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ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION HABITS: SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA
EXAMPLE


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**ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION HABITS: SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA
EXAMPLE
ELEKTRİK TÜKETİM ALIŞKANLIKLARI: GÜNEYDOĞU ANADOLU
ÖRNEĞİ**

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ABBREVIATIONS

- AKP:** Justice and Development Party/Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi
- ANAP:** Motherland Party/Anavatan Partisi
- BDP:** Peace and Democracy Party/Bariş ve Demokrasi Partisi
- CHP:** Republican People's Party/Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi
- DDKO:** Revolutionary Eastern Cultural Hearts/Devrimci Doğu Kùltür Ocakları
- DEDAŞ:** Dicle Electricity Distribution Company/Dicle Elektrik Dağıtım A.Ş
- DEP:** Democracy Party/Demokrasi Partisi
- DEHAP:** Democratic People's Party/ Demokratik Halk Partisi
- DSP:** Democratic Left Party/Demokratik Sol Parti
- DTP:** Democratic Society Party/Demokratik Toplum Partisi
- DP:** Democrat Party
- EMRA:** Republic of Turkey Energy Market Regulatory/Enerji Piyasası Düzenleme Kurumu
- ERNK:** National Liberation Front of Kurdistan/ Enîya Rizgarîya Neteweya Kurdistan
- HADEP:** People's Democracy Party/ Halkın Demokrasi Partisi
- HDP:** People's Democracy Party/ Halkların Demokrasi Partisi
- HEP:** People's Labor Party/Halkların Emek Partisi
- KCK:** Kurdistan Communities Union/ Koma Civakên Kurdistan
- MHP:** Nationalist Action Party/Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi
- OHAL:** State of Emergency/Olağanüstü Hal
- PKK:** Kurdistan Workers Party/ Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê
- PYD:** Democratic Union Party/ Partiya Yekîtiya Demokrat
- TEİAŞ:** Turkish Electricity Transmission Cooperation/Türkiye Elektrik İletim A.Ş
- TKSP:** Turkey Kurdistan Socialist Party/Türkiye Kürdistan Sosyalist Partisi
- TOKİ:** Housing Development Administration/Toplu Konut İdaresi
- SHP:** Social Democratic Populist Party/Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti
- YDGH:** Patriotic Revolutionary Youth Movement/Yurtsever Devrimci Gençlik Hareketi

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the entangled relationship between state, society and market by studying the networks emanated around the “illegal” electricity usage in Diyarbakır. Based on a field research conducted in the city, elusiveness of the boundary between the market and the state, specters of the state in the city and the potential of “illegal” electricity usage for opening up dissident realms are discussed. With a critical perspective towards the state theories that study the state either by looking at the bureaucratic practices or encounters of the individuals with the state officials, in this study, the reproduction of state power in the everyday life of the “illegal” electricity users in the city is discussed. Moreover, abandoning the binary thinking that puts resistance and power in a directly confrontational position is offered and accordingly the possibilities of resistance practices in the domains where state power is being constantly reproduced are explored.

ÖZET

Bu tez Diyarbakır şehrindeki kaçak elektrik kullanımı etrafında örölmüş ağıları merkeze alarak; devlet, toplum ve piyasa arasındaki karmaşık ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Şehirde yapılan saha çalışmasının bulgularına dayanarak, devlet ve piyasa arasındaki çizginin bulanıklığı, devletin şehirdeki hayaletleri, ve kaçak elektrik kullanımının açabileceğı muhalif alanlar tartışılmıştır. Devleti bürokratik uygulamalara veya bireylerin devlet çalışanları ile karşılaşmalarına bakarak anlamaya çalışan perspektiflere kritik yaklaşılmış, ve devlet fikrinin şehirdeki varlığı izlenerek, kaçak elektrik kullanıcılarının gündelik yaşantılarında devlet iktidarının nasıl üretildiğı anlaşılmaya çalışılmıştır. Ayrıca, direniş ve iktidarı birbirine zıt şekilde konumlandıran ikili düşünme eleştirilerek, devlet iktidarının üretildiğı alanlarda direnişin olanakları araştırılmıştır.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis offers an anthropological examination of the illegal electricity usage in Diyarbakır. Starting with the privatization of electricity sector, which created new fields of governance for state, undermined his “distinct” position from the market, and affected adversely the Kurdish regions (ecologically, economically, politically), and asking how state maintains its existence in the city, this study aims to discuss the entangled relation between state, society and market emanated around the network of illegal electricity usage.

After the forced migration of Kurdish villagers, who refused to be village guards, by the state during the war between Turkish security forces and the PKK in the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of people descended from the villages to settle in the city proper. They had no jobs and had very few household belongings when they arrived in Diyarbakır. Consequently, they began using electricity illegally for their basic needs, but over time, it became commonplace in the city slums as the people also began to use it beyond their needs. Until the privatization of DEDAŞ in 2013, state has been condoning the illegal electricity usage in the city. The company was privatized when the loss/illegal ratio (Kayıp/kaçak oranı) was 75%¹, while the average loss/illegal consumption rate of Turkey was 15,45%². This date became a turning point for illegal users because from that time onwards their illegal consumption placed under close surveillance by the company. Before the privatization of the company, the meters were very old and controllers working in the field had a quota of detecting two users a day. With the privatization of the company, digital meters were set into motion and frequency of the illegal electricity controls increased. For that reason, the summer of 2013 marked an important date in the lives of illegal electricity users, yet they remember these days not with the absence of the state but with the emergence of surveillance. Therefore, instead of

¹ DEDAŞ, Faaliyet Raporu, 2013, retrieved from:
<https://www.dedas.com.tr/content/fotosfiles/FaaliyetRaporu.pdf>

² EPDK, Elektrik Piyasası Gelişim Raporu 2013

regarding the state as withdrawn from the network of relations around the illegal electricity usage, I will ask does state necessarily need its institutions to maintain its existence? To answer this question, the changing role of the state during electricity generation and distribution processes will be traced, and the domains that the power of state is reproduced, even after unsubscribing from the government services will be discussed. I will argue that, with the formation of the discourse “illegal Kurds”, who use electricity without making payments, state turned the illegal electricity usage into a governance tool. By doing this, it strengthens the antagonistic relation between state and the Kurdish movement through criminalizing the Kurdish identity.

Besides the reproduction of state power with the dissemination of the discursive governance tools, throughout this thesis I will try to understand the everyday imaginations of state in Diyarbakır. Following Akhil Gupta’s theoretical line of argumentation (Gupta, 1995), I will argue that although there is an history of repression on Kurdish population living in Turkey since the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923, experiences of individuals with the state differ from encounter to encounter. This is because, while certain people like tribe leaders and businessmen, have been collaborating with the state, the others have been remaining at the margins of the state. Even within the two, there are multiple positions vis a vis the state. Therefore, the perceptions and imaginations of the state are unique for every individual. To understand the ghostly presence of state emanated through the network of relations around illegal electricity usage, I will make an anthropology of abstraction (Navaro, 2002) and discuss in which ways the state is imagined in the everyday life of Diyarbakır inhabitants.

To move a step further from the assumed dichotomous relationship between state/society, legal/illegal and power/resistance, I will also ask is formation of a state-free domain possible in state-led societies? Although it seems impossible to envisage state-free domains in an era, when state and market integrated that much, dissident realms can still be created. I will look for these realms of resistance that illegal electricity usage can offer and discuss how this action can function as a

resistance tool even when the motivation behind is not resisting the state. I will argue, under certain circumstances the realms of resistance overlap with the realms that the power of state maintains its afterlife. However, I will approach these zones with caution to prevent romanticizing the action and always keep in mind that illegal electricity usage is a paradoxical action that is inherently destructive because electricity production processes are destructive.

Following the theoretical framework that state theories in different social sciences literatures offer to us, I will try to answer the questions I proposed in this section throughout this thesis. With an anthropological approach to studying the state I will discuss the following: 1) blurred boundaries between the market and the state, 2) discursive governance tools of state, 3) everyday imaginations of state, 4) illegal electricity usage as a tool of resistance.

1.1 Theoretical Background

1.1.1 State, Society and Market

Discussions regarding state-society relations has been very popular in social sciences literature. In 1950s, the main approach towards the state was *systems theory* (Easton, 1953) that takes state as a political system with precise boundaries. After the systems theory, the new trend was *Bringing the State Back in* (Evans, Rueschemeyer and Skocpol, 1985) which is a state centered approach towards politics. This trend was called statist approach and takes the state as an autonomous entity from society.

Besides these approaches, starting with Foucault, the post-structuralist school argues that the distinction between state and society is illusory. For Foucault, with *governmentality techniques* and *technologies of power* every individual becomes both object and the subject of power, so it is impossible to distinguish the state and society anymore. He borrows Jeremy Bentham's concept *Panopticon* and claims that "The Panopticon, on the other hand, must be understood as a generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of everyday life of men." (Foucault, 1977: 205) and "It is a type of location of bodies

in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, of hierarchical organization, of disposition of centers and channels of power, of definition of instruments and modes of intervention of power, which can be implemented in hospitals, workshops, schools, prisons" (205). For Foucault, state is a mechanism of surveillance and the power functions via distribution of bodies to spaces.

In 1988, Philip Abrams published his canonical essay "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State" and offered us an alternative way of studying the state by abandoning it as an object of analysis and discussing the practices of social subordination that state hinders from our views. What he suggests is not leaving the state totally aside but to take the idea of it seriously without forgetting it being "the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is" (Abrams, 1988: 125). Because for him, mystifying the state, functions in a way that enables the legitimization of domination. Although his study offers a new perspective of studying the state, it fails to explain how other sources of power, which functions like state, such as market, reproduces the state "effect".

Timothy Mitchell, carries the argument of the Abrams a step further by claiming that it is not the state which is elusive but the boundary between the state and society, and to understand how state is represented as a coherent entity distinct from society, we should study the practices in which this distinction is constituted. He gives Aramco (Arabian American Oil Company) case, which made US citizens pay taxes to Saudi Arabian Monarchy due to Saudi Arabia's demand of raise for royalty paid to him by Aramco, as an example to illustrate the permeability of the line and significance of maintaining it for political purposes. Because instead of increasing the oil prices, Aramco met the money deficit by taking it from US citizens. For him the appearance of these two realms as distinct entities is for maintaining a certain social and economic order. With this specific example of Aramco, he perfectly demonstrates the ambivalent relation between the state and private organizations without rejecting the state altogether. By incorporating a Foucauldian framework with his own perspective, he suggests that the state should be examined as a powerful, metaphysical, structural effect "containing and giving

order and meaning to people's lives" (Mitchell, 1991: 85). Through approaching the state this way, "one can both acknowledge the power of the political arrangements that we call the state and at the same time account for their elusiveness." (95). In one of his later articles, he furthers his argument regarding the distinction between state/society and claims that the boundary is more elusive between state and economy. From a Marxist point of view, he argues that although state is perceived as an external organization it overlaps with the economy because capital and the state are the counterparts of "common process of abstraction" (Mitchell, 1999: 89).

Starting with a very similar argument with Mitchell, Sharma and Gupta discuss the crucialness of approaching the distinction between the state and society as an effect of certain forms of power, to be able to talk the non-discrete position of state from other institutional forms like civil society, economy etc. They attach particular importance to the cultural difference when studying state and argue that people's perceptions of state is shaped by their encounters. For them, "everyday statist encounter shape people's imaginations of what state is" (Sharma and Gupta, 2006: 18).

In an earlier text, Gupta studies the state in India ethnographically and looks at the two domains in which state is constructed constantly: everyday activities of local bureaucracies and discourse formation in public culture. He makes an analysis of "discourse of corruption" (Gupta, 1995) through following the lower level state official's practices and local newspapers published in English. He argues that "all constructions of state have to be situated with respect to the location of the speaker" and states the need of a non-Eurocentric approach to state, particularly in the societies where the boundaries of power and state are ambiguous. For him local encounters together with the mass media materialize the state in everyday life of individuals and studying them helps us to get a sense of "texture of relations" (378) between state and people as citizens, and to understand how the state is produced.

Looking for the shifting imaginations of state is among the primary aims of this thesis and these perspectives enable us to discuss certain dynamics of state,

society and market relations. However, they fall short in explaining how state is reproduced even when the mundane bureaucratic practices are missing. Because in Diyarbakır, even after the privatization of electricity transmission company DEDAŞ, state is being constantly imagined and reproduced through the network of relations, settled around illegal electricity usage. To better understand the spectral presence of state in the city, a discussion regarding the subjectivity of state is needed.

1.1.2 Subjectivity of State

With his essay *Maleficum: State Fetishism*, Michael Taussig inspired many scholars to discuss the spectral presence of state. He conceptualized this presence as the state fetishism (Taussig, 1992), and discuss “the cultural constitution of the modern state with a big S”. He argues that the big S of State is a fiction with the ability to fetishize state power by intriguing “a peculiar sacred and erotic attraction, even thralldom combined with disgust” among the subjects of state.

Following his lead, Yael Navaro discusses *fantasies for the state* to point out the subjectivity of the state. Rather than studying directly the state, she discusses the “political” by approaching it as a conceptual tool to understand how state power survives deconstruction. She asks, “why does state appear to be an insurmountable reality?” (Navaro, 2002) and focuses on its constant reproduction in everyday life of individuals rather than everyday activities of local state officials. For Yael, previous state theorists are wrong about disregarding the agency of people when studying their relations with state. She argues that what gives state an afterlife is the mundane cynicism and banal everyday rituals for the state. In her own words: “the state endures as an idea and reality because insignificant number of people normalize the idea of the state through their habits of everyday life because statesman and other people with power are successfully able to produce truth about the existence of state through their bureaucratic practices because the materiality - force, economy, bureaucracy- that has been functioning in the name of the symbol of state is still intact.”(178) For her, state is constantly reproduced because ordinary

people tend to live their lives as state is real. She criticizes all the previous approaches and argues that fantasies for the state gives the state an afterlife because of its maintenance as an object: "We fix, rebuild, and maintain the state through our real everyday practices. It is because the state remains as an object and we are still subjected to it that we resort to fantasy. Despite our consciousness about it as farce, the state as an object persists" (187). In this sense, from Navaro's point of view, even when state is absent on the surface, it continues to exist in a sense because of its affective capacity.

Begona Aretxaga starts her discussion by criticizing Abrams and Mitchell's arguments regarding the state being an effect of power, which will lose its magical power when unmasked. She offers another approach to state that is close to Navaro's position by pointing out the ghostly presence of state. She asks, "How state is imagined by the people who experience it, what its particular manifestations and forms of operation are, and what kind of subjectivity it comes to embody?" (Aretxaga, 2000: 44) To answer these questions she studies how state terror and excessive violence is framed mimetically through a confession letter written by two Basque police officers, hired as para-militias on the part of the state to fight with ERA. She makes a detailed reading of the confession letter, which exhibits the violence and transgression of state, and claims that with the narrative of this letter state finds itself a spectral presence in the political life of Basque country. In her own words, "state figures as a ghostly reality, a universe of surfaces, held together by fear, apprehension and anger, by kinds of excitement that make the bodies of young radical nationalists, like the body of the state, nervous bodies" (52). For her, state makes itself so real by triggering stories, and constituting itself as subject.

In another article, found almost in complete form by her friends and published after her death, she discusses how state maintains its crucial presence despite the transformations came with globalization and existence of non-governmental actors such as private corporations, guerilla groups and narcotraffickers. She examines the subjectivity of state and traces the *intimate spaces of state power* like fantasy, fetish and sensuality. Much the same as her

previous article, she argues that the discourse of terrorism haunts by generating uncertainty and fear in a bidirectional way both on the part of state officials and on the part of the “enemy” of state, and by blurring the boundary between fiction and reality. (Aretxaga, 2003)

In this thesis, I will discuss both the relation between market, state and society, and everyday imaginations of state. For that reason, I will combine the two theoretical traditions and discuss both the blurred boundaries of relations and subjectivity of state. Following Mitchell, I will argue that we need to be careful about the elusiveness of the boundary between state-society and the market when studying illegal electricity usage, yet I will add another dimension and discuss the subjectivity of the state because this perspective falls short in explaining how state power is reproduced when its relevant institutions are not existing anymore.

Therefore, with the help of the theoretical framework Yael Navaro offers, I will try to discuss the phantasmatic recovery of the state power, without totally rejecting its materiality.

However, to understand better the situated perceptions, imaginations, and reproductions of state in Diyarbakır, we first need to discuss the history of Turkish-Kurdish conflict in Turkey.

1.2 A Brief overview of Turkish-Kurdish Conflict in Turkey

During the dissolution period of Ottoman Empire, particularly after 1919 Armenian Genocide, Kurdish tribes and notables established alliances with CUP (Committee of Union and Progress) government, which later became the founders of Republic. (Bozarslan, 2008) In so much that, Mustafa Kemal promised the autonomy of Kurdish regions under 1921 constitution. However, with the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923, Kemalist government’s attitude towards Kurdish population has changed because Turkish nationalism became the official ideology of the Republic. After this rupture, particularly between 1924 and 1936, Kurdish revolts against the state accelerated. Among the uprisings, most prominent

ones were; Şeyh Said revolt in 1925, Ararat revolt in 1930 and the Dersim rebellion of 1936-38. (Bozarslan, 2008: 339)

On the part of state, the year 1934 serves as a cornerstone within this process because that was the date when the Settlement Act No.2510 was enacted and opened the way for the movement of populations in the direction of the state's will. In this law, populations living in Turkey were divided into three groups: Turkish speaking Turks, non-Turkish speaking Turks -actually Kurds- and non-Turkish speaking non-Turks -who are non-Muslim minorities- and three zones, are defined in the territory for the resettlement of these populations. *Zone I*, was the region mostly inhabited by Kurds and this law prohibited non-Turkish speaking Turks-Kurds- to possess more than 20% of this territory. This law was not only used as a tool for the repression of Kurdish insurrections and resettlement of insurgent populations but was used for a wider purpose of "*creating a homeland of the Turks.*" (Jongerden, 2007: 281) The Settlement Act opened the way for the forced migration of populations from territories they had inhabited for years. The first application of this law regarding Kurdish populations was in 1938, after the Dersim Rebellion- arose as a response to this law-. Nearly 40,000 Dersimlis were deported and massacred (White, 2000: 83).

Since the establishment of Republic, the trajectory of Kurdish issue can be summarized as, denial of a distinct Kurdish identity by the state and emergence of a radical challenge as a responsive act to state. (Bozarslan, 2008; Yeğen, 2011) With time, both the state's approach and Kurdish national movement have changed. Between 1938 and 1960, it was a silent period on the both sides. Particularly after 1950, when DP (Democrat Party) came to power, it adopted a more integrative policy towards Kurds and enabled a couple of Kurdish nationalist and religious figures to take seats in the parliament. (Bozarslan 2008: 343).

In the 1960s, with an increase in the level of education among Kurds, together with the limited freedoms offered by 1961 constitution, a new group of activists comprised of Kurdish intellectuals has emerged. (Güneş, 2012: 49) During the first half of these years, Kurdish political activism was being organized around

magazines and acting together with the leftist movements in Turkey. They were approaching the Kurdish issue from a perspective of causal understanding between “negligence of Kurds and Kurdish identity” and “regional underdevelopment”. (Güneş, 2012: 51) In 1967, at the Eastern Meetings, they declared their demands regarding East’s being a zone of deprivation and suppressed harshly by the state. In the event known as 49s incidence (49’lar olayı), 50 Kurdish activists were detained, and one was killed under detention. (Beşikçi, 1992)

Radicalization of the Kurdish movement took place after the massive repression of state on Kurdish movement during 1968s. (Bozarslan, 2008) From 1970s onwards, especially after 1971 coup, Kurdish political movement separated from the leftists and organized around the national liberation, socialism, and colonialism discourses. They approached Kemalist elites and the Kurdish feudal elites as its antagonistic other and offered a new Kurdish identity including phantasmatic dimensions to its body through marking the Median Empire as the Golden Age of Kurds, restoring the legend of Kawa and festival of Newroz (Güneş, 2012). They argued that the economic and political marginalization of the region is because of the colonization of lands of Kurdistan and feudal relations in the region and the only way to fight with them is violent resistance (87).

Until 1977, DDKO and TKSP -the main Kurdish left-wing groups who adopted colonialism discourse- were able to abstain from violence. They even participated in elections (Bozarslan, 2008: 348). However, in 1978, PKK was founded by Abdullah Öcalan, based on the similar ideas of colonialization of the lands of Kurdistan by four nation states namely: Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey, and offered the armed struggle as the only way to deal with both inside-feudal families who they name as collaborators of Turkish state- and outside oppressors - colonizers-. After 1980 coup, Kurdish political movement faced massive oppression from state. Kurdish language and giving Kurdish names to children were banned, and Kurdish names of the towns and villages turned into Turkish (Ergil, 2000). Many activists and leaders of political groups, including Öcalan escaped from Turkey. During these years with the hunger strikes- due to maltreatments and

tortures- and court cases/defenses held in Diyarbakır Prison by PKK supporters and with silencing other groups by exile or execution, PKK emerged as the dominant actor of Kurdish political movement.

With PKK's declaration of the start of guerilla insurgency against the state in 1984, the reciprocal repression of the insurgency process became a warlike situation between the two. In 1987, with the establishment of OHAL (Governorship of the Region under Emergency Rule), the state of emergency rule became permanent in the cities; Batman, Bingöl, Diyarbakır, Elazığ, Hakkari, Mardin, Siirt, Şırnak, Tunceli and Van. Due to the acceleration of state violence in the region during 1990s, PKK, particularly its formal political wing, became popular among the Kurdish population. With urban uprisings organized in Kurdish cities, the support of the people to PKK's national liberation cause was demonstrated. In 1991, the Law numbered 3713, known as Anti-terror legislation was enacted and Turkish-Kurdish conflict framed as a security concern and terrorism issue in the state discourse. Until Öcalan's capture in 1999, PKK's attacks and coercive state repression continued. Between these years, "an estimated 40,000 people, among them 5,000 civilians and 5,000 members of the security forces lost their lives, while the military and security forces spent more than \$100 billion. Almost 3 million people were also displaced" (Bozarslan, 2008: 352).

Around the same times, Kurdish political movement was also organizing within the legal framework of Turkish politics. On 7 June 1990, HEP, the first pro-Kurdish political party was established. Before 1991 elections HEP and SHP, under Erdal İnönü, established an election coalition and won 88 seats in the parliament by taking the 20% of the entire votes. Victory in the elections paved the way of a shift in party politics of HEP towards Kurdish nationalism (Watts, 2014: 103). After three years in the parliament, the party was closed and banned. Some of its deputies were put in jail. It was the beginning of establishment-closure-establishment cycle. (Watts, 2014: 102). Inside this cycle, pro-Kurdish parties were trying to find a balance between representing the demands of Kurdish population and maintaining their legal position under the strict limitations of 1982 constitution (Güneş, 2012:

155). After the closure, in 1993, DEP was established, and this cycle continued with HADEP, DEHAP, DTP, BDP and finally HDP³, which is still active despite many of its deputies being put in prison.

