Joost Jongerden

Crafting Space, Making People: The Spatial Design of Nation in Modern Turkey

Joost Jongerden

Crafting Space, Making People: The Spatial Design of Nation in Modern Turkey

Introduction

1   This article is concerned with the contemporary expression of a particular form of nation-building and identity politics, namely the molding of state-society relations and Turkishness through spatial means. Two cases will be discussed, the first focusing on plans for the reconstruction of physical space, in particular the design of villages and rural settlement patterns, the second on the attachment of values and meaning given to space by means of naming practices, in particular the naming and renaming of settlements and public spaces in urban environments. While the first case has an emphasis on the construction of physical space, the second focuses mainly on discursive space. The ultimate aim of these spatial practices, it will be argued, is the construction of a material and discursive environment contributing to the engineering of lived experience, expressed in the 1930s by the architect Abdullah Ziya in terms of the nationalist need to construct villages in such a way that their inhabitants 'talk, dress and live like Turks' (Ziya 1933).[1]

2   Spatial politics have received considerable attention in Turkish and Kurdish studies, though mainly in the form of a treatment of resettlement politics (which includes population exchanges). Karpat and Ari have argued that resettlement gaveAnatolia its Turkish imprint (Karpat 1985; Ari 1995), while Keyder advanced the argument that resettlement contributed to a 'nationalization' or 'turkification' of the petty bourgeoisie (Keyder 1979-1980). Beşikçi focused on the flip side to this, regarding the employment of spatial politics in Turkey not so much as a means of nation building but of nation destroying; in this case, the Kurdish nation (Beşikçi 1991a; 1991b). In all these studies, however, space was only a 'nominal participant', their primary focus being on nationhood and its construction/destruction.

3   This study engages with the debate on the engineering of a Turkish nation-state, but from a specifically spatial perspective. It does not question how Turkish nationalists and state institutions have attempted to engineer administration and design culture through the development of new spaces, so much as inquire into the kinds of space they have desired. This approach therefore refers to the work of Kerem Öktem, who, also focusing on the Turkish context, has directed attention to what he names the 'material and discursive appropriation of space' – defined as the annihilation of 'the Other' from spatial representation by means of a geographical *re*production, primarily through the tactic of *re*naming and *re*construction, especially of urban space (Öktem 2005, 2009). Houston (2004), too, engages with this theme, calling it the 'animation' of cities in Turkey as Kemalist, and referring also to Kurdish strategies to counteract their erasure from public space.

4   Also focusing on the urban environment, Bozdoğan (2001) and Nalbentoğlu (1997) have looked at spatial construction from the perspective of 'architectural culture'. Bozdoğan shows how architecture became an expression of power for the new regime during the establishment of the republic. Although mainly concerned with the types of buildings constructed in cities during this period, Bozdoğan also discusses village architecture as a spatial component of Kemalist ideology, with the design of new villages as intended to contribute to a revolution in lifestyle, e.g. the turning of peasants into Turks (Bozdögan 2001: 97-105), a theme with which I also have engaged (Jongerden 2007).

5   Developing the literature on the material and discursive production of rural and urban space in Turkey, this article investigates the two cases mentioned specifically in order to consider

the spatiality of the Turkish state's Kurdish policies. It will examine both state attempts to construct environments thought to be conducive to Turkification and also counterstrategies of Kurdish actors, particularly villagers and local municipalities.

I. Centrality of Space

6   Social space is a complex category. It may be understood as either literal or metaphorical. First, there is the literal dimension of space, that which is materially constituted. A paradigmatic example of social space in the physical dimension would be the design of settlements and settlement structures, i.e. the construction and arrangement of the built environment. Second, there is the metaphorical dimension of space, that which is constituted by the discursive. A paradigmatic example of social space in the abstract dimension is the attachment of values to space through naming strategies, i.e. the enculturalization of the world we live in.

7   Nowadays, the concept of socially produced or constructed space appears in publications with little apparent need for justification or explanation (Unwin 2000: 12). It was not so long ago that the word 'space' had a geometrical meaning (Lefebvre 1991: 1) or was conceptualized as a residual of time (Massey 2005: 18) – but strong arguments were made for a mode of thinking that brought spatiality, and the production of space, to the center of social theory (Soja 1989) and social scientists rapidly adopted the idea of space as socially produced (Unwin 2000: 12). This idea of a socially produced space may be summarized in three propositions (Massey 2005: 9-12). First, space is the product of social practices, constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimate tininess of the local. Second, space is the sphere of the possibility of multiple trajectories: the story of the world cannot be told merely as the story of those in power. Third, space is always under construction (and therefore there is no 'end of space'): when new (social and political) relations are established and new 'connections' made, space itself is transformed.

8   In this contribution, the analysis of space as embedded in social practices (proposition 1) and being continuously under construction (proposition 3) are discussed in two different cases related to Kurdish policies in Turkey. The first case involves regional development plans and practices aimed at a transformation of the countryside into an instance of the nation, a homogenous and ubiquitous representation throughout the territory as everywhere the same, from west to east and north to south. The second case discusses plans and practices for naming and renaming, from the regional to the village and street levels, as a method of attaching national values to public space. Thus, while discussing the production of space at different levels of scale, the first case will take the physical production of space as a point of entry and the second case will focus on the discursive production of space. Moreover, employing the idea of 'multiple trajectories' (proposition 2) will draw attention to the conflicting spatial trajectories of Turkish state institutions –with each other, with Kurdish villagers and municipalities, and with the national-state program(s).

II. The Social Production of 'Physical' Turkish Space and Counterstrategies

9   The settlement issue in Turkey has been perceived by Turkish nationalists primarily as a problem with the existing rural settlement structure, a structure regarded as a barrier against modernization and Turkification (the two were intimately intertwined). Two aspects of this rural settlement structure were considered to be problematic. First, there was the high number of rural settlements. Statistics vary, due to counting problems and varying counting models, but the number of villages was generally calculated at around 35,000 and the number of hamlets at 30,000 to 50,000.[2] The second problem was inaccessibility: the state could not easily reach a large number of the rural settlements, recorded statistically as a high level of dispersion. This ranged – with the caveat on counting – from one settlement per nine square

kilometers in the Marmara region near Istanbul to one per 77 square kilometers in Hakkari in the Kurdish southeast (Tütengil 1975).

10   A redesign of the countryside was regarded as of crucial importance for the engineering of a Turkish culture and consolidation of the nation-state (Bozdoğan 2001; Jongerden 2007). In the early decades of the republic this redesign of the countryside had been referred to as 'internal colonization'. Architects developing new model villages were seen as 'cultural missionaries', 'civilizing' and 'converting' the population into Turks. These ambitions and attempts, this civilizing mission with its connotation of Turkification, were later afforded the more neutral term of 'modernization' (Ziya 1933; Köymen 1939a; Barkan 1948; Bozdoğan 2001). The following section will briefly review this history, roughly covering the period 1930-2000.

Modernization, Turkification and the redesign of rural space

11   The principle dynamic of the republic was modernization and Turkification. It was in this context that Prime Minister Şükrü Kaya concluded in 1937 that 'the principal shortcoming of our villages is that they are dispersed and small. It is evident that civilization (. . .) does not go to these small places' (Özefe 2001a: 24). A quarter of a century later, Mustafa Ok, then member of parliament for the Republican People's Party, the CHP, published an essay on the idea of concentrating the rural population into large settlements in which he proposed to abolish all hamlets and reduce the number of villages from 40,000 traditional villages scattered around the countryside to some 6,000-10,000 modern villages, established along main roads (Ok 1962). And again, almost 40 years after that, social scientist and CHP vice-president Oğuz Oyan laid the foundation for a master-plan for the Kurdish southeast, in which he wrote: 'Apart from the social and economic problems, the fact of evacuated villages in East and Southeast Anatolia has created new opportunities and dynamics for the formation of new standards that can accomplish a new rural settlement pattern; for the transition from dispersed and unsuitable settlement units towards settlements units of sustainable size and potentials' (Oyan 2001: 7).

12   Three commentaries are highlighted here in which the redesign of (parts of) the countryside was propelled to a high position on the political agenda. Şükrü Kaya made his statement in the midst of a lively discussion within the peasantist current[3] of the Kemalist movement (Karaömerlioğlu 2006) about the design of new villages that would guide and direct their inhabitants to a 'Turkish' lifestyle (Ziya 1933). Mustafa Ok's polemic on the abolition and reduction of rural communities set the agenda for rural resettlement as a political program and eventuated in various plans to cluster villages. Oğuz Oyan conception of a master plan for the southeast of Turkey involved the reconstruction of a region which had been subject to village evacuation and widespread destruction by the military in the course of the war between the state and insurgents of the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK). Taken together, these three commentaries mark a seventy-odd year period in which a redesign of the countryside was politically valued as a national priority, with the ultimate aim being to bring the rural population within the realm of a centralized administration and its cultural mission of modernization, culturally equated with Turkification, or, becoming Turkish.

