyday acts of prejudice and discrimination, family environment, and neighborhood/social status. By doing that, this book focuses on elements that are both state-led and individual-centered. This book shows that Kurdishness is not about linguistic attachments nor about ethnic origins of an individual; it is about (re-)negotiating state rhetoric and everyday practices individuals experience daily. Through these individual experiences, *customized* and *personalized* forms of Kurdishness are constructed.

For this purpose, each chapter in this book is dedicated to one of the research questions. Discussion of the research questions started with a macro approach towards unpacking Kurdishness, and state rhetoric was discussed in chapter 1. After discussing state rhetoric of the Republic starting from the early Republican period, it then looked at some of the manifestations of Kurdishness during the two transitional periods in the Republic: early Republican period (1923–1938) and the AKP period starting from 2002. The discussion in this chapter argued that *both* changes *and* continuities within state rhetoric play a significant role in the (re-)shaping of Kurdishness. Chapter 2 turned the discussion to a more micro

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element that plays a role in manifestations of Kurdishness: locality. The role that different localities individuals are based in play is reflected through everyday acts of discrimination and prejudice individuals encounter: boundary markers change across different localities. Chapter 3 focused on the role that language plays in different forms of Kurdishness, and analysed how language is effective in (re-)shaping Kurdishness: through family environments and through neighborhoods. By putting the emphasis on everyday experiences of the respondents, chapters 2 and 3 show the importance of "everyday practices" in the manifestation of different forms of Kurdishness. Based on these everyday experiences, some form of Kurdishness or other is being constructed and re-constructed on a daily basis by the respondents. Combined with the focus on state rhetoric in chapter 1, this book suggests a two-dimensional approach towards unpacking Kurdishness that takes into account both state-led and bottom-up factors.

This two-dimensional approach towards Kurdishness also serves to reinforce the dynamic nature of ethnicity construction. The different forms of Kurdishness emerge as the result of the interaction of these different elements discussed in this book (locality, language, and state rhetoric), and these are unique to each individual. It is beyond the intentions of this book to claim that the three elements outlined here are the only things that play a role in different forms of Kurdishness. What this book suggests, however, is to take the concept of Kurdishness as something more than a mere identity; it is a "contextually fluctuating conceptual variable" (Brubaker 2002, 167–68) that is in a constant state of transformation as a result of its interaction with the three elements outlined in the previous chapters.

THINKING BEYOND THIS RESEARCH

This book's contribution to the existing literature will be considered in three different aspects: firstly, it presents original empirical data on different manifestations of Kurdishness, and discusses the different variables that are effective in these different manifestations of Kurdishness. Secondly, this book presents the theoretical discussion on Kurdishness as something that is in a constant state of transformation; as something that is *customized* for each individual; as a construction of the boundaries that are (re-)shaped due to contextual variability. This research also offers methodological insights into studying ethnicity by adopting a two-dimensional approach.

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Empirical Contributions

The empirical contribution of this book comes not least from the originality of the data and from the diversity of field sites where the data were collected. The empirical contribution of this book lies in the fact that the data were collected in five different field sites (with different characteristics) in two different parts of Turkey: Western and Southeast. Contrary to previous studies that showed Kurds living in the Southeast region of Turkey showing more support for ethno-nationalism (Sarigil and Fazlioglu 2014), this book illustrates that individuals living in Western Turkey also exhibit forms of Kurdishness albeit in different ways. The diversity of individual experiences regarding Kurdishness is understood by looking at different parts of Turkey that have their own unique characteristics. Another empirical contribution of this book is to introduce the concept "half-Kurd," illustrating that the Barthian concepts of "self-ascription" and "ascription" (Barth 1969) can be incongruous.

This book places emphasis on the experiences of Kurdishness in everyday life and under everyday tensions in different family and neighborhood environments in both Kurdish-dominated and non-Kurdish-dominated places of Turkey. By doing so, this book goes beyond the institutional, guerrilla, and partisan levels that have been common within the literature: it analyses the meaning of Kurdishness for individuals from different backgrounds and social milieus, and its boundaries in different urban contexts. It discusses the questions of how Kurdishness (re-)shapes itself, and negotiates its different forms in discriminatory and in both almost exclusive Kurdish and inter-cultural contexts. By doing so, it fills the gap within the Kurdish Studies literature that has emerged by focusing too much on only one aspect of Kurdishness.