In 2000s, with the rule of the AKP Government, a new period began in relations between the state and the Kurdish movement. The Islamic Brotherhood discourse superseded the Turkification policies and under the name of liberalization, some rights were given to the Kurdish minority in 2009, as a part of the first ‘Kurdish Opening.’ Basically, this outreach was a reform package that offered some cultural rights to Kurds; like initiating the establishment of TRT ŞEŞ, a state-owned TV channel broadcasting in Kurdish (Kurmanci) and allowing usage of Kurdish language at universities and on signboards within the urban space. Yet, this attempt of liberalization did not move beyond giving a number of symbolic rights. On the part of Kurdish movement, electoral victories of Kurdish political parties in the municipal elections in Kurdish cities mark this era. With these victories, Kurdish political movement found itself another domain, within the state apparatus, to voice its identity demands.

A second Kurdish Opening round began in 2013, which reached to the Dolmabahçe Agreement in February 2015. During this process, a BDP-HDP committee functioned as a messenger between the PKK and the Turkish state. They made quite number of visits to Imralı Island and to Qandil Mountain to carry messages between Abdullah Öcalan, KCK and the state. This second round of Kurdish outreach became a turning point in Turkish history because until that time, one cannot imagine a Kurdish politician visiting Qandil mountain and bringing messages from there to the government. It was considered a major step forward in the Turkish state’s relationship with the Kurdish political movement. However, the

³ HADEP, Halkın Demokrasi Partisi/People’s Democracy Party, was established in 1994 and closed in 2003. DEHAP, Demokratik Halk Partisi/Democratic People’s Party was founded as the continuation of HADEP in 1997, banned in 2003 and repealed itself in 2005. DTP, Demokratik Toplum Partisi/Democratic Society Party, was established in 2005 as the successor of DEHAP and dissolved in 2009. BDP, Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi/The Peace and Democracy Party was founded in 2008 and dissolved in 2014. HDP, Halkların Demokrasi Party/People’s Democracy Party, was founded in 2012.

Peace Process was turned upside down with the official declaration of an autonomous government in Rojava in 2014. Particularly after the defense of Kobane and the defeat of ISIS (October 2014-January 2015), the PYD strengthened its presence and found popular support for its democratic autonomy project (Vali, 2017), which caused a major crack in the peace process.

Although the Dolmabahçe Agreement was declared in February 2015, the process was set aside a month later. However, the worst came later when an explosion rocked a HDP meeting in Diyarbakır two days before the general elections. Moreover, a series of explosions followed the June 7th, 2015 elections: the first one was in July in Suruç, a Kurdish town near Syrian border of Turkey, where 34 people were killed by a suicide bomber who was proved to be an ISIS militant. Two days after the explosion, two police officers were assassinated in Ceylanpınar and according to Reuters; the PKK claimed the responsibility of these killings.

As a response, the Turkish state started a military operation with its air force and attacked Qandil Mountain after four years of a peaceful situation. After years of war in rural areas with the state, the PKK changed its insurgency techniques and carried the war to the cities by digging trenches and building barricades in urban towns. In addition, as a counter-move to putting mayors into custody, Kurdish political actors, under the name of the People's Committee, declared autonomous governance to reclaim the land in 16 districts including; Sur, Silvan, Lice, Şırnak, Cizre, Silopi, Yüksekova and more in August 2015. The state responded by declaring a curfew in the region starting with Varto in August 2015, followed by the other towns.

One of the rupturing points of this process occurred on October 10th when another suicide attack was carried out by an ISIS militant, this time in Ankara at a peace rally organized by the HDP for the solution of Kurdish-Turkish armed conflict and 109 people were killed. On the following day, the AKP Government, once again turned the state's fighter aircraft in the direction of Qandil. From that day onwards, urban clashes intensified and turned into a warfare in Kurdish cities

between the YDG-H and the state. After conflict that lasted months, the government lifted the curfew within the entire districts with the exception of some neighborhoods in Suriçi, Diyarbakır.

Particularly, with the declaration of state of emergency rule after the 15 July 2015 coup attempt –which is still in operation-, Turkish political arena became more conservative in terms of allowing room for different voices. Many MPs of HDP were taken into custody, including the former co-chairs Figen Yüksekdağ and Selahattin Demirtaş. Under this atmosphere, pro-Kurdish parties are still trying to find themselves a place in the legal framework of Turkish politics.

1.3 Methodology

For this research, I traveled to Diyarbakır in August 2017 and in January 2018. I conducted qualitative field research and gathered data through informal conversations, life histories, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and participant observation. In this research I studied both the narratives framed around certain political ideologies and the “flashes”, that are only graspable at that moment. (Benjamin, 1968)

My first visit to Diyarbakır was on August 23, 2017. I entered the field as a close acquaintance of a well-known human rights activist from Diyarbakır. For that reason, my first visit was shaped around his network. However, at certain points I had a chance to move beyond his network. During my visit, I did not conduct any interviews but only had informal conversations with NGO workers, co-presidents of trade associations, past and current state officials working in the electricity sector, party members and Diyarbakır inhabitants.

During my second visit in January 2018, I reached my informants via snowball method. First, I had a meeting with a human rights activist, who I have met in the course of my previous trip, then moved to other informants through his connections. This time, I conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews with activists, co-presidents of trade associations, workers in the electricity sector

and former party members, and listened the life stories of “illegal” electricity users. My main research sites were Ofis, Bağlar and Sur districts in central Diyarbakır.

Although there was an uneasiness in the city during the times of my both visits, thanks to the good reputation of my “Key Informant”, in my interviews and conversations I did not sense any anxiety or fear. However, as a researcher coming from İstanbul with a certain educational background, my informants mostly perceived me as “not-too-native” (Navaro, 2002). Both my non-Kurdish identity and assumed socio-economic status, put me in a position of someone who is “different” from them in the eyes of illegal electricity users. For the activists, the only difference I have was my Turkish ethnicity. During my most interviews, my homeland was asked as the first question. Yet, due the common trust among us, coming from the reputation of my key informant, my subjective position did not set an impassable obstacle.

In Diyarbakır, I conducted 12 semi structured interviews, 10 unstructured interviews and listened several life stories. In none of my conversations, I used a recording device. Most of the times I took notes, sometimes the atmosphere was so intense that I even couldn’t take notes. My visits took place only a year after the end of war in Suriçi neighborhood. For that reason, the city was still under close surveillance by the state. There were special operations forces, anti-terror police and civil police nearly on every corner of the city. Many of my informants were either politically active people or illegal electricity users -sometimes two of them together- and in such a setting I prefer not to record their voices. Moreover, I assured them about not using their real names. Therefore, in this thesis fake names will be given to the informants to ensure anonymity.

1.4 Content of the Chapters

This thesis is comprised of four chapters. In the first chapter, the purpose of this study, theoretical background, a brief overview of Turkish-Kurdish conflict and the methodology of this thesis are discussed. In the second chapter, to describe the context of this thesis, privatization of the electricity sector, state’s changing role

within this process, and the effects of these privatizations together with the effects of GAP on the Dicle river and on the region in general are explained. In the third chapter, after a discussion regarding the meaning of illegal within the borders of Turkish Republic and specificity of Diyarbakır as a research site, the entangled relation between state, market and society, discursive governance tools of state, everyday imaginations of state are examined after a detailed analysis of the interviews and life stories. Moreover, in this chapter a ground for rethinking resistance is offered. Finally, in the conclusion chapter the research analysis is summarized.



2. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 A Brief History of Diyarbakır

In August 2017, I was in an office in Diyarbakır interviewing two electrical engineers at TEIAS, the state-owned company responsible for electricity generation and transmission. I had been asking them questions about illegal electricity usage. Afterwards, I closed my notebook and we began a casual conversation about daily life in Diyarbakır. One of the engineers asked me if I was from Diyarbakır. When I said no, she told me:

"Diyarbakır is a very depressing city. Maybe the most depressed city in Turkey. This city has gone through some tremendous trauma. Everybody is traumatized here."⁴

This bit of our conversation was not exceptional. It was just a description of everyday life in Diyarbakır. Because since the late Ottoman period, the city has been witnessing revolts, clashes, migration, violence, destruction and (re)construction due to its central position for the state and Kurdish movement.

In the 19th century, as a trade city and an administrative center of the Empire, Diyarbakır had a mixed population with Turks, Kurds, Armenians, Arabs and Assyrians. During those years, Kurdish tribes were autonomously governing⁵ certain parts of the province –particularly inaccessible highlands- (Aydın and Verheij, 2015). Yet centralization and modernization project of the empire in the beginning of the 20th century transformed the city demographically and provoked a power struggle between the state and local authorities (Bruinessen, 1992). This later paved the way to the birth of Kurdish nationalism in Diyarbakır and located the city to a key position in Kurdish people's struggle with state. Because local power

⁴ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Female, in her thirties, electrical engineer working at TEIAS. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (1).

⁵ This semi-autonomous position of the certain parts later became an ideological point of reference for Kurdish political movement.

struggles of the time were represented as the national struggle of Kurds by certain important figures like Bedirxan family, who lived in 1800s, (Klein, 2015) and later these nationalistic sentiments expanded among the inhabitants of the city. Those were also the years that the city witnessed revolts and large-scale violence for the first time. As part of the Turkification policies of central government, non-Muslim communities -Armenians and Assyrians- were exterminated in 1915-1917, with the collaboration of local authorities and Kurdish elites. However, this collaboration did not last long. Kurdish demands for an independent state arose⁶ and Kurdish population became the subject of the same policies with the establishment of Turkish Republic in 1923.

In February 1925, Sheikh Said Revolt erupted in the city. As a response, Kemalist government enacted the Law on the Maintenance of Order (Tahrir-i Sükun Kanunu) and accelerated the intensity of military operations to quell the revolt. On 15th of April, Sheikh Said was caught and on 29th of June, he and his 46 friends were hanged at Dağkapı Square (Çiçek, 2013). Although the motivation of the revolt was religious, rather than nationalistic, it became a symbol for Kurdish nationalism and Diyarbakır gained a significant importance for hosting the first revolt against Turkish state. After this event, Turkification policies of the government systematized under Şark Islahat Planı. As a part of this plan, Diyarbakır turned into a military-administrative headquarter by building new roads, quartering military, moving local populations from the city, and crafting (Navaro, 2012) the urban space. In a report written by himself in 1935, İsmet İnönü describes the atmosphere in the city as following:

⁶ In 1918, under the roof of Kürt Teali Cemiyeti (DKTC), the demands for an independent state were expressed for the first time and found significant support among Diyarbakır inhabitants. For that reason Dadaylı Halit Akmansü, a high level military officer working in Diyarbakır, defines the city as Kaaba of Kurdism (Kürtçülüğün Kabesi) in his memoir. For further details see: Malmisanij. (2010). *Yirminci yüzyılın başında Diyarbakır'da Kürt ulusçuluğu (1900-1920)*. Vate yayınevi.

“Diyarbakır is mature enough for operating our measures to turn the city into a strong Turkishness center.” (Inönü Report, 1935)⁷

Although İnönü projected a smooth transformation in Diyarbakır, the city one more time became central for Kurdish political activism towards the end of 1960s, after being home to one of the first large-scale protests of civilian Kurdish population, known as Eastern Meetings. Until 1980s, demands rising from the city were related with the economical backwardness of the region because Kurdish activism were moving hand in hand with the leftist organizations. In 1978, a Kurdish politician, Mehdi Zana, elected as the mayor of Diyarbakır Municipality for the first time. However, he was arrested and put in Diyarbakır Prison together with other Kurdish activists after September 1980 coup d'état. After coup d'état, Kurdish political movement transformed massively. By reviving the Newroz myth and creating a modern resistance myth around his resistance in the infamous Diyarbakır Prison (Diyarbakır 5 No'lu), PKK became the hegemonic power of Kurdish political movement in a very short time. Particularly Mazlum Doğan's self-immolation protest in the prison marked as the act, which activated the resistance in Diyarbakır and gave start to the guerilla warfare (Güneş, 2015). The resistance in Diyarbakır Prison became one of the main ideological reference points of the movement. It both gave rise to PKK and materialized the Kurdish resistance in the architectural space of Diyarbakır Prison⁸. Today the prison functions as a *witness-site* like Dağkapı Square (Çaylı, 2015) and gives life to movement's ideology in the urban space. Moreover, it increases the significance of Diyarbakır in the eyes of Kurdish people who follow the movement's ideology.

In 1990s, the city maintained its position as the center of resistance. In March 1990, Zekiye Alkan, a medical student studying at Dicle University, set her body on fire on top of the ancient city walls. PKK described her act as the trigger

⁷ Original quotation: Diyarbakır, kuvvetli Türklük merkezi olmak için tedbirlerimizi kolaylıkla işletebileceğimiz bir olgunluktur.

⁸ In 2015, Diyarbakır Municipality, which was being governed by a Kurdish political party, DBP, appealed to the Parliament for turning the prison into a museum. However, the Project was not implemented.

of urban uprisings and carried the movement to the cities. Throughout these years, Diyarbakır witnessed several urban uprisings. The most prominent one was at Vedat Aydın's funeral, chairperson of HEP branch in Diyarbakır who was killed by an unidentified murder (faili meçhul cinayet), in July 1991. Thousands of people attended the funeral. The coffin of Aydın was covered with ERNK flag and people shouted pro-PKK slogans throughout the funeral. As a response, security forces fired into the crowd and caused the death of seven people (Güneş, 2015).

Around the same times, the guerilla warfare for national independence has also reached its peak. Accordingly, with the help of the authorities granted to it via the previously declared state of emergency rule⁹ Turkish state repressed harshly any political mobilization it encountered in the city. With mass detentions, enforced disappearances, extrajudicial executions and security checks instituted either by counter-guerilla or security forces, Diyarbakır witnessed one of the most violent times of its history. However, state's efforts to repress Kurdish political movement backlashed. Kurdish militancy mobilized further in the city with the incoming migrants, who were purged from their villages.

Throughout 1990s, the city's population quadrupled. Nearly one million people¹⁰ arrived to Diyarbakır, without a proper strategy of resettlement. Moreover, state did not provide the necessary assistance for transportation to people or gave enough time to them for gathering their belongings on the excuse that they either supported PKK logistically or refused to be village guards. Their arrival left permanent traces both in the memory and in the urban space of the city. Due to war and immigration caused by it, economic hardships accelerated, and class differences intensified. Ayşe, born and raised in Diyarbakır said the biggest problem of the city back then was forced migrants integration to the city:

⁹ The state of emergency rule declared in 1979 and continued until 2002.

¹⁰ For further information see: Mazlumder Migration Report: Reasons and results of internal migration in East and Southeast. <http://istanbul.mazlumder.org/tr/main/yayinlar/yurt-ici-raporlar/3/mazlumder-goc-raporu-dogu-ve-guneydoguda-ic-g/1125>

“People were dying in the traffic. I remember kids dying because they weren’t used to the city life. People experienced a shift in their life spaces. Aghas were making their livings by selling parsley in the streets. Class differences and othering were very common during those times.”¹¹

For Ahmet the post-migration Diyarbakır was a mega-village that is unable to integrate rural culture with city culture:

“After forced migration a conflict between city culture and rural culture had emerged in Diyarbakır. Rural culture came to the city. Our cities turned into mega-villages. State has done nothing to solve this issue. You cannot say, I am giving you unjust suffering, but you are the responsible. (Mağduriyeti size yaşıyorum, sorumlu da sizsiniz diyemezsiniz)”¹²

Similar with Ahmet, for Hasan, state did not fulfill his responsibility of integrating the rural people to the city:

“Before the forced migration, population of Bağlar district was 100.000, now it is 350.000. These people came to the city in one night. They were only given fifteen minutes for deporting their houses. They came here without bringing any of their belongings. After their villages were evacuated, they weren’t told where to go, what to do. State did not provide any support. At this point, it should act like a welfare state. Nothing has done for the integration of the people to the city. These people are coming from tandır and sheep-grazing culture. (Bu insanlar hayvancılık ve tandır kültüründen geliyorlar) This the only thing they know how to do. Even today, you can see tandırs in the streets if you go to Bağlar. Basements of some apartments are being used as barns. They are doing sheep-grazing in the city-center.”¹³

¹¹ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ayşe, Female, in her forties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (2).

¹² Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ahmet, male in his forties, working in the electricity sector. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (3).

¹³ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Hasan, Male, in his fifties, HDP member. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (4).

Inhabitants of the city, including Ahmet, Ayşe, and Hasan, are constantly constructing their relationship with the state through their memories and experiences of Diyarbakır city. They even address the problems like intensification of class differences or clash between the rural and urban culture by referring state's policies regarding Kurdish population. The centrality of Diyarbakır for Kurdish political movement stems from its role in the construction of this relationship. Particularly post-migration Diyarbakır, as the representation of the melancholic relationship with state, preserves its unwavering position in the memories and lives of its inhabitants.

In the aftermath of war, the role of Diyarbakır within the Kurdish political movement has changed. In 1999, a Kurdish political party, HADEP/DEHAP, won the local elections and started to run the Diyarbakır Municipality (Watts, 2014). When they came to power, their first task was to rebuild the ancient city walls, as part of the *cultural decolonization* project (Gambetti, 2010). Then the transformation of the city project continued by building memory spaces like parks with the names of Kurdish martyrs and places from Kurdish history or by putting the figure of an imaginary Kurdistan map to certain places in Diyarbakır. In her article, Gambetti explains the motivations behind the transformations as following:

“The subsequent re-appropriation of urban space points to the gestation of a counter-power that operates through the hierarchical reordering of space according to an alternative imaginary of Diyarbakır as the capital of Kurdish identity” (Gambetti, 2010: 99)

These practices of the appropriation of space in Diyarbakır have served the purpose of strengthening Kurdish nationalism both as an ideology and as a material reality. As it has been said before, many people came into the city via forced migration, without bringing any belongings with them and built a new life of economic hardship. Yet, what they have left behind was not only material belongings but also the sense of belonging to a place they called home. At a time like this, newly

transformed Diyarbakır, with full of references to Kurdish history, nation and identity offered another sense of belonging to the Kurds.

Takeover of the municipality by HADEP/DEHAP also extended the legal political sphere for Kurdish movement and increased the visibility of Kurdish identity. During its tenure, the party adopted a project of re-appropriating the Kurdish language. In accordance with this purpose, municipality started to provide services in Kurmanci and Zazaki, and use these languages in the public spaces. This extension was particularly related with Turkey's EU accession process. Incoming EU funds, and liberal ideas praising local governance, initiated the demilitarization of the city and opened a civil space for politics. In the absence of Kurdish deputies in the parliament, municipality perceived as the legal representative of Kurdish people in the eyes of Europe. So much so that, Diyarbakır mayor (between 2004 and 2014) Osman Baydemir, visited EU capitals several times to inform member states regarding Turkey's capacity to fulfill the necessary requirements to begin to the negotiations.

With the motivation of being the most important legal representative of Kurdish people in Turkey, Diyarbakır Municipality worked for filling the gaps left vacant by the state. During its tenure HDP municipality, opened several community centers in the migration-receiving neighborhoods like Bağlar and Suriçi. The aim of opening these centers were to facilitate the integration of rural migrants to the urban life. For instance, at White Butterflies Center women can do their laundry, iron their clothes and cook tandır¹⁴ (Gambetti, 2010). A former municipality worker related the problems of post-migration Diyarbakır with the absence of state services and told me how municipalities worked so hard to fill this gap.

“Because of the forced migration, in these districts, a paradoxical situation with the city has emerged. An urban rehabilitation regarding the transformation of the city needed to be done yet none of them was done. We, as the municipality, worked very hard yet for instance you put benches in the parks people still sit on the ground

¹⁴ It is a certain type of bread generally cooked in the rural parts of Kurdish region.

in front of the benches. It is very hard to accustom people. Besides the level of poverty is very high. ''¹⁵

For him, municipality's efforts were not sufficient for resolving the problems of the city. Yet, daily municipal services created new fields of intervention for the Kurdish political movement. In the eyes of the people, it was the municipality who is offering them services not the central state. Creating that perception was a part of the party's political agenda. All kinds of activities of the Diyarbakır municipality were promoted to the public with the motto ``We will govern ourselves and our cities on our own/Kendimizi de kentimizi de biz yöneteceğiz'' (Özsoy, 2010). The campaign was so successful that its effects on Diyarbakır inhabitants can still be traced today. As in the words of Suat, for the people it was ``our municipality''

``Once there was a campaign of municipality saying if you subscribe to water services, the municipality will earn money. It was very beneficial. Many people went and subscribed immediately. I mean, understanding of the municipality as our municipality found correspondence within the public (Yani bizim belediyemizdir anlayışı karşılık buldu). ''¹⁶

Limited resources were one of the main problems of Diyarbakır Municipality because state was cutting of its budget due to the antagonistic relation between them. Therefore, the municipality was extracting resources by using its own means. However, the picture was complicated by an agreement for the renewal of buildings outside the ancient city walls in the Alipaşa and Lalebey neighborhoods of Suriçi as a part of the urban transformation process signed between the BDP (DEHAP's successor) Diyarbakır Metropolitan Municipality and TOKİ in 2010. Although the Diyarbakır Municipality claimed it signed the agreement in order to have a say in the reconstruction project, it became a part of the resource extraction process by compromising with the state under neo-liberal demands (Yüksel, 2016). Yet, the

¹⁵ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Male, in his fifties, previous Bağlar Municipality worker. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (5).

¹⁶ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Suat, Male, in his thirties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (6).

project had to be cancelled before the demolition process began when it received an adverse reaction from the public. These were the times when Diyarbakır was integrating to the global market (Gambetti,2010) and municipality was taking its part from this transformation. For instance, Kırklar Mountain, which is enshired by the people, was zoned for construction with the signature of Sur Municipality.