13   In Turkey during the 1930s, at the time when PM Şükrü Kaya made his statement, there was considerable debate on the development of a new type of village. Prominent names in this debate were Turkish nationalists and self-appointed architects like Abdullah Ziya, Kazım Dirik[4], Burhan Arif and Şükrü Çankaya. For them, the term 'nation-building' was more than a figure of speech: they truly believed that the new environments they constructed really could turn villagers into Turks (Bozdoğan 2001). These were to be disciplinary environments (Nalbantoğlu 1997), infusing peasants with a nationalist consciousness (Bozdoğan 2001: 105). The various village plans that emerged from this 'design for nation' had in common the application of geometry. Their spaces were isotropic, corresponding perfectly to the ideal of the nation, which conceptualizes its 'members' as essentially the same.

14   The uniform application of particular elements in the design of new villages becoming prevalent at that time had to make these settlements into instances of the nation-state, each village a microcosm of the national cosmos. A main street would run to Republican Square with a statue of Atatürk in the middle emphasizing his centrality in the new social order,[5] while at the head of the square there would be a People's House [*Halk Evi*], the (CHP) party building[6] designed to serve both as a school for the dissemination of the ideals of the Kemalist revolution and as the location for the local administrative headquarters. The centrality and integration of these cultural and political institutions of the state –and the manifest absence of a mosque– reveals clearly the conception of social relations that the radical secular Kemalist elite of the 1930s aimed to realize in the public domain. With space represented as isotropic and materially associated with homologies and seriality, *e.g.* reproducible products (Poovey 1995: 29), the most important product became the Turkish man (and woman).

15   Although the village issue received considerable attention in the mid-1930s, the tide was turning towards the end of the decade. The writer Yakup Kadri complained about the faltering of the Kemalist political project, arguing that fashion exhibitions interested the ruling elite more than the crucial problems of the country (Karaömerlioglu 1998). Others, such as Nusret Kemal Köymen, a sociologist at the vanguard of the peasantist movement in Turkey, worried about opinions circulating within the Kemalist elite that it was better not to bother about the fate of the rural population, as that might raise expectations which could not be fulfilled and consequently create hostility against the government (Köymen 1939b). Indeed, the departure of Köymen for the United States in order to continue his studies in rural sociology, when his life's work had been devoted to the development of a new rural space for Turkey, was symptomatic of the loss of forward momentum for the movement aiming at a redesigning the countryside (Jongerden 2007: 196).

16   The issue of rural redesign was left, but not abandoned. Mustafa Ok's proposal for the abolition of hamlets and small villages and the resettlement of their inhabitants in larger settlements was taken seriously. Already in 1963, just a year after Ok's sweeping statement, the costs had been calculated for the resettlement of the inhabitants of all villages and hamlets into 10,000 settlement units of 10,000 houses each. This turned out to be equivalent to 120 billion US dollars (Geray 1999), an incredible amount far exceeding the financial capabilities of the state.[7] The concern in Ankara with the state of the countryside at this time was, however, recognized with the establishment of a Ministry of Village Affairs, in 1964.

17   A decade and a half later, three years after the military coup of 1980 –but still under the prime ministership of retired admiral Bülent Ulusu, who had been appointed by junta-leader Kenan Evren– the now Ministry of Village Affairs and Cooperatives drafted a Model Village Project [*Örnek Köy Projesi*] in which the costs were calculated for the abolition of hamlets only and the establishment of their populations in villages. These costs were estimated at 15.6 billion USD (Korkut 1987: 2-3).[8] Another calculation was made in 1987, according to which the abolition of 52,000 hamlets and the concentration of their inhabitants into 10,400 villages would require about 20 billion USD, not including the resources needed to create a new framework of economic activities for the resettled population (Korkut 1987: 3).

18   Somewhat similarly, in 1993 it was claimed that the concentration of the population –into small cities of up to 100,000 people and medium sized cities of between 100,000 and 1,000,000 people– was vital in order to fight the PKK's 'social fire of anarchy and disorder' that weakened the 'power and authority of the state in the Southeast' (Akın 1993: 39). Using a medical metaphor, it was argued that the problem in the region should not be regarded as a cancer to be cut away, but instead as a sick organ to be nursed back to health for the benefit of the 'national functional structure'. The small rural settlements were the cancer cells spread throughout the national body, and the remedy proposed the development of small and medium sized cities, to be called 'attraction centers' [*cazibe merkezleri*] (Akın 1993: 39-49).

19   Though calculations were made for the abolishment and resettlement of the rural population, and returned to the political agenda occasionally, the main approach to the redesign of the countryside in the period 1970-2000 became administrative clustering. Basically, the idea behind the establishment of such clusters was to identify rural settlements that could be equipped with the necessary means to perform central functions for rural settlements in the immediate vicinity. These clusters would be given formal administrative status, responsibilities and competences and have authority over the rural settlements within their borders. Clustering did not entail a concentration of the population, but a concentration of services (Doganay 1993).

20   Such a concentration of services would relieve the state of the burden of having to establish services in every single settlement, as described by Mustafa Ok, and avoided the need for an expensive and complicated resettlement operation (Günaydin 2001; Güven 1974; Güven 1977; Tütengil 1975). The most important services envisaged were cultural (education) and administrative (local administration and cadastre). It was assumed that, over time, these clusters would attract migration and develop into towns and that, as a consequence, the ability of the authorities to supervise and control the countryside would improve. It was thought also that the integration of rural settlements into the national grid would produce a shared socio-cultural framework (including a common language and cultural values), and would be accompanied by the assimilation of 'subcultures' into the 'national culture' (Korkut 1987; Tütengil 1975; Doganay 1993) – this being primarily a euphemism for turning Kurds into Turks.

21   Divided along party political lines of division, three approaches to clustering emerged during the 1960s and 1970s: the center-village [*merkez-köy*] approach, a form of clustering described above, and the village-town [*köy-kent*] and agricultural-town [*tarım-kent*] approaches, which aimed also at the development of rural-industries within these clusters. Advocates of the center-village approach were to be found in the conservative Justice Party [*Adalet Partisi*], while proponents of the village-town and agricultural-town approaches were to be found in the CHP and the ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (MHP). Attempts to implement center-village and village-town approaches were made at the times when their advocates came to power in the 1970s, but abandoned again in the carousel of government change during this period.

22   The most serious attempt to redesign the countryside on the basis of a clustering system was made with the employment of the center-village model for the reconstruction of the Kurdish southeast at the beginning of the new millennium, during the period of government of Bülent Ecevit's Democratic Socialist Party (DSP). In 2001, a so-called master plan for return was announced, the East and Southeast Anatolia Return to Village and Rehabilitation Project Sub-Regional Development Plan [*Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi Köye Dönü ve Rehabilitasyon Projesi AltBölge Gelişme Planı*] –henceforth the Village Return and Rehabilitation DevelopmentPlan. In the plan it was acknowledged that the evacuation of villages and the displacement of people in the (south)east – approximately 3,000 rural settlements had been evacuated and destroyed, and an estimated 1-3 million people displaced –had inflicted much suffering, but that it ought also to be considered an opportunity for the creation of something new. Therefore, a plan for reconstructing the region should be concerned not merely with 'return' (of villagers to their homelands), but also with the creation of the conditions in which the 'forced migrants' could become more productive, both for themselves and for 'their country'. Employing the traditional analysis of the countryside settlement issue (too many small, thinly dispersed settlements), the evacuation was regarded as an opportunity for the development of a new structure that was more 'rational' and 'vital':

     'Apart from the social and economic problems, the event of evacuated villages in East and Southeast Anatolia has created new opportunities and dynamics for the formation of new

standards that can accomplish a new rural settlement pattern; for the transition from dispersed and unsuitable settlement units towards settlements units of sustainable size and potentials' (Oyan *et al.* 2001a: 1).[9]

23   The plan introduced two working-concepts: the sub-region [*alt-bölge*] and center-village [*merkez-köy*]. The concept of a *sub-region* was defined as a cluster of settlements distinguished from other settlements by economic, cultural, administrative and/or social characteristics. Supposed affinity and coherence between peoples and villages were used as characteristics to 'border' sub-regions. The center-village was defined as the settlement within a sub-region, which, by virtue of its characteristics of size, location, and infrastructure, could be turned into a junction or hub for the other settlements, and administratively developed into an intermediate entity between the district town and the small villages and hamlets. At the same time as improving efficiency, it was thought that such a development would bring modernity (Turkishness) to the countryside.