Theoretical Contributions

This book takes the boundary-making approach as one of its main theoretical frameworks. In line with the contextual variability of this framework, this book illustrates that boundary markers for Kurdishness vary across different contexts, and that ethnic forms are (re-)shaped by individuals depending on the changes and continuities within state rhetoric, on differences in local contexts, and also on more micro contexts such as neighborhoods and family environments. This book also contributes to understanding ethnicity construction by individualizing and customizing the process of ethnic construction. Taking ethnicity construction as something that is neither being imposed by the state nor by the "others," this book takes individuals themselves as the agents of construction. Individuals construct forms of Kurdishness "on the ground" (Fearon and Laitin 2000, 855). Even though individuals as the agents of construction has been discussed widely in the literature, this book contributes to the

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discussion by pointing out some of the different elements that influence individuals on their construction of different forms of Kurdishness: state rhetoric, local characteristics, family environments, and neighborhoods.

By looking at these different elements, this book argues that one single element cannot sufficiently explain the existence of varieties of Kurdishness. These elements, in a way, complement each other. For instance, two individuals might live in the same town within Turkey, yet the forms of Kurdishness they construct would differ due to their different family environments and neighborhoods. Related to Cohen's concept of "personal nationalism" (1996), individuals make their own meanings of Kurdishness. This argument also suggests that Kurdishness is constructed through (re-)negotiating the two different elements on a daily basis: state rhetoric (state-led) and everyday practices (bottom-up). Similar to Renan's famous description of a nation as a "daily plebiscite" (Renan 1990), Kurdishness is (re-)constructed on a daily basis through the interaction of state rhetoric and everyday practices. This way, this book argues for customized forms of Kurdishness.

Methodological Contributions

This book's methodological contribution is related to its adoption of a two-dimensional approach towards ethnicity construction.

In addition to studying the structural forces of nation construction, nation is "embedded in the routine practices of everyday life" (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008, 553), so studying it requires different methods such as surveys, interviewing, and participant observation.[1] To explore the two-dimensional approach towards ethnicity that this book adopts, it made use of three different methods: interviews, participant observation, and document research. To explore how Kurdishness is manifested through activities of "ordinary people," this book made use of semi-structured interviews and participant observation. Documents were researched to explore the role that state rhetoric plays in Kurdishness.

The effectiveness of the "triangulation of methods" (Denzin 1978) for research on ethnicity can be understood by looking at what each method aimed at exploring. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather life stories and narratives, whereas participant observation is useful in capturing the more mundane activities such as conversations in tearooms, responses to everyday news, and social interactions of individuals. Compared to the interviewing method in which the context is "forced" by the interviewer, participant observation is more a "wait-and-listen approach because most of everyday life is devoid of national inflection" (Fox and Miller-Idriss 2008, 556). Participant observation and interviews together are effective in exploring the "bottom-up" approaches towards ethnicity, whereas document research is useful to explore the state-led forces on ethnicity.

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DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This research explored how Kurdishness is manifested within Turkey. For this reason, its focus was on the different forms of Kurdishness individuals construct. Kurdishness, however, is not the only ethnicity that exists within the borders of the Turkish state. As one of the arguments of this book is that everyday practices have an influence on shaping different forms of Kurdishness, these everyday practices should be understood in more detail: who are the groups that individuals who construct forms of Kurdishness interact with on a daily basis? If there are many different ethnic groups within the Turkish state, then how do everyday interactions among those different ethnic groups contribute to our understanding on ethnicities? Saraçoğlu's (2009) study shows the importance of individual experiences and of interactions in everyday life of Turkish cities[2] in the formation of an "exclusive recognition" that specifically targets Kurds. His data shows that based on everyday contacts with the Kurdish migrants in Western cities, an antagonistic attitude that specifically recognizes and targets Kurds is being constructed by individuals independent of the state discourse. According to this individualistic discourse, Kurds are seen as an "experienced Other" (2009, 642). A recent study by Serdar (2017), drawing on boundary work theories, analyses the strategies that are used by the Laz group of Black Sea Turkey, and stresses the importance of Laz-Kurd relations on the Laz identity. Studies like these all contribute to our understanding of the construction of different ethnic groups, yet further studies are also needed to enhance how *both* sides of ethnic interactions are affected by everyday practices.