Despite all, Diyarbakır municipality has always maintained its importance. Particularly with the domination of self-governance discourse within the Kurdish political movement, the city's significance increased in the eyes of the politicized public. Moreover, decolonization of the urban space and re-appropriation of the language projects, and metropolitan municipality mayor's participation to EU-level meetings as the representative of the Kurdish people contributed to the alternative imaginary of Diyarbakır as the unofficial capital of Kurdistan. This idea found resemblance among the inhabitants of the city. In August 2017, during a car ride around the city with a friend, we passed by the Cegerxwin Cultural Center, one of cultural centers built during the era of Kurdish DTP municipality. She wanted to show me around, so we parked the car in front of the building and start walking. Once we started walking, she pointed the Cegerxwin¹⁷ Cultural Center and told me: ``Do you see this building? A few years back, there was a rumor around the city about this building. They were saying, when we become independent, this will be our parliament building. ``

With the eruption of Peace Process, this time Diyarbakır, particularly Suriçi, the historical district situated within the old city walls, became the capital of armed conflict between the special operation forces and YDG-H. Due to the use of heavy armament and lethal weapons, nearly the entire district was demolished in the course of 10 months of armed clashes and curfews. During and after the curfews, 24,000 people were forced to abandon their homes without any proper guarantee

¹⁷ A famous Kurdish poet and nationalist, whose real name is Şeyhmuz Hasan. He was born in 1903, in Batman and fled to Amude with his family, due to the World War I. Besides writing poetry, he joined to Kurdish Freedom and Union Front and Azadi organizations. Both his writings and political activities contributed to the evolvement of Kurdish nationalism.

for decent housing. Moreover, in March 2016, the government declared an emergency Decision of Expropriation (Acele Kamulaştırma Kararı) for homes in the district which was already declared a risk area with the disaster law, whereas 70% of the land in Sur was taken over by the government. This time it was different from the urban transformation, because state has a right to first demolish the remaining buildings, then reconstruct them without obtaining permission from their owners. The state disbursed an amount of money in exchange for the property, one that was insufficient to buy a new one. The project of demolition and reconstruction of the buildings in Sur is sitting at the center of the state – society - market triangle. In Sur, the state extracted resources from war and made a space out of it, therefore it is inherently a violent process (Madra, 2017).

The reconstruction of buildings in Sur is a project of gentrification, which combines the violence of capitalism with the violence of the state but not limited to it (Kadioğlu & Glastonbury, 2016). The aim of this project was threefold: securitizing the region through gentrification, extracting resources, and leaving the trace of state power in the urban space. It was not the first time that market and state forces are working hand in hand to transform the Kurdish cities. The motivation behind GAP and privatization of DEDAŞ projects were very similar to urban transformation project in Suriçi neighborhood. It is crucial to understand how these projects had materialized, to better discuss the entangled relationship between state, society and market through illegal electricity usage. Because these projects have inflicted economic and symbolic damage on the lives of Diyarbakır inhabitants.

2.2 Privatization of the Electricity Sector (1980-2013)

Until 1980s, the electricity sector was under the total control of publicly owned state institutions. During these years, with the general wave of liberalization of the economy, Turkey meet the term "privatization". As a part of this general trend, the privatization process of the electricity sector has started, which finalized in 2013. We can summarize this process as three phases: 1980-1990 infiltration of

the private sector for the first time, 2001-2013 enactment of the Electricity Market Law, after 2013 final phase of the privatization.

2.2.1 An Overview of the Former Electricity Market

In 1970, TEK (Turkish Electricity Authority), the publicly owned state institution, was founded, and all the electricity generation assets previously owned by municipalities, were transferred to it¹⁸. Before the enactment of the Electricity Cooperation Law, municipalities were the sole authority of building and operating power plants. With this law, TEK became the institution that generates, transmits, distributes and trades the electrical energy.

With the neoliberal turn, state's presence in the Turkish economy had diminished and the doors of the electricity sector were opened to private enterprises. The privatization efforts have started in the 1980s. From that time onwards, the liberalization of the electricity market has initiated by the governments.

On 4 December 1984, Law on Authorization to Institutions other than TEK¹⁹ for Generation, Transmission, Distribution and Trade of Electricity (no.3096) was enacted²⁰. This law was the complete opposite of the previous one, which delegated TEK as the only authority in all stages of electricity sector. It allowed the participation of the private enterprises through BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) and TOR (Transfer of Operating Rights) methods. Basically, in BOT method, state was granting rights to build a power plant, operate it for several years (maximum 99 years) and sell it back to state. While BOT was a method for indirect privatization of the electricity generation, TOR was for privatizing electricity distribution business. For both models, the main idea was to privatize without abandoning the state's ownership rights. These models could not be implemented

¹⁸ Electricity Cooperation Law (No.1312), enacted on 15.07.1970.

¹⁹ In 1993, TEK was reorganized as two separate state owned institutions: TEAŞ, electricity generation and transmission company, and TEDAŞ, electricity distribution company. For Sözer, the motivation behind the reorganization process was to facilitate the privatization of the distribution sector by taking it away from the other stages of the electricity sector (2014). In 2001, TEAŞ was divided into three separate state-owned institutions: TEİAŞ, responsible for transmission, EÜAŞ, responsible for generation, and TETAŞ, responsible for trading and contracting.

²⁰ Published in the Official Gazette No. 18610; dated 19 December 1984

until 1996 due to certain obstacles faced at the administrative and judicial level. Because according to the Turkish Constitution, electricity was a public good. Therefore, public law should apply to BOT projects rather than private law (Özkivrak, 2005). To overcome these obstacles in 1996, the government created the BOO (Build-Operate) model with the Decree 96/8269. This model was successfully implemented after the enactment of Law No. 4283 on Establishment and Operation of Electricity Generation Facilities with Build - Operate Model and Sale of Electricity in 1997²¹. However, a more important transformation came after the change of certain items in the Turkish Constitution in 1999. For the state, privatization of the electricity sector had such an importance that could even lead it to change the constitution. With these changes BOT projects made compatible with the law. It was the last move on its side before the enactment of the first Electricity Market Law (No.4628) on 3 March 2001²².

EML (No.4628) was the starting point of the reform period in the electricity market (Sözer, 2014). As it is indicated in its first article, the aim of the law was to promote the liberalization of the electricity market by initiating a competitive, financially strong, stable and transparent atmosphere.

“The aim of this law; is to establish a financially strong, stable and transparent electricity energy market that can operate in accordance with the provisions of private law in a competitive environment and to provide an independent regulation and inspection in this market in order to present a sufficient, high quality, continuous, low cost and environmentally friendly electricity to consumers’ use”²³

To guarantee the free and competitive environment, state’s role must be diminished. For this purpose, EMRA (EPDK) was founded, and state’s role was restricted to a “independent” regulatory authority. As a part of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, the main tasks of EMRA were establishment of energy policies, implementation of privatization proposals and import-export of electricity. With

²¹ Published in the Official Gazette No. 23054; dated 19 July 1997.

²² Published in the Official Gazette No. 24335 (Repeated); dated 3 March 2001.

²³ Published in the Official Gazette No. 24335 (Repeated); dated 3 March 2001.

this law, EMRA became the rule-maker of this newly restructuring electricity market.

This first Electricity Market Law functions as a cornerstone in the privatization process of the sector, because it prepared the necessary ground for further transformations. For instance, it initiated the privatization of the distribution operations through General Implementation on Privatization Implementations (No.4040), the law which authorizes the sale of assets and transfer of sales. Following the enactment of this law, privatization of TEDAŞ's assets have started and continued until the end of 2013.

2.2.2 Electricity Market Law No:6446

On March 2013, Electricity Market Law No:6446 was enacted. This law paved the way to full privatization of distribution facilities. It replaced all the previous provisions and changed the structure of the market. Together with Electricity Market Licensing Regulation, the law divided the activities in the market into 8 categories: generation, transmission, distribution, wholesale, retail sale, market operation, export and import. For each activity getting a separate license became compulsory. Only wholesale and retail sale activities are combined under one license namely, supply license. According to the law, the market activities are divided to determine the boundaries of different type of activities and regions, and to overcome the monopolization in the market. However, a number of companies operating in the distribution sector also acquired supply licenses. One of them is, Cengiz-Kolin-Limak consortium, who holds the legal rights of electricity distribution of 4 regions; Çamlıbel, Boğaziçi, Akdeniz, Uludağ regions and operates many hydroelectric power plants at the same time. Namely, the law did ensure the division of market activities, and companies continue their operations in different fields by obtaining several licenses.

Another important change that came with this law was the rearrangements made in EMRA's duties. Granting licenses to enterprises, monitoring the activities of the market actors and resolving the conflicts between them were among the new

duties of EMRA. This new position of it was a bit controversial because it was founded as an autonomous authority according to previous EML, yet it has been acting as an organic part of the state, in practice. Especially, there is an entangled relationship between Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources and EMRA. Since the former is considered as the related ministry of the latter, the policy decisions are being taken together. Moreover, it has been following the discourse of the government, and acting like a political institution in contrast to its legal status, an autonomous body²⁴. For instance, at the 15th anniversary dinner of EMRA, Mustafa Yılmaz, the president of EMRA, gave a speech about the position of the institution after 15th of July coup attempt:

“I want to speak out this clearly, after the terrible day that we had lived, some of our workers personally came to me and said that if we need to work for 20 hours, we are definitely ready to work eagerly without taking it as offense. I had been filled with tremendous hope by this matter about where can this national (*milli*) look with the determination to work and the consideration for the motherland take our institution off.”²⁵

Other controversial point regarding EMRA is caused by its authority to issue and cancel licenses. The EML, 2013 gives EMRA the authority to cancel licenses of enterprises in the case of breaches of the obligations under their license. However, the limits of the breaches are not well defined in the law. Therefore, this

²⁴ Additionally, EMRA's non-political position is being violated with the personal relations that its president has, such as the one with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the president of Turkish Republic. Especially, publicly maintaining these relations makes EMRA to look like a pro-government institution. One example of such events is the wedding of Furkan Yılmaz, the son of Mustafa Yılmaz. In August 2017, the son of EMRA's president got married and Kadir Topbaş, the Mayor of Istanbul Municipality from Justice and Development Party, performed the marriage ceremony. Furthermore, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attended the ceremony and personally delivered the marriage license to the couple. Sabah (2017), Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan Nikaha Katıldı, 20 August(Online). Available at: <https://www.sabah.com.tr/gundem/2017/08/21/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-nikaha-katildi>

²⁵ Enerji Günlüğü (2017), Yılmaz: EPDK birçok ülkeye örnek oluyor. 22 February(Online). Available at: <http://www.enerjigunlugu.net/icerik/21888/yilmaz-epdk-bircok-ulkeye-ornek-oluyor.html>
Original quotation: "Şunu açıklıkla söylemek istiyorum, yaşadığımız o berbat günün ertesi günü bazı personelimiz gelip sayın başkanım eğer bize 20 saat çalışmak düşünüyorsa biz kesinlikle gocunmadan aşkla şevkle çalışmaya hazırız diyerek bizzat şahsıma geldiler. Bu çalışma azmiyle bu vatan kaygısıyla böyle bir milli bakışın kurumumuzu nereye götüreceği konusunda müthiş bir umutla beslenmiş oldum."

authority of EMRA enables it to control the activities of the enterprises outside the energy market. For instance, Ciner Holding engages in both the electricity and media businesses (See Figure 1.1), this position of the company directly contradicts with the freedom of press principle because in order to keep its licenses it may abstain from publishing anti-government news. Consequently, the boundary between state and market becomes blurred because an autonomous public body, holds the ability to monitor the activities of a private enterprise outside of its sphere of intervention.

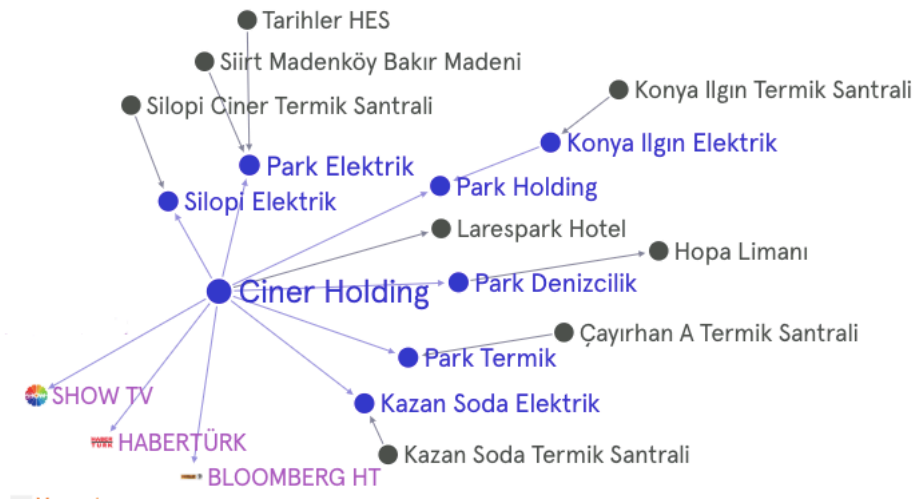


Figure 1.1 Market Networks

Source: Networks of Dispossession

2.2.2.1 Full Privatization of the Distribution Sector

Under the provisions of Electricity Market Law, no: 4628, Turkish electricity network was divided into 21 distribution regions (See Figure 1.2).

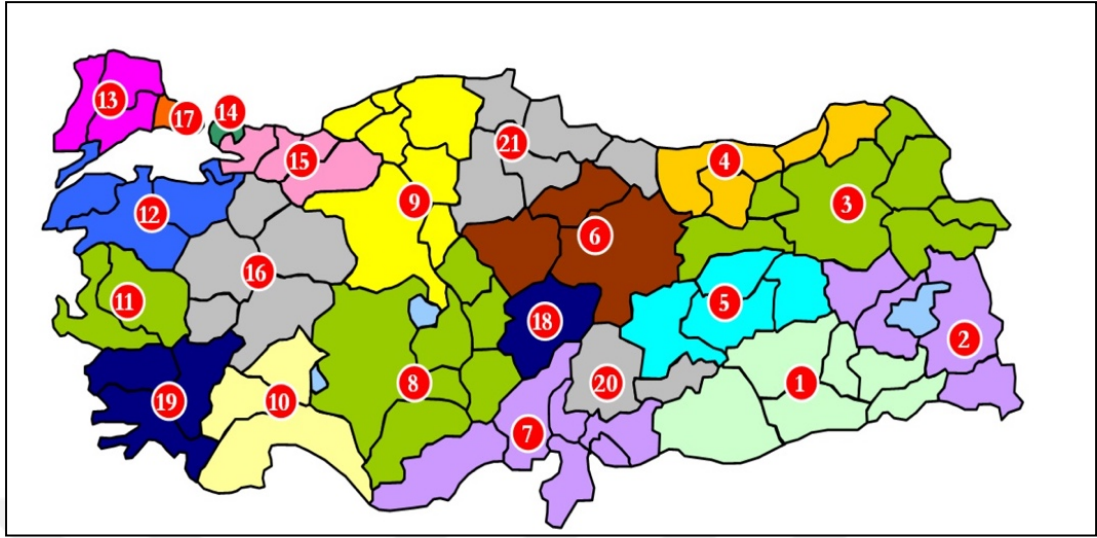


Figure 1.2 Electricity Distribution Zones

Source: Prepared by the author

For each zone the rights to distribute electricity were aimed to be transferred to private companies for a limited time frame. After EML, no:6446 all of the regions were privatized via block sales of 100% of the assets and Transfer of Operating Rights methods. Differently from the 2001 law, under this law, owner of the distribution company becomes the sole licensee of the related distribution region. Moreover, state offered many incentives to investors for facilitating the privatization process. One of them was, the continuation of the compensation of electricity loss from the subscribers.

“The target rates for technical and non-technical losses that will be the base tariffs of the distribution companies are determined by the Board, in such a manner that would encourage the reduction of these losses. Providing that not exceeding the target rates determined by the board, the costs related with the technical and non-technical losses appear in the distribution tariffs and be reflected on the consumers.”²⁶

²⁶ Electricity Market Law No:6446, “Dağıtım şirketlerinin tarifelerine esas alınacak teknik ve teknik olmayan kayıplara ilişkin hedef oranlar bu kayıpları düşürmeyi teşvik edecek şekilde Kurul tarafından belirlenir. Kurulca belirlenen hedef oranlarını geçmemek kaydı ile teknik ve teknik olmayan kayıplara ilişkin maliyetler dağıtım tarifelerinde yer alır ve tüketicilere yansıtılır.”

After strong reactions from the public, the loss/illegal electricity consumption cost (Kayıp Kaçak Bedeli) has started to be reflected in the bills as a part of the total cost.

Another incentive regarding the electricity loss was the reward system offered to the distribution companies. According to this system, state is rewarding the companies that decrease the electricity loss in their operating regions, although the cost of the losses is being reflected to the subscribers' bills. In other words, state was minimizing the risks of the private enterprises, maximizing their profits by offering them rewards, and compensating their losses from public.

Under these circumstances, the ongoing privatization process that started with EML 2001, has finalized in 2013 after the privatization of Dicle Electricity Distribution Company (See Figure 1.3)

	Abone Sayısı (bin)	Kapsadığı İller	İhale Bedeli (milyon dolar)
BAŞKENT EDAŞ	2.951	ANKARA, ÇANKIRI, KASTAMONU, ZONGULDAK, KIRIKKALE, BARTIN, KARABÜK	1.225,0
SAKARYA EDAŞ	1.275	BOLU, KOCAELİ, SAKARYA, DÜZCE	600,0
MERAM EDAŞ	1.483	KIRŞEHİR, KONYA, NEVŞEHİR, NİĞDE, AKSARAY, KARAMAN	440,0
OSMANGAZİ EDAŞ	1.232	AFYONKARAHİSAR, BİLECİK, ESKİŞEHİR, KÜTAHYA, UŞAK	485,0
ULUDAĞ EDAŞ	2.265	BALIKESİR, BURSA, ÇANAKKALE, YALOVA	940,0
ÇAMLIBEL EDAŞ	735	SİVAS, TOKAT, YOZGAT	258,5
YEŞİLIRMAK EDAŞ	1.429	AMASYA, ÇORUM, ORDU, SAMSUN, SİNOP	441,5
ÇORUH EDAŞ	959	ARTVİN, GİRESUN, GÜMÜŞHANE, RİZE, TRABZON	227,0
FIRAT EDAŞ	657	BİNGÖL, ELAZIĞ, MALATYA, TUNCELİ	230,3
TRAKYA EDAŞ	790	EDİRNE, KIRKLARELİ, TEKİRDAĞ	575,0
BOĞAZİÇİ EDAŞ	4.202	İSTANBUL AVRUPA YAKASI	1.960,0
AKDENİZ EDAŞ	1.677	ANTALYA, BURDUR, ISPARTA	546,0
GEDİZ EDAŞ	2.488	İZMİR, MANİSA	1.231,0
ARAS EDAŞ	725	AĞRI, ERZİNCAN, ERZURUM, KARS, BAYBURT, ARDAHAN, IĞDIR	128,5
TOROSLAR EDAŞ	2.879	ADANA, GAZİANTEP, HATAY, MERSİN, KİLİS, OSMANİYE	1.725,0
AYEDAŞ	2.389	İSTANBUL ANADOLU YAKASI	1.227,0
VANGÖLÜ EDAŞ	459	BİTLİS, HAKKARİ, MUŞ, VAN	118,0
DİCLE EDAŞ	1.221	DİYARBAKIR, MARDİN, SIİRT, ŞANLIURFA, BATMAN, ŞIRNAK	387,0
	29.816		12.744,8

Figure 1.3 Privatization of the Electricity Market

Source: Privatization Administration

With the full privatization of the distribution sector, and partial privatization of the other sectors, electricity, which supposed to be a public good, transformed into a commodity that fuels the Turkish economy (Sözer, 2014). As in the words of the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Berat Albayrak, today in Turkey, electricity distribution services are being delivered by private companies functioning in a perfectly competitive market.

“As you all know, the activity of electricity distribution was started to be performed by the craft/skill of the private sector with a process of privatization began in 2008

and completed in 2013. Again, by separating the activities of distribution and retail, significant contributions have been made to the formation of competition in the market and to the liberalization of trade. Important steps have been taken forward in the formation of a structure that has been transformed into professional companies, has added-values and can plan the future, instead of the services that are produced by the logic and the structure of state.”²⁷

2.2.3 Privatization of DEDAŞ

In April 2004, Privatization Administration declared a decision for the inclusion of TEDAŞ to the privatization program of the state.²⁸ Following this decision, DEDAŞ was founded in 2005 and its operating region is declared as Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Batman, Mardin, Siirt and Şırnak cities. On 2010, the first tender for the privatization of DEDAŞ was initiated and Ceylan-Karavil Consortium won the tender by making the highest offer, with 228.000.000 USD. When the decision was published on the Official Gazette, The Chamber of Electrical Engineers made a declaration, and call for the abolishment of the tender because of a previous penalty imposed on Ceylan Construction and Trade Corporation due to illegal electricity usage. On 2012, the tender was cancelled. However, the reason behind the abolishment was not the previous illegal electricity usage record of Ceylan, but the consortium’s inability to make the payments necessary for the transfer of assets.

In March 2013, another tender was initiated, this time İşkaya-Doğu Consortium made the highest bid with 387.000.000 USD and won the tender. Through TOR method, 100% of the DEDAŞ’s assets were transferred to the consortium. Namely, İşkaya-Doğu became the only licensee responsible for

²⁷ ELDER 9th Sectoral Meeting, 7 May 2016. Original quotation: “Hepinizin bildiği gibi elektrik dağıtım faaliyeti 2008 yılında başlayan ve 2013 yılında tamamlanan bir özelleştirme süreciyle özel sektör marifeti ile yapılmaya başlanmıştır. Yine dağıtım ve perakende faaliyetleri ayrıştırılarak piyasada rekabetin oluşumuna ve ticaretin serbestleşmesine önemli katkılar sağlanmıştır. Artık devletin müessese mantığı ve yapısıyla üretilen hizmetler yerine profesyonel şirketler haline dönüştürülmüş, katma değeri olan ve geleceğini planlayabilen bir yapının oluşumu konusunda önemli mesafeler alınmıştır” retrieved from: <http://www.enerji.gov.tr/tr-TR/Bakanlik-Haberleri/ELDER-9-Sektor-Toplantisi>

²⁸ Published in the Official Gazette No. 25422; dated 02 April 2004.

electricity distribution until 2042, in the cities where DEDAŞ is operating. On 24th of July 2014, handover ceremony of DEDAŞ took place during a fast-breaking meal (İftar Yemeği) in Diyarbakır with participation of four ministers, Taner Yıldız, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Mehdi Eker, Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock, Mehmet Şimşek, Minister of Finance and Cevdet Yılmaz, Minister of Development. At the ceremony, a symbolic check was handed to ministers and Abdullah Tivnikli, Chairman of the Executive Board of Eksim Holding, signed the handover agreement. The ceremony was quite ostentatious. All of the ministers made speeches about the importance of the privatization of the distribution sector and the possible contributions of DEDAŞ to development of the region and to the fight against illegal electricity usage. After the speeches Tivnikli and the ministers have taken a photograph together holding the giant check in their hands and celebrating the bright future of Dicle region with their smiles.