24   The Village Return and Rehabilitation Development Plan proposed a pilot scheme consisting of 12 projects, one per province, each project being a sub-region and consisting of a center-village with its dependent villages and hamlets, varying in number between 6 and 42. In addition to the 12 center-villages, 77 villages and 105 hamlets were planned, 194 settlements in total. Implementation of the pilots failed, however, for two reasons. First, the plan, to be executed by the Regional Development Administration of the Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP-BKI), met serious opposition from other state institutions in the region, who preferred a spatial trajectory of urbanization. Secondly, it was not warmly welcomed by the displaced villagers, who wanted above all else just to go back home to their own villages.

25   Regarding state institutional opposition, the (Ankara appointed) state governors in the region had made it clear that they approached the issue of a redesign of the region from a security rather than a reconstruction perspective, even as the master-plan was being drafted. These governors had suggested the destroyed and evacuated rural settlements be classified into two types: those settlements which, mainly for reasons of security, were not deemed appropriate for reconstruction, i.e. those which had been emptied in the effort to win the war against the PKK and in order not to lose gains made needed to stay that way; and there were those settlements that *were* deemed appropriate for reconstruction because of the feasibility of turning them into centers for the spatial concentration of populations, appropriate for supervision and control.

26   The military, for their part, did not favor the principle of either village return or creation, being of the opinion that settlement in urban centers would create better opportunities for supervision. One former commander, for example, of the Artillery Battalion of the 61st Internal Security Brigade, based in Van, was plainly negative about a cluster-pilot in Özalp-Dorutay, concluding that these kinds of development projects were expensive but ineffective, since they did not initiate social-cultural change in the area and had not brought the population closer to the state –indeed, he added, the people there were 'adverse' [*tepkisel*] to the state, as evidenced by their majority vote in the 2002 elections for DEHAP, the main Kurdish party at the time (Arisoy 2002: 97–9).

27   Regarding the people themselves, the villagers who had been forced to leave their homes and (often) seen them destroyed were no more receptive to the approach developed in the master plan. Though clustering was the key-concept, it was clear from the proposed pilots that abolishment of settlements and relocation was expected to take place, and they rejected this. In the context of research underlying the master-plan, a survey of 1,097 evacuated people from 297 selected villages was undertaken in which revealed around 90 percent of respondents indicated a desire to return home, to the settlements from which they had been evacuated,[10] with even more, 98 percent, rejecting the proposal that they be resettled in a settlement other than their own (Oyan *et al.* 2001a: xx).

28   As was acknowledged by those who drafted the plan, settlements are not places for a random housing of individuals and family units, but the spatial expressions of kinship. For its inhabitants, place is not an arbitrary location in an abstract grid, which can be changed at will: through generations, people come to feel attached to a particular environment, which becomes part of family, community or tribal history. Also, concentration of the population could run up against economic difficulties. The economy in the southeast is agriculture-based and peasants are inclined to establish their houses on or near their land. A concentration of the population implies the separation of farmers from their land, with negative affects for their livelihoods.

29   In the end, the design of rural space in accordance to the master plan did not take place. When the AKP came to power with the 2002 elections, it withdrew support for the Village Return and Rehabilitation Development Plan and announced its intention to come up with a new approach, which never materialized. The clustering approach and its modernizing mission thus hit the rocks even before implementation of the pilot scheme, and with no alternative at hand. As a result, the present situation basically involves the concurrent operation of two diametrically opposed spatial strategies. One is that of the governors and the military, who prefer to have the population in urban centers or larger rural settlements which are easy to control. Put bluntly, rather than cede rural territory, the prevailing preference has been to empty it. The other is that of the displaced villagers who return by their own means to the villages from which they were evicted. The counter-strategy of returnees is just to go back, meeting and trying to deal with official opposition, lack of support, and other obstacles as they present themselves.[11]

III. The Social Production of a 'Discursive' Turkish Space, and Counterstrategies

30   The ambition of the various – sometimes contradictory, often contentious – ideas and approaches of state-institutions and Turkish nationalists for the design of physical space was to plan environments that could 'civilize' or 'modernize' the countryside and develop its citizenship, understood as converting its inhabitants into Turks. Another attempted conversion process – increasingly challenged in the southeast – has been the naming and renaming of physical space.

31   Naming and renaming is never 'innocent': attaching names to places weaves values and meaning into the 'geographic fabric of everyday life' (Alderman 2002). Name variants such as *Yerushalayim* [Hebrew] / *al-Quds* [Arab] and St. Petersburg (monarchist) / Leningrad (Marxist) are associated with different repositories of values, and are not simply interchangeable. Names are not fixed entities, of course: as symbols, fluid (or at least viscous) carriers of meaning, they also are subject to historical processes and undergo changes of reference and the shifting dynamics of politicized interpretation. The renaming of Leningrad into St. Petersburg rehabilitates a tsarist name, and is meant to express both the failure and annihilation of Soviet communism, while '*Yerushalayim*' references the Israeli claim to the city and '*al-Quds*' the Palestinian. When names are associated with practices of erasure and identity politics, name change may provoke powerful emotions and reactions (Rose-Redwood 2008: 433). And the dynamic rejection, replacement and introduction of names do not just represent change, they effect it –or, in line with the rather ritualistic aspect of this, by the deed is change performed. The process of (re)naming, that is, in itself enacts the transformation which it symbolizes.

32   Taking a spatial perspective (going from large scale to small), this activity started in Turkey with the initial assumption of the ethnically-based, European name for the new nation. Next, the county was asocially dehistoricized by its division into seven regions by the 1st Geographical Congress according to natural features (in 1941), with old names from the Ottoman provincial [*eyalet*/*vilayet*] system like 'Eastern Rumelia', 'Pontus' and 'Kurdistan' discarded for the 'Marmara Region', the 'Black Sea Region' and the 'Southeast Region' (Erinç

& Tunçdilek 1952). Then, centralized administration of the 63 new provinces [*il*] was established (in 1926) through the naming of the provinces according to their central cities [*merkez*], with all the uniformity of a nationalist blank canvass (the city of Van became the provincial capital of Van, for Erzerum it was Erzerum, etc). Finally, the names of settlements were changed. Some were minor adjustments made to conform with Turkish rules of vocalization –'Erzerum' to 'Erzurum', for example, 'Konieh' to 'Konya' (Law 1999)– while others involved linguistic purification as an aspect of ethnic cleansing or cultural domination, like the replacement of the Greek 'Smyrna' for the Turkish 'Izmir' in 1922 and the Kurdish 'Dersim' for the Turkish 'Tunceli' in 1936.[12]

33   This republican renaming of settlements can be understood as a discursive erasure of the 'Other'; spatially, it is the incorporation of places associated with 'the Other' into Turkish space, or, the conversion of space from one form to another. The spatial forms being converted by name changes may operate across several, interconnecting discourses, a single instance enacting moves like traditional-to-modern, local-to-national, Christian-to-Muslim, etc. From the Kemalist perspective, however, all these moves can be regarded as going in the direction of Turkishness. This political act of giving names –particularly names that are commemorative of Turkish nationalism, nationalists and the republican struggle– is thus the infusion of an idea of Turkishness into public space (the country, its settlements, etc). The following section discusses this production of a discursive Turkish space, through naming, defined as assigning a new name, renaming, defined as assigning a new name and discarding the old (replacing one name with another), and back-naming, defined as a particular form of renaming involving the assignment or rehabilitation of a previous name (as in the case of St. Petersburg). It also pays considerable attention to the 'return of the Other', *i.e.* the attempts of municipalities under the control of a pro-Kurdish party to discursively re-establish Kurdishness in this public sphere.
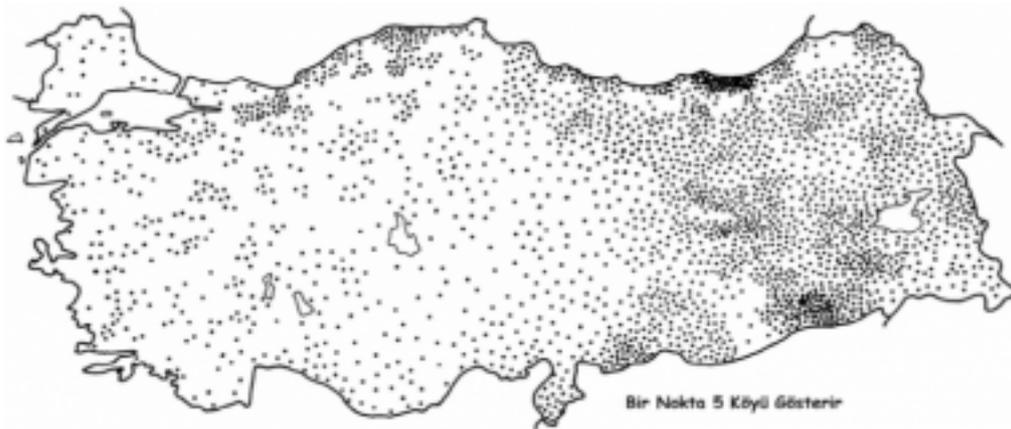
Renaming and back-naming settlements