Another route to further research is through the field of Diaspora studies and transnationalism. This research explored the role that locality plays in the manifestation of Kurdishness, and for this reason, it collected data from five different field sites from two different parts of Turkey. If "diasporas form when populations disperse from their homeland to foreign lands" (Soysal 2000, 2–3), then is it possible to consider Kurds living in the Western part of Turkey as "internal diasporas" (O'Connor 2015)? This research already illustrated some forms of Kurdishness constructed by the "internal diaspora," Kurds from the Western cities of Turkey. To extend this question, how does living in different nation-states play a role in shaping the boundaries of diasporic communities? Is there a difference in the ways Kurdishness is formed across the borders of different nation-states? How do individuals living in different nation-states imagine themselves as members of the same "imagined community" (Anderson 1983)? Or, to rephrase it by referring to the boundary-making approach, how do individuals see themselves as members of the same ethnic category (shaping the boundaries of Kurdishness) across the borders of different nation-states?

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One of the discussions within the literature on transnationalism focuses on the concept of "duality," and questions if immigrants do indeed lead dual lives in their host societies (Portes 1997, 812). That is, there is an argument stating that through political, social, and economic networks, migrants could be both "here and there" (Vertovec 2001, 575). The issue with this argument is two-fold: firstly, it presumes that immigrants experience a sense of belonging to their homeland (Ghorashi 2004, 329) and secondly, it takes the issue of belonging through a territorial approach. Kurdish Diasporas have been the focus of comparative studies within the literature: there have been studies analyzing the processes of integration for Kurdish refugees within the UK and Finland (Wahlbeck 1999); comparing the activisms of Kurdish immigrants in Germany and Sweden, and stating that the Kurdish immigrants in Sweden are more politicized than the ones in Germany (van Bruinessen 1998); analyzing the politics of transnationalism within Turks and Kurds in Germany (Østergaard-Nielsen 2003). However, the dynamic aspect of how the second-generation Kurdish immigrants experience their feelings of belonging is still under-researched. The second-generation immigrants present an interesting case as they are "increasingly part of the global" and "in many ways, bypassing the national or traditional" (Soysal 2000, 11). So, how do they shape the boundaries of their ethnic category? Guided by these issues, further studies on the second-generation immigrants about how they experience their feelings of belonging should further enhance our understanding of transnationalist and dynamic lives of immigrants.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The initial "questions of curiosity" that this research started with have been discussed throughout this book. However, it is beyond the intentions and the scope of this book to unpack other contextual variables that play a significant role in Kurdishness. This book, by emphasizing forms of Kurdishness that are customized and unique to each individual, suggests that it would be highly likely to explore other variables significant for Kurdishness that are unique to each context. Therefore, as a concluding sentence, it should be emphasized that this book should be considered a part of a bigger project on the construction of different ethnic forms.

NOTES

1. It should be noted here that Fox and Miller-Idriss' discussion revolves around the concept of "nation" and "nationhood," whereas throughout this book the term "ethnicity" has been used. With regards to Kurdishness in Turkey, whether it is a "nation" or "ethnicity" is not really significant for the purposes of this discussion as Kurdishness develops, this book argues, beyond the aspirations for the nation-state.

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Therefore, the discussions of both "everyday nationalism" and "everyday ethnicity" (Brubaker, et al., 2006) are related for the purposes of this discussion.

2. Saraçoğlu conducted his field study in the Western city of Izmir.

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Appendix

List of the Respondents

No	*Pseudonym*	*Locality*	*Occupation*
1	Mahsun	Istanbul	Journalist
2	Halil	Istanbul	Journalist
3	Muhammed	Istanbul	Journalist
4	Emel	Ayvalık	Teacher
5	Kenan	Ayvalık	Construction worker
6	Rezine	Ayvalık	Teacher
7	Reyhan	Ayvalık	Teacher
8	Arzu	Ayvalık	Teacher
9	Arif	Ayvalık	Construction worker
10	Emir	Ayvalık	Teacher
11	Osman	Ayvalık	Construction worker
12	Kadir	Mardin	Professor
13	Ahmet	Mardin	Student
14	Mehmet	Mardin	Student
15	Hasan	Mardin	Teacher
16	Umut	Mardin	Teacher
17	İlhan	Diyarbakır	Teacher
18	Ayşe	Diyarbakır	Public sector
19	Ümit	Diyarbakır	Public sector
20	Süleyman	Diyarbakır	Teacher
21	Zeynep	Derik	Student
22	Meryem	Derik	Student
23	Abdurrahman	Derik	Business owner
24	Dilan	Derik	Teacher
25	Ali	Derik	Teacher
26	Murat	Derik	Teacher
27	Abdullah	Derik	Teacher

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No	*Pseudonym*	*Locality*	*Occupation*
28	Ramazan	Derik	Construction worker
29	Elif	Derik	NGO worker
30	Baran	Derik	Student
31	Selahattin	Derik	Teacher
32	Burak	Ayvalık	Student
33	Rıza	Derik	Teacher

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