Shortly afterwards, news claiming that DEDAŞ tender is unlawful, began disseminating among media channels. The issue even carried to the parliament by Aytun Çınar, Republican People's Party İzmir Deputy, via a parliamentary question.²⁹ For Çınar, the main problem of the auction was the credit given to İşkaya-Doğu OGG by Kuveyt-Türk Bank, a member of the consortium including four banks that provide loans for privatization. Because, according to 50th article of Law of Banking, banks cannot provide loans to companies which their board members or family members (wife or children) of their board members, have more than 25% share of the entire capital of that company.³⁰ Share distribution of İşkaya-Doğu consortium is 20%-80%, and Doğu Energy Investment Company is owned by İltek Enerji, which is a part of Eksim Holding. Abdullah Tivnikli, vice chairman of Kuveyt-Türk Bank, was also the chairman of İltek Enerji and Eksim Holding. When the complicated partnership structure of the companies is investigated, it is seen that Tivnikli, indirectly owns more than 30% of the DEDAŞ's assets.

²⁹ Parliamentary Question, No:36840, published on 25 December 2013.

³⁰ Law of Banking, Article:50, enacted on April 2011.

However, BBDK did not impose any sanction because the application of the law regarding indirect ownership is not clearly defined.

Another important point regarding the privatization of DEDAŞ is loss/illegal electricity usage rates in the region. During the first privatization attempt in 2010, the illegal electricity rate in the region was 65.48% and at the second successful attempt, it was 75.03% (See Figure 1.4).

ŞİRKET	DAĞITIM SİSTEMİ KAYIP-KAÇAK GERÇEKLEŞME ORANLARI						
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
AKDENİZ	9,72%	9,40%	9,29%	8,30%	8,47%	9,78%	11,32%
AKEDAŞ	7,95%	7,84%	8,44%	8,17%	8,33%	7,22%	6,70%
ARAS	29,32%	27,16%	27,67%	25,47%	34,02%	33,79%	27,58%
AYDEM	7,36%	11,92%	10,28%	8,69%	8,41%	8,00%	7,61%
AYEDAŞ	9,14%	8,71%	7,47%	6,92%	6,91%	6,88%	7,59%
BAŞKENT	8,63%	8,48%	8,88%	8,55%	9,17%	8,67%	7,90%
BOĞAZİÇİ	12,15%	10,84%	9,56%	9,75%	10,76%	10,24%	9,89%
ÇAMLIBEL	8,76%	9,21%	8,10%	7,31%	9,20%	8,32%	7,58%
ÇORUH	11,98%	10,63%	11,44%	11,57%	11,24%	10,19%	9,42%
DİCLE	64,81%	64,54%	73,39%	65,48%	76,55%	71,74%	75,03%
FIRAT	10,99%	10,44%	13,61%	12,24%	11,11%	10,85%	9,49%
GEDİZ	10,23%	7,48%	8,89%	8,84%	8,83%	7,81%	9,73%
KAYSERİ	11,14%	10,27%	10,70%	8,74%	7,12%	6,89%	6,85%
MERAM	8,27%	8,80%	9,01%	9,64%	8,93%	8,98%	7,14%
OSMANGAZİ	6,26%	5,64%	6,78%	9,11%	7,14%	7,15%	7,86%
SEDAŞ	6,53%	7,55%	8,04%	6,41%	7,00%	7,14%	6,64%
TOROSLAR	10,61%	9,85%	9,84%	8,92%	13,77%	13,22%	15,24%
TRAKYA	7,61%	7,18%	7,11%	6,80%	8,26%	6,46%	6,14%
ULUDAĞ	8,59%	7,52%	7,30%	7,38%	8,92%	7,32%	7,03%
VANGÖLÜ	56,19%	55,91%	55,56%	57,15%	59,05%	59,07%	65,84%
YEŞİLIRMAK	9,09%	9,24%	10,86%	12,89%	7,80%	7,26%	10,46%

Figure 1.4 Loss/illegal Consumption Rates

Source: TBMM

Although the illegal electricity usage rate was lower in 2010, the highest bid in the auction was 228.000.000 USD, in 2013 it was 387.000.000 USD with nearly 10% more illegal electricity usage rate. This discrepancy can be explained with the compensation of losses from the consumers and with the reward system of EMRA. In this system EMRA sets loss rate objectives for each region and rewards the companies which accomplished their objectives. Therefore, if a company manages

to reduce the loss to the targeted level, it can even make profit depending on the amount of reward.

Under these circumstances DEDAŞ was privatized in June 2013. This date became a turning point for “illegal” electricity users in Diyarbakır because from that time onwards surveillance in the city started to increase incrementally. Many people I met in Diyarbakır, talked about how the number of inspections and the amount of penalties have increased after the privatization. Particularly in the shantytowns of the city, this event caused the deepening of poverty. Hacer, who lives in Bağlar district in an apartment with 2 other families, describes the way things work after 2013 as following:

“Penalties are very high. It has increased even more after privatization. Both the cost of electricity and the penalties were increased. Now, they come and write a fine to you during the night. You do not know when they will come. They do not knock the door.”³¹

Prior to an amendment in 1999, electricity was being defined as a public service in the Turkish Constitution. However, it became a commodity after the liberalization of the electricity sector. For that reason, privatization of DEDAŞ marks a breakthrough for the people of Diyarbakır, because it directly affected the everyday lives of the city’s inhabitants in many different ways, which will be explained further in details in the next chapter.

2.3 GAP and Its Impacts on the Region

The Southeastern Anatolia Development Project (GAP), is a regional development project, focusing on the Euphrates-Tigris basin, which comprised of nine cities, six of them located in DEDAŞ’s operating zone: Adıyaman, Batman, Diyarbakır, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Siirt, Şanlıurfa and Şırnak. Although, it introduced to public in 1970s as a water-resource development project whose primary purpose is energy generation, its history dates back to 1930s. The first

³¹ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, female, in her sixties, “illegal” electricity user. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (7).

attempt of electricity generation in the region was a couple of years after the establishment of EİEİ (Elektrik İşleri Etüt İdaresi) in 1936. A recon was conducted on the Euphrates River, for a possible Keban Project in the future. Between the 1950 and 1970, feasibility studies in the Euphrates-Tigris basin gained momentum. During those years, the aim was to determine the energy generation potential of both rivers. In 1977, all the previous projects were combined under one name, Southeastern Anatolia Development Project. The envisaged objectives of this new project were building 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric power plants and investing in irrigation channels on 1.8-million-hectare field. Although, the region was famous for its hydropower generation capacity that equals to 22% of Turkey and freshwater potential, an estimated 25% of the country (Ünver, 1997), the motivations behind the project were not limited to energy production, it was also a political project since the beginning. First of all, GAP was a reflection of “high modernist ideology”, that aims rapid socio-economic transformation of the region and the country by means of short-term gains of hydroelectric power plants and irrigation schemes (Çarkoğlu and Eder, 2001). It was a top-down executed centralist ideology, inspired by the development model that emerged in Western countries in 1960’s. According to this model, fostering excessive amount of energy and food production through mega-projects which excludes the local populations, would bring rapid economic development (Ayboğa, 2013). Although, the model lost its influence in 1970’s and gave its place to more inclusive and environment friendly projects in Europe, Turkey followed this model until 2000s.

In 1989 GAP went through a transformation and adopted the regional development discourse that moves beyond the hydroelectric production and addresses the socio-economic backwardness of the region. GAP Regional Development Administration was founded, and the new targets of the project were described in the new action plan as following:

- “ Generation of hydroelectric power; development of regional agriculture through irrigation; development of a regional agro-industrial base; and formulation of a

mid-to long-term solution to Kurdish ethnic separatism. " (Çarkoğlu and Eder, 2001, 177)

When the new objectives of the project are examined, it can be argued that this shift is somehow related with the rise of PKK as the hegemonic power of the Kurdish movement. Because these years coincide with PKK's declaration of war against the Turkish state. Therefore, another objective, which remains unremarked in the official documents, can be added next to the others: the securitization of the region. However, effective fight against PKK was not the only reason of this shift. The new action plan also had a "growth-based integrated planning approach" (Çarkoğlu and Eder, 2001, 178) aiming to make use of the arable land effectively and to turn the region into an agro-industrial zone.

Around the end of 1990s, it was realized that none of these objectives were accomplished. Accordingly, the focus of the project changed one more time and the idea of sustainable human development put to the center of the project. Other issues such as; economy, culture, gender equality, education, health, physical planning, agriculture and environment were aimed to be addressed from this perspective. Available international funds and EU accession process were also among the main triggers of this latest change. In 1995, a joint conference was held between GAP administration and UNDP Sustainable Development Program. At the conference the two sides agreed upon the new principles of GAP as social sustainability, agricultural sustainability, integration of disadvantaged populations to the development projects and provision of equal opportunity to vulnerable groups.³² The concept "sustainability" was borrowed from international development projects and tried to be adapted to the Turkish context. Although, the adaptation was not very successful particularly regarding environmental and humanitarian issues, EU and other international agencies gave generous grants to GAP (See Figure 1.5).

³²GAP Sustainable Development Program, retrieved from: <http://www.gap.gov.tr/gap-surdurulebilir-kalkinma-programi-sayfa-28.html>

Tablo 13: GAP İdaresi Tarafından Sağlanan Hibeler

Finansman Kaynağı	Proje Adı	Yılı	Hibe Miktarı (ABD Doları)
ABD Ticaret ve Kalkınma Teşkilatı	GAP Uluslararası Havalimanı	1994-1994	720 000
	GAP Coğrafi Bilgi Sistemi	1995-1995	377 000
Kanada Uluslararası Kalkınma Teşkilatı	GAP Bölgesi Hasat Sonrası Teknolojileri	1994-1996	284 000
	Atatürk Baraj Gölü Çevresi Alt-Bölge Gelişme Planı	1994-1996	249 000
Fransa Hükümeti	Sulama Kanalları Regülasyonu ve Sulama Teknolojileri Projesi	1989-1991	187 266
	Küçük Yerleşimlerde Atıksuların Yeniden Kullanımı		540 000
Dünya Bankası	Şanlıurfa Harran Ovaları Tarla içi Köy Geliştirme Projesi	1999-1999	300 000
	GAP Kentsel Planlama ve Sanitasyon	1999-1999	350 000
ABD Ulusal Sağlık Örgütü	GAP Sağlık Çalışması		150 000
Dünya Sağlık Teşkilatı (WHO)	Sıtma Hizmetleri		200 000
ABD Ortak Dağıtım Komitesi(JDC)	Sokakta Çalışan Çocukların Rehabilitasyonu Projesi		100 000
Uluslararası Çalışma Teşkilatı(ILO)	Sokakta Çalışan Çocukların Rehabilitasyonu Projesi		30 000
	Kendi İşini Kur Projesi	2000-2001	30 000
GAP-FAO Kırsal Kalkınma Programı	10 proje		430 000
İsrail	Sulama Teknolojileri		70 000
	Atıksuyun Geri kazanımı		50 000
Birleşmiş Milletler Kalkınma Programı (UNDP)	Sürdürülebilir Kalkınma Programı		5 900 000
(İsviçre Hükümeti)	(6 Proje için)		(2 200 000)
İsveç Hükümeti	GAP Bölgesinde Kadının Güçlendirilmesinde Yenilikler Projesi		950 000
TOPLAM (DOLAR)			10 917 266
Finansman Kaynağı	Proje Adı	Yılı	Hibe Miktarı (EURO)
Avrupa Birliği (AB)	GAP Bölgesel Kalkınma Programı	2004-2007	47 000 000
Avrupa Birliği(AB)	Türkiye'nin Az Gelişmiş Bölgelerindeki Kadın ve Kadın STK'larının Güçlendirilmesi Hibe Programı		5 000 000
Avrupa Birliği(AB)	GAP Sel Projesi		14 000 000
AB TOPLAMI (EURO)			66 000 000

Figure 1.5 GAP International Funds

Source: GAP Report 2018

With the incoming funds, many projects were initiated as part of the holistic sustainable development method. Such as; The Rehabilitation of Children Working in the Streets in Diyarbakır, The Excavation and Rescue of Hasankeyf, Public Health Project, and Empowerment of Women and Women NGO's in Underdeveloped Regions of Turkey. However, these are not welcomed by the local populations and GAP continued to be perceived as a modernizing project. Because,

as it has been argued, motivations behind GAP was both economic and political. Since the beginning, it was aiming to transform the region, which is inhabited mostly by people with Kurdish ethnicity. For that reason, the projects like teaching Turkish language or birth control were considered as assimilation projects of the nation state. To better understand these dynamics, history of GAP should also be evaluated regarding the dialectical relationship between state and Kurdish movement.

2.3.1 Development Projects and Turkish-Kurdish Conflict

According to the founders of the Republic, Turkish-Kurdish conflict was entirely related with economic backwardness of the region. Nearly for seventy years, governments approached this conflict as a purely economic one, deprived of ethnic identity claims (Yeğen, 2011). Therefore, they tried to solve the conflict either by assimilation projects like East Improvement Plan (Şark Islahat Planı), or by trying to integrate the region economically to the center. Since its execution area is Southeastern Anatolia, GAP should be addressed as a part of these attempts.

Although GAP's primary objective was rapid socio-economic development of Turkey through energy generation, it had an implicit goal: transforming the region to integrate economically, culturally and politically to central state (Harris, 2010). Because, for the state when the region's economic underdevelopment problem was resolved, and Kurdish populations became dependent to state economy, the Turkish-Kurdish conflict would end. In terms of GAP, this were to be made via irrigation schemes, and other social development projects like education. For instance, after GAP, cotton production became the primary economic activity in the Harran region substituting the traditional agricultural system and sheep grazing. Since cotton is a water-dependent product that is not resistant to drought, this transformation made the economic activity in the region dependent to state-controlled irrigation projects (Harris, 2010). Namely, with GAP state consolidated its presence and influence in the region.

With politicization of Kurdish issue following the popularization of PKK, towards the end of 1980s, the picture became more complicated. Both the military activism and identity politics evolved around PKK's ideas, attributed new roles to GAP. As a response to these changes, the new action plan was declared, and rapid transformation of the region became central for the project. The reason behind this change was mainly PKK's ideas regarding colonization of the Kurdish lands, that spread into the region in a very short time. For them, Sykes Picot Agreement, signed in 1916, paved the way to the division of Kurdistan's lands into four parts, and colonization of their homeland by four nation states; Turkey, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Among Kurdish populations GAP, was being perceived as a follow-up of this great colonization project. For PKK, they were rivers of Kurdistan where Turkish state has been building dams on and they were lands of Kurdistan, where the state has been building irrigation schemes on. Moreover, they were claiming that with GAP project state was maintaining a strong security presence in the region because every construction zone, hydroelectric power plant or irrigation dam was being guarded by security forces. For that reason, during 2000s, dam constructions became the target of PKK attacks.

Another point of criticism regarding GAP was related with its economic aspect. Since the region is inhabiting the half of the hydroelectric generation capacity of Turkey and lacking the industrial complexes to use the produced electricity, people living in the region were unable to observe any positive effects of the project (Çarkoğlu and Eder, 2001). This created the feeling that the state, together with private enterprises is exploiting the Kurdish region for enhancement of Turkish economy not for developing the region. Destructive effects of the project further strengthened this feeling. After the construction of Atatürk, Keban and Birecik dams, a number historical villages and agricultural lands have submerged. As a result, populations living in those villages were forced to migrate either to cities, where they cannot continue husbandry and sheep-grazing, or other villages, where they don't own agricultural lands.

Furthermore, the discrepancy between the completion rate of energy and irrigation pillars of the project caused a suspicion among Kurdish populations. According to 2018 GAP report, the completion rate of hydroelectric power plants is 90% and will be 93% after the construction of Silvan dam is finished and the completion rate of irrigation schemes is 30.4% for now. Due to this discrepancy, GAP is considered as a capital accumulation project of the state which also has political motivations. As an electrical engineer Ahmet, addresses the construction of the dams in the region as following:

“Since the 1940’s, they are saying that the irrigation channels will come, it has not come yet. The dams have been retaining water for forty years. When the irrigation channels started to function, the lives of the dams would expire. These are conscious policies (Barajlar yaklaşık kırk senedir su tutuyor. Sulama kanalları geldiğinde barajların ömrü dolmuş olacak. Bunlar bilinçli politikalar) ”³³

For him, construction of the dams is not for the well-being of the local communities, but it is an ideological project of the state.

On July 2009, state announced that, they are going to build eleven more dams in the border (Iraq and Iran) regions of Hakkari and Şırnak provinces. This time the dams would not be constructed for hydroelectric production or for irrigation but for the securitization of the border zone. The main purpose of these new dams was to prevent the flee of PKK fighters across the borders (Jongerden, 2010; Ayboğa, 2013). Although securitization of the region has always been an unspoken objective of the GAP, it was the first time that state was building *security dams* (güvenlik barajları)³⁴ and using water as a physical barrier in its fight against PKK. For that reason, the construction of dams turned into potential targets of PKK.

³³ Personal interview, conducted in January 2018, Ahmet, Male in his forties, working in the electricity sector. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (8).

³⁴ In an official report published by General Directorate of State Hydraulic Works, the purpose of these dams is explained as securitization of the border region. DSI, 2007 Faaliyet Raporu, published in 2008. Available at: http://www2.dsi.gov.tr/faaliyet_raporlari/2007_faaliyet_raporu.pdf ; Yavuz, R. and Bulut, B., (2011), PKK'ya karşı planlanan o barajlardan ikisi tamam..., Milliyet, 26 October(Online), Available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/pkk-ya-karsi-planlanan-o-barajlardan-ikisi-tamam---gundem-1455488/>

Between 2007-2015, many attacks were employed to construction zones and many workers were kidnapped. As for the state, “flooding out terror” (Çağaptay&Otun 2012) became a military strategy starting with this project, because as many Diyarbakır inhabitants have mentioned, canyons are the hiding places of PKK fighters. Latest example of these dams is the Ilisu project. However, differently from the security dams it has built to realize three aims; generating energy, providing water to dry lands of the region and cutting off the route used by PKK for moving from their base camps in Iraq to Turkey (Çağaptay&Otun 2012). This project provoked excessive reaction among public because for its construction, Hasankeyf, a historical world heritage under UNESCO’s protection and a symbolic site of Kurdish geography, were to be to be flooded out together with terror. Moreover, it will contribute to ecological destruction of Dicle basin, together with Silvan dam project. As in the words of Hasan these projects will disturb the ecological balance:

“Hydroelectric power plants (HPP) are important. Especially in terms of security. Because these are the fields where the guerilla is hiding (HES’ler önemli. Güvenlik açısından özellikle. Çünkü buralar gerillanın saklandığı yerler). Besides, it affects the agriculture. Several villages were flooded. For example, Hasankeyf, now. In addition, they turn the fresh water into energy, which destroys the ecological balance.”³⁵

GAP is intertwined with the dynamics of the Turkish-Kurdish problem in many ways. Especially the dams became a zone of armed conflict after the rise of PKK. Moreover, they have been used as a foreign policy tool by the state against Iraq and Syria. Because the Euphrates and Tigris rivers are flowing over these countries and the dams built as part of GAP are reducing the flow rates of the rivers. For instance; when Abdullah Öcalan was inhabiting Syria, Turkish state threatened the country with cutting off their waters and Syria had to dismiss him to decrease the tension. In short, GAP is both an economic and political project aiming to

³⁵ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Hasan, Male, in his fifties, HDP member. Fort he quotation in Turkish, see Appendix (9).

generate cheap energy, transform the region, and increase state surveillance. Militarily guarded construction projects that has been continuing all over the region, turned GAP into the symbol of state power and violence, in the eyes of Kurdish people (İlhan, 2016). Moreover, it further impoverished the provinces where the dams were built through expropriation of lands and forced migration, despite providing jobs to many other inhabitants of the region.



3. ILLEGAL ELECTRICITY USAGE AND EVERYDAY IMAGINATIONS OF STATE

3.1 What is “illegal”?

In January 2018, two years after the end of urban clashes, I spent some time in Suriçi district by walking through the streets. On the road leading to the inner side of the district I encountered the first security checkpoint, then the second and finally the third one before reaching to the main street. Nearly half of the buildings were demolished, and the remaining ones were waiting for their destiny. Curfew was still continuing in some neighborhoods. Entrances of those areas were covered with blue sheets, with signposts attached next to the policemen sitting in front of the sheets, saying “Forbidden”. I tried to look behind the barriers, yet it was forbidden too. All I could see was, a couple of buildings with full of bullet holes.

However, in the other parts of the district, life has been moving on. A weekly bazaar has been sat up on the side street of one of the construction areas of TOKİ, yet another prohibited zone of the district, with many people shopping for fruits and vegetables next to the demolished houses of Suriçi. Reconstruction project was continuing in the form of gentrification and transforming the entire district, even the paving stones. “Now they are transforming this area, to make it a touristic attraction” said Filiz, born and raised in Suriçi and lost her house during the clashes but still living in one of the remaining neighborhoods of the district with her two kids and husband. “It hurts so much, every time I see the construction zone, it hurts so much. I guess they will turn this area into an open-air museum. If so, they should place us there and exhibit us too.”³⁶

I walked a little farther, and arrived at the shop of Fazıl Usta, a craftsman around his forties. He welcomed me in and asked me if I would like to have a tea, “Have you tried our tea? Our smuggled tea (kaçak çay) is very famous, you cannot

³⁶ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Filiz, Female, in her thirties, “illegal” electricity user. Original quotation: Şimdi orayı yapıyorlar turistik diye. Benim canım çok yanıyor. Orayı her gördüğümde benim canım çok yanıyor. Açık hava müzesine çevirecekler herhalde. Bari bizi de oraya koyup sergilesinler.

leave the city without drinking our tea.”³⁷ Walls of his shop were covered with photos. The first thing that attracted my attention was the picture of Sheikh Said, hanging on the wall next to the photographs he had taken with his friends at fishing.

“I worked for thirty years” said Fazıl Usta, “After thirty years all I had was that house. I hired a lawyer, he wanted me to pay him 10.000 liras. State supposed to pay 40.000 liras for our house, but it has been two years. I borrowed some money and paid for the lawyer. If state pays us, we will have 30.000 liras. How can I buy a house with that money? Our house’s worth is way more than 40.000 liras. We left our house before the curfew was declared for our street, but the clashes were so close to us. For that reason, state did not pay us any housing benefit. One day after we left curfew was declared, we have barely escaped our lives. We don’t want their money but is it justice? I have the legal documents of ownership of that house, is this the justice? (İstemiyoruz onlardan para falan ama adalet bu mu? Bende evimin tapusu var, adalet bu mu?)”³⁸

Newly built villas were waiting for their “legal” owners, together with the newly decorated shops which were waiting for their customers. Special Operation Forces, were pacing up and down the streets, holding long barreled weapons and showing that the state is there, highly visible but invisible at the same time, able to control every move, and prevent eruption of anything against the law during the transformation of the area.