34   On the 20th of April, 2008, Hasip Kaplan, Şırnak[13] MP for the pro-Kurdish DTP, proposed an amendment to Law 5442. Law 5442 stipulates that 'Village names that are not Turkish and give rise to confusion are to be changed in the shortest possible time by the Interior Ministry after receiving the opinion of the Provincial Permanent Committee'.[14] In Kaplan's amendment it is suggested that name change adopt the objective of respecting 'the rich history originating in the foundation of the Republic, protecting cultural plurality, and maintaining diversity'.[15] Law 5442 had originally been used to legitimate the change of names of thousands of settlements with non-Turkish (Kurdish, Armenian, Greek, etc.) names to Turkish. To date, Kaplan's amendment continues to be under consideration, but if it is accepted the old names of these rural settlements could be rehabilitated.

35   Back-naming alone would not result from Kaplan's amendment since it proposes a strategy of double naming, with the ejected names of 'villages, districts, provinces and geographical locations, along with [other] settlement areas' to be employed alongside the 'new names' rather than replace them. In practice this is already the case. Although the 'old' names have long been expunged from standard maps and only the 'new' names given in official publications (the state's representation of space), in daily life (the public's mental mapping, or folk representation of space) a large proportion of the name changes did not have very much impact. Locals in the (south)east region especially have continued to call their own and surrounding villages by the old names. Indeed, government institutions with local functions to execute, such as the office of the *Kaymakam* [district administrator], use village/hamlet information files which already include both the new and the old names. Kaplan's proposal openly challenged the 'one state, one nation, one language' canon of Kemalism, and represented an overt attempt by the DTP parliamentary fraction to change an official policy based on the annihilation of 'the Other' from public space.

36   The importance of Kaplan's amendment needs to be seen against the background of systematic efforts by state institutions to remove Kurdish, Armenian, Greek and other non-Turkish village names and replace them with Turkish ones. Efforts by state institutions to efface 'the Other' from the public sphere by means of renaming strategies have a history which goes back to the nationalist government of the (Young Turk) Committee of Union and Progress at the end of empire and the first years of the republican regime. Waves of place name changing also occurred –and were initiated– under so-called liberal governments, notably the period of the Democrat Party of Menderes in the 1950s and the Motherland Party of Özal in the 1980s (each voted into power following a period of culturally repressive politics, the former after the one-party era, the latter after a spell of military dictatorship). Indeed, it was in 1957, during the fourth of Menderes' five terms of office spanning the decade of the 1950s, that the 'Special Commission for the Change of Names' [*Ad Değiştirme Ihtisas Komisyonu*]was established, under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior.

37   The Commission brought together representatives of the General Command of the Armed Forces, the Defense Ministry, the Education Ministry, the Faculty of Letters, History and Geography of the University of Ankara and the Turkish Language Foundation, and embarked on the task of the Turkification of place names. By 1968, approximately 30 percent of the names of the 45,000 villages that had been counted in Turkey were changed. In 1973, the Commission commenced work on larger scale maps, changing the names listed in the topographical records of another 2,000-odd villages and nearly 13,000 of the almost 40,000 hamlets (again, around 30% of the total). Most of the name changes occurred in the eastern third of the country, the traditional homeland for most of Turkey's non-Turkish (Kurdish, Armenian, Laz, etc.) populations. This is shown visually by the density of black spots in Figure 1. In the province of Mardin, for example, 91 percent of the place names were changed, while 72 percent were changed in Trabzon (Öktem 2005: 185-221).

Figure 1 : Distribution of villages of which the name has been changed: one point is equal to five villages

(source: Tunçel 2000: 30)

38   In total, the names of some 85,000 rural settlements (45,000 villages + 40,000 hamlets) were reviewed during the period 1957-78, and a final count of just over 25,000 (12,884 hamlets + 12,211 villages) changed (Tunçel 2000: 28). The numbers for changed village names (i.e. excluding hamlets) per province are given in Figure 2. Listed in ascending order, it immediately strikes the eye that most of the name changes occurred in the provinces of the Kurdish Southeastern region, followed by the Eastern and eastern Black Sea regions.

39   The process of village renaming was put on the agenda again by the military junta after the 1980 coup, and yet more changes enacted by the reconvened Commission in 1984 following the election victory of Özal's Motherland Party, even though up to 90 percent of place names in some of the southeastern provinces had already been changed by that time (for an

extensive discussion, see Öktem 2005: 185-221). This latest review resulted in the change of an additional 280 place names (Tunçel 2000).

Figure 2. Number of villages of which the name was changed per province, in ascending order

Province	No. of villages	Province	No. of villages	Province	No. of villages
Tekirdağ	19	Yozgat	90	Bitlis	236
Edirne	20	Kütahya	93	Konya	236
Istanbul	21	Amasya	99	Tokat	245
Nevşehir	24	Artvin	101	Bingöl	247
Kocaeli	26	Çorum	103	Tunceli	273
Bilecik	32	Maraş	105	Gaziantep	279
Kırklareli	35	Rize	105	Kastamonu	295
Kirşehir	39	Balıkesir	110	Muş	297
Isparta	46	Içel	112	Gümüşhane	343
Uşak	47	Hatay	117	Erzincan	366
Niğde	48	Sakarya	117	Ağrı	374
Burdur	49	Hakkâri	128	Elazığ	383
Çanakkale	53	Ordu	134	Urfa	389
Denizli	53	Bursa	136	Trabzon	390
Sinop	59	Zonguldak	156	Siirt	392
Izmir	68	Giresun	167	Kars	398
Aydın	69	Antalya	168	Sivas	406
Eskişehir	70	Adana	169	Van	415
Muğla	70	Bolu	182	Diyarbakır	555
Çankiri	76	Samsun	185	Mardin	647
Manisa	83	Ankara	193	Erzurum	653
Kayseri	86	Malatya	217		
Afyon	88	Adiyaman	224	**Total**	**12,211**

(source: Tunçel 2000: 28)

40   Some of the new names that were introduced as replacements expressed a sense of religious, political or ethnic identity reflecting the nature of the political regime. In Diyarbakır for example, the name 'İslamköy', which obviously evokes a religious identity, had in fact been attached to a settlement in an area formerly inhabited by Christians (Armenians); the name of the model village 'Cumhuriyet' (administratively dependent on the province's central district) expresses republicanism; and 'Türkmen' (in the district of Çüngüs) arouses the idea of an ethnic identity in a region mainly inhabited by Kurds. However, such place names expressing the nature of the regime or the alleged identity of its people seem to have been exceptions. In most of the cases, the new names did not have any pronounced religious, political, or ethnic significance, and nor were they translations from the original, but appear instead to have

been often arbitrary, effectively de-historicized references to a general category from nature, evoking, if anything, an unspecified sense of timelessness.[16]

Return of the Other: (re)naming in the urban environment

41   In recent years the naming issue has arisen again at the level of street and park names. The protagonists of this are the DTP-run municipalities. These local offices are advocating Kurdish-oriented name changes, in ideological opposition to the central authority of state and thus resulting in a clash within the state, between its institutions, with municipalities set against governors.[17] In January 2001, the High Court in Ankara [*Danıştay*] decided upon a case brought by Ali Parlak, governor of the southeastern province of Batman (see figure 3). A few months previously, in June 2000, the mayor of Batman, Abdullah Akın, elected on behalf of the pro-Kurdish party HADEP (predecessor to the DTP), had changed a reported 200 street names in the city.[18] One of the names that was removed by Akın was 'Aydın Arslan', former 'super-governor' of the state of emergency region and in this position responsible for the reign of repression related to the 'state of exception' in the region.[19] Another street name changed was 'Mehmet Akif Ersoy', the poet (1873-1936) who wrote the words of the Turkish national anthem. The names proposed to take the place of these important figures in the political and ideological canon of the central state were 'Botan' and 'Garzan', the Kurdish names of now primarily Kurdish provincial or regional demarcations, and which compete with Turkish provincial demarcations.