Encounters with Special Operation Forces and Anti-terror Police or regular security checks are part of the everyday life in the districts of Diyarbakır like Suriçi and Bağlar. In most of the times, it was the only form of state that exists in these areas. After forced migration, these districts transformed massively, and this made them “dangerous” in the eyes of state. The main reason of this perception was the politicization of the inhabitants living in the certain neighborhoods of these

³⁷ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Fazıl, Male, in his forties, “illegal” electricity user.

³⁸ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Fazıl, Male, illegal” electricity user. For the quotation in Turkish, see Appendix (10).

districts. Particularly in some parts of Bağlar, PKK gathered serious support. This accelerated the securitization in the district.

On the other hand, "illegal" activities besides civil or military activism, were not under the close surveillance of the state in the city. Therefore, they became normalized among people. Moreover, lack of state services in the region and the never-ending warfare, contributed to the normalization by widening the gap between East and West in economic terms.

I spoke with a young lawyer, who lives with her family in an upper-middle class neighborhood of Diyarbakır. She said:

"My family also engages in smuggling. We are from Lice, that is the only economic activity of our district. There is no single person, who does not engage in smuggling and be from Lice."³⁹

During my times in Diyarbakır, I found that the word, illegal, has two different meanings, one for Western Turkey and another for the Kurdish cities in the East. What is criminalized in the West is regarded as normal in the East due to the differing historical, economic and political factors in the two regions. As Sarah Ahmed says, "colonialism makes the world 'white,' which is of course a world 'ready' for certain kinds of bodies, as a world that puts certain objects within their reach" (Ahmed, 2007). Although the inhabitants of Diyarbakır, especially forced migrants, do not have the same access to basic services as the inhabitants of western parts of Turkey, their actions are considered 'illegal' together with their Kurdish identities because the norms are created in accordance with the dominant ethnicity, in this case white Turks. As a researcher from Istanbul, I believe that, we need to problematize this whiteness as a privilege area before discussing governance and resistance practices because only then we can understand the role of criminalization in the formation of the antagonistic relation supported by the state and PKK. For that reason, we need to be cautious when using the concept illegal because in this

³⁹ Excerpt from a daily talk. Original quotation: Benim ailem de kaçakçılık yapıyor. E biz Liceliyiz bizim oralarda tek ekonomik faaliyet bu. Liceli olup da kaçakçılık yapmayan yoktur.

city, the right to life, the right to the city (Harvey, 2008), the right to access equal opportunities for basic services do not bear the same meanings as Western conceptualizations.

3.2 Reproduction of State in Everyday Life

In this chapter, I study how state is reproduced in the everyday life of individuals in Diyarbakır. I ask does state necessarily need its institutions to maintain its power or it has an afterlife (Navaro, 2002) beyond the institutional borders? As it has been discussed, there are many different perspectives in the literature about studying the state. In his famous article, *Limits of State: Beyond Statist Approaches and their Critics*, Timothy Mitchell has suggested that we should take the elusiveness of the boundary between state and society seriously and examine the practices through which these two are produced as discrete entities. In his own words:

“An alternative approach to the state has to begin with this uncertain boundary. In a given area of practice, how is the effect created that certain aspects of what occurs pertain to society, while others stand apart as the state?” He further asks: “What is the significance of effecting this distinction?” (Mitchell, 1991: 89)

For Mitchell, statist approaches in social sciences have failed to understand the dynamics of state-society relations because they treated the state as a coherent body that is separated from society with a line drawn externally. In other words, in these approaches state and society were considered to be locating in two different spheres, without transgressing the borders of each other. However, as Aramco case -which is described in a detailed way in the introduction chapter- illustrates, the limits of each sphere, including market, are blurred. Yet they are treated as separate realms for maintaining a certain political and economic order. The act of approaching this distinction as real is itself “a mechanism that generates resources of power” (90). Mitchell writes:

“The power to regulate and control is not simply a capacity stored within the state, from where it extends out into society. The apparent boundary of the state does not mark the limit of the processes of regulation. It is itself a product of those processes.” (90)

Therefore, we should examine those processes that creates the effect of state by edging the boundary which is in fact elusive. Because imagining the state as a coherent body is what attributes it its unyielding power. In a later article, Mitchell furthers this argument by adding another dimension: economy. For him, the line between state and economy is more elusive than the line between state and society because both power of state and factory regime- regime of capitalist production- are “systems of disciplinary power and techniques of production. Both produce the effect of an abstraction that stands apart from material reality” (Mitchell, 1999: 88). Although these two entities are subjected to same process of abstraction, economy is considered as belonging to material realm while state is considered to belong to an abstract, institutional structure. For grasping the real dynamics of the relation between state-economy-society, this binary thinking should be abandoned because it is what produces the effect of the state as a distinct entity.

Drawing on Mitchell, I claim that the line between state and market is blurred in Diyarbakır. However, in contrast to his argument, in the city, state power is being reproduced due to this elusiveness because, the private institutions are perceived as a part of the state by virtue of the intertwined relationship between the two. Although the inhabitants of the city are aware that DEDAŞ is privatized in 2013, they consider the company as belonging to the state. These entanglements make the state appear as more powerful in the eyes of the people. Therefore, we need to examine why state maintains its existence even after state-owned institutions are privatized.

Following Akhil Gupta (Gupta, 1995), Yael Navaro argues that we should study the “situational and relative, positional relations with state” (Navaro, 2002: 162) Because, it is the domain of mundane everyday practices, which give state an

afterlife. She offers cynicism, that incorporates *state fetishism* and everyday critiques of the state, as a conceptual tool to discuss how state is regenerated in the everyday life. She writes:

“ Instead of looking for the state in tangible social institutions or stately persona, the sites of everyday life, where people attempt to produce meaning for themselves by appropriating the political, ought to be studies as a central domain for the production and reproduction of the state. ” (135)

For her, previous state theorists were wrong about disregarding the agency of “the people” and attributing a false consciousness to them when studying their relations with state. Because, there is consciousness about the corrupt nature of the state but there is also “a pragmatic recycling of statism in everyday life ” (165) through mundane cynicism. She defines this pragmatism she encountered among the people living in the margins of the state as following:

“ Here, there is consciousness about the state as farce, a recognition or awareness of alienation. And yet, simultaneously, there is a pragmatic recycling in everyday life. To put it in Lacanian terms, the so-called people have discovered their symptom but they cling to it out of worldly necessity. For these cynics the line between carrying or deconstructing the symptom is thin: it is the mark between livelihood and death; the symptom is a tool of survival. In most cases, the symptom is about an income, about bread and butter. ” (165)

This is how state power survives deconstruction even after many crises. Through this process, it not only prevails but also is being reproduced. Furthermore, she argues that, since a material world encapsulating financial system, education, army, borders and market, is organized around the state, it remains as a solid signifier. To maintain the daily life, one should engage with bureaucracy. State has real effects that are directly related with the daily survival of individuals. We are subjected to the state. For that reason, we constantly regenerate the state with our mundane everyday activities. In her own words:

“The state remains because it is a doer as much as it is a signifier. What we experience as our real world is a product of structures and objects produced in the name of ‘Turkey’ as signifier. Even when we know that state as an abstraction does not exist, the objects and life processes that have been put into activity in the name of state continue to exist. Cynicism as I mentioned before, is part and parcel of a practice keeping the signifier ‘Turkey’ and ‘Turkish state’ intact. And cynicism is located in acts of doing or taking action upon world. We are aware of our symptom of statism yet we maintain it” (187)

Drawing on Yael Navaro’s anthropological study of the political in Turkey, I will ask how state power is regenerated in the everyday life of individuals in Diyarbakır. However, rather than examining the fetishistic quality of this recovery, I will discuss the everyday imaginations of state both as a legitimate authority to provide services and a solid body to resist against. Because in Diyarbakır, state’s presence felt differently than the western parts of Turkey due to its historical heritage as being “the unofficial capital of Kurdistan”. In this city, the state does not reside in high-rise offices, but rather makes its presence felt either through violence or a spectral presence (Aretxaga, 2000a). For that reason, there is lack of trust towards its services. Moreover, state is not the only power domain in the city. Therefore, in this context, mundane cynicism does not lead to state fetishism as Navaro argues.

Another aspect we need to keep in mind is that; what she calls as “the people”, who live in the margins of the state, corresponds to Turkish people. The citizenship experiences of Kurdish population, especially those belong to lower and working classes, differ from the Turkish population. On the part of the state what started as denial of Kurdish identity turned into a massive repression with the rise of the Kurdish political movement (Yeğen, 2006). As for the Kurdish population, until the rise of PKK as the hegemonic power of Kurdish movement, it was a passive citizenship experience, yet towards the end 1980s and the beginning of 1990s, it became a reactionary citizenship. With the Kurdish parties’ victories in local elections in Kurdish cities, the citizenship relation of the Kurdish population

with the Turkish state has started to normalize and turned into an active citizenship (Aktan, 2012). Yet, the last urban clashes and mayor's taken into custody, inflicted damage on the active citizenship experience of Kurdish population. Therefore, when discussing reproduction of state through the everyday practices of ordinary people, state's ideological interventions for the governance of Kurdish populations should not be forgotten. Differently than ethnographic context that Navaro describes, there is consciousness among people also about the state's ideology regarding their identity. As in the words of Ayşe:

“ Both water and electricity are ideological. Being unable to generate your own water or electricity and living in a country that does not consider you as an equal citizen is hard. It has always been like that in here, a never-ending history. ”⁴⁰

Accordingly, by taking into consideration the subjective conditions of the region, throughout this section, everyday imaginations of the state will be discussed under two headings: A Discursive Governance Tool: “Illegal” Kurds, and In the Shades of Market: Imagining the Welfare State. In the former I will examine how state maintains its life with the help of media channels. I will argue that state power is reproduced through appropriation of the statist discourse of “illegal” Kurds who use electricity illegally, by ordinary -Turkish- people. In the latter, I will discuss the imaginaries of the state as an authority, and a legitimate service provider after the privatization of DEDAŞ. Following Navaro, I will argue that “the state is maintained within the agencies of what is called ‘society’ ” (135) and examine the critiques of state made by the people of Diyarbakır.

3.2.1 A Discursive Governance Tool: “Illegal” Kurds

In August 2017, I was sitting in a lobby in DEDAŞ, waiting for my appointment that I got very hardly from a high-level officer. Although it was

⁴⁰ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ayşe, Female, in her forties, human rights activist. In Turkish: Su da elektrik de hepsi ideolojik. Kendi suyunu elektriğini üretememek, seni eşit vatandaş olarak kabul etmeyen bir ülkede olmak çok zor. Burası hep böyle, bitmeyen bir tarih.

privatized in 2013, the regional directorate in Diyarbakır, was still functioning like a state-owned institution. You first need to register yourself to the notebook of the security guard of your floor. If the officer accepts to see you, the security guard will show you the way of the room. Nearly in front of every room, a group of people were waiting for their turns to come. Together with me, there was a family, trying to solve their connection problem and a young man around his twenties, who is a distant-relative of the officer, asking for a job. After his relative left, finally, my turn has come, and Levent Bey reluctantly welcomed me to his room. He said: "I accepted to see you only because Mahmut Ağabey asked me to", he anxiously added, "You are not a journalist, right? What are you researching? Are you going to share this information with the press?" After minutes long introduction of myself, I finally convinced him that I am only a researcher and I am going to keep his real name hidden. Then I asked a couple of questions about illegal/loss electricity rate and its history, he answered:

"I can only share with you the loss/illegal numbers that we reported to EMRA. According to 2016 data, the loss/illegal consumption rate is 65.7%, and the amount of electricity is 5.364.000 KWATT, mostly household consumption, in Diyarbakır. If we only look at the city center this rate falls to 40%." He continued, "In 1980's Diyarbakır was among the cities with lowest loss/illegal electricity consumption rate. This percentage increased after the forced migration in 1990s. Later on, the illegal consumption reached to a wastage level. It is because, state adopted a populist attitude and maintained it for years. It kept himself at a distance because of the clashes. The people who use electricity illegally are called as thief, intriguer, swindler but nothing has done for the solution of this problem. People are marked as thieves, but nothing has been done. State was condoning the illegal electricity usage. However, it needs to be a welfare state."⁴¹

Reflecting on my material, I argue that, before the privatization of DEDAŞ, state has been condoning the illegal electricity usage to prevent radicalization of

⁴¹ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Levent, Male, in his forties, DEDAŞ personnel. For the quotation in Turkish, see Appendix (11).

incoming forced migrants. Then, it started to use this as a ‘populist discursive tool’ to fuel Turkish nationalistic feelings nationwide, and to strengthen its antagonistic relationship with the Kurdish political movement. A former DEDAŞ employee, who was working as an electrical engineer before the privatization of company describes the pre-2013 period with the lack of state investments:

“ Before the privatization, there were already many endeavors, which we have been working on for years, to reduce the loss/illegal electricity usage rate. However, they were not implemented. State did not give budget to our projects. Projects like carrying the electricity posts to underground or distance reading of electrometers have been on the table for 12 years, yet they were not implemented before the privatization. Now, they are getting allowance from the state. ”⁴²

It was a common description of pre-2013 period among the former and current DEDAŞ workers. For them, state was absent when it comes to surveillance of the illegal electricity usage. This absence was one of the main reasons why illegal electricity usage reached to the “high” levels. Faruk, a current DEDAŞ personnel working in the loss/illegal electricity usage unit of the company as a field controller compares the pre-2013 and post-2013 periods, and explains this discrepancy -in terms of surveillance- with state’s indifference to illegal electricity usage:

“The main reason behind illegal electricity usage in this region is poverty. When DEDAŞ was owned by the state, it was not interfering in with people who use electricity illegally. Controllers had a quota, detecting two users a day was sufficient. In this way, this practice became a habit. The users were thinking, they are not controlling it anyway. But now, it is being monitored by multi panel and modem systems. In the case of intervention, modem immediately gives signal. A distance intervention system was established. Connecting-disconnecting

⁴² Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Female, in her thirties, electrical engineer. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (12).

procedures are remotely being applied. But it is still a pilot project. It is not working efficiently yet.”⁴³

Another aspect of illegal electricity is the usage rates. Although, the region is industrially underdeveloped, the amount of loss/illegal electricity usage is very high. For instance, according to the report of UCTAE, The Chamber of Electrical Engineers, in 2015, in the SEDAŞ’s (Sakarya Electricity Distribution A.Ş.) distribution region, which includes Düzce, Sakarya, Kocaeli and Bolu cities, the total amount of electricity distributed was 9.105.588 MWh. However, in the DEDAŞ’s region, this amount equals to 21.053.332 MWh.⁴⁴ Although, the cities Sakarya and Kocaeli host a tidy amount of industrial plants of Turkey, the amount of electricity consumed is half of DEDAŞ’s region. Faruk explains this inconsistency with distortions in numbers:

“Illegal electricity usage is a habit coming from the past. Electricity is very expensive. In particular, very high amounts come to businesses. Today, while speaking about the illegal electricity, the consumption of this region is being exaggerated. Here, it is used mainly in the households. One factory’s “illegal” consumption for one day in Kocaeli, is more than the one-month long consumption of the households in here. But these are not reflected in the figures. For example, *Limak Çimento* is paying 2.5 trillion.”⁴⁵

Despite being uninformed about the illegal electricity usage rates of other distribution regions, among Diyarbakır inhabitants, there is a skeptical look towards the statistics published by the state regarding “illegal” electricity usage.

⁴³ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Faruk, male, in his thirties, DEDAŞ personnel. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (13).

⁴⁴ EMO-Statistics of Electricity in Turkey, published on 12.12.2017, http://www.emo.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=88369

⁴⁵ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Faruk, male, in his thirties, DEDAŞ personnel. “Kaçak elektrik kullanımı geçmişten gelen bir alışkanlık. Elektrik çok pahalı. Özellikle işletmelere çok yüksek meblağlar geliyor. Bugün kaçak elektrik konuşurken bu bölgedeki çok abartılıyor. Burada meskende kullanılıyor ağırlıklı olarak. Kocaeli’ndeki bir fabrikanın bir günde kaçırıldığı meskenlerin bir ayda kaçırıldığından fazladır. Ama bunlar rakamlara yansıtılmıyor. Mesela Limak Çimento 2,5 trilyon ödeme yapıyor.”

“The loss/illegal rate does not reflect the picture completely. We need to look at the amount of energy consumption per residence, rather than rate. Because, in Diyarbakır the illegal usage comes mainly from the households but when used illegally in the industry, the consumption is much higher. Since the number of households is high, this increases the rate. One factory is consuming up to a neighborhood’s total amount. Residence/out-of-residence loss/illegal rate is important, you need to calculate this. Mass data is being used while calculating the rates.”⁴⁶

This is mainly due the general distrust felt towards the state due to the state’s previous policies aiming the securitization of the region rather than the development:

“ When you look at the items in the state’s investments in this region, you will see that 80% of the investments are for security. What you see as investment to education is actually assimilation. These are all ill-intentioned policies.”⁴⁷

State’s approach towards the “illegal” electricity usage was resembling its previous policies. When DEDAŞ was statelily-owned, the “illegal” electricity usage was not under close surveillance. As I have already argued, at first it was for preventing the radicalization of the incoming migrants. Because they came to the city due to village evacuations and started a life in great poverty. Moreover, they were coming from the rural areas of the region, where PKK was very active. For that reason, many of the incoming migrants have directly experienced the violence of 1990s. As a result of this, most of them were politically mobilized⁴⁸. On the other hand, state had no

⁴⁶ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Serhat, Male, in his fifties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (14).

⁴⁷ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Suat, Male, in his thirties, human rights activist. Quotation in Turkish: Devletin bölgedeki yatırım kalemlerine baktığınız zaman göreceksiniz, 80%’i güvenlik harcaması. Eğitim harcaması diye görülen şey de asimilasyon. Bunlar hep kötü niyetli politikalar.

⁴⁸ Another reason behind the high levels of political mobilization among the forced migrants was popularity of PKK’s ideas in the rural parts of the region.

projects for the integration of the forced migrants to the city and avoided offering solutions to their problems. Moreover, he overlooked the “illegal” activities that are perceived as non-political like adding a story to an existing building or using electricity “illegally”. Despite its indifferent attitude towards this activity, state has benefited from the high “illegal” electricity consumption rates in DEDAŞ’s distribution region and turned it into a discursive governance tool. In other words, the Kurdish identity is criminalized by using the high rates of “illegal” electricity usage. The discourse “Illegal Kurds, who use electricity illegally” was spread through the mainstream media channels and contributed to the deepening of ethnic discrimination in the society by triggering the nationalistic sentiments of ordinary Turkish citizens.

3.2.1.1 Representations of “Illegal” Electricity Usage in the Speeches of Government Officials

In 2002, Zeki Çakan, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the DSP-MHP-ANP coalition government, gave a speech about illegal electricity usage in Turkey. After his speech, he answered the questions of the journalists about the high loss/illegal consumption rates in Eastern and Southeastern Anatolia:

“The reason of the highest loss/illegal rates being in the Southeastern provinces, seems to be the PKK and Hezbollah terror. Both terrorist organizations have applied intense pressure on our citizens not to pay their electricity bills. Even, the Hezbollah organization gave a fatwa in some provinces saying that “do not give money to the state”. All the regional managers that I have met in this region have expressed this detection to me.”⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Çevikcan, S. (2002), Güneydoğu’da Kaçak Elektrik Kullanmanın Arkasından PKK ve Hizbullah Çıktı, Milliyet, 20 February. “Kayıp-kaçak oranının en fazla Güneydoğu illerinde olmasının nedeni, PKK ve Hizbullah terörü olarak görünüyor. Her iki terör örgütü de bölgedeki vatandaşlarımıza elektrik paralarını ödememeleri için çok yoğun baskı uygulamış. Hatta Hizbullah örgütü bazı illerde ‘devlete para vermeyin’ diye fetva bile çıkartmış. Bu saptamayı bölgede görüştüğüm bütün bölge müdürleri bana ifade ettiler.”

By framing the illegal electricity usage in the region as a reactionary act against the state, conducted under the coercion of PKK and Hizbullah, Çakan has followed the dominant state ideology and underlined the distinction between good -governable- Kurds and the bad -terrorist- Kurds.

Three years later, Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has approached the same issue from a very similar perspective. However, this time the emphasis was put on the differences in the electricity consumption habits of the people living in the Western parts Turkey and people living in the Eastern parts Turkey⁵⁰ :

“We have been working on transferring the grid/network and production lines to underground in order to prevent our energy loss. We are about to make the tender. Especially in the Southeast, in the East, there is no such thing like paying the money. Everyone is throwing a hook. He/she put cable to the water-well, as well. The water-well heats, and he/she uses the water. You see how clever we are.”⁵¹

In his speech, Erdoğan presents ‘not paying the electricity bills’ as a habit of Kurdish population living in the Eastern parts of Turkey. As the Prime Minister, with his words, he directly contributes to the strengthening of the discriminatory image towards Kurdish population, as the “illegal” citizens of Turkey.

On November 2013, another state official, Numan Kurtulmuş, the Vice President of AK Parti, brought the illegal electricity usage “problem” to the public’s attention at a press conference. The topic of the conference was the cost of Turkey’s 28 years long fight with terrorism. He shared some numbers regarding the economic cost of Turkish state’s fight with terrorism. On the next day, his list named ‘Total Cost of Terrorism’ was shared with public through media channels. The numbers were published with some excerpts from Kurtulmuş’s speech. In one of the excerpts, he mentions the cost of each item in the list:

⁵⁰ In Turkish mainstream media channels, Kurdish population is generally referred as ‘people living in the Southeastern or Eastern Anatolia’.

⁵¹ Milliyet (2005), Elektrikle Kuyu Isıtıyorlar, 29 April, “Enerjide kaybımızı önlemek için şebeke ve üretim hatlarını yer altına alma çalışmaları yaptık. İhaleyi yapmak üzereyiz. Hele Güneydoğu’da Doğu’da para ödeme diye bir şey yok. Herkes bir çengel atıyor. Kuyuya kablo da salmış. Kuyu ısıtıyor, o suyu kullanıyor. Ne kadar zekiyiz görüyorsunuz. ”

“Its effect on defense and security expenditures is 358.1 billion; its effect on borrowing cost is 161.4 billion; its effect on tourism revenue is 120.6 billion; its effect on direct foreign investment is 52.6 billion; the cost of migration to metropolitans is 78 billion; its effect on employment is 22 billion; paid compensations are 3 billion; its effect on loss/illegal electricity is 46 billion.”⁵²

Together with the defense and security expenditures, loss/illegal electricity consumption was counted as an item in the list. By doing so, “illegal” electricity usage is being framed as directly relational with the military wing of Kurdish political movement. Although, a number of “illegal” electricity users have the political motivation of resisting the Turkish state behind their action, framing the illegal electricity usage as a security related issue and attributing it solely to the Kurdish people without taking into consideration the subjective conditions of the region, proves that this practice is used as a discursive governance tool by the state.