42   As well as this type of transferred back-naming (reviving names from the past but attaching them to different entities), the Batman municipality introduced names associated with anti-colonialism. Kurdish political parties in Turkey, including, but not only the PKK, have defined their endeavor as an anti-colonial struggle, so attaching the names of leaders of anti-colonial movements across the world to items in the public arena is intended to symbolize their alignment with this history and thereby evoke the legitimacy of their struggle. The employment of the name 'Zilan' falls into this category, notwithstanding its ambivalence in meaning (Zilan is the name of both a celebrated PKK militant and a tribe based north-northeast of Batman).

43   Clearly, the (re)naming strategy of DTP mayors not only directly counteracts past efforts to efface Kurdishness from rural and urban political geography, but also tries to reintroduce a Kurdish politico-cultural sensitivity into the public setting of everyday life. Similarly, reference to multiculturalism, another approach to name selection in this Kurdish (re)naming project, operates as an expression of the pluralism the Kurdish politicians say they adhere to. Exemplifying this, the name 'Laleş' is associated with the Yezidi, a non-Muslim Kurdish group, a substantial number of which used to live in the Beşiri region, east of Batman, before many migrated out of the region in the 1980s.

Figure 3: Street names proposed by the municipality of Batman

Proposed Name	Reference
Mahatma Gandhi	Anti-colonial and non-violent activist, resisting British dominance over India
Ömer Muhtar	Leader of the anti-colonial movement in Libya, resisting Italian dominance
Halabja	A Kurdish town in northern Iraq, subject in 1988 to a poison gas attack by state forces under Saddam Hussein
Yılmaz Güney	Kurdish socialist and director of the film *Yol* [The Way], Cannes prize-winner but banned by the state for its depiction of 'Kurdistan' and the Turkish presence there
Mehmet Sincar	Kurdish member of parliament, killed by unknown assailants in Batman in 1993
Ahmed Arif	Kurd and poet, writer of the poem 33 Bullets (see below)

Zilan	The name of a tribe in the area, but also the code name of a PKK militant who engaged in a suicidal action killing several members of the Turkish armed forces in Tunceli/Dersim on June 30th, 1996
Elmedina	The Kurdish name of a village flooded in 1927
Laleş	A village in Northern Iraq, home to the holiest site in the Yezidi religion
Botan	The Kurdish name of a region covering parts of provinces of Şırnak, Hakkari, Van, Siirt, Eruh and into Northern Iraq
Garzan	Kurdish name of a region covering parts of Batman, Siirt, Van, Hizan and Gevaş
İnsan Hakları	Turkish for 'human rights'
Özgürlük	Turkish for 'freedom'

44   Taken as a whole, at an aggregated level, the names selected by the Batman municipality give expression to resistance to repression, anti-colonial struggle, Kurdishness, and (cultural) diversity.The Batman case was, in fact, part of a concerted effort on the part of the DTP to employ its control over the local state-apparatus in a large part of the southeast in order to change the 'city text', to reclaim urban space in the region from decades of Kemalism. In other words, the DTP naming strategy is at heart a political struggle over the meaning attached to public space. In the end, the political sensitivity of these names in the Turkish context was made manifest by the High Court ruling from Ankara, which demanded the cancellation of the names listed above on the grounds that they encouraged rebellion against the state (*e.g.* 'Ömer Muhtar', 'Mahatma Gandhi', 'Halabja', 'Botan' and 'Garzan'), separatism (*e.g.* 'Yılmaz Güney'), or belong to a 'foreign' language and would open the doors to cultural erosion (*e.g.* 'Laleş') (Zaman, 6 October 2000; Ozgur Politika, 23 January 2001; Watts 2006).[20]

45   Another example of name-controversies comes from Diyarbakır, the main city in the Kurdish southeast. After his election in 2004, the HADEP mayor of Diyarbakır, Osman Baydemir, removed a statue Atatürk from one of the city's main squares along with one of the signs to the city proclaiming 'Ne Mutlu Türküm Diyene' (Watts 2006). The phrase translates as "How Happy is He Who Can Say He is a Turk," and is one of the most widely used and well-known aphorisms quoted from Mustafa Kemal, and an emblematic slogan of republican mythology.[21] Then, in late 2005, a statue was erected in Diyarbakır commemorating Musa Anter, one of the country's most prominent Kurdish authors and activists, killed as part of a wave of 'unknownassailant murders' when visiting the city in 1992. The removal of a statue of the republic's founding father along with the slogan and the later erection of a statue of the slain Kurdish intellectual clearly evidences efforts to create a new 'geography of memory' (Alderman 1996, 2002). In fact, it is rather puzzling that this silent rebellion did not evoke any reaction from the side of the authorities.

46   The DTP in Diyarbakır city also proposed new street and park names, a list which repays a closer look, because, as in Batman, the naming reveals the values and ideas the DTP desires to inscribe in the public sphere. In several neighborhoods, the party proposed the renaming of street names, but original names also were proposed for new streets and parks in the rapidly expanding city.[22] Several controversial names were included in the proposal, which I have identified from a list of proposed names (undated, but most likely from 2007) and cross-checked with people working at the municipality (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Street names proposed by the municipality of Diyarbakir

Proposed Name	Reference
1 Gulan	Kurdish for the 'First of May', International Workers Day

8 Mart	Women's day
Barış	Turkish for 'peace'
Aşiti	Kurdish for 'peace'
Ekim	Turkish for 'October'
33 Kurşun Parkı	Turkish for '33 Bullets Park', commemorating the extrajudicial killing of Kurdish villagers in 1943 on the order of a Turkish general and hero of the war of independence
Çarçıra Parkı	Named after Chahar-cheragh Square in the city of Mahabad (in today's Iran) where Qazi Muhammed announced the (Russian-backed) independent state of the republic of Kurdistan, (and where he and several of his comrades were executed a year later, when Iranian authority was restored)
Azad	Kurdish for 'freedom'
Özgür	Turkish for 'free'
Jiyanan Azad	Kurdish for 'free life'
Kardeşlık	Turkish for 'brotherhood'
Ciwan	Kurdish for 'youth'
Amid	Old Kurdish name for Diyarbakır
Mem û Zîn	A long poem written in 1706/7 by Ahmet Hani in which he called forcefully for Kurdish self-rule and which was adopted by later generations as a national epic
Zembilfroş	Kurdish epic poem
Ahmed Xani (Hane)	Kurdish poet
Ahmed Arif	Kurdish poet
Musa Anter	Kurdish writer and activist
Ayşe Nur Zarakoğlu	Turkish writer and activist
Zeynel Durmuş	A young Kurdish woman who was going to participate in the celebrations for World Peace Day 2001, but died after falling from the sixth floor of a building while being chased by police
Şemse Allak	The name of a Kurdish woman who became victim of a honor-killing, stoned to death by her family for having an extramarital relationship

47   In response to references to Turkish nationalism and nationalists in the naming of items in urban spaces, the Diyarbakır municipality sought to commemorate events and individuals related to the Kurdish struggle against an oppressive Turkish state. Through commemorative naming a past is brought into the present and versions of history into a setting of everyday life (Azaryahu 1996; Alderman 2002; Rose-Redwoord 2008). '*33 Kurşun Parkı*' [33 Bullets Park] is an example of this, commemorating the extrajudicial killing of Kurdish villagers in 1943 on the order of a Turkish general and hero of the war of independence – and as such, symbolizing the ruthless treatment of Kurds and incorporating the repression inflicted in the social space of everyday life.[23] Another instance of commemorative symbolism, '*Çarçıra Parkı*' was named after a square in the city of Mahabad (in today's Iran) where Qazi Muhammed announced the independent state of the republic of Kurdistan, known as the Republic of Mahabad, on January 22, 1946, and where he and several of his comrades were executed a year later, when Iranian authority was restored. The name '*Çarçıra Parkı*' thus commemorates the struggle for an independent state, not only as a dream or an ideal, but as a near reality and the product of struggle. The references to the Kurdish epic *Zembilfroş* and most certainly the Kurdish love story *Mem û Zîn* should be interpreted as adding cultural depth, commemorating the history and thus affirming the existence of a Kurdish nation. Ahmed Xani (or Hane) adapted the

popular romance *Mem û Zîn* into a long poem of the same name written in 1706/7, in which he called forcefully for Kurdish self-rule, and which was adopted by later generations as a national epic (Bruinessen 1999; Hassanpour 2008).

48   The municipality also weaves into the city geography a leftist or emancipatory discourse. References are made to the struggle of workers ('1st of May') and women ('8th of March'), both of these days being established by the Paris-based, socialist Second International. The name 'October' should be understood as a reference to the Russian October Revolution of 1917. References are also made to freedom, brotherhood, and peace. In addition to International Women's Day, the gender issue is referred to by 'Şemse Allak', the name of a Kurdish woman who became victim of a honor-killing, stoned to death by her family for having an extramarital relationship. By giving her name to a park, the DTP municipality emphasizes again its stance against honor-killings.

49   Not all the proposed names have been accepted by the governorship (see Figure 5). In a dossier sent to the Administrative Court [*İdare Mahkemesi*], the vice-governor of Diyarbakır stated that the name '33 Bullets' makes the state an object of accusation. The governorship wanted the banning of the names 'Zembilfroş', 'Jiyana Azad', 'Aşiti', 'Ciwan', 'Yek Gulan' and 'Zeynel Durmuş' as symbols of a forbidden terrorist organization (*i.e.* the PKK). In relation to the requested ban on the name 'Ciwan', the governorship added to its declaration that Article 222 in the Turkish Penal Code mentioned a prison sentence of 2-6 months for acts contrary to rules regarding the Turkish alphabet.[24]

Figure 5: Accepted, rejected and revised street and park names proposed by the DTP municipality[25]

Accepted names	Rejected names	Revised names
Amidiye Street	Jiyanan Azad Park	
Barış Park	Zembilfroş Park	
Mem u Zin Park	Aşiti Park	
8 Mart Kadın Park	33 Kurşun Park	
Ahmed Arif Park	Çarçıra Park	
Özgür Park	Yek Gulan	
Ahmede Hane Street	Zeynel Durmuş	Ciwan Park (accepted as Civan Park)
Ahmet Arif Street	1 Gulan Park	SeyrangehPark(acceptedas
Ayşe Nur Zarakolu Street	Şilan	Seyrangah Park)
Musa Anter Park	Roşna	
Şemse Allak Park	Rojda	
Ekim Park	Nefel	
Gülistan	Daraşin	
	Beybun	
	Berfin	

50   Article 222 integrates (penalties for) the original 1928 Turkish Letters Law and 1925 Hat Law, which had been aimed at the incumbent theocratic establishment, the clerics [*ulema*], banning the Arabic-based script of Ottoman and the turban/fez as part of the revolutionary founding process of the secular republic. The 1928 Law (No.1353, *Türk Harflerinin Kabul ve Tatbiki Hakkında Kanun*) detailed a Turkish alphabet consisting of 29 Latinate letters and specifically stipulated 'old Arabic letters' as no longer acceptable.[26] In practice, this law also discriminated against Kurdish, which employs the non-Turkish (unlisted) letters 'q', 'x' and 'w' –although, as Euro MP and co-chairman of the Turkey-EU Joint Parliamentary Commission Joost Langendijk notes, 'However legally surprising it may be to see this article used against communication in Kurdish, the practice fits with the article's history and purpose.'[27] Indeed, the article *was* invoked in other cases during the same period (2007), against a union leader in Kilis, for example, for using the (non-Turkish) letter 'w' in newspaper articles;[28] and against Abdullah Demirtaş, DTP mayor of Sur (a district in Diyarbakır province), for giving

multilingual information on local service provision, for which he was forced out of office (at the time of writing, Demirtaş was still facing charges under Article 222).[29]

51   Many of the names proposed for Diyarbakır by its municipality were rejected by the governor and the Higher Court, and an appeal against this decision by the municipality was pending at the time of writing, to be handled by the State Council [*Danistay*], in Ankara. Two names, in fact, have been accepted after revision, as shown (Figure 5): 'Seyrangeh' has been turkified into 'Seyrangah', and the 'w' in 'Ciwan' has been changed to a 'v'. Other names have been accepted, such as that of Musa Anter, the Kurdish writer and intellectual killed on September 20, 1992 by a Turkish death squad. Thus in spite of opposition from state authorities, small steps are being taken to include 'another' city text. Turkish nationalist arrangements are challenged and new a discursive social space developed, which is not simply parochial Kurdish nationalist, but articulated to a universal discourse of rights and emancipation.

Conclusions

52   This article has discussed the state's concern with space, both physical and discursive, to redesign and rename space in order to mold social space (or rather, the state's concern to mold social space at the material level, both physically and discursively). The primary dynamic of this concern has been nation building, the perceived need to turn the inhabitants of the territory into Turks and convert the sovereign space into an expression of Turkishness. Emphasis has been placed on the lesser known attempts to redesign rural space, and the recent Kurdish response to counter the hegemonic domination of urban space, again through the machinery of state, but at a more local level.

53   Following Massey (2005), space is specified as the product of social practices, constituted through interactions, and also as subject to continual revision, always under construction. This article has paid considerable attention to the constructivist argument, discussing efforts to re-design and re-name. The existing rural settlement structure was regarded by Turkish nationalists as a barrier to the civilizing project of the republic, so spaces had to be crafted that would facilitate the production of a Turkish population, environments which would in of themselves develop citizenship. These spaces were attributed the agency to convert their inhabitants into Turks.

54   Only the state could achieve this, through centralized design and planning – or at least, no other initiating organization was imagined. The nationalist ideology of state reflexively saw itself as the natural and inevitable mediator for development of the nation. The spaces envisioned, rural settlements and rural settlement patterns (networks), were not only attributed an assimilating agency, they also had to actually express Turkishness. And so the work of renaming those rural settlement considered to have non-Turkish names was done, and redone again and again, with a thorough precision.

55   Nevertheless, in spite of all this industry, the results achieved were less than desired. An important conclusion we may draw, therefore, is that an engineering of space –at least, a top-down, centralized engineering of rural space– is easier said than done. Attempts to craft such assimilating spaces physically through model village/rural development schemes were prone to institutional conflicts, both diachronic and synchronic. Different approaches replaced one another at the design planning and pilot project stages, with progress hampered by changes in government and the conflicting agendas of different state institutions backing alternative and competing ideas, especially in respect of managing the rural environment in the evacuated parts in the southeast. Furthermore, the spatial practices of everyday life happened to conflict with the plans designed by state institutions (as people have returned to their villages in the southeast, irrespective of official obstruction).

56   Although the spatial design project for the countryside was a national concern, in its modernizing, developmental aspect, it was also, in its ethno-nationalist aspect, particularly

focused on the eastern part of the country, and especially the Kurdish southeast. The (re)classification of Kurds as 'mountain Turks' was one strategy employed in this endeavor; another was the renaming of villages and hamlets. Again, however, we are led to conclude that the extent to which this was –and has been– effective in everyday life in the Kurdish region is extremely questionable. People in the region continued to refer to their neighboring settlements by their old –often Kurdish, Armenian or Assyrian– names, because these names were part of their mental universe.

57   In southeast Turkey today, we are witnessing an overt struggle over space, or, to put it differently, a political struggle in the form of spatial strategies. The battle for spatial sovereignty of the physical space in southeast Turkey may be less bloody these days than in the recent past, but it is no less vital to the major actors, the state and the people. The nationalist spatial strategy has become contested, countryside and cities in the southeast the social battlegrounds for control of the discursive dimension of physical space. The attachment to streets and parks of names referring to or commemorative of Kurdish regions, events and people in the Kurdish pantheon of contemporary culture and cultural history, political struggle and universal ideals, as well as the proposed back-naming to old Kurdish (and Armenian and Assyrian) names, along with the actions of people returning to their evacuated settlements, combine to constitute both a political statement and spatial exposure.

Bibliography

Akın, Cihangir (1993) 'Güneydogu Anadolu bölgesinde kalkınma: Güvenlik ve istihdamın temini için cazibe merkezi modeli.' *Kooperatifçilik*:. Eylül-Aralık, pp. 39-49.

Alderman, Derek H. (1996) 'Creating a New geography of Memory in the South: (Re)naming of streets in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.', *Southeastern Geographer*, 36 (1), pp. 51-69.

Alderman, Derek H. (2002) 'Street Names as Memorial Arenas: the reputational politics of commemorating Martin Luther King Jr. in a Georgia County', *Historical Geography* 30, pp. 99-120.