In 2016, a very similar news was published in a pro-government newspaper. This time it is not referring the Kurdish regions, but it is referring HDP, the Kurdish Political Party:

“The police raided the building of Beyoğlu District Presidency of People’s Democratic Party in the morning hours. In the operation, that district president was put into custody, it was determined that the electricity is being used illegally (...) The Special Operation and Riot Police also gave support to the operation. The teams took precautions with TOMA (anti-riot water cannon vehicle) and armored cars called ‘Akrep’, at the entrances of the street where the district building resides in. The police officers who made a search in the office, determined that the

⁵² Yılmaz, T. (2013), Kurtulmuş: ‘Terörün 28 yıllık maliyeti 2.3 trilyon lira’, Hürriyet, 20 November, Available at: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/kurtulmus-terorun-28-yillik-maliyeti-2-3-trilyon-lira-25163610>: “ Savunma ve güvenlik harcamalarına etkisi 358.1 milyar, borçlanma maliyetine etkisi 161.4 milyar, turizm gelirlerine etkisi 120.6 milyar, doğrudan yabancı yatırıma etkisi 52.6 milyar, büyükşehirilere göçün maliyeti 78 milyar, istihdama etkisi 22 milyar, ödenen tazminatlar 3 milyar, elektrik kayıp-kaçaklara etkisi 46 milyar lira. ”

electricity is used illegally. Upon examining the electricity installation, it was revealed that there is no electric meter.”⁵³

The news is describing an operation carried out by the anti-terror police, in Beyoğlu/İstanbul office of HDP, the legal Kurdish political party. Militaristic details like the existence of the riot police, TOMA (Anti-Riot Control Vehicle) and armored vehicles were mentioned specifically together with the pictures of balaclava-clad polices, taken in front of a wall covered with writings, saying ‘DHKPC and ‘PKK’. Although, the central topic in the news was the police raid conducted in search for some “terror-related” documents, detection of the illegal electricity consumption in the building was presented as an evidence of the “illegality” of HDP. Moreover, the news was published with the headline “HDP Beyoğlu Office is Using Illegal Electricity”. By directly linking HDP, a legal political party, PKK and “illegal” electricity usage, the wording of the news criminalizes the Kurdish identity and triggers nationalistic feelings of Turkish citizens.

Besides directly relating the “illegal” electricity usage with terror, another common approach regarding this practice is naming the Kurdish population as thieves who steal from the national wealth of Turkey. In a very well-known Kemalist, neo-nationalist (ulusalcı) newspaper, Sözcü, a news regarding “illegal” electricity usage in the region, is published with the title “Here is the picture of theft”:

“While the government is simply rewarding those who use illegal electricity, of whose bills we are paying was reflected strikingly on the pictures. The pictures taken in Dicle distribution region in Southeast where the illegal usage is in high

⁵³ Yeni Akit (2016), HDP Beyoğlu Teşkilatı kaçak elektrik kullanıyor, 08 January, Available at: <https://www.yeniakit.com.tr/haber/hdp-beyoglu-teskilati-kaçak-elektrik-kullaniyor-119486.html> : “Halkların Demokratik Partisi Beyoğlu İlçe Başkanlığı binasına sabah saatlerinde polis baskın yaptı. İlçe Başkanı'nın gözaltına alındığı operasyonda elektriğin de kaçak kullanıldığı belirlendi (...) Operasyona Özel Harekat ve Çevik Kuvvet ekipleri de destek verdi. Ekipler, ilçe binasının bulunduğu sokak başlarında TOMA ve "Akrep" diye tabir edilen zırhlı araçlarla önlem aldı. Ofiste arama yapan polisler, binadaki elektriğin kaçak kullanıldığını belirledi. Elektrik tesisatının incelenmesi üzerine elektrik saatinin olmadığı ortaya çıktı. ”

levels, reveal the air conditioners that cover the exterior walls of apartments and office buildings, the dual air conditioners that are used in jerry-built shanty houses, the agricultural lands that are irrigated by using illegal electricity.”⁵⁴

According to the laws, the cost of loss/illegal electricity is reflected on the invoices of subscribers of each distribution region. Yet, in the news published about this topic, the issue is portrayed as ‘Westerners are paying for the excessive amount of electricity that Easterners steal’. Furthermore, state is perceived as the cause of this unfairness. I argue that even though state is criticized for making the law that enables the reflection of loss/illegal costs on the invoices of other subscribers to remain in force, the portrayal of Kurdish citizens as thieves, strengthens the power of state. This is because, it resembles the state’s discourse “illegal Kurds” and contributes to the deepening of ethnic segregation in the society.

3.2.1.2 Daily Life of “Illegal” Electricity Usage

In Diyarbakır, state finds itself an afterlife through the encounters of the its inhabitants with the specters of state's ideology. By this means, the power of the state maintains its existence even after the privatization of DEDAŞ. However, it does not mean that people of Diyarbakır are passive objects of the state who are trapped within its unyielding power. In fact, by using electricity “illegally” they turn into active subjects who are resisting the state⁵⁵. Yet, rather than focusing on the resistance dimension of this action, in this part, I will discuss the everyday life of state’s discursive governance tool: “illegal Kurds”, in the city.

⁵⁴Süzer, E. (2015), *İşte Hırsızlığın Fotoğrafı*, Sözcü, 21 March, Available at: <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2015/gunun-icinden/iste-hirsizligin-fotografi-779376/> In Turkish: “Hükümet, kaçak elektrik kullananları adeta ödüllendirirken, kimlerin faturasını ödediğimiz fotoğraflara çarpıcı bir şekilde yansıdı. Kaçağın en yüksek boyutlarda olduğu Güneydoğu'daki Dicle dağıtım bölgesinde çekilen fotoğraflar, apartman ve işhanlarının dış duvarını tamamını saran klimaları, derme çatma gecekondularda kullanılan çiftler klimaları, kaçak elektrikle sulanan geniş tarım arazilerini gözler önüne seriyor.”

⁵⁵ This dimension of the action will be discussed in a detailed way in the upcoming sections of this thesis.

“Nobody wants to be called as a thief” said Adnan, “People living in the West does not understand. We are not using illegal electricity because we want to. Do you think that we won’t work if there are jobs available in the city?”⁵⁶ What Adnan has said was not peculiar to him. During my interviews in Diyarbakır, I heard many similar expressions from different people. It was the state, materialized in the words of Adnan. As he says, nobody wants to be called as a thief, however the mass media has been calling the “illegal” electricity users as thieves since many years. Moreover, this narrative is appropriated by the regular citizens living in the West and has been circulated among the public as a racist prejudice used towards the “Criminal Kurds”. Appropriation of the state’s discourse and dissemination of it in the daily life, attributes “illegal” electricity usage a spectral quality. Because power of the state is transmitted in every encounter with the discourse and state is imagined as the service provider, by the “illegal” electricity users due to this quality of the practice. For that reason, even after the privatization, its power keeps being reproduced through the networks emanated around this practice. Ayşe describes the feelings felt in the encounters with the discourse as following:

“ People feel anger because of the things said about illegal electricity. Naming people as thieves without knowing their conditions is causing anger in here. It is a problem of the state. ”⁵⁷

Besides, due to the discomfort felt about this narrative, some Diyarbakır inhabitants have a tendency to indicate the high “illegal” electricity usage rates in Şanlıurfa:

⁵⁶ In Turkish: Kimse kendisine hırsız denmesini istemez. Batıda anlamıyor bazı insanlar. Biz keyfimizden kaçırmıyoruz. Burada iş olsa çalışmaz mıyız?

⁵⁷ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ayşe, Female, in her forties, human rights activist. Quotation in Turkish: Kaçak elektrik ile ilgili söylenenlere karşı öfke hissediliyor. Burada insanların durumunu bilmeyip onlara hırsız gibi davranılması öfkeliyor. Bu devletin bir sorunu.

“ In Urfa, they are using illegal electricity for agricultural production. Rates may be lower, but the amount is higher. People who use it there are AKP voters, yet they are weighing upon the poor Kurds living here in Bağlar. ”⁵⁸

The reason behind choosing Urfa for exemplifying the higher amount of “ illegal” electricity usage in agricultural production is not limited to city’s extensive agricultural production capacity but also related with the demographic structure of the city. Unlike Diyarbakır, tribes are still existing in Urfa and historically they are known as collaborators of the state:

“Real illegal electricity usage is not in household consumption. The reason behind the high amounts seen in this region is illegal usage in the agriculture. We need to look at Urfa for understanding this. We need to look at the agriculture lobbies and tribes in there. The amount of illegal electricity used by the poor people of our city is nothing. They are using it out of need. In agriculture the aim is profit making. ”⁵⁹

I argue that, with the dissemination of the state’s narrative, its power is being reproduced and due to this reproduction, people of Diyarbakır have a tendency to mention the “illegal” electricity usage amounts in Şanlıurfa when talking about this issue. It is because historically, both the city and its inhabitants are perceived as outside the struggle of Kurdish people.

3.2.2 In the Shades of Market: Imagining the Welfare State

In July 2013, DEDAŞ was privatized and the operating rights of the company were transferred to İşkaya-Eksim consortium for thirty years. With the newly introduced surveillance mechanisms, the privatization of the company

⁵⁸ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Hasan, Male, in his fifties, HDP member. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (15).

⁵⁹ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Serhat, Male, in his fifties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (16).

transformed the daily lives of the “illegal” electricity users. Many people I talked to, refer the summer of 2013 as a breakthrough in terms of increase in pressures.

“Before the privatization, there were some pressures, yet it was never serious. After the privatization, the penalties have increased. Now, one way or another, they make you pay”⁶⁰

Although the privatization created a rupture in the daily lives of “illegal” electricity users, the company continued to be perceived as a part of the state due to the intertwined relationship between state and market. To better understand the what caused this perception, we first need to examine how DEDAŞ and government have been interacting with each other. For this, I will describe four events that took place after privatization period. Accordingly, I will discuss the ideological proximity between the company and state, and the state interventions to the market.

3.2.2.1 Ideological Proximity Between the Company and the State

Just a few months after the privatization of DEDAŞ, as part of the symbolic war they declared against AKP government, Gülen Movement affiliated public prosecutors unfolded one of the biggest bribery and corruption scandals of Turkey. On December 17, 2013 a number of voice records, obtained through the tapping of AKP parliamentarians’ and ministers’ telephones, were came out⁶¹. The published records were picturing an entangled relationship, that includes bribery, illegal money transactions and irregular law enforcements, between the Saudi capital, Turkish state and the Turkish business owners. One of the voice records was a telephone call between Abdullah Tivnikli, the chairman of DEDAŞ, and İbrahim

⁶⁰ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Suat, male in his late thirties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (17)

⁶¹ For further information regarding the operation see; Hamsici, M. (2014,). What happened in 17-25 December Operations in 10 Questions, BBC 16 December 2014. Available at: https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2014/12/141212_17_25_aralik_operasyonu_neler_oldu_10_soruda

Kalın, deputy undersecretary of Prime Minister, about the high “illegal” electricity usage rates in the region. In the news published, it was claimed that, the prime minister of the era accepted to pay the loss of the company caused by the illegal electricity usage and asked for him not to cut the electricity of the illegal users until the elections.⁶² A year later, news about a second tape were published regarding a talk between Abdullah Tivnikli, and Nurettin Canikli, Giresun deputy of AKP. It was a call from Tivnikli to Canikli about a law enforcement regarding the capacity increase of wind power generation systems. According to the news, after the talk, with a motion that Canikli entered to the parliament, the new Electricity Market Law was reorganized and made aligned with Tivnikli’s requests⁶³. When combined with the previous claims regarding the unlawfulness of DEDAŞ tender because of the credit taken from Kuveyt Türk, dissemination of the news about these events, made Tivnikli “the man of the state” in the eyes of some Diyarbakır inhabitants.

“ They gave it to Abdullah Tivnikli, the man of the president. They report loss/illegal rate as 75% to EMRA but it cannot be more than 40% in the city center. When the rates reach to 75%, EMRA pays money to company. For that reason, they publish higher rates. ”⁶⁴

For Ahmet, DEDAŞ equals to Abdullah Tivnikli, and Tivnikli equals to state. Therefore, when criticizing DEDAŞ, he is also referring the state and relating the corruption of DEDAŞ with the corrupt nature of state.

Another event, that reveals why state power maintains its existence in the lives of “illegal” electricity users after the privatization, is the post-2014 elections electric cut-outs. After the elections, number of long-lasting electric cut-out incidents in the region have strikingly increased. Particularly in the rural areas, where the main economic activity is agriculture and the irrigation channels are

⁶² Cumhuriyet, Kaçak Elektrik Tapesi TBMM’de, published on 04.03.2014

⁶³ Cumhuriyet (2015), Aykut Küçükkaya, 40 Milyon Avroluk Alo, 18 December (Online). Available at: http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/turkiye/449962/40_milyon_avro_luk_alo.html

⁶⁴ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ahmet, male in his forties, working in the electricity sector. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (18).

missing, these caused great damage. Faruk explains the underlying objective of the cut-outs as following:

“DEDAŞ was cutting out the electricity in the rural areas, before the times that they know the illegal electricity usage intensifies generally. They were doing the same thing in the city. Their mentality is this, if I won’t be able to make profit, then I am not providing electricity. The problem is poverty in this city. DEDAŞ buys the electricity then sells it to the customers. When they cannot get the payments, they cut-out the electricity. You cannot do that. It is unethical.”⁶⁵

Besides DEDAŞ workers, other Diyarbakır inhabitants are considering the electricity cut outs as intentional acts. Both the duration and the frequency of the cut-outs give rise to the feeling that these incidents are resembling the state’s energy policies regarding the region. Raci Bilici, a very well-known human rights activist in the city, explained me this situation by referring the proximity of the company’s actions with the state’s ideology:

“In 2014, the electricity of the people was cut. It started right after the privatization of the company. We made a press statement in front of the DEDAŞ building. We had a fight there, a guy walked up to me. They even cut out the electricity of the patients who are living connected to dialyzer. Duration of the cuts were too long. The market owns the electricity. They make profit out of the people. We made a lot of suggestions for possible solutions, yet they have rejected them. The guy who talked with us in front of DEDAŞ was a racist human and an ideological person. He said to us, the state is behind my back you cannot do anything to me. They are using cut-outs as a method of punishment in this region. They did the same in Suriçi, for discharging people. Diyarbakır Governorship supported them. Electricity is being used as an ideological tool. Otherwise, DEDAŞ might create

⁶⁵ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, male in his thirties, working as a controller in DEDAŞ. Quotation in Turkish: “DEDAŞ kasıtlı olarak köylere elektrik vermiyordu kaçağın yoğunlaşacağı zamanlarda. Şehre de bunu yapıyorlardı. Ben kar etmeyeceksem elektrik de vermiyorum anlayışı var müessesede. Burada mesele yoksulluk. DEDAŞ elektriği satın alıyor, sonra tüketiciye satıyor, parasını alamazsa kesiyor. Bu şekilde kesemezsin, hiç etik değil.”

opportunities for those who cannot make their payments. After the privatization, they did not look for any solution. ⁶⁶

Similar to Raci Bilici, Ayşe thinks that the electricity is an ideological tool used by the state:

“During the destruction of buildings in Alipaşa neighborhood, they cut out the water and electricity. Nearly for 10 months both were disconnected. There was water only at the mosques. Although, electricity and water supposed to be utilities provided to people by the state, they transform into disciplinary tools in this city. ”
⁶⁷

Although it has been following the market logic when trying to maximize its profit with electricity cut-outs, DEDAŞ has always been considered as a part of the state due the entangled relation between two. Moreover, it adopted state’s ideological stance, instrumentalized electricity distribution and put punishment at the center of its policies. This approach of DEDAŞ towards the “illegal” electricity users in the region, further strengthened the idea of the togetherness of market and the state, among the people of Diyarbakır.

3.2.2.2 Understanding the role of the State in the Electricity Market

Another aspect that we need to discuss for understanding the dynamics of the state-market relations, is the DEDAŞ related state interventions to the electricity market. First of these interventions is the rearrangements made by the state in the loss/illegal electricity rate objectives of the distribution companies. According to the Law Amending the Electricity Market Law and Certain Other Laws (No:6719), EMRA sets loss/illegal electricity rate objectives for each distribution region, for

⁶⁶ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Raci Bilici, chairperson of İHD Diyarbakır. See Appendix (19) for the Turkish version of the quotation.

⁶⁷ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, female in her forties. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (20).

five years. If the company of the relevant region accomplishes its objective, it is rewarded with a certain amount of money. Yet if it fails to accomplish, it is obliged to pay a fee⁶⁸. Towards the end of 2017, many of the companies were failed to accomplish the past two years objectives. On 21 December 2017, EMRA made a silent rearrangement regarding the past and future objectives of the distribution companies (See Figure: 1.6).

DAĞITIM ŞİRKETLERİ	2016 Hedefleri (2015 Yılısonu)*	2016 Hedef Revizyonu (21.12.2017)	2016 Gerç. (EPDK)	2016 Gerç. (TEDAŞ)	2017 Hedefleri (07.12.2016)	2017 Hedef Revizyonu (21.12.2017)	2018 Hedefleri (21.12.2017)
ADM	7,92		5,74		7,76	7,46	7,15
Akdeniz	9,66	9,67	6,31		8,71	8,73	7,63
AKEDAŞ	7,46		7,20	7,22	7,07		7,2
Aras	31,68		25,68		29,38	29,37	25,65
AYEDAŞ	7,61		6,78		7,63		7,5
Başkent	8		6,98		7,76	7,75	7,64
Boğaziçi	9,6	9,46	9,61		9,34	8	7,98
Çamlıbel	7,93	7,96	5,97		7,79	7,82	7,55
Çoruh	9,35	9,33	9,25		9,06	9,08	9,02
Dicle	71,62		67,63	67,76	71,76	71,78	69,2
Fırat	9,74	9,72	10,56		9,77	10,99	10,47
GDZ	8,47		7,32		8,31		7,84
Kayseri ve Civ.	7,44	7,45	5,87		7,16	7,17	7
Meram	7,9		6,65		7,63	7,7	7,66
Osmangazi	7,77		5,75		7,9		7,55
Sakarya	7,42		6,58		7,35	7,34	7,34
Toroslar	13,59		12,12		13,32		12,34
Trakya	7,15	7,17	5,46		7,31	7,29	7,12
Uludağ	7,55	7,54	5,57		7,48	7,47	7,2
Vangölü	60,16	60,17	56,42		60,34	60,35	57,27
Yeşilırmak	8,5		8,20		8,76	8,95	8,06

Figure 1.6 EMRA Loss/illegal Rate Objectives

Source: UCTEA Press Statement, 2018

Accordingly, 2017 and 2018 objectives of DEDAŞ were increased.⁶⁹ Together with the other companies it is saved from paying the penalty for failing the objectives. Moreover, there is an inconsistency between the actualized rates shared in different official documents. Faruk has claimed that the real numbers are not shared with public -even with their own personnel- because of the reward/penalty system:

⁶⁸ The Law Amending the Electricity Market Law and Certain Other Laws (No: 6719), enacted on 17.06.2016

⁶⁹ UCTEA, The Chamber of Electrical Engineers, Press Statement, issued on 18.01.2018. http://www.emo.org.tr/ekler/0bc163795d6d87b_ek.pdf?tipi=2&turu=X&sube=0

“Before coming here, I called the company to learn about the loss/illegal rates of this year. However, they did not share the numbers with me. The company made a deal with the state. It is taking money from the state. That’s why it doesn’t share the real numbers even if the rates were decreased.”⁷⁰

Differently than the first one, the second state intervention to the electricity market took place at the micro level. With a new regulation enacted in February 2017, state granted DEDAŞ the authorization to seize the support payments of agricultural laborers, made by the state, in Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Mardin, Batman, Siirt and Şırnak, in exchange for their “illegal” electricity consumption loans.⁷¹ This intervention of the state strongly effected the daily lives of Diyarbakır inhabitants. Although, I did not have a chance to spend time in the rural areas of the city, many people I met had families who work as agricultural laborers. Serhat, who is living in the city center but originally from Bismil, described this incident as following:

“It is important to learn whether there is an agreement or its possibility between farmers and state. For instance, the state paid incentive to the farmer some time ago. These agricultural incentives were put into Ziraat Bankası, then the electricity debt was automatically collected from this money. Consequently, the farmer could not take the incentive money.”⁷²

State’s taking sides with DEDAŞ against the agricultural laborers, by authorizing the company to dispossess the support payments, contributes to the perception that state and the market are the same entity, among Diyarbakır inhabitants. Drawing on Mitchell, I argue that the boundary between state and market is elusive (Mitchell, 1991). However, unlike what he has claimed, in

⁷⁰ Personal interview conducted in January 2018. Quotation in Turkish: Gelmeden sordum DEDAŞ’a oranları bana bile söylemiyor. Anlaşma yapmış devletle para alıyor bu sebeple düşürse bile rakamları açıklamıyor.

⁷¹ Published in Official Gazette No.29987, dated 22 February 2017

⁷² Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Serhat, male in his fifties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (21).

Diyarbakır, the state power is reproduced because of the elusiveness of this boundary.

Although the power domain of the state is narrowed because of letting DEDAŞ intervene in the decision-making processes, it preserves its position as a powerful authority. This is because, the company is considered as an organic part of the state due the ideological proximity between two and between their policies. Moreover, state's involvement in corruption scandals, and its taking sides with the market against the people, strengthened this perception of city's inhabitants. This oneness of the two entities draws a picture of a powerful state, who is able to control every sphere in life. As Yael Navaro writes:

"The state has to be dealt with, in everyday life, as an object because it functions as though it were. A whole economy mobilized around this symbol. Even when we have come intellectually to disentangle the state, we need to keep on treating it as a reality, because there existing a reality, that has been activated through this symbol" (Navaro, 2002: 171)

For that reason, state finds itself an afterlife through the networks emanated around "illegal" electricity usage. Even after the privatization of the company, state is being imagined as an authority that supposed to provide services and its power is reproduced through the "everyday public critiques" (Navaro, 2002: 159) of the lack of these services. However, as it has been argued before, the "illegal" electricity users are not the submissive recipients of state power, through this practice they are also empowered. Yet, in this part I will only discuss why state is perceived as the sole authority and what gives it its unyielding power. Following Navaro, I will try to understand everyday imaginations of power in the margins of state.

3.2.2.3 Daily Critiques of State

I met Kübra in August 2017. She was in her thirties, working as an officer at one of the law bureaus located at the Ofis district. One day, after work, we went

together to her house. Her house was within a fifteen minutes bus ride from the Dağkapı square. After we get off the bus, we walked for a little and arrived at the house. It was an apartment in the 8th floor of a multistory building. Since she called them before, nearly her entire family was at home. There were six women sitting in the living room and waiting to talk with me.

“ State gives no support to us” stated her mother, “ The prices are very high, how can we pay that? Last year after she gave birth, we boiled sherbet in the house together with other women. Weather was already very hot, plus we boiled sherbet. For that reason, I opened the air conditioner. It was on only for one day, but electricity bill came 150 liras. How can we pay that? If they make some discounts it will be better. For instance, they can sell the electricity at half-price. Our people are poor, they cannot pay that amount of money. ”⁷³

She knows she cannot pay the bills, she knows the state will not provide access to clean electricity, but she keeps imagining the state as a legitimate body out of mere necessity. She added:

“After the privatization, the electrometers became digital. Before they became digital, using electricity “illegally” was easier. Now, they control the electrometers and write the fines from outside, even without knocking the doors. We don’t notice. We realized the fines later. It doesn’t matter if you are using illegal electricity or not, they give you the fine anyway. It wasn’t like that before. It became like that with the digital electrometers. State should do something. ” ⁷⁴

During my interviews, I realized that everybody was aware of the privatization of the company. However, they keep criticizing the state for the lack of services. It is what makes the state that powerful. Through everyday critiques, the state is reproduced as a real entity.

⁷³ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Hacer, female, in her sixties, “illegal” electricity user. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (22).

⁷⁴ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Hacer, female, in her sixties, “illegal” electricity user. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (23).

After many questions and many glasses of tea, we left the house to meet her brother. He was living in the same neighborhood. We walked for a while through the narrow streets of the inner sides of the district. Although everything was digitalized, the infrastructure of the electricity in the neighborhood was very old. There were cables hanging out from the balconies, transformers located next to the windows of the buildings and electric poles with cables very close to the ground (See Figure 1.7 and 1.8).



Figure 1.7 Bağlar District-1

Source: Photographed by the author



Figure 1.8 Bağlar District-2

Source: Photographed by the author

The neighborhood is perfectly resembling the DEDAŞ's understanding of development, based on profit maximization. Consumption amount of the electricity, transmitted via the worn cables are being measured by highly technologic digital electrometers. Passing by a couple of streets, we arrived at her brother's home. His wife welcomed us in, and right after we started to talk:

"I am disabled, my wife is also disabled. State is paying us 250 liras per month. How can I pay the electricity bill with that amount of money? Electricity bill costs 380 liras. It is impossible for me to pay. They can come and take anything they want to take. We have nothing. I will also pour gasoline on me and burn myself. State does not help us. He does not make investments in this region. ..⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, male, in his forties. Quotation in Turkish: Ben engelliyim, eşim de engelli. Bize devlet ayda 250 lira para veriyor. Nasıl elektrik faturası ödeyeyim ben bu maaşla. 380 lira fatura geliyor. Ödememi mümkün değil. Gelsinler alacakları bir şey varsa alsınlar. Ben de benzin döküp yakacağım kendimi. Devlet hiç yardım etmiyor. Bu bölgeye yatırım yapmıyor.

He adds:

“They used to cut the electricity on purpose. Transformers were also exploding but they were cutting on purpose, too. They also weren’t fixing the broken transformers. Because, it was also serving for their purpose. Now they cut the electricity of both those who pays and those doesn’t pay. For that reason, you regret for not using illegal electricity.”⁷⁶

Although he is conscious about the state’s negligence towards the region when it comes to providing services. He imagines the welfare state through criticizing its non-existence. Yet at the same time, he keeps living despite the state, with his own methods of survival like “illegal” electricity usage. Through these mundane critiques, state remains to be a legitimate authority in the lives of “illegal” electricity users, and its power is being reproduced without necessarily interacting with its institutions. As Kübra’s brother said, state exists in Diyarbakır, but not in the way it supposed to be: “We are not saying that there is no state. There is state but is that it? A state never does these things (Biz devlet yoktur demiyoruz, devlet var ama bu mu yani? Devlet dediğin böyle yapmaz).”

3.3 Resisting the State Power

In this section, I will try to examine how “illegal” electricity usage can function as a resistance tool against the unyielding power of the state. Following Yael Navaro, I will argue that resistance and power are generated within the same domain (Navaro, 2002). For that reason, we need to abandon the binary thinking that puts resistance and power in a directly confrontational position and discuss the possibilities of resistance practices in the domains where state power is being constantly reproduced.

⁷⁶ Quotation in Turkish: Eskiden elektriği kasıtlı keserlerdi. Trafolar da patlardı ama kasıtlı da keserlerdi. Patlayanı da gelip yapmazlardı. Çünkü onların da işine geliyor. Şimdi ödeyeninkini de kesiyorlar, ödemeyeninkini de kesiyorlar. İnsan pişman oluyor, keşke kaçırıydm diyor.

Throughout this section I will try to give answer to the following question: Does formation of a state-free domain possible in state-led societies? After briefly explaining what I mean by resistance, in the first part, I will discuss “illegal” electricity usage as a politically motivated resistance practice. In the second part, I will examine how “illegal” electricity usage can create a dissident realm when the motivation behind the action is not resisting the state.

3.3.1 What is Resistance?

First of all, I would like to explain which types of practices that I am not talking about when I say resistance. In the social sciences literature Marxist, leftist, organized and result-oriented mass movements are the first things that come to the minds, when writing about resistance. Moreover, Marxist insurgents, who became the subjects of the movement, have a tendency to consider the actions beyond these practices as belonging to the outside of the sphere of resistance. Such movements, that gather around the idea of horizontal organization, generally end up with fetishizing the insurgent. Constrained within the “ideal militancy” narrative, this insurgent becomes a masculine symbol who is invulnerable, freed from his desires, devoted to the cause and constantly in action. This narrative is so strong that even the death of the insurgent cannot be thought independently from the movement. The best example of this, is the militant funerals. Nobody cries at the militant funerals, but they chant slogans because the militant, who have lived his life for the movement, also dies for the movement.

Furthermore, these movements are organized based on impossibilities, which is the action repertoire used widely by the left and becomes melancholic organizations. In this way, they, in the global context, got stuck in the emotional situation that Wendy Brown calls as the left melancholia and limit their action field. According to Brown, leftist movements became obsessed with the idea that a massive transformation will take place one day through the means of the class struggle. For that reason, they started to grow into more conservative movements. More importantly, the strong longing felt for the magnificent era of the left and the

grief that came with its decline became the main sources of mobilization for the movement. This further limited and keep limiting their ability to move (Brown, 2003).

Needless to say, leftist, organized, mass movements have certain problems, yet it does not mean that they are invaluable. However, in this section, I aim to discuss the horizontal resistance practices, rather than insurgent-centered, mass movements whose ultimate aim is the massive transformations.

3.3.1.1 If not Mass Movements, What?

I will start with the question, is resistance possible without mass mobilization? James C. Scott, who approaches resistance from an anarchist perspective, is among the first scholars who argue that resistance is possible without mass mobilization (Scott, 1985). In his book, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, he writes, both the oppressed and the oppressor play the roles assigned to them in the presence of each other, yet the subordinate groups manage to resist the power of the suppressed, by using the secret discourse they created in their "offstage talks" (Scott, 1990). For him, these secret talks of the oppressed create a crack in the public performance and open up new domains for resistance. Although the hidden transcripts, as he calls them, opens up cracks that enable the subordinates to leak from the power domain of the oppressor, they are not totally immune from other power relations because they too are performances. He adds, the only difference between two performances is their audiences. While, in the former they need to perform their roles according to the power relation between the two, in the latter the subordinates play another role by ridiculing the oppressor. Scott, argues that in the absence of visible resistance practices, we should look for the "hidden transcripts". For him, these practices cannot replace "the real resistance" but can only be supportive to it (Scott, 1990).

Drawing on Scott, I argue that invisible resistance practices can be called as resistance. Particularly, his concept *infrapolitics* (Scott, 1990), helps us to move beyond the binary thinking, by showing us that there is an invisible struggle behind

the curtains, and this struggle has its own dynamics. However, for him, invisible resistance practices cannot replace visible resistance practices. Within the context of hidden transcripts, infrapolitics only serves the purpose of pushing the limits of possible gains of visible resistance practices. This infrapolitics, does not necessarily include language. Secret discourses play an important role in the formation of resistance, yet unspoken practices are also a part of the infrapolitics. Scott exemplifies these practices as following; villagers evasion of their soil bit by bit, after it was dispossessed by the state or farmers foot-dragging when working on the lands that was forcefully taken from them. He calls them, "everyday forms of resistance" (Scott, 1990) and argues that they grow stronger with the help of the hidden transcripts taken place behind the doors. However, these practices like hidden transcripts produce other forms of power relations within the subordinate groups. He adds, the oppressed, whose political sphere is restricted by its relations with the oppressor, has its own politics as well and such politics cannot be separated from its resistance which comes into existence at the encounters with the oppressor.

By pointing out the intra-group struggles of the subordinates and refusing to consider this domain as immune from power relations, Scott trips up Marxist understanding of a single oppressed class with the common consciousness. Yet, this doesn't mean that his approach to resistance is problem-free. Although, he helps us to imagine different resistance practices, his theoretical approach has its own predicaments. Particularly, his argument regarding everyday forms of resistance being the supportive practices along the road leading to mass rebellions, trivializes the possible gains of these practices. However, in this section, my main aim is to discuss possible gains of these kinds of practices. For that reason, despite being an important cornerstone in resistance studies, his theoretical approach remains insufficient for understanding the kind of resistance practices that I aim to discuss.

3.3.1.2 Resistance of Infrastructure or Infrastructure of Resistance

Before examining how “illegal” electricity usage can function as a resistance tool, we need to discuss the possible contributions of this kind of approach to studying resistance. I put infrastructure instead of people, to the center of my approach in order to minimize the power relations and look for horizontally constructed dissident realms. In fact, it is not a new approach to follow a network and human’s way of building relations therewith, removing human from the center. Actor Network Theory, based on the idea that the material and the semiotic work together, mentions that relation buildings of human and nonhuman constitute a network (Callon, 1999). ANT, which tries to explain the world with this network, does not accept existence of any area other than this and therefore its analysis is superficial. In addition, given that it suggests talking only about what has happened and prefers to ignore the periods prior to what has happened, it can be argued that it has a colonial point of view due to ignoring the political, economic and historical process that brought to the phenomenon studied to its current state. It is obvious that a theory with this kind of approach does not help us to discuss a horizontal dissident realm by following the “illegal” electricity. Because, this kind of writing ends up only with a discussion that is sterilized from politics. Yet, following the network and human’s relation with that network is significant in terms of the possibilities that it would create.

Therefore, in order to correct the shortcomings of ANT, first of all, we need to talk about the processes and the networks of electricity production, distribution and consumption. By doing this we will be able to discuss the possibility of illegal electricity usage to create state-free domains in precarious societies from an unsterile perspective. Because, electricity is produced via transforming the natural resources into energy and these are not “non-violent” processes. Instead, the production and consumption processes are inherently violent. Because, natural resources, as its the name implies, derive from the nature and the process of transforming it into energy brings with it the occupation of the lands and the destruction of the nature. In other words, the transforming of the natural resources

starts primarily with disturbing the natural balance and continues with the commercialization of the energy production.

To be more precise, I would like to touch upon only the Southeastern Anatolia Project (the “GAP”). GAP’s section concerning electricity generation includes 22 hydroelectric power plants (HPP) and 19 dams which have been constructed or are still under construction in nine provinces, all of which, except for Kilis, are located in the Kurdish region. One of the most destructive outcomes of the GAP, which was launched as an improvement project for the region, is deterioration of the natural balance and consequently, submerge of many residential and agricultural area due to the HPPs and dams constructed on the two large rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris. Besides, I believe it is necessary to mention the nonvisible destructiveness of the GAP. When we look from the Kurdish population’s point of view, we see that the GAP includes other violent elements. Especially when we look at the illegal electricity consumption figures, we can argue that the figure for illegal electricity consumption rate in 2016 being 67.63% announced by Dicle Elektrik Dağıtım A.Ş., the authorized electricity distribution company for 6 of the 9 provinces within the GAP’s scope, is conspicuously high. I am in the opinion that it is insufficient to explain illegal electricity consumption at such high levels based solely on economic impossibilities. Failing to address the reactional side of the illegal electricity consumption at such high levels in the Kurdish region which hosts the underlying rivers within the GAP would undoubtedly lead to an incomplete analysis.

Therefore, we need to consider the motivations like reclaiming the resources and the land, while thinking about the illegal electricity usage. Even though, we would head towards Turkey, by drawing on GAP, it is crucial not to ignore the claims on the land and resources in these kinds of geographies. For that reason, throughout this section I will try to answer, does the illegal electricity usage have the potential to create a state-free domain, when we consider all these circumstances? To do this, first I will discuss the “illegal” electricity usage as a resistance tool used against the colonial state. Then I will examine how it can open up new spaces as a silent resistance practice.

3.3.1.3 Resisting the Colonial State

Intensification of the “illegal” electricity usage in the city coincides with the forced migration of 1990s. As many people I have met in Diyarbakır have explained, “illegal” electricity usage started out of necessity but acquired a political meaning throughout time. A previous DEDAŞ worker relates the politicization of this practice with the region’s remarkable hydroelectric generation potential:

“Household consumption of illegal electricity has increased in 1986-1987 and 1992-1993. Therefore, forced migration is an important factor. Moreover, it is directly related with this. Sur and Bağlar are the districts with highest illegal electricity rates. People came to these neighborhoods after losing everything they have. They are poverty-stricken people, how can you cut their electricity. Illegal electricity usage started like that, out of need, but now they see it as their right. Because, electricity is produced from the resources of this region (Gariban insanlar bu insanlar gidip nasıl keseceksin elektriklerini. Kaçak elektrik böyle ihtiyaçtan başladı şimdi hak olarak görüyorlar bunu. Enerji buradan üretiliyor diye).”⁷⁷

Implementation of GAP, left an indelible mark in the lives of the region’s inhabitants. Besides its economic effects, the project also had political and ecological effects. For a remarkable portion of the Kurdish population, particularly for lower classes and politically active people, GAP is the follow up of the colonization project that started with Sykes Picot. As in the words of a Diyarbakır inhabitant, “it is an ideological project” because it was the Kurdish waters that state has been building dams on.

⁷⁷ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Female, engineer in her thirties.

“ Here, the electricity is the people’s electricity. You have taken it without paying its price. Now you call the people as illegal electricity users and try to punish them.

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For him, state has dispossessed the waters of the region, therefore, he cannot punish the people by saying that they are using the electricity “illegally”. One of the main reasons behind this approach is the hydroelectric generation potential of the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. Since the region is inhabiting the half of the hydroelectricity potential of Turkey and lacking the industry to use it, GAP is perceived as state’s exploitation of the waters of Kurdistan, particularly by the politically motivated Kurds who are living in the region. For that reason, the project is associated with the further economic and political marginalization of the region among people. In relation with this, “illegal” electricity usage is thought as claiming the land rights back. Ayşe describes this issue as following:

“This region produces a serious amount of electricity. All the dams constructed as a part of GAP are located in this region. The cost of this project to the region is very high. When I was a kid we used to say, they are producing the electricity by using our waters. State is using the illegal electricity as a racist discourse. Yet the effects of hydroelectric power plants on the region are very serious. ”⁷⁹

By using electricity “illegally”, they are not only claiming their lands back but also resisting to the securitization of the region. Especially with the construction of eleven security dams on the border (Iraq and Iran) regions of Hakkari and Şırnak provinces, the distrust felt towards the state’s policies in the region has accelerated and GAP began to be considered as the symbol of state power and violence among the region’s inhabitants. For many “illegal” electricity users, like Suat, securitization

⁷⁸ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Male, NGO worker in his fifties. Quotation in Turkish: Elektrik burada halkın elektriğidir. Sen zaten bedelini ödemedi alıyorsun. Şimdi kaçak kullanıyorlar diyerek cezalandırmaya çalışıyorsun.

⁷⁹ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ayşe, Female, human rights activist in her forties. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (24).

of the region and dispossession of the Kurdish waters are inseparable aspects of the hydroelectric power plant constructions:

“ Hydroelectric power plant projects are multipurposed. They are both for the securitization and selling the electricity to other people. Here, they produce electricity from our waters and sell it to others. To overcome possible objections, state subcontracted the projects to local businessman and gave tenders to local families. As a result of this, objections have lessened. ”⁸⁰

Another aspect of “illegal” electricity usage as a resistance practice is how it serves the purpose of creating justice for the people living in the shantytowns of Diyarbakır, in other words (margins)margins of the state. After the forced migration, economic hardships were accelerated in the city and state did not provide sufficient amount of help for the incoming migrants. This vacuum was either filled by the municipality or by the people themselves. Using electricity “illegally” was among the survival techniques of forced migrants. However, with time it gained political connotation and became a resistance practice used as a revenge tool against the state violence also by the people who can pay their bills. As Ahmet puts forwards, they are using electricity “illegally” in return for state’s previous maltreatments:

“ Here, people use it because they think it is state’s property. They say, state has done this to us, that’s why it is our right to use it. Even people who can pay their bills use “illegal” electricity. They are thinking, we have to use it. If they believe that state is taking care of them, they won’t use. They won’t use if they believe that state will provide services to them. ”⁸¹

⁸⁰ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Suat, Male, in his thirties, human rights activist. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (25).

⁸¹ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Ahmet, Male, electrical engineer in his forties. Quotation in Turkish: Buradaki halk devletin malıdır diye kullanıyor. Devlet bize bunu yaptı, biz de hakkımızı böyle kullanırız. Ödeyebilecek insanlar da kullanıyor. Halk kaçak kullanmazsam olmaz durumuna geldi. Devletin kendisine sahip çıkacağını inancı olsa kullanmayacak. Hizmet edeceğine inansa yapmayacak.

Without directly confronting with the state, the “illegal” electricity users are opening up dissident realms in their own houses. They are taking back, what they think they have already deserved because of their previous experiences from their encounters with the state.

“Forced migration caused the acceleration of poverty and the hardships in the city. A political stance has evolved in here (Burada politik bir bakış açısı gelişti). State took everything we have from us. Let us take something from it, too (Devlet bizim her şeyimizi aldı. Burada biz de ondan alalım).”⁸²

With the effects of the community, this resistance practice disseminated, and, in some neighborhoods, it turned into a mass action. Hasan gives certain districts of Bağlar as an example of these neighborhoods and explains:

“Illegal electricity usage started because of poverty but it highly increased due to lack of state control. In some houses, they turn on the UFO (electrical heater) and open the windows at the same time. Because the state did not provide any support after the forced migration, a reactionary approach towards the system has evolved in here. Besides, there was the effect of community. Those who does not use illegal electricity started to use it due to other people in their neighborhoods.”⁸³

Although, the “illegal” electricity usage can function as a horizontal resistance practice that comes into existence through the engagement of individual households with each other and moves along without putting the people and the state in direct confrontation, it is not entirely immune from power relations. Especially, framing of this action by certain users as claiming their land rights back, when there is an active Kurdish political movement whose main argument is the colonization of the lands of Kurdistan by four nation states, makes it harder to consider this practice as independent from the movement.

⁸² Personal interview conducted in January 2019, Suat, Male, in his thirties.

⁸³ Personal interview conducted in August 2017, Hasan, Male, in his sixties. For the quotation in Turkish see Appendix (26).

Moreover, it contributes to the reproduction of the state power through the imaginaries of state as a legitimate⁸⁴ authority to resist against, while creating dissident realms at the same time. It also strengthens the antagonistic relation between the state and PKK, which is being supported by the both sides, through enabling the maintenance of the narrative “Illegal Kurds”, the state’s discursive governance tool. As Yael Navaro writes, sometimes realms of resistance overlap with the realms that state power is being reproduced. I argue that, we should approach the “illegal” electricity usage as such a resistance practice and discuss its limitations and possibilities together. Because, its being controversial does not mean that it is invaluable. By using electricity “illegally”, the region’s inhabitants are creating their own justice and filling the vacuum opened by the state via using their own means. Yet, electricity is an exhaustible resource, and electricity production is inherently a violent process due to its destructive effects at the ecological and economical levels. For that reason, “illegal” electricity usage as a resistance practice, becomes a paradoxical act because it still includes electricity production, which gives great damage to Kurdish waters and agricultural lands.

By keeping in mind its possible limitations, in the second part of this section I will briefly discuss how “illegal” electricity usage, as a silent resistance practice, can open up new spheres of survival when state becomes illegitimate in the eyes of people.

3.3.1.4 Trauma and State Power

In January 2018, I walked the narrow streets of Suriçi to meet Filiz. It was two years after the end of urban clashes, however its effects were still there. In the entrance of every street, there were civil polices waiting yet the streets were very crowded. Filiz was living in one of the remaining neighborhoods of Suriçi. She left

⁸⁴ What I mean by legitimate is different from a Weberian understanding. Here, legitimacy of the state is coming from its illegitimate status in the eyes of the public. For a more detailed discussion see the conclusion chapter.

her previous house due to the clashes, together with her family. After they have left, their house was demolished.

“I have seen the worst” said Filiz, “ I have seen the bombs exploding, I have seen kids dying, I have seen the worst” she added, “Yes, we are using illegal electricity. We have always been using. They can come and try take something from me if they wish. I won’t give anything to them. I have seen the worst. What else they can do to me. If they wish they can give it a try. Let them come and see”⁸⁵

As she stated, she has seen everything. She witnessed the worst forms of state violence, she witnessed the worst forms of PKK’s violence. She has seen everything. For her using “illegal” electricity is not something anymore. It is just a part of her daily survival practices.

“They can come and write a fine to me. I don’t care. I don’t want anything from the state. They can do whatever they want. Every day, I saw kids dying, mines exploding”⁸⁶

Like many other Sur inhabitants, for Filiz state has lost its legitimacy. It is no more an authority, it is no more a service provider, it is no more a solid body to resist against. State remained as a name, responsible for her trauma. “During the last two elections, I did not go to ballot box. The party who I voted for planted mines in front of my door. Why do I go to ballot box?”⁸⁷ Due to what she has witnessed, Kurdish political movement has too lost its legitimacy together with the state. “I curse all of them. I curse the state. I curse the other one. The state went to its home.

⁸⁵ Personal interview conducted in January 2018, Filiz, Female, in her thirties. Quotation in Turkish: Ben en kötüsünü görmüşüm, daha kötüsü yok. Bombaların patladığını gördüm. Çocukların öldüğünü gördüm. Ben en kötüsünü görmüşüm. Kullanıyoruz kaçak elektrik evet. Hep kullanıyorduk. Alsınlar istiyorlarsa gelip, ben hiçbir şey vermem. Ne yapabilirler ki bana. Ben en kötüsünü görmüşüm. Bana daha ne yapabilirler. Alsınlar hadi, gelsinler de alsınlar.

⁸⁶ Quotation in Turkish: İstiyorlarsa gelsinler ceza kessinler. Umurumda değil. Devletten hiçbir şey istemiyorum. Ne yapıyorlarsa yapsınlar. Ben burada her gün çocukların öldüğünü mayınların patladığını gördüm.

⁸⁷ Quotation in Turkish: Ben iki seçimdir oy vermiyorum. Benim oy verdiğim kapıma mayın döşedi. Ben niye oy vereyim?

The others went back to mountain. We lived the real consequences “⁸⁸ After experiencing the violence, everything she has previously believed lost their meanings. Now she is only thinking the daily survival of her family because she is exhausted politically. She does not even want to go to the ballot box. I argue that, her indifference is also a political act which enables her to move beyond the two fields of power that are active in the city. As a part of her daily survival practices, “illegal” electricity usage should be treated as a tool of resisting the state and the market. Although, her “illegal” electricity usage has no political motivation at the discursive level, it is a very political act. Because for Filiz, the word legal has lost its meaning during and after the clashes, and the apathy she feels towards a possible fine due to “illegal” electricity usage is the resemblance of this illegitimization of the state. For that reason, I argue that, by creating her family a sphere of survival, she turns “illegal” electricity usage into a horizontal resistance practice that has the potential to connect to other dissident realms, like self-help neighborhood groups, in Suriçi.

3.4 Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter, following the networks emanated around “illegal” electricity usage, I studied how state is imagined in the everyday life of individuals. I argued that the power of the state is constantly reproduced through the encounters of “illegal” electricity users with the statist discourse “illegal” Kurds, who use electricity illegally and through the imaginations of welfare state in the daily critiques of the lack of state services.

Moreover, I approach this phenomenon as a resistance practice, that can offer new domains of survival and enables the city’s inhabitants to fill the vacuum left vacant by the state and to create their own justice.

⁸⁸ Quotation in Turkish: Hepsine lanet olsun. Devlete de lanet olsun, öbürüne de lanet olsun. Devlet evine döndü, öbürleri dağa döndü. Olan bize oldu.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on a field research conducted in Diyarbakır, throughout this thesis, I examined the entangled relationship between state, society and market emanated around the network of “illegal” electricity usage. During my times in the city, I realized that, even though DEDAŞ was privatized, it is still perceived as a part of the state. For that reason, I asked, does state necessarily need its institutions to maintain its existence and looked for the domains where the power of the state is being reproduced even after unsubscribing from the government services.

To be able to discuss this practice from a non-colonial perspective, I first tried to explain the two different meanings of the word “illegal”, one for the western Turkey and one for the Kurdish cities. In Diyarbakır, I realized, what is criminalized in the West, considered as normal in the East. I argued that, this discrepancy is caused by certain political, economic and historical factors like the previous state policies regarding Kurdish lands and populations or the ongoing armed clashes in the region. These contributed to the widening of the gap between East and West economically and to the criminalization of the Kurdish identity. Since the norms are created in accordance with the dominant ethnicity, we will have a colonial perspective if we define the limits of the legal only within the norms without taking into consideration the unique conditions of the region. For that reason, bearing the subjective conditions of the region in mind, I tried to discuss in which ways the state is imagined in the everyday life of Diyarbakır inhabitants. With an anthropological approach to studying the state I aimed to explore: 1) discursive governance tools of the state 2) blurred boundaries between market and the state 3) everyday imaginations of the welfare state 4) illegal electricity usage as a tool of resistance.

After spending some time in the city, I figured out that the privatization of DEDAŞ functions as a turning point in the lives of “illegal” electricity users, because from that time onwards surveillance of this practice has accelerated incrementally. During my both visits, I talked with many current and past DEDAŞ workers. One of the most common things they shared with me was the state’s absence when it

comes to surveillance. For them state has been condoning the “illegal” electricity usage to prevent the radicalization of the incoming forced migrants to the city. Another issue they mentioned a lot was the distortion in the statistics regarding “illegal” electricity usage rates. Many of the past and current workers were skeptical about the numbers shared with the public. They were saying, in this region there are very small number of industrial plants, in Kocaeli factories are using “illegal” electricity but their consumptions are not being reflected to the numbers and one factory’s “illegal” consumption for one day is more than the one-month long consumption of a household. I argue that, although state has turned a blind eye to this practice it used “illegal” electricity usage as a discursive governance tool to strengthen the discriminatory image towards Kurdish citizens as criminals. By doing so, it contributed to the deepening of the ethnic segregation which cultivates the antagonistic relation between state and PKK. Following Yael Navaro, I also tried to discuss how state power is reproduced “within the agencies of what is called society” (Navaro, 2002: 135) through the appropriation of this statist discourse by the ordinary Turkish citizens. I claim that in every encounter with the discourse, specter of the state haunts the “illegal” electricity users. By this means, state finds itself an afterlife, even after the company was privatized.

Moreover, drawing on Mitchell, I argued that the boundary between state and market is blurred in Diyarbakır. However, unlike what he has claimed, in this city, the power of the state is reproduced because of the elusiveness of the boundary. Although the power domain of the state is narrowed with the intervention of DEDAŞ to the decision-making processes, state remained as a powerful authority in the eyes of the city’s inhabitants due the perception that the two are the same entity. The reasons behind this perception are mainly; the ideological proximity between the new owners of the company, particularly Abdullah Tivnikli, and the AKP government, state’s interventions to the electricity market for favoring the private companies, and resemblance between the state’s ideology and the policies of the company that put the punishment at its center. Due to this perception, DEDAŞ is being considered as an outsider (yabancı) because state has always been the other, especially among the politicized public and in the shantytowns of the city.

Paradoxically, past and current state officials and the workers of DEDAŞ, criticize the company and the state without hesitating, by reason of belonging to the local community. Nearly for all people I have met in the city, their identities as Kurdish citizens from Diyarbakır is seen more important than any other belongings. For instance, Suat, who is a well-known human rights activist and a previous municipality worker⁸⁹, talked to me about his experience with DEDAŞ controllers as following:

“DEDAŞ workers were well-intentioned. We hired a shop here but could not pay the electricity bills. They came a couple of times to cut our electricity, but they helped us after they have learnt that I was purged due to a statutory decree (KHK ile ihraç edildiğimi öğrenince yardımcı oldular). They were sympathetic towards the Kurdish political movement; therefore, they did not cut our electricity. ”

Despite of DEDAŞ personnel’s attitudes in certain encounters, this oneness of two entities draws a picture of a powerful state, who is able to control every sphere in life. Therefore, state is being imagined as an authority and a legitimate service provider even after the privatization of DEDAŞ, and its power is reproduced through the “everyday public critiques” (Navaro, 2002: 159) of the lack of these services. Although the “illegal” electricity users are conscious about the state’s negligence towards the region when it comes to providing services, they keep imagining the welfare state through criticizing this non-existence.

Secondly, following Yael Navaro, I argue that resistance and power are generated within the same domain (Navaro, 2002). Therefore, we need to abandon the binary thinking, which puts resistance and reproduction of state power in direct opposition, to better understand how “illegal” electricity usage can function as a resistance tool within the very sphere that state power is constantly reproduced. Based on my experiences in the city, I discussed “illegal” electricity usage as a politically motivated resistance practice, that is used against the colonial state, and

⁸⁹ He was purged from the municipality after a statutory decree issued in 2016, during the state of emergency regime in Turkey.

a silent resistance practice, that can open up new spheres of survival when state becomes illegitimate in the eyes of people. As for the former, I claim that it will be insufficient to explain this practice solely with economic reasons. Failing to address the reactionary side of the “illegal” electricity usage at such high levels in the Kurdish region which hosts the underlying number of rivers within the GAP would undoubtedly lead to an incomplete analysis. For that reason, I approach reclaiming the resources and the land, as among the motivations of the “illegal” electricity usage. I argue that this action is a horizontal resistance practice that can open up dissident realms through the engagement of household with each other, when resisting against the ‘colonial’ state. However, it is not totally immune from other power relations, especially in the presence of a Kurdish political movement, whose main argument is the colonization of the lands of Kurdistan by four nation state, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Iraq. Moreover, it contributes to the reproduction of state power, by imagining the state as an authority to resist against. Through this action state acquires a legitimacy, coming from its illegitimate status in the eyes of the public. For resistance to continue, a body to resist against is necessary. Since the antagonistic relation between state and PKK strengthens the power of the state in the eyes of the Turkish public, cultivation of this relation grants more legitimacy to state’s use of violence in the region.⁹⁰ Here, the meaning of the legitimate is different from a Weberian understanding. Because, in Diyarbakır, state’s presence felt differently than the western parts of the Turkey due to its historical heritage as being the unofficial capital of Kurdistan.

As Yael Navaro writes, sometimes realms of resistance overlap with the realm where state power is reproduced. I approached the “illegal” electricity usage as such a resistance practice and discuss its impossibilities together with its possibilities. Although, it contributes to the reproduction of state power in a sense, “illegal” electricity usage let’s inhabitants to create their own justice and fill the gaps left vacant by the state. For that reason, finally, I discussed how this practice can open up new spheres of survival, when all the power domains in the city lost their

⁹⁰ It also strengthens PKK’s position, yet I did not give details about this topic because it is beyond the scope of this thesis.

legitimacy in the eyes of the public. Similar with Filiz, after witnessing the urban clashes in Suriçi, state became illegitimate for many inhabitants of the neighborhood. This illegitimization finds can be traced in the daily lives of the neighborhood's inhabitants as an apathy felt towards a possible fine coming from the state (actually it is coming from the company) for "illegal" electricity usage. For that reason, "illegal" electricity usage is a very political act, even when it does not have a political motivation behind it. By being an important part of the sphere of survival created by the city's inhabitants, it becomes a horizontal resistance practice that has the potential to connect to other dissident realms, like self-help neighborhood groups, in Suriçi.

Throughout this thesis, I tried to discuss the intertwined relationship between state, society and market. Differently from the previous approaches, I followed Yael Navaro's lead and discuss this relation by looking at the encounters of individuals with the state or with the specters of the state. Furthermore, I looked for the possible cracks that can offer new spheres of resistance. However, for a better understanding of this phenomenon further studies focusing on the affective dimensions of this relationship is necessary.

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APPENDIX

- (1) Diyarbakır çok travma yaşadı. Burada herkes travma yaşamış. Diyarbakır çok depresif bir şehir. Türkiye'nin en depresif şehri.
- (2) Trafikte ölenler vardı. Şehir hayatına alışık olmadığı için çocukların trafikte öldüğünü hatırlıyorum. İnsanlar yaşam alanı değişimi yaşadı. Ağalar maydanoz satarak geçiniyorlardı. Sınıfsal ötekileştirme çok fazlaydı bu dönemde.
- (3) Göç sonrası şehir kültürü, köy kültürü çatışması ortaya çıktı. Köy kültürü şehre geldi. Şehirlerimiz mega köyler oldu. Devlet bu konuda hiçbir şey yapmadı. Mağduriyeti size yaşıyorum, sorumlu da sizsiniz diyemezsiniz.
- (4) Zorunlu göç öncesinde Bağlar'ın nüfusun 100.000 iken şimdi 350.000. Bu insanlar bir gecede şehre geldi. Evlerini boşaltmak için 15 dakika verildi sadece. Yanlarında hiçbir şeyleri olmadan geldiler. Köyleri boşaltıldıktan sonra nereye gidecekleri, ne yapacakları söylenmedi. Devlet ne yapacakları konusunda destek olmadı. Bu noktada devletin sosyal devlet olması gerekiyordu. İnsanların kente uyumu için hiçbir şey yapılmadı. Bu insanlar hayvancılık ve tandır kültüründen geliyorlar. Yapmayı bildikleri iş bundan ibaret. Şimdi bile gidin Bağlar'a sokaklarda tandırları görürsünüz. Bazı apartmanların bodrum katları hala ahır olarak kullanılıyor. Şehir merkezinde hayvancılık yapıyorlar.
- (5) Zorunlu göçten ötürü bu mahallelerde kentle çelişkili bir durum oluştu. Kentin dönüşümüne ilişkin kentsel rehabilitasyon yapılması gerekliydi ama bunların hiçbiri yapılmadı. Biz belediye olarak çok uğraştık ama mesela bank yapıyorsun bankın önüne yere oturuyor insanlar. Alıştırmak çok zor. Ayrıca fakirlik çok fazla.
- (6) Bir ara suya abone olun, belediyeye kazandırıyor kampanyası yaptılar. Çok faydalı oldu bu kampanyalar. Birçok insan gitti hemen abone oldu. Yani bizim belediyemizdir anlayışı karşılık buldu.
- (7) Cezalar çok fazla. Özelleştikten sonra iyice arttı. Elektriğin parası da arttı, cezalar da arttı. Artık gece gelip yazıyorlar. Ne zaman geleceklerini bilmiyorsun. Kapıyı çalmıyorlar.
- (8) 1940'lardan beri sulama kanalları gelecek diyorlar, hala gelmedi. Barajlar yaklaşık kırk senedir su tutuyor. Sulama kanalları geldiğinde barajların ömrü dolmuş olacak. Bunlar bilinçli politikalar.

- (9) HES'ler önemli. Güvenlik açısından özellikle. Çünkü buralar gerillanın saklandığı yerler. Ayrıca tarımı etkiliyor. Birçok köyü su basıyor. Hasankeyf mesela şu an. Bunun yanında tatlı suyu enerjiye çeviriyorlar, bu da ekolojik dengeyi bozuyor.
- (10) Otuz sene boyunca çalıştım. Otuz senenin sonunda, tek sahip olduğumuz şey o evdi. Bir avukat tuttum, 10.000 lira para istedi. Devlet zaten veriyor 40.000 lira, onu da iki senedir alamadık. Arkadaşlardan borç aldım avukatın parasını ödedim. Devletten paramızı alabilirsek bize 30.000 lira kalacak. Ben o parayla nasıl ev alayım? Üç katlı kocaman ev, 40.000 lira mı eder? Biz evden çıktığımızda sokağa çıkma yasağı daha bizim oraya gelmemiştir ama çatışmalar çok yakındaydı. Çocuklar korkuyor biz de korktuk boşalttık evi. Ertesi gün sokağa çıkma yasağı ilan edildi. Canımızı zor kurtarmışız. İstemiyoruz onlardan para falan ama adalet bu mu? Ben de evimin tapusu var, adalet bu mu?
- (11) Kayıp/kaçak oranı 65.7%, 5.364.000.000 kwatt, mesken ağırlıklı. Tarımsal ve sanayide sorun çözüldü. Merkezde 40% civarı oran. Diyarbakır 80'lerde kayıp/kaçak oranının en düşük olduğu illerden birisiydi. 90'larda zorunlu göçle oran arttı. Daha sonra tüketim israf boyutuna ulaştı. Devlet yıllarca popülist bir tavır sergiledi. Olaylar sebebiyle uzak durdu. Kaçıran insanlar için hırsız/dalavereci/üçkağıtçı dendi ama çözüm için hiçbir şey yapılmadı. Hırsız damgası vuruldu ama bir şey yapılmadı. Göz yumma vardı. Halbuki devlet "sosyal devlet" olmalı.
- (12) Özelleştirme öncesinde bizim senelerdir yaptığımız çalışmalar vardı kayıp/kaçak oranlarını düşürmek ile ilgili fakat projelerimizin hiçbirini uygulanmadı. Devlet bütçe ayırmadı. Elektrik direklerini yer altına alma, uzaktan okuma gibi projeler 12 senelik işler. Fakat özelleşmeden önce yapılmadı. Şimdi devletten ödenek alıyorlar.
- (13) Bu bölgede kaçak kullanımının temel sebebi yoksulluk.DEDAŞ resmîyken insanlara çok karışmıyordu. Kotası vardı. Günde 2 tane yakala yetiyordu. Böyle böyle alışkanlık haline geldi. Kontrol de etmiyorlar zaten düşüncesiyle.Şimdi çoklu panolar ile takip ediliyor. Modemle takip ediliyor. Herhangi bir müdahalede modem sinyal veriyor. Uzaktan müdahale sistemi kuruldu. Açma, kesme uzaktan yapılıyor. Ama bu pilot proje. Henüz çok verimli çalışmıyor.
- (14) Kayıp/kaçak oranı gerçek resmi tam olarak yansıtmıyor. Orandan ziyade hane başı enerji "tüketim miktarlarına" bakmanız gerekli. Çünkü Diyarbakır'da kaçak daha çok hane tüketiminden geliyor fakat sanayide kaçırıldığı zaman tüketim çok daha fazla. Hane sayısı fazla olduğu için oranı yükseltiyor, 1 fabrika bir mahalle toplamı kadar tüketiyor. Hane/hane dışı

kayıp/kaçak oranı önemli bunu hesaplaman gerekli. Toplu veri kullanılıyor oranlar hesaplanırken.

- (15) Urfa'da tarımsal üretimde kaçak elektrik kullanılıyor. Oran daha düşük çıkabilir ama miktar daha fazla. Bunu kullananlar AKP seçmenleri aslında ama buradaki gariban Bağlar'da yaşayan Kürtlere yükleniyorlar.
- (16) Fakat esas kayıp/kaçak hane tüketiminde değil. Bölgede bu kadar büyük miktarlar görülmesinin sebebi tarımsalda kayıp/kaçak. Urfa'ya bakmamız lazım bunun için. Oradaki tarımsal lobilere, aşiretlere. Buradaki gariban insanın kaçırdığı bir şey değil. Mecburiyetten yapılıyor. Tarımda rant için kaçırılıyor.
- (17) Özelleştirme öncesi zaman zaman baskılar oldu ama çok ciddi yaptırımlar olmadı. Özelleştirme sonrası cezalar arttı. Şimdi bir şekilde alınıyor.
- (18) Zaten Abdullah Tivnikli'ye verdiler. Cumhurbaşkanı'nın adamı. EPDK'ya 75% kayıp kaçak var diyorlar ama merkezde 40%'tan fazla olamaz. EPDK 75'i bulunca para ödüyor. O yüzden yüksek gösteriyorlar.
- (19) 2014 yılında elektrikleri kesildi halkın. Özelleştirmeden hemen sonra başladılar bu işe. DEDAŞ'ın önünde basın açıklaması yaptık biz. Üzerime yürüdü adam orada epey kavga ettik. Mesela hasta diyaliz cihazına bağlı onun elektriğini de kesiyorlar. Çok uzun sürüyordu o dönemde kesintiler. Sermayenin elinde elektrik. Burada halk üzerinden para kazanıyorlar. Biz birçok öneride bulunduk, gelin buna birlikte çözüm bulalım dedik ama yanaşmadılar. Jeneratör kullanım bedellerini bile iade etmiyorlar. DEDAŞ'ta bizimle konuşan, ırkçı bir insan ideolojik bir kişiydi. Bize devlet arkamdadır bana bir şey yapamazsınız dedi. Bu bölgede elektrik kesintisi cezalandırma yöntemi olarak kullanılıyor. Suriçi'ni boşaltmak için de elektrik kesintileri yapıldı. Valilik de buna destek verdi. Elektrik ideolojik bir araç olarak kullanılıyor. Yoksa DEDAŞ kaçak kullananları ödeyebileceği imkanlar yaratabilirdi. Özelleştirmeden sonra, çözüme yaklaşmadılar.
- (20) Bu yıkım esnasında da Alipaşa'da su ve elektrik kesildi. 10 aya yakın süre ikisi de yoktu. Sadece camilerde su vardı. Elektrik, su hizmet aracı olması gerekirken terbiye etme aracına dönüşüyor burada.
- (21) Devletle çiftçinin bir anlaşma durumu ya da ihtimali var mı öğrenmek önemli. Mesela bir süre önce devlet çiftçiye teşvik verdi Ziraat Bankasına yattı bu tarımsal teşvikler, sonra buraya yatan paradan elektrik

borcu otomatik olarak tahsil edildi. Sonuç olarak çiftçi teşvik bedelini alamamış oldu.

(22) Devlet hiç destek vermiyor. Fiyatlar çok yüksek biz bunu nasıl ödeyelim? Geçen sene ha bu doğum yaptı. Evde şerbet kaynatıyoruz bir sürü kadın. Hava zaten sıcak, burada duramıyorsun. Bir de şerbet kaynatıyoruz, kalabalık. Bir gün klima çalıştırdım 150 lira fatura geldi. Bunu biz nasıl ödeyelim? Biraz indirim yapsalar daha iyi olur. Mesela yarı fiyatına satsalar. İnsanlarımız fakir bu kadar parayı ödeyemiyorlar.

(23) Özelleştirmeden sonra saatler dijital oldu. Saatler dijital olmadan önce çok daha kolaydı kaçak kullanmak. Şimdi kapıyı bile çalmadan dışarıdan kontrol ediyorlar, cezayı yazıyorlar. Haberimiz bile olmuyor. Bir bakıyoruz ceza gelmiş. Kullansan da kullanmasan da ceza kesiyorlar. Eskiden böyle değildi. Dijital saatler geldiğinden beri böyle oldu. Devlet bu konuda bir şey yapmalı.

(24) Bu bölge çok ciddi elektrik üreten bir bölge. GAP barajlarının hepsi bu bölgede. Bu projenin bölgeye maliyeti çok yüksek. Ben çocukken şöyle derdik, zaten elektriği bizim suyumuzdan üretiyorlar. Devlet kaçak elektriği ırkçı bir söylem olarak kullanıyor. Fakat HES'lerin bölgeye çok ciddi zararı var.

(25) HES'ler çok yönlü bir proje. Hem güvenlik hem elektriği başkasına satma amacı var. Burada bizim suyumuzdan elektrik üretiliyor ve başkasına satılıyor. Devlet itirazları önlemek için buradaki işleri yerellere taşere etti. Yerel ailelere ihale verdi. Bu durum biraz itirazları kırdı.

(26) Fakirlikten başlayan kaçak elektrik kullanımı kontrol olmaması sebebiyle çok arttı. Hem UFO çalışıyor hem cam açık bazı evlerde. Göç sonrası hiç destek verilmediği için sisteme karşı tepkisellik gelişti buralarda. Ayrıca topluluğun etkisi de vardı. Kaçak kullanmayanlar da kullananların yanında kaçak kullanmaya başladı.