Arı, Kemal (1995) *Büyük Mübadele Türkiye'ye Zorunlu Göç 1923–1925*, Istanbul, Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayınları.

Arisoy, A. Zafer (2002) *Van Bölgesi Örnekleri Göre OHAL sonras. 'Köye Dönüş' Olgusunun Sosyolojik Degerlendirmesi,* MSc thesis, *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü*, Van, 100ncu Yıl Üniversitesi.

Azaryahu, M. (1996) 'The power of commemorative street names', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 14, pp. 311–330.

Beşikçi, İsmail (1991a) *Kürtlerin Mecburi İskan*, Ankara, Yurt Yayınlar.

Beşikçi, İsmail (1991b) *Devletlerarası Sömürge Kürdistan*, Istanbul, Alan Yayınlar.

Bozdogan, Sibel (2001) *Modernism and Nation Building, Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic*. Seattle and London, University of Washington Press.

Bruinessen, Martin van (1994) 'Genocide in Kurdistan? The suppression of the Dersim rebellion in Turkey (1937-38) and the chemical war against the Iraqi Kurds (1988)', in George J. Andreopoulos (ed), *Conceptual and Historical Dimensions of Genocide*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press.

Casier, M., (forthcoming), 'Turkey's Kurds and the quest for recognition. Transnational politics and the EU-Turkey accession negotiations', in Casier, M. (ed.) *Ethnicities.*

Dirik, Doğan K (2008) *Atatürk'ün İzinde Vali Paşa Kazım Dirik, Bandırma Vapuru'ndan Halkın Kalbine*, Istanbul, Gürer Yayınları.

Doğanay, Filiz (1993) *Merkez Köyler*. Ankara, Devlet Planlama Teskilati.

DPT (1982) *Türkiye'de Yerlesme Merkezlerinin Kademelenmesi; Ülke Yerlesme Merkezleri Sistemi, Cilt 1-2*, Ankara, DPT Yayını.

Erinç, Sirri and Necdet Tunçdilek (1952) 'The Agricultural regions of Turkey', *Geographical Review* 42 (2) (Apr.), pp. 179-203.

Elbruz, Layla Sayar (1974) 'The Changing Order of Socio-Economic Life', in Peter Benedict, Erol Tümertekin and Fatma Mansur (eds.), *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives*, Leiden, Brill.

Foucault, Michel (2006) 'Governmentality', in Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta (eds.), *The Anthropology of the State; A Reader*, Malden, Oxford, Victoria, Blackwell Publishing.

Foucault, Michel (2007) *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France*, New York, Palgrave-MacMillan.

Geray, Cevat (1977) 'Türkiye'de kirsal yerleşme düzeni ve köykent yaklasımı', *Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Fakultesi Dergisi* 29, pp. 45-67.

Günaydin, Gökhan (2001) 'Köy-Kentler: Başbakanın 30 Yıllık Rüyası. Kamu Yönetimi Dünyas', *Dergisi* 2.

Güven, Sami (1974) 'Köykent Sorunu', *Amme İdaresi Dergisi* 7, pp. 115-145.

Güven, Sami (1977) 'The "village-town approach"', *Turkish Public Administration Annual 4*, pp.111-156.

Hassanpour, Amir (2008) 'Ferment and Fetters in the Study of Kurdish Nationalism', *Monthly Review*, 24-11-2008.

Houston, Christopher (2005) 'Provocations of the built environment: animating cities in Turkey as Kemalist', Political Geography 24 (1), pp. 101-119.

Jongerden, Joost (2007) *The Settlement Issue in Turkey and the Kurds*, Leiden & Boston, Brill.

Karaömerlioglu, M. Asim (1998) 'The Village Institutes Experience in Turkey.' *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 25 (1), pp. 47-73.

— .2007. *Orada Bir Koy Var Uzakta*. Istanbul, Iletişim Yayınları.

Karpat, Kemal H. (1985) *Ottoman Populations 1830–1914, Demographic and Social Characteristics*. Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press.

Keyder, Çaglar (1979–1980) *Cumhuriyetin ilk yıllarında Türk tüccarinin milli'leşmesi*, ODTÜ Gelişme Dergisi, pp. 239–255.

Korkut, Selver (1987) *Toplulaştırılmış Köy Uygulamas. (Dagınık yerleşim birimlerinin toplulaştırılmas.)*, Unpublished note, 15-01-1987. Ankara: DPT.

Köymen, Nusret Kemal (1934) 'Soy Düzeni', *Ülkü.* 4, pp. 302-303.

Köymen, Nusret Kemal (1935) 'Köycülük Programına Giriş', *Ülkü* 5 (26) (Nisan 1935), pp.132-141.

Köymen, Nusret Kemal (1937) *Village, the Unit of Societal Organization*. Unpublished master's thesis. Madison, University of Wisconsin.

Köymen, Nusret Kemal(1939a) ' Düşünceler', *Ülkü* (13) (Mart), p. 29.

Köymen, Nusret Kemal (1939b) *Türk Köyünü Yükseltme Çareleri*, Ankara, Çankaya Matbaası.

Law, Gwillim (1999) *Administrative Divisions of Countries*, North Carolina, McFarland & Company.

Lefebvre, Henry (1991) *The Production of Space*. Malden, Oxford, Victoria, Blackwell Publishing.

Massey, Doreen (2005) *For Space*, Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Sage.

Nalbantoglu, Gülsüm Baydar (1997) 'Silent Interruptions, Urban Encounters with RuralTurkey', in *Rethinking Modernity and National Identity in Turkey*, Bozdogan, Sibel andKasaba, Reşat (eds.), Seattle, London, University of Washington Press.

Ok, Mustafa (1962) 'Köylerin kuruluş konusu' (Newpaper article), *Cumhuriyet*. Istanbul, İlhan Selçuk.

Oyan, Oğuz; Ersoy, Melih; Keskinok, H. Çağatay; Şengül, H. Tarık; Yalman, Galip; Sönmez, Remzi; Kurttaş, Erdal (eds.). (2001a) *Doğu ve Güneydoğu Anadolu Bölgesi Köye Dönüş ve Rehabilitasyon Projesi Alt Bölge Gelişme Planı*. 12 Volumes. Ankara: *GAP Bölge Kalkınma İdaresi (BKI) ve Türk Sosyal Bilimler Derneği*.

Öktem, Kerem (2005) *Reconstructing Geographies of Nationalism: Nation, Space and Discourse in Twentieth Century Turkey*, Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oxford, School of Geography.

Öktem, Kerem (2009) 'The Nation's Imprint: Demographic Engineering and the Change of Toponymes in Republican Turkey', *European Journal of Turkish Studies*, Thematic Issue 7 (7).

Özefe, Ibrahim (2001) 'Köy Idarelerinin Sorunlari ve Yeniden Yapilanmasi', in *Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü*, Konya, Selçuk Üniversitesi.

Poovey, Mary (1995) *Making a Social Body: British Cultural Formation, 1830-1864*, Chicago & London, University of Chicago Press.

Rose-Redwood (2008) 'From Number to Name: symbolic capital, places of memory and the politics of street renaming in New York City', *Social and Cultural Geography* 9 (4).

Scott, James C. (1998) *Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press.

Soja, Edward (1989) *Post-Modern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, London, Verso.

Tunçel, Harun (2000) *Türkiye'de İsmi Değistirilen Köyler*, in *Firat Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi* 10 (2), pp. 23-34.

Tütengil, Cavit Orhan (1975) *Kırsal Türkiye'nin Yapısı Sorunlar*, Ankara, Gerçek Yayınevi.

Unwin, Tim (2000) 'A Waste of Space? Towards a Critique of the Social Production of Space', in *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *New Series* 25 (1) pp. 11-29.

Watts, Nicole (2006) 'Activists in office: Pro-Kurdish contentious politics in Turkey', in *Ethnopolitics*, 5 (2), pp. 125-144.

Ziya, Abdullah (1933) 'Köy Mimarısı',*Ülkü* 9, pp. 37-41.

Notes

1 All translations from Turkish by the author.

2 A village was defined by the Village Act of 1924 as a settlement with its 'people living compactly or dispersed, who jointly own a mosque, a school, a pasture, a summer pasture and part of a forest reserved for fire-wood form a village, together with their vineyards, gardens, and fields' and having a population of between 150 and 2,000 inhabitants. The Village Act defined hamlets purely in terms of size, as settlements with a population of less than 150. The State Institute of Statistics, however, has used an upper limit of 250 inhabitants for a village, and the Minister of Internal affairs determined the minimum population of a village at 500 people (Jongerden 2007: 1267).

3 A key element in the ideology of peasantism was the idea that rural life and the peasantry constituted the stronghold of national values and traditions. The most ardent supporters of the peasantist movement even thought that the nation *was* the peasantry and made rural society the sole focus of their interest (Jongerden 2007: 208).

4 Kazım Dirik, a former member of the Young Turk Committee of Union and Progress and general in the war of liberation, is said to have developed some 200 model villages in the period he was inspector-general in Thrace (1935-1941). He was the creator of the 'ideal republican village', a model rural community through which inhabitants could be integrated into the ongoing revolution (Dirik 2008: 291).

5 Underlining the continuing centrality of Atatürk: photographs, drawings and paintings of the flag and of Ataturk are to be found adorning every school textbook, in every place of work, at the entrance of all official buildings from the local tax office to the police headquarters; there are even shrines, an Atatürk corner [*Atatürk köşesi*] composed of the flag, a picture of the man, a copy of his words and those of the national anthem required by law in every place of education. Supplementing this, at the discursive level, use of the name 'Ataturk' is again ubiquitous, used like a beacon of excellence for the majority of main streets, major sports stadia, top schools, state cultural centers (museums, concert halls), etc throughout the land.

6 It was not until after World War II that a multi-party system really developed in Turkey, prior to which it was, with two brief exceptions, a single-party state, led by Ataturk's People's Party, the CHP.

7 Meanwhile, in 1963, a five-year plan was introduced by the newly established State Planning Organization (DTP) which included an unimplemented program and thus ultimately unsuccessful attempt at rural community development, despite some good results at the pilot project stage –one of the obstacles being that of the financing of schemes nationwide (Elbruz 1974: 144-154).

8 To lower the costs for the state, it was proposed that the inhabitants of the hamlets contribute 2 million TL (7,000 USD) per household toward their compulsory relocation into a modern settlement,

even though it was acknowledged that low-income villagers could not be expected to find such a large sum of money.

9 All translations from Turkish by the author.

10 This is not indicate that over 90 percent of the displaced population actually would return–obviously, expressing a desire and really doing it are not the same thing.

11 These include the refusal to permit return, favored treatment to village guards, intimidation by security forces and village guards, non-provision of amenities, failed infrastructure and wasted lands.

12 The 1936 change of name of the Kurdish city Dersim [Silver Gate] to the Turkish Tunçeli [Bronze Fist] immediately following a bloody uprising there and 'genocidal' response (Bruinessen 2000) seems to have been very clearly intended to send a message asserting the authority of the state over its territory.

13 One of the provinces in the southeast.

14 Provincial Administration Law No. 5442, adopted on June 10, 1949, Article 2D (Amended in 1959 by Law 7267).

15 http://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d23/2/2-0233.pdf

16 For example, in the Çınar district in Diyarbakır the villages were given new names such as 'Gümüştaş' [Silver Stone], 'Ağaçsever' [Tree Lover], 'Akçomak' [White Cudgel] and 'Ovabağ' [Plains Orchard] the Kurdish village Kuştiyan [Killed People] was renamed 'Soğansuyu' [Onion Water]; Kanipanık [Flat Spring] was renamed 'Yarımkaş' [Half Eyebrow]; and Bımbareki [Holy] was renamed 'Halkapinar' [Circular Spring].

17 Each province has a governor, appointed from Ankara (by the Council of Ministers [the Cabinet], on approval from the president).

18 Interestingly, where once the Kurds had organized their fight for rights mainly from an illegal position, today they have entered representative bodies and do their fighting against the hegemonic nationalism from within the existing political system (even though they remain balanced on the fringes of the state).

19 The state of emergency region (OHAL) was created in 1983 and ended in 2002. Generally covering the southeastern region, its composition changed over time (see Jongerden 2007: 85).

20 Regarding the foreign language, it might be noted that the use of English language names also can sometimes be perceived as a cultural threat in Turkey, as elsewhere. In education, for example, there is a ministry [*Milli Eğittim Bakanlığı*] ruling to the effect that the officially registered company names of private educational establishments must be Turkish, even though many schools and universities operate under English language names. What is accepted in the public domain is still not sanctioned officially, the space taken not ceded.

21 Although it is standard to take Ataturk's words to refer to one who can say he is 'a Turk', an alternative translation would be to refer to one who can say he is 'Turkish', as the Turkish language does not distinguish between ethnicity and nationality in this case (both are expressed by the word '*Türk*' –thus the recent, controversial suggestion to introduce a Turkish word for nationality, '*Türkiyeli'*).

22 Most of the new names did not raise controversy, because they only concerned a renumbering. To give an example, in the Huzurevleri quarter of the Kayapinar district, a rapidly expanding neighborhood in the south of the city, 12th Street was renamed '1st Street', and 1st Street '2nd Street'. There are numerous, hundreds actually, of examples of such a re-numbering of street names.

23 General Mustafa Muğlalı ordered the execution of 33 villagers. Known as a hard-liner, war hero Muğlalı had previously been chairman of a special court, ordering death sentences for 36 people following anti-government riots in Izmir in 1930. The 33 villagers condemned in 1943 and shot at a remote spot near the border with Iran were members of the Milan tribe and family members of the suspects of a sheep theft, allegedly killed because of conflicts between the Kurdish tribe members and the Turkish military. On February 28, 2004 the Chiefs of Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces announced the renaming of a military base in Van-Ozalp, on the border with Iran, to the 'General Mustafa Muğlali Army Base' [*Orgeneral Mustafa Muğlalı Kışlası*] This led to furious reaction from human rights activists and Kurds, and the proposal for a '33 Bullets Park' is to be considered a counter-move to this.

24 Reported at http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/news/376773.asp.

25 'Street' and 'Park' are translations of the Turkish (suffixed) words that the municipality proposed ('*Caddesi*' and '*Parkı*'): i.e. although Kurdish words may have been suggested *in* (the content of) the new names, the linguistic rules applied *to* (structural forms *of*) the names were those of Turkish.

26 At http://www.idealhukuk.com

27 Reported at http://www.todayszaman.com/tz-web/detaylar.do?load=detay&link=115171

28 This notwithstanding the fact that the letter 'w' is used in Turkey, widely (*e.g.* 'showroom'), usually ('WC'), famously ('Show TV') and even officially ('www. […] .gov.com.tr').

29   Reported   at   http://bianet.org/english/minorities/103328-newroz-and-kawa-reason-for-imprisonment;   http://bianet.org/english/minorities/114726-state-wants-kurdish-speaking-employees-but-tries-kurdish-mayor. The Demirbaş' case was later taken up as one of the main rallying points of DTP diplomacy in the European institutions in 2006-7 (see Casier, forthcoming 2010). Permitting he three banned letters has recently been cited as an issue discussed between the government and military as part of the AKP's developing Kurdish/Democratic initiative [*açalım*] (reported by *Radikal* newspaper, 16.09.09).

References

Electronic reference
Joost Jongerden, « Crafting Space, Making People: The Spatial Design of Nation in Modern Turkey », *European Journal of Turkish Studies* [Online], 10 | 2009, Online since 31 décembre 2009. URL : http://ejts.revues.org/index4014.html

---

About the author

Joost Jongerden
Joost Jongerden is an assistant professor at the Social Sciences Group of the Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Email: joost.jongerden@wur.nl

---

Copyright

Abstract

Much has been written about identity politics in Turkey, mainly focusing on citizenship issues and analyses of state discourses. This article is concerned with a different dimension of identity-politics: the molding of society and identity through the construction of space. Based on a discussion of two cases, this contribution analyzes state attempts to craft 'assimilating spaces.' The first case discusses plans and activities to redesign the countryside in the 20th century. State institutions thought the principal shortcoming of rural Anatolia was the dispersed settlement structure and small size of the myriad rural settlements. In order to be able to establish the authority of the state in the countryside and develop a national body of people it was thought that a new rural settlement structure had to be developed, either by abolishing or clustering small rural settlements. The latest and most serious attempt to redesign the countryside was made in the war-affected Kurdish southeast at the beginning of the new millennium. However, this program encountered problems as a result of institutional disagreement and opposition from returnees. The second case discusses the issue of village- and street names and how through naming strategies a discursive national space was designed. Drawing on recent examples from the Kurdistan region in Turkey, this article show politics of assimilation were embedded in the state's discursive spatial practices, but also how these were resisted at the local level. Turkish nationalist discursive arrangements are challenged and a new discursive social space developed. Data for this article was obtained mainly through archival research, in particular the study of documents of state institutions, and field